

City of Beverly
Regular City Council Meeting
Public Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 21, 2026, 7:00 PM
Council Chambers, 3rd Floor, Beverly City Hall, 191 Cabot Street

CITY OF BEVERLY
RECEIVED AND RECORDED
CITY CLERKS OFFICE

2026 AUG 17 A 8:59

Julie Flowers, City Council President, called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Sarah Kirker, Assistant City Clerk, took attendance by roll call.

Members Present: Julie Flowers, Matthew St. Hilaire, Steven Crowley, Kathleen Feldman, Scott Houseman, Todd Rotondo, Keith Sonia, Danielle Spang.

Members Absent: John Mullady.

Also Present: Fire Chief Peter O'Connor, City Solicitor Beth Oldmixon, and members of the public.

Councilor Houseman led the pledge of allegiance.

Comments by Citizens:

Mitchell Surowiec, 42 Pratt Avenue, addressed the Council to speak on City's use of Flock Safety cameras and concerns with data safety and security.

Aayesha Siddiqui, 14 Windsor Road, first read the Land Acknowledgement. She addressed the Council to discuss City's use of Flock Safety cameras, data use issues, and transparency setting available.

Communications from His Honor the Mayor:

Order #124-An interdepartmental transfer of \$190,000 to support the required shift coverage costs for the Fire Department during FY2026.

Referred to the Committee on Finance and Property.

Order #125-Ten \$100 Paper Store gift cards donated by Beverly residents Alice Therese Riley-King and Edward A. King Jr. for the Council on Aging.

Referred to the Committee on Finance and Property.

Order #126-A \$250 donation from the Beverly/Peabody Lodge Elks 1309 to be used by the Veterans Department to support veterans in need.

Referred to the Committee on Finance and Property.

Communications, from other City Officers and Boards:

Order #127-Councilor Rotondo-A request to initiate the process to name the road leading into Beverly Golf & Tennis as "Matzeliger Way" in honor of Jan Ernst Matzeliger.

Rotondo noted that Dr. McKenzie DeFranza brought the request to his attention earlier in the year. He stated that he believes the order would be very beneficial to the City, as well as with regard to the Black history within the City.

Referred to the Committee on Legal Affairs.

Order #128-City Clerk-Renewal application for an Ice Cream Truck Vending Permit for Steven Wright, 116B Collins Street.

Referred to the Committee on Legal Affairs.

Communications, Applications and Petitions:

Order #129-National Grid-Petition #31302639-Install underground facilities on Chase St/West Dane St. (set a public hearing)

Referred to the Committee on Public Services to set a public hearing.

Unfinished Business from a previous meeting:

Order #061-Councilors St. Hilaire and Mullady-A request to hold a public meeting on the City's utilization and plan for Camp Paradise located at 44 Cole Street.

No action was taken.

Motions and Orders:

Order #118-Sergeant Nicholson-Handicapped Parking Sign-23 Front Street. (Final Passage)

President Flowers noted this vote was for final passage of the order. A motion was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and motion carried (8-0).

A motion to recess for subcommittee work was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and motion carried (8-0). The meeting recessed from 7:20 PM until 7:40 PM when President Flowers called the meeting back to order.

Public Hearings:

7:40 PM-Order #049-GONETSPEED-A petition to install and maintain underground facilities-Ashton Street. (Cont. from 2-2 and 3-2)

President Flowers opened the hearing at 7:40 PM. Heidi Mahoney, Manager of Government Affairs for GONETSPEED, addressed the Council. She provided an overview of the company, noting that GONETSPEED has provided telecommunications services for more than 100 years and is one of the largest independent fiber providers in the Northeast, operating across 11 states. She stated that the company builds and operates privately funded fiber networks and is making an investment of approximately \$17.5 million in the first phase of construction in Beverly.

St. Hilaire noted the materials shared by GONETSPEED referenced open trenching as a last resort and questioned whether this is the method being used on Ashton Street.

Joe Teed, Director of Construction, explained that the preferred construction method is horizontal directional drilling, with open trenching used only as a last resort. He stated that the final construction method depends on field conditions, including existing utilities, environmental conditions, and the presence of rock or ledge. Directional drilling is preferred because it minimizes impacts to residents and the surrounding environment.

St. Hilaire questioned estimated completion time. Mr. Teed estimated that the work on Ashton Street, approximately 250 to 300 feet in length, would be at the most three days, depending on site conditions.

Rotondo questioned whether testing had been completed on Ashton Street in regards to soil or ledge. Teed stated that no soil or ledge testing had yet been performed on any sites because the petition process is the first step before conducting investigative work. He explained that, if subsurface conditions make underground installation impractical, the company could instead pursue aerial installation using utility poles, with pole modifications determined by the pole owners through the make-ready process.

Houseman noted his intention to attach a condition to the petition related to East Street to require testing for ledge and noted the opportunity for other Councilors to consider.

Spang noted that the petition indicated crossing four laterals, three sewer and one water, and questioned the use of directional boring around those locations. Teed explained that when crossing existing utility laterals, the company follows Dig Safe requirements by exposing utilities through potholing or vacuum excavation before drilling. Utility crossings remain exposed so the drill head can be monitored to avoid damage before conduit is installed and the excavation is backfilled.

Teed stated that fiber conduit is typically installed between 24 and 36 inches below grade, with the exact depth depending on existing underground utilities and municipal specifications for utility separation.

Rotondo expressed support for increased telecommunications competition while raising concerns about locating underground facilities within the public right-of-way adjacent to private property and questioned whether they have experienced damage from a resident planting a tree without calling Dig Safe. Teed explained that the fiber is installed within heavy-wall conduit designed to withstand ground movement and that damage from tree roots is considered a minimal risk. He noted that, during the site walk, City staff recommended locating the conduit as close to the curb as practical to preserve space for future tree planting, while recognizing that final alignment depends on existing underground utilities.

Spang asked whether trees would need to be removed to accommodate directional drilling. Teed stated that the company generally drills beneath tree root systems or adjusts the depth to avoid impacts and has not had to remove trees on similar

projects. He also explained that residents are notified in advance of construction through door hangers delivered approximately one to two weeks before work begins, along with project signage placed in the area.

President Flowers asked whether the site visit to Ashton Street revealed any issues that would affect the proposed work. Teed stated that each location presents different conditions and noted that Ashton Street contains additional trees requiring consideration during design. However, he indicated that nothing was observed during the site visit would prevent the project from proceeding as proposed.

Spang asked when GONETSPEED determines that underground installation is no longer feasible. Teed responded that, if multiple test holes reveal significant ledge or rock, the company evaluates the cost, disruption, and feasibility of continuing underground installation. If underground construction is determined to be impractical, the company may withdraw the underground permit request and instead pursue aerial installation.

Houseman asked how the company evaluates situations where only some test holes encounter ledge. Teed explained that additional test holes would typically be performed to determine the extent of the rock formation before deciding whether to continue directional drilling, pursue open trenching, or switch to aerial installation. He noted that the decision is based on the extent of the ledge, construction feasibility, cost, and potential impacts to the surrounding area.

Using a project in Rhode Island as an example, Teed described circumstances in which repeated attempts at directional drilling through rock were unsuccessful, ultimately requiring open trenching after consultation with municipal officials. Houseman asked whether the Council could prohibit open trenching as a condition of approval. Teed responded that such a condition could require the company to either complete the project underground without trenching or proceed with an aerial installation if underground construction proved infeasible.

No members of the public spoke during the public hearing.

President Flowers closed the public hearing at 8:03 PM and referred the order to the Committee on Public Services.

A motion to recess the Council meeting was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and motion carried (8-0). The meeting recessed from 8:03 PM until 8:10 PM when President Flowers called the meeting back to order for the next scheduled public hearing.

8:10 PM- Order #050-GONETSPEED-A petition to install and maintain underground facilities-Friend Street. (Cont. from 2-2 and 3-2)

President Flowers opened the hearing at 8:10 PM. Mr. Teed noted Friend Street was straightforward with a level environment with minimal anticipated impact.

Rotondo asked for confirmation that, if trenching or disturbance to the softscape were necessary, the area would be restored to its original condition or better. Mr. Teed confirmed that it would.

No members of the public spoke during the public hearing.

President Flowers closed the public hearing at 8:14 PM and referred the order to the Committee on Public Services.

A motion to recess the Council meeting was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and motion carried (8-0). The meeting recessed from 8:14 PM until 8:30 PM when President Flowers called the meeting back to order for the next scheduled public hearing.

8:30 PM- Order #051-GONETSPEED-A petition to install and maintain underground facilities-East Street. (Cont. from 2-2 and 3-2)

President Flowers opened the hearing at 8:30 PM. Mr. Teed acknowledge the construction and disruption endured by the neighbors. Joe Teed, Director of Construction for GONETSPEED, acknowledged concerns raised by Councilor Houseman and residents regarding previous construction impacts and disruption for the specific location. He stated that GONETSPEED intends to be a good partner with the City and will work with City staff to determine the best location for the installation, with the intent of remaining within the softscape rather than the roadway. He added that the company would comply with

any conditions imposed by the Council, including test borings or limiting construction to horizontal directional drilling, to minimize disruption to residents.

Spang noted a storm drain in addition to the water and sewer laterals identified on the plan and asked whether directional drilling was typically used. Mr. Teed stated that directional drilling around storm drains would be handled in the same manner as other existing utilities. Utilities would be exposed in advance, and the drill path adjusted, typically passing beneath the utility while maintaining the required depth.

Houseman requested Mr. Teed describe the horizontal directional drilling process. Mr. Teed explained that construction begins with an entry pit and a receiving pit, with the drill head guided underground using a locating device that provides the operator with the precise location and depth of the drill head. Existing utilities are exposed in advance in accordance with Dig Safe requirements, allowing the drill to be safely steered over, under, or around underground infrastructure. He noted that exposing utilities is required regardless of the drilling method and may be accomplished through hand excavation, hydrovac excavation, or air excavation, depending on site conditions and the contractor. Excavations are kept as small as possible and are backfilled upon completion.

Spang questioned whether the referenced digging to open up laterals would be in the softscape and not in the road. Mr. Teed confirmed that potholing and utility exposure associated with the project would occur within the softscape rather than the roadway. He further stated that, if landscaping such as shrubs were encountered, the company would make every effort to temporarily remove and replace the vegetation to minimize disruption while meeting its obligation to safely expose underground utilities.

David Mahood, 191 East Lothrop Street, addressed the Council. He raised questions regarding the long-term responsibility for underground infrastructure at the end of its useful life, including whether abandoned conduit and cable would be removed or remain in place. He also asked about the expected lifespan and warranty of the fiber optic cable, noting residents' concerns about future construction impacts. Mr. Mahood expressed that he and his neighbors are frustrated with the ongoing road construction. While recognizing the benefits of increased telecommunications competition, he emphasized the importance of considering the long-term environmental impacts of underground infrastructure before approving the project.

Responding to the public comment, Mr. Teed stated that fiber optic cable has an expected lifespan exceeding 30 years based on his industry experience. He explained that, once installed within conduit, future replacement of the fiber itself would generally not require excavation, as new fiber can be pulled through the existing conduit. He noted that excavation would typically only be required if the conduit were damaged by a third party.

Houseman questioned a previously referenced hub or node proposed on East Lothrop Street and ask if additional information could be provided. Mr. Teed stated that the location of a proposed network hub, or Point of Presence (POP), had not yet been finalized. He explained that the company's engineering and site acquisition teams were evaluating several potential locations. Mr. Teed stated that the equipment would be housed within a cabinet approximately 4 feet wide, 2 to 3 feet deep, and 6 feet high, located on a concrete pad measuring approximately 20 feet by 20 feet. The site would also include fencing, landscaping, or other screening as required by the municipality. He added that the facility would operate quietly, with only a standby generator running periodically for testing or during power outages.

President Flowers closed the public hearing at 8:53 PM and referred the order to the Committee on Public Services.

A motion to recess the Council meeting was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and motion carried (8-0). The meeting recessed from 8:53pm until 8:56pm when President Flowers called the meeting back to order.

Reports of Committees:

Public Services:

Order #065-National Grid Petition #31124344-to install underground facilities on Broadway. (Original P/H's 2/17/2026, 3/2/26 and 4/6/26)

President Flowers put the question of acceptance of the proposal and adoption of the order as recommended by the subcommittee with the amended site plan and 8 conditions as follows.

1. National Grid shall comply with all applicable City of Beverly Ordinances, rules, and regulations.
2. National Grid shall comply with the "Dig Safe Law," Chapter 82, Sections 40 through and including 40E of the Massachusetts General Laws and the Department of Public Utilities regulations issued thereunder.

3. National Grid shall comply with the "Excavation and Trench Safety Law," Chapter 82A of the Massachusetts General Laws.
4. National Grid shall comply with all orders or decisions issued by the City of any City official pursuant to any City Ordinance, rule, or regulation, any Massachusetts statute or regulation, or any other legal authority authorizing said City official to issue an order, including an order to National Grid directing a halt to the work.
5. National Grid shall reconstruct any impacted sidewalk panels in full and in concrete to the City's Engineering Department standards.
6. National Grid shall re-loam and re-seed any impacted grassy sidewalk areas to the City's Engineering Department standards.
7. In the event National Grid removes or damages public shade trees, it shall replace those trees in consultation with the City Arborist. In the event National Grid removes a tree on private property, it shall replace those trees in consultation with the property owner.
8. National Grid shall guarantee the continuing health of any newly planted replacement trees and those subject to root cutting related to the work, for a period of two (2) years from the date of planting. Should impacted trees die or become substantially impaired during this two-year period, as determined by the City Arborist, National Grid shall replace any impacted tree. This requirement shall be limited to a one-time replacement.

A motion was made and seconded.

Sonia thanked his Public Services colleagues, Solicitor Oldmixon, National Grid, and the customer for their cooperation and good faith throughout the process. He expressed his appreciation that the petition had reached a positive resolution.

Spang informed the Council that the revised site plan showed all work would be conducted within the softscape and not within the roadway.

A vote was taken, and the motion carried (8-0).

Order #107-A reappointment for Julia Work Vient, 76 Cabot Street #2, to serve on the Beverly Waste Reduction Committee. President Flowers put the question of acceptance of the proposal and adoption of the order as recommended by the subcommittee. A motion was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (8-0).

Order #108-A reappointment for Barbie Papalios, 30 Pond Street, to serve on the Beverly Waste Reduction Committee. President Flowers put the question of acceptance of the proposal and adoption of the order as recommended by the subcommittee. A motion was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (8-0).

Order #109-A reappointment for Brenda Wong Murphy, 15 Bertram Street, to serve on the Beverly Cultural Council. President Flowers put the question of acceptance of the proposal and adoption of the order as recommended by the subcommittee. A motion was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (8-0).

Order #110-A an appointment and waiver request of residency for Amanda Bittner, 131 Main Street, Byfield, to serve on the Beverly Cultural Council.

A motion to waive the residency requirement as recommended by the subcommittee was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and motion carried (8-0). A motion to accept the proposal and adopt the order as recommended by the subcommittee was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and motion carried (8-0).

Order #111-A an appointment for Alex Weatherup, 27 Fayette Street, to serve on the Beverly Cultural Council. President Flowers put the question of acceptance of the proposal and adoption of the order as recommended by the subcommittee. A motion was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (8-0).

Order #129-National Grid-Petition #31302639-Install underground facilities on Chase St/West Dane St.
A motion to set a public hearing for May 4, 2026, at 7:50 PM as recommended by the subcommittee was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and motion carried (8-0).

Legal Affairs:

Order #106-A reappointment for William Finch, 50 Front Street, to serve on the Beverly Historic Commission.

President Flowers put the question of acceptance of the proposal and adoption of the order as recommended by the subcommittee. A motion was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (8-0).

Order #127-Councilor Rotondo-A request to initiate the process to name the road leading into Beverly Golf & Tennis as "Matzeliger Way" in honor of Jan Ernst Matzeliger.

President Flowers explained that the City's ordinance governing the naming of municipal property requires a 30-day public written comment period before a public hearing may be held.

City Solicitor Oldmixon explained that the ordinance first requires approval from the board or commission with jurisdiction over the property, which, in this case, had already been granted by the Beverly Golf and Tennis Commission. She explained that the City Council must then hold a public hearing following a 30-day public written comment period, which concludes at the close of the hearing. Notice of the public hearing and written comment period must be published on the City's website and in a local newspaper at least 30 days before the hearing. Ms. Oldmixon stated that her office would coordinate with the City Clerk's Office to publish the required notices and schedule the public hearing in accordance with the ordinance.

President Flowers informed the public that written comments may be submitted to the City Clerk's Office during the public comment period and noted that additional information regarding the process would be included in the published notice. She stated that the process would conclude with the required public hearing.

Order #128-City Clerk-Renewal application for an Ice Cream Truck Vending Permit for Steven Wright, 116B Collins Street. President Flowers put the question of acceptance of the proposal and adoption of the order as recommended by the subcommittee. A motion was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (8-0).

Finance and Property:

Order #124-An interdepartmental transfer of \$190,000 to support the required shift coverage costs for the Fire Department during FY2026.

A motion to set a public hearing for May 4, 2026, at 8:00 PM as recommended by the subcommittee was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and motion carried (8-0).

Order #125-Ten \$100 Paper Store gift cards donated by Beverly residents Alice Therese Riley-King and Edward A. King Jr. for the Council on Aging.

President Flowers put the question of acceptance of the proposal and adoption of the order as recommended by the subcommittee. A motion was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (8-0).

Order #126-A \$250 donation from the Beverly/Peabody Lodge Elks 1309 to be used by the Veterans Department to support veterans in need.

President Flowers put the question of acceptance of the proposal and adoption of the order as recommended by the subcommittee. A motion was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (8-0).

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and motion carried (8-0). The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Kathleen M. Feldman, Chair
Julie R. Flowers
Scott D. Houseman

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Finance and Property / Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 21 2026, 7:00 PM

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Within the Confines of the City Council Meeting

Council Chambers, 3rd Floor, Beverly City Hall, 191 Cabot Street

Feldman called the meeting to order at 7:21 PM.

Members present: Feldman, Flowers, Houseman

Members absent: None

Order Number	Date to Committee	Description	Action Taken
#124	04/21/2026	An interdepartmental transfer of \$190,000 to support the required shift coverage costs for the Fire Department during FY2026.	Recommend the Council to set a public hearing for May 4, 2026, at 8:00 PM (3-0).
#125	04/21/2026	Ten \$100 Paper Store gift cards donated by Beverly residents Alice Therese Riley-King and Edward A. King Jr. for the Council on Aging.	Recommend the Council to approve (3-0).
#126	04/21/2026	A \$250 donation from the Beverly/Peabody Lodge Elks 1309 to be used by the Veterans Department to support veterans in need.	Recommend the Council to approve (3-0).

Houseman noted his appreciation for the many private citizens, local businesses, and volunteers who step forward to donate their time and resources and serve on the City's commissions and committees. He remarked that their contributions make a meaningful difference and reflect the strong character of the community. Chair Feldman and President Flowers echoed Houseman's comments and expressed their appreciation as well.

A motion to adjourn the Committee on Finance and Property was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and motion carried (3-0). The meeting adjourned at 7:26 PM.

Todd C. Rotondo, Chair
Matthew J. St. Hilaire
Steven M. Crowley

Legal Affairs / Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 21, 2026, 7:00 PM
Within the Confines of the City Council Meeting
Council Chambers, 3rd Floor, Beverly City Hall, 191 Cabot Street

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Rotondo called the meeting to order at 7:22 PM.
Members present: Rotondo, St. Hilaire, Crowley
Members absent: None

Order Number	Date to Committee	Description	Action Taken
#106	04/06/2026	A reappointment for William Finch, 50 Front Street, to serve on the Beverly Historic Commission.	Recommend the Council to approve (3-0).
#112	04/06/2026	An appointment for Semih Bulbul, 3 Quincy Park, to serve on the Human Rights Committee.	Hold
#120	04/06/2026	Councilors Rotondo and Span to Schedule a joint meeting of the Legal Affairs and Public Services Committees to review the City's use of and contracts for Automated License Plate Readers and associated software including Flock Safety cameras. (Meeting set for April 21, 2026 at 6:00p.m.)	Hold
#127	04/21/2026	Councilor Rotondo-A request to initiate the process to name the road leading into Beverly Golf & Tennis as "Matzeliger Way" in honor of Jan Ernst Matzeliger.	Refer back to the Committee of the Whole (3-0).
#128	04/21/2026	City Clerk-Renewal application for an Ice Cream Truck Vending Permit for Steven Wright, 116B Collins Street.	Recommend the Council to approve (3-0).

A motion to adjourn the Committee on Legal Affairs was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and motion carried (3-0).
The meeting adjourned at 7:31 PM.

Danielle M. Spang, Chair
John J. Mullady
Keith A. Sonia

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Public Services / Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 21, 2026, 7:00 PM
Within the Confines of the City Council Meeting
Council Chambers, 3rd Floor, Beverly City Hall, 191 Cabot Street

Spang called the meeting to order at 7:23 PM.
Members present: Spang, Sonia
Members absent: Mullady

Order Number	Date to Committee	Description	Action Taken
#065	04/06/2026	National Grid Petition #31124344-to install underground facilities on Broadway. (Original P/H's 2/17/2026, 3/2/26 and 4/6/26)	Recommend the Council to approve (2-0).
#107	04/06/2026	A reappointment for Julia Work Vient, 76 Cabot Street #2, to serve on the Beverly Waste Reduction Committee.	Recommend the Council to approve (2-0).
#108	04/06/2026	A reappointment for Barbie Papalios, 30 Pond Street, to serve on the Beverly Waste Reduction Committee.	Recommend the Council to approve (2-0).
#109	04/06/2026	A reappointment for Brenda Wong Murphy, 15 Bertram Street, to serve on the Beverly Cultural Council.	Recommend the Council to approve (2-0).
#110	04/06/2026	An appointment and waiver request of residency for Amanda Bittner, 131 Main Street, Byfield, to serve on the Beverly Cultural Council.	Recommend the Council to approve residency waiver (2-0). Recommend the Council to approve the appointment (2-0).
#111	04/06/2026	An appointment for Alex Weatherup, 27 Fayette Street, to serve on the Beverly Cultural Council.	Recommend the Council to approve (2-0).
#120	04/06/2026	Councilors Rotondo and Span to Schedule a joint meeting of the Legal Affairs and Public Services Committees to review the City's use of and contracts for Automated License Plate Readers and associated software including Flock Safety cameras. (Meeting set for April 21, 2026 at 6:00p.m.)	Hold

#129	04/21/2026	National Grid-Petition #31302639-Install underground facilities on Chase St/West Dane St.	Recommend the Council to set a public hearing for May 6, 2026, at 7:45 PM (2-0)
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A motion to adjourn the Committee on Public Services was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and motion carried (2-0). The meeting adjourned at 7:36 PM.