

CITY OF LEWISTON

CITY COUNCIL

APRIL 21, 2026

REGULAR MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL ROOM AT 7:00 P.M.

THE HONORABLE DAVID B. CHITTIM, COUNCIL PRESIDENT, PRESIDING.

PRESENT: Councilors Nagine, Longchamps, Harriman, Roy, Noble, Chittim, and Martel, City Administrator Bryan Kaenrath, Deputy City Administrator Brian O'Malley, and Deputy City Clerk Kelly Brooks. Excused/Absent: Mayor Sheline.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

VOTE (131-2026)

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Martel:

To dispense with the reading of the minutes of the meeting of April 7, 2026, and to accept and place them on file as prepared by the Deputy City Clerk. Passed - Vote 7-0

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Ronnie Paradis, Ward 6 – Concerned with lack of progress for the Martel School senior housing project which has been in the works since 2019, feels the city is not paying attention to seniors. Feels the Council is not paying attention to residents in Wards 2,4 6 and 7. City pays a lot of attention to Bates College. Where is the city's communication plan – we had the water main break and several recent shootings, and both issues had delayed communication to the residents and not timely social media post. Advisory committees should be doing more – public health, seniors – Council should be asking the committees to be working on projects and programs to help the Council. Ryn Soule notified residents of the water main break and the Council let her go.

Cara Courchesne, Ward 1 – The residents are divided on many issues and sometimes division is healthy because we have a community with different people and different beliefs. Some goes beyond healthy and is cruel. Complimented Councilor Harriman's bravery at the last meeting when speaking about his autism diagnosis but he should not have had to elaborate about it publicly. Neuro-divergence is not rare, 1 in 5 people are diagnosed on the spectrum. Partner's son has ADHD and autism, the world is not built for his needs. This is why it matters how we talk about people. Some things such as drawing or knitting are to help focus the brain. Lewiston should be a place where people don't have to shrink themselves to participate. We should work together to solve our issues and treat each other with dignity.

Bob McDonald, Ward 6 – Does not understand why the barricade is in front of the Chambers, this is a public meeting and the Council should not be afraid to talk with the public. When was Mayor, the city hired Bill Healey, when the budget is to be reviewed, please run it by him because he knows more than anyone else about how the revaluation should be implemented. Cut budget simply by bringing in ICE, but the Council does not want to do that because it would anger people in Augusta. But if ICE is brought in, welfare would go down and the school budget would go down.

Destiny Johnson, resident of Windham and Lewiston shooting survivor – The Mayor altered the rules to limit speaking to only Lewiston residents. (Councilors asked to permit Ms. Johnson to speak.) Has been speaking at meeting for past several months. Mayor’s stance suggests he wants to shut them down to make them go away. The survivors and families of victims are seeking accountability for the \$1.9 million awarded to 29 non-profit organizations that were not at the 2 locations of the shooting. The Root Cellar returned their funds back to the victims. The Maine Community Foundation should return the funds and the Council should direct them to do it. Victims should come first in fundraising.

John Butcher, Diamond Court – The water main break impacted his property and parts of his home need to be replaced due to the damage. Everyone at Public Works has been helpful but he needs to know when the situation will be resolved and he does not want it to be forgotten.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Public Works is working with the Androscoggin Transportation Resource Center on the Lisbon Street Safety and Mobility Study which is looking at improving safety and accessibility along Lisbon Street. The study is expected to be completed in July. There are public sessions for the property revaluation on May 11 and 18. Letters notifying property owners of the new assessments will be going out the last week of April. The City is required every five years to update the Consolidated Plan for CDBG and it will be presented at the May 5 Council meeting. The Busking Festival will be held on May 1, 8 and 15 on Lisbon Street from Ash Street to Main Street. Earth Day is April 22 and Public Works will be conducting the annual citywide clean up effort. The Public Art Committee is issuing a Call for Artists and the deadline is May 4. The Lewiston Auburn Veterans Council will be holding a Memorial Day observance on Saturday, May 23 at 10am at Veterans Park. The Central Avenue Rehabilitation Project begins this week.

AMENDMENTS TO THE ATHLETIC FIELD USE POLICY

VOTE (132-2026)

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Longchamps:

To approve the proposed amendments to City Policy #3, “Athletic Field Use” Policy, as recommended by the Recreation Director. Passed - Vote 7-0

AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY BUSINESS LICENSE FEE SCHEDULE POLICY REGARDING THE FEES FOR PREPACKAGED FOOD SALES

VOTE (133-2026)

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Longchamps:

To approve the proposed amendment to the City Business Licensing Fee Schedule Policy, Policy Manual Number 7, as recommended by the City Clerk. Passed - Vote 7-0

BIENNIAL APPOINTMENT OF ELECTION WORKERS

VOTE (134-2026)

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Longchamps:

To approve the list of election workers as presented by the City Clerk for the 2026-2028 biennial period. Passed - Vote 7-0

**AMENDMENTS TO THE PERSONNEL POLICIES TO CLARIFY THE LANGUAGE
REGARDING EMPLOYEE TERMINATION**

VOTE (135-2026)

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Longchamps:

To approve the proposed amendments to the Personnel Policies, adding clarifying language in the termination of employment status section. Passed - Vote 7-0

**AMENDMENTS TO THE PERSONNEL POLICIES TO CLARIFY THE
CATASTROPHIC LEAVE POLICY**

VOTE (136-2026)

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Longchamps:

To approve the proposed amendments to the Personnel Policies to revise the Catastrophic Leave policy. Passed - Vote 7-0

**AMENDMENTS TO THE PERSONNEL POLICIES TO ADD THE MAINE EMPLOYEE
SURVEILLANCE ACT LAW**

VOTE (137-2026)

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Longchamps:

To approve the proposed amendments to the Personnel Policies to add the Maine Employee Surveillance Law. Passed - Vote 7-0

**ORDER, AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS FROM WATER UTILITY
BOND PREMIUM AND INTEREST PROCEEDS FROM 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, AND
2024 BONDS TO THE LAKE AUBURN INTAKE STUDY PROJECT
TOTALING \$150,000**

VOTE (138-2026)

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Longchamps:

To approve the Order, Authorizing the transfer of funds from Water Utility bond premium and interest proceeds from 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 bonds for a total of \$150,000 to the Lake Auburn Intake Study project:

Whereas, this project is a joint study between City of Lewiston Water Division and Auburn Water District; and

Whereas, the City of Lewiston and Auburn Water District agree to split the project cost 50/50; and

Whereas, an in-depth analysis of water quality in Lake Auburn along with an alternatives analysis for future infrastructure will assist in capital planning; and

Whereas, \$150,000 in bond premiums and interest funding is available for this project; and

Now, Therefore, Be It Ordered by the City Council of the City of Lewiston to authorize the transfer of funds from Water Utility bond premium and interest proceeds from 2020 bond in the amount of \$3,900, 2021 bond in the amount of \$11,060, 2022 bond in the amount of \$25,100, 2023 bond in the amount of \$69,940, and 2024 bond in the amount of \$40,000 to the Lake Auburn Intake Study project totaling \$150,000.

Passed - Vote 7-0

**ANNUAL APPOINTMENTS TO THE LEWISTON-AUBURN RAILROAD COMPANY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

VOTE (139-2026)

Motion by Councilor Harriman, seconded by Councilor Nagine:

To appoint David Chittim and C. Alexander Pine as Lewiston Directors on the Lewiston and Auburn Railroad Company Board of Directors for a three-year term, said term to expire April 2029. Passed - Vote 7-0

**RESOLVE, APPOINTMENT OF A PROXY TO VOTE THE SHARES OF THE
LEWISTON DIRECTORS OF THE LEWISTON AUBURN RAILROAD COMPANY AS
A SINGLE BLOCK AS DETERMINED BY THE MAJORITY OF THE
LEWISTON DIRECTORS**

VOTE (140-2026)

Motion by Councilor Martel, seconded by Councilor Nagine:

To approve the Resolve, Appointment of a Proxy to vote the shares of the Lewiston Directors of the Lewiston Auburn Railroad Company as a single block as determined by the majority of the Lewiston Directors:

Whereas, the Lewiston and Auburn Railroad Company (LARC) is a corporation founded in 1872, by the two cities to establish a rail connection from downtown Lewiston through Auburn to connect with Grand Trunk Railroad; and

Whereas, the work of the LARC continues today with the corporation owning the real estate in Lewiston and Auburn, including but not limited to parking lots on Lincoln Street in Lewiston, the

former Grand Trunk Railway Depot, rail right of way in Lewiston; rail right of way and switch yards in Auburn; and policy discussions looking to expand rail freight operations in Auburn, passenger rail service between Portland and Lewiston - Auburn, and a Rails to Trails conversion in Lewiston; and

Whereas, the cities of Lewiston and Auburn are the only Shareholders in the LARC, with Lewiston owning 75% of the shares of the corporation and Auburn owning 25% of the shares; and

Whereas, the governance and work of the LARC is overseen by six Lewiston Directors and three Auburn Directors; and

Whereas, the LARC bylaws require that each Shareholder appoint a Proxy to vote the shares of the Shareholder as a single block that reflects the majority vote of the Directors of each Shareholder;

Whereas, Director of Economic and Community Development serves as an ex-officio member of the LARC Board of Directors and has served as the Proxy many times in the past;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Lewiston that Acting Director John Blais or his designee is appointed to serve as the Proxy to vote the shares of the Lewiston Directors.

Passed – Vote 7-0

**PUBLIC HEARING ON AN APPLICATION FOR A NEW LIQUOR LICENSE FOR
5/5 EAST AFRICA, LLC, 413 MAIN STREET**

Council President Chittim opened the public hearing to receive input from residents. No members of the public spoke for or against this issue. The Council President then closed the hearing.

VOTE (141-2026)

Motion by Councilor Martel, seconded by Councilor Harriman:

To authorize the City Clerk's Office to approve a new liquor license application for 5/5 East Africa, LLC, 413 Main Street. Passed – Vote 7-0

**PUBLIC HEARING AND FINAL PASSAGE REGARDING AN AMENDMENT TO THE
BUSINESS LICENSING ORDINANCE REGARDING THE ANNUAL LICENSING FOR
PRE-PACKAGED FOOD SALES AND INSPECTIONS**

Council President Chittim opened the public hearing to receive input from residents. No members of the public spoke for or against this issue. The Council President then closed the hearing.

VOTE (142-2026)

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Martel:

That the proposed amendment to the City Code of Ordinances, Chapter 22 “Businesses”, Article I “In General”, Sec. 22-2 “Definitions” and Article II. “Licenses”, Sec 22-34 “Inspection of applicant’s premises, merchandise”, receive final passage by a roll call vote. Passed - Vote 7-0

PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST PASSAGE FOR AN AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING AND LAND USE CODE, ARTICLE XI, DISTRICT REGULATIONS FOR CHANGES TO THE SPACE AND BULK TABLE AND THE LAND USE TABLE REGARDING MOBILE HOMES, DAY CARES, AND USED CAR DEALERS, AND NEW DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Council President Chittim opened the public hearing to receive input from residents. No members of the public spoke for or against this issue. The Council President then closed the hearing. Director of Planning & Code Enforcement Jon Connor provided background information on this item.

VOTE (143-2026)

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Harriman:

That the proposed amendments to Appendix A of the Code of Ordinances, Zoning and Land Use Code, Article XI, District Regulations, regarding mobile homes, day cares, and used car dealers, and new dimensional requirements, receive first passage by a roll call vote and to continue the public hearing to the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting. Passed – Vote 7-0

PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST PASSAGE FOR AN AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING AND LAND USE CODE, ARTICLE XI, DISTRICT REGULATIONS FOR CHANGES TO THE NO NAME POND CONSERVATION OVERLAY DISTRICT TO CLARIFY BUFFER LANGUAGE

Council President Chittim opened the public hearing to receive input from residents. Diane Chasse, Ward 6 – Her property abuts the Water’s Edge subdivision entrance, land is close to pond level and has standing water and flooding in sections of her yard during parts of the year which is eroding part of her lawn. There is a stream of water that runs and is causing problems for her well. Feels like property is a large retention pond. Concerned proposed ordinance language will negatively impact her land even more and any increase in storm water run off will make the issue worse. Asked Council to vote this down.

Dan Bernier, Ward 6 - Asking Council to vote “no” and to leave the ordinance as it. The current ordinance has consistent stormwater quality protection and no record that it has failed. Once the conservation ordinance can be rewritten for a single permit request, no overlay in this city is safe. This ordinance was adopted as a cautionary protection, stormwater runoff is one of the most well documents sources of pollution to water sources and the ordinance was written to require early interception of natural buffering across the watershed.

The Council President then closed the hearing.

Motion by Councilor Martel, seconded by Councilor Harriman:

That the proposed amendments to Appendix A of the Code of Ordinances, Zoning and Land Use Code, Article XI, District Regulations for changes to the No Name Pond Conservation Overlay District to clarify buffer language receive first passage by a roll call vote and to continue the public hearing to the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting

VOTE (144-2026)

Motion by Councilor Chittim, seconded by Councilor Nagine:

To continue the public hearing to the May 19 City Council meeting. Passed – Vote 7-0

PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST PASSAGE TO CONTRACTUALLY REZONE 860 LISBON STREET FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS ZONING DISTRICT TO A CONTRACT ZONE TO ALLOW THE COMMERCIAL USES AND BULK AND SPACE REQUIREMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY BUSINESS DISTRICT WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SMALLER SETBACKS FOR PAVEMENT AND STRUCTURES

Director of Planning & Code Enforcement Jon Connor provided background information for this item. Council President Chittim opened the public hearing to receive input from residents. No members of the public spoke for or against this issue. The Council President then closed the hearing. Pen Lindsay from the Lewiston Housing Authority noted they share the community's frustration in the slow start to this project but they have recently received the commitment from Maine Housing for the final financial piece that they were waiting to have completed. They are hoping to start construction in five to six weeks. The project is three phases with 44 units each. Phase 1 is ready to go within a few months and Phase 2 has been already approved by Maine Housing. Phase 3 is scheduled for funding consideration by Maine Housing in September. Phase 3 has in the plans for a commercial operation on the first floor with a drive through along Lisbon Street. They do not have any businesses lined up for this as of yet. Everything will need to go through the Planning Board process for approval.

VOTE (145-2026)

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Martel:

That the proposed amendments to Appendix A of the Code of Ordinances, Zoning and Land Use Code, Article IV, Establishment of Districts, for a contract zone located at 860 Lisbon Street from Neighborhood Business zoning district to a contract zone with the limitations proposed, receive first passage by a roll call vote and that the public hearing be continued to the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting. Passed – Vote 7-0

REQUEST TO APPROVE A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO THE MAINE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION REGARDING THE BROOKFIELD LEWISTON FALLS RELICENSING WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATE

Public Works Director Kevin Gagne supports the upgrade in the classification of the river from a C to a B but let the Council know of the financial impact on this change. The publicly operated sewer treatment plant on River Road will then discharge into a Class B river and there are upgraded standards for that. This could mean a 15-20% impact in sewer rate increases due to the additional upgrades needed.

VOTE (146-2026)

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Longchamps:

To approve and endorse the Letter of Support to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection regarding the Brookfield Lewiston Falls Relicensing Water Quality Certificate.
Passed – Vote 7-0

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Christine Holden, Ward 1 – Voiced her concern over the closing of the Androscoggin Bank on Lisbon Street, there will be no banking downtown after many years, has been a customer since 1972. Unfortunate not to have a bank downtown on one of the main retail streets in the second largest city in the state.

REPORTS AND UPDATES

No reports or updates were provided at this time.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Longchamps complimented the Council President on running the meeting this evening. Is not in favor of supporting Tier 3 of the budget option due to the staff cuts but that does not mean she doesn't support cutting the budget and the tax rate to support the citizens. Councilor Chittim asked about the opinions of keeping the stanchion barricade in front of the dais or removing it. The City Administrator noted the other safety measures that were put into place such as the new camera focused on the dais at all times and the presence of a police officer at the meetings. Councilors unanimously agreed to remove the barrier. Councilor Nagine reminded everyone that Earth Day is April 22 and there are citywide clean-up events going on. Also on April 26 from 10am – 2pm at 2 Oxford St is a clean-up of the farmer's market site and the first market is May 10. Healthy Neighborhoods is running their bulky trash pickup on May 1 and 2. The City Administrator said there will be another budget workshop on Thursday evening.

EXECUTIVE SESSION**VOTE (147-2026)**

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Martel:

To enter into an Executive Session pursuant to MRSA Title 1, section 405 (6) (c) to discuss an Economic Development issue of which the premature disclosure of the information would prejudice the competitive bargaining position of the City. Passed – Vote 7-0

Executive Session began at 8:20pm and ended at 9:00pm.

VOTE (148-2026)

Motion by Councilor Nagine, seconded by Councilor Chittim:

To adjourn at 9:00 P.M. Passed - Vote 7-0

A true record, Attest:

Kelly J. Brooks, CMC
Deputy City Clerk
Lewiston, Maine