



Michael Q. Geary
City Clerk

Angela M. Gitschier
Assistant City Clerk

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: April 21, 2026

Time: 6:30 PM

Location: City Council Chamber, 375 Merrimack Street, 2nd Floor,
Lowell, MA / Zoom (Hybrid)

1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed 11 present (C. Chau, C. Descoteaux, M. Gitschier, C. Juran, C. Liang, C. McDonough, C. Mercier, C. Nuon, C. Robinson, C. Rourke, C. Scott).

M. Gitschier presiding.

M. Gitschier recognized his Assistant Erastus Mwangi for completing the Boston Marathon.

2. MAYOR'S BUSINESS

2.1. Communication Remote/Zoom Participation.

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Mercier, seconded by C. McDonough. So voted.

2.2. Citation - Lowell Spinners.

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Juran, seconded by C. Descoteaux. So voted.

M. Gitschier recognized Marc Deschenes and John Croteau to say a few words. Mr. Deschenes thanked everyone and was excited to be here and overwhelmed with support from the city. Mr. Croteau thanked everyone again for the welcome and for bringing back summer baseball to Lowell.



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C. Robinson moved, seconded by C. Rourke "To Suspend the Rules to take 5.2 out of order". So voted.

3. CITY CLERK

3.1. Minutes of Rules & Election Law SC April 14th; City Council Regular Meeting April 14th, for acceptance.

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Liang, seconded by C. Juran. So voted.

4. CITY COUNCIL - MOTIONS

4.1. C. McDonough - Req. City Mgr. have the proper department proper department have Chapter 266 Section 82 of the City Code "Acre/Highlands residential parking area" amended by adding/restoring Perkins Street to Schedule X.

In City Council, seconded by C. Liang, referred to City Manager. So voted.

C. McDonough noted Perkins Street used to be on Schedule X and UMass Lowell still list Perkins Street as Residential Parking Only and it was somehow removed from the Ordinance and he would like to see it added back on the list in Schedule X. C. Juran asked what the impact would be to UMass Lowell or the Spinners. M. Gitschier noted that it will be included in the motion response.

4.2. M. Gitschier - Req. City Mgr. update the City Council on the bridge deck repair on the Ouellette/Aiken St Bridge.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted.

City Manager Golden will provide information in couple weeks.

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY MANAGER

5.1. Motion Responses.

A) Motion Response - Translation Solutions



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C. Liang asked if the policy was in written form and City Manager Golden said we do not have it in written form but is an order of operations that they do down in the CASE Office. City Manager Golden explained they once thought Google Translate was the way to go however they have figured out it is not. City Manager Golden said they could write it up and share with their partners in the city. C. Liang commented he would appreciate that. C. Juran asked the City Administration to make that available very broadly because she has personally tried to get things translated into Khmer through different resources and received different answers. In City Council, **Motion** “To accept and place on file” by C. Liang, seconded by C. Juran. So voted.

B) Motion Response - Parking Bans

C. McDonough noted this was an excellent report. In City Council, **Motion** “To accept and place on file” by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Nuon.

C) Motion Response - 90 Day Pothole Report

C. Nuon noted he appreciates the very detailed report. C. Nuon also noted that most of the reports come from the CFO. C. Nuon asked the report be put on the website for all residents. City Manager Golden asked the councilors and the residents to look at the report and see how it could be better. CFO Baldwin thanked the councilors for the motion to show the capabilities of the 311 system. C. Nuon asked that any potholes not been filled or taken care of within 20 days be prioritized and taken care of first. City Manager Golden explained there could be an underlying matter as to why, but they would look into the matter. C. Liang asked the administration to also look into the potholes in the Acre. C. Scott noted it was a great report and asked if we are tracking legal claims in terms of repeat and refilled potholes and would like this data incorporated into the report. C. Robinson agrees with his colleagues regarding same potholes being patched 3 to 4 times. In City Council, **Motion** “To accept and place on file” by C. Liang, seconded by C. Juran.

D) Motion Response - Lease Agreements



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C. McDonough thanked the administration for the very detailed and extensive report. In City Council, **Motion** “To accept and place on file” by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Nuon.

5.2. Informational Reports.

Informational Report - Pollard Memorial Library

City Manager Golden recognized Ms. Cooley, Director of the Library to talk about all the great things happening at the library. Ms. Cooley went over the power point presentation that she provided to the City Council. Ms. Cooley thanked the administration for allowing her to share highlights of the library. Ms. Cooley commented that this is National Library Week. Ms. Cooley explained they have been expanding their library services within the building and beyond the walls and making sure the library space is welcoming to anyone using it and that the ultimate goal is to be Lowell’s Library representing the entire community. Ms. Cooley explained the core mission, access to technology, learning opportunities for all ages, workspaces for non-profits, groups, community members. Ms. Cooley commented on the access of materials the community can obtain through the library such as audio, digital, languages other than English, access to business information, job hunting and support for filing out job applications, helping with applications for apartments and submitting timesheets for their job. Ms. Cooley outlined the number of computer sessions provided to the residents by staff members as most questions were about technology. Ms. Cooley explained why libraries are important. Ms. Cooley also commented on the bookmobile services and growth through the years as well as the neighborhoods reached. Ms. Cooley commented on the programming trends and the ones that the community would like to have. Ms. Cooley commented on the support from the administration and the Board of Trustees and community. Ms. Cooley also commented on the strategic plan outreach activities, bookmobile visits and stops, expanding community relationships and to collaborate with city departments, support for non-profits and businesses and to strengthen core services by evaluating trends in usages and needs of patrons, increasing accessibilities for reading levels and languages, home deliveries for those in need, ensure library spaces



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and furniture meet community needs. Ms. Cooley commented on feedback from the patrons, suggestions and ideas to make the library better. Ms. Cooley then thanked the council for their time and welcomed any questions. C. Robinson thanked MS. Cooley and commented on the bookmobile service growth. C. Robinson asked if there were services seminars, webinars for authors, maybe an author workshop and if this could be something looked into. C. Robinson also asked if maybe the library could become information hub for voting, for dates, and options. C. Mercier she is proud of all Ms. Cooley's dedication to the library and that she is the right person for the job. C. Chau thanked Ms. Cooley and the Board of Trustees and the Friends of the Library. C. Descoteaux thanked Ms. Cooley and the staff and Board of Trustees. C. Descoteaux commented on the 70 percent increase in the number of people served and how impressive it is. C. Juran commented on how proud she is of the work Ms. Cooley and her team have done for the community. C. Juran commented that she is a member of the Pollard Memorial Library Foundation a 501 c3 that helps support our library and that she has filed a form 23 b3 to put public on notice of that. C. Juran thanked C. Robinson for highlighting the bookmobile and suggested everyone read the report attached to the agenda as it highlights the library. C. McDonough thanked Ms. Cooley and staff and commented on the increase in number of people served and how incredible it is. C. McDonough explained all the amazing work is not free and the investment in return in terms of program growth and residents served has been done on a minimal budget and that we keep this in mind when going through the budget process. C. Nuon applauded again the Board of Trustees and the Friends of the Library as well as Ms. Cooley and staff for remarkable job. C. Nuon asked the city administration to join the council in the support of the library maintain their funding during the budget. C. Liang commented he would like to see more community partnership, how he used to volunteer teaching basic computers skills at the Senior Center to the older adults which is part of the library program. C. Liang would like to see more community input and growth as this helps to keep the children in the libraries. C. Liang thanked Ms. Cooley and staff. M. Gitschier commented on the growth and the members of the community served and the benefit to the city. M. Gitschier then thanked Ms. Cooley



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and staff and Board of Trustees for all that they do. In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Scott. So voted.

Informational Report - Frontrunner City Program Update - SICC MOU

Speakers:

Timothy Collins, Union Iron worker Local 7 out of Boston urged prioritizing union labor. Joe Hungler, Executive Director of the Lowell Boys and Girls Club excited about this amazing opportunity. Amie Thomas spoke in favor of this and supports works for the local residents. Steven Conlon organizer for Local Laborers Union 429 here to support the Frontrunner City Project and investment behind it. In City Council, **Motion** "To allow others to speak" by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Robinson. So voted. Kathy Mercado, Executive Director of Merrimack Valley Housing Partnership explained they have been promoting homeownership for 40 years and helping families with financial stability and they strongly support this MOU. Corey Belanger thanked the administration as well as councilors past and present and pledged to be biggest advocate for this. Dennis McCarthy local architect and member of the Zoning Board thanked the City Council and City Manager Golden that helped get to this agreement and grateful to see this come as so few communities get to have this and we should do all we can to keep this moving forward and help make this happen. City Manager Golden commented on how this happened back in 2024 with an article and the city took a chance. City Manager Golden explained this is about opportunity and how the City of Lowell was named Frontrunner City by the Urban Economy. City Manager Golden commented on what is happening today and what this city can be. City Manager Golden thanked his administration for the countless meeting with the Planning and Development and the Law Department as well as his own office for talking with the folks from the Frontrunner City Program few time a week to discuss big things. City Manager Golden explained that the meetings have taught our group to think bigger and ask what else we can do, they have introduced us to global network. City Manager Golden explained this is what lead us to today the MOU with a potential suitor, Solar International Core Canada Ltd. City Manager Golden noted this is the first step in looking for this funding mechanism. City Manager Golden explained having the



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opportunity to do this is something no other city in the United States is doing and he is very excited. City Manager Golden thanked all the councilors. C. Scott thanked former Mayor Rourke, City Administration and DPD. C. Scott commented she is excited for this opportunity for housing, jobs, our children being able to stay here and these are important to us. C. Robinson would also like to thank former Mayor Rourke and the entire administration. C. Robinson commented he was fortunate enough to go to Toronto to see all the things accomplished and how they adapt to fit the needs of the community. C. Robinson also commented on labor workforce, local people for local jobs, transparency for community. C. Nuon also thanked former Mayor Rourke, Councilors, and City Administration and speakers for advocating for the Frontrunner City MOU with SICC. C. Nuon commented this is a big opportunity for the city for the economic development and for the future. C. Nuon also asked the administration to provide more information about individual and or entities, investors that we have, past projects that have been done, more information on their balance sheets to be transparent to make a better-informed decision. C. Nuon said it is important to know where the funding is coming from. C. Mercier commented that this happened when the former Mayor was presented with a business card and read an article which turned into \$2 billion dollars. C. Mercier commented former Mayor Rourke is amazing and she applauded him and said this is what an investment is all about. C. Liang commented that \$2 billion dollars is a lot of money and he is happy but would like to see more information. C. Liang also commented on what the speakers were saying about poverty being decreased, local jobs, union jobs and residents staying in our city. C. Liang commented that he hopes this will help with home ownership and keeping the residents in Lowell. C. McDonough commented this could be very good and agrees a lot with his colleagues C. Liang and C. Nuon. C. McDonough said he is happy this is just informational and that he has some questions regarding the informative MOU and also listening to the speakers. C. McDonough hopes the protocols are referenced and solidified all over with concrete written provisions. C. McDonough also noted all the residents who live in the JAM area neighborhood and when forming this advisory joint task force that it is not just the city's interest represented that the neighborhood has input in the process. C. McDonough would also like to see when protocols are



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established that there is something concrete around first-time home buyer's incentives. C. Juran thanked the City Administration and former Mayor Rouke for getting us to this point. C. Juran commented she is excited about this. C. Juran commented this is a public announcement of intent and now city and advisors must plan so that we do not end with unintended consequences. C. Juran noted the city should not downplay its value because we are an amazing city. C. Juran commented that this development should be encouraged but also keeping an eye on the details to protect the city's interest. C. Juran commented in her experience as a lawyer there are steps the city needs to take with focus, vision and plan. C. Juran would urge the city to invest in experienced negotiators, sophisticated financial advisors and lawyers who done multiple deals like this who have access to international advisors so that we are aware of the risk to achieve our goals. C. Juran also noted the advisory task force should be broadly represented of all of Lowell's interest, and she recommends including 1 representative from Downtown Neighborhood group, Community Health Center, Lowell Plan, developer and a local business at minimum so that all voices are heard and she is very excited about this opportunity. C. Descoteaux commented without the initiative of former Mayor Rourke we would not be here at this point. C. Descoteaux noted he was one of the councilors who had the privilege of visiting Toronto and Geneva and is excited about this opportunity. C. Chau noted he is very excited about the Frontrunner City and the MOU \$2 Billion dollar investment to the city. C. Chau thanked the City Administration for their hard work on this to make this happen. C. Chau would also like to see other neighborhoods included such as Acre Neighborhood, Lower Highlands, Upper Highlands that all neighborhoods be included and also development growth, new investment, new development, small businesses expanding. C. Rourke thanked all the speakers, thanked everyone for the kind words. C. Rourke noted this has been an 18-month project. C. Rourke commented on the mixed-use housing, higher education, Linc Project and how they want to help get these going. C. Rourke noted it is about fairness and opportunity for everybody for everyone involved. C. Rourke commented there has been a lot of work done by the City Administration, DPD, Law Department and everyone has been working together. In City Council,



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Motion “To accept and place on file” by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Mercier.
So voted.

6. VOTES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

6.1. Vote - Accept/Expend \$41,462 FY25 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant

In City Council, Given 2nd reading. **Motion** “To Adopt” by C. Liang, seconded by C. Descoteaux. Adopted per Roll Call vote 11 yeas (C. Chau, C. Descoteaux, M. Gitschier, C. Juran, C. Liang, C. McDonough, C. Mercier, C. Nuon, C. Robinson, C. Rourke, C. Scott). So voted.

7. REPORTS (SUB/COMMITTEE, IF ANY)

7.1. Rules & Election Law SC April 14, 2026.

In City Council, **Motion** “To accept the report as a report of progress” by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Robinson. So voted. C. Juran provide report outlining discussion regarding selection of the mayor for the city. C. Juran provided the report noting attendance and discussion regarding the selection of the Mayor and Open Meeting Law Requirements for Boards and Commissions. C. Juran noted the committee did not get to the second topic and would schedule another to meeting to continue with that discussion. C. Juran noted Atty Williams provided a summary of prior discussions regarding the selection of the mayor for the consent decree discussions with the plaintiffs of the lawsuit that could be followed. C. Juran noted they discussed it would be a two-step process for a conclusion on how to select a mayor. C. Juran noted C. Scott commented on the ballot question that may need further clarification. C. Juran noted C. Scott may be open if the selection of the mayor is open to all councilors. C. Juran noted C. McDonough questioned if changes could be made Charter review process and Atty. Williams outlined the process to do so. C. Juran noted the meeting was opened up to residents and both C. Mercier and C. Robinson spoke as residents. C. Juran noted C. Robinson commented maybe the City of Worcester could be looked at, however, City of Worcester only allows at-large Councilors the opportunity to run for Mayor



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which would not satisfy district councilors to run. C. Juran noted C. Mercier commented on the over whelming response of residents to be able to select the mayor. C. Juran noted C. McDonough request the Law Department provide written review of Charter change process. C. Juran commented they also discussed the need for public involvement by way of neighborhood meetings. C. Juran noted there was a motion by C. Scott, seconded by C. McDonough “To request the City Manager have the Law Department put together materials and to attend Neighborhood Meetings to supply information regarding potential options for the selection of Mayor” and voted on.

7.2. Wire Insp. - Boston Gas - Request replacement of existing gas main on Fletcher Street, from Suffolk to Rock Streets.

In City Council, **Motion** “To adopt and accept the accompanying orders” by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

8. PETITIONS

8.1. Claim - (1) Property Damage.

In City Council, **Motion** to refer to Law Department for report and recommendation by C. Robinson, seconded by C. Juran. So voted.

8.2. Misc. - William Walsh request permission to address City Council regarding parking at the skateboard park located at Hudson and Chase Streets and Richmond Avenue.

In City Council, **Motion** to refer to City Manager for report and recommendation by C. Liang, seconded by C. McDonough. So voted. Speaker: William Walsh spoke regarding the parking situation. C. Scott thanked the speaker and asked for possible solution 6 or 8 spots dedicated to parking. C. McDonough thanked the speaker and said he agrees with C. Scott and that maybe a possible solution would be to take the signs down. C. Robinson look at the Community Preservation Study and that maybe parking at the parks be included in this.



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8.3. Misc. - Charles Akintobi / Stella Okitikan request installation of handicap parking sign at 44 D Street.

In City Council, **Motion** to refer to Transportation Engineer for report and recommendation by C. Chau, seconded by C. Juran. So voted.

8.4. Misc. - Normand Giguere request installation of a handicap paring sign at 166 Stevens Street.

In City Council, **Motion** to refer to Transportation Engineer for report and recommendation by C. Juran, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS

In City Council, C. Mercier noted the Spring Celebration of music and art in Lowell for the bicentennial called the Town and the City Festival from April 30th to May 2nd, tickets and weekend passes and more can be obtained by texting into the TownandCityFestival.com and will be happening at venues throughout downtown Lowell.

10. ADJOURNMENT

In City Council, **Motion** to Adjourn by C. Robinson, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Angela Gitschier, Assistant City Clerk