

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

1. **Roll Call - All members present - Clr. DiZoglio, Clr. Drew, Clr. MacLaren, Clr. Marsan, Clr. Pesce, Clr. Santos, Clr. Simard, Clr. Valley and Chair Soto**
2. **Acceptance of the Agenda - Motion to accept by Clr. DiZoglio, seconded by Clr. Pesce – Motion to amend by moving TO-26-13 to after item #9 – (Presentations/Projects/Department Updates) by Clr. Pesce, seconded by Clr. Valley – UPON VOTE – unanimously accepted – Motion to accept as amended by Clr. DiZoglio, seconded by Clr. Pesce – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**
3. **Pledge of Allegiance/Invocation/Moment of Silence** – Vice Chair Pesce said, “Theodore Roosevelt said, ‘Speak softly and carry a big stick. You will go far.’” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Santos who said the invocation prayer.
4. **Public Participation**
 - **Bonita LaTorre, 34 Forest Street** – “I'm here with regards to the position that is presently being temporarily held by Mr. Sheehy. And I understand that the position has recently been posted online for applicants. And I would just like to point out to all of you, as a retired Army person, 22 years, I would like to remind you all about our values. And our values require loyalty, duty, respect, selfish service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. Not only did the Army teach me this, but my parents also taught me this. And I've carried it through my life. And I hope with the VSO position, you people also keep that in mind when you're selecting the candidate. Thank you.”
 - **Vice Chair Pesce read into the record email letter from Jon Craig (attached.)**
5. **Organizational Business - None**
6. **Reading and Acceptance of Minutes from Previous Meetings** April 6, 2026 regular meeting - **Motion to approve by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**
7. **Proclamations/Correspondence:** Citation presented to Michele Desrochers-Reo from Creative Hair from the Methuen City Council (and sponsored by Clr. Ryan DiZoglio) for their over 23 years of quality hair and beauty services to the Greater Methuen Community.
8. **Consideration of Appointments:** None
9. **Presentations/Projects/Department Updates:** None
10. **TO-26-13 - An Ordinance Amending the Methuen Municipal Code, Section 4-1 (J) Nepotism (Req. of Chair Soto) - Motion to approve by Clr. MacLaren, seconded by Clr. Valley – Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Vice Chair Pesce, “I just had questions and I know I spoke with the Chair on this as well as the Assistant Solicitor

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

involving the definition of family member. I completely understand the thought behind this; I understand why we want it in place. My only concern is that I don't necessarily see nepotism where two related individuals are working within the same department so long as one of those are not in a supervising role. So, it does create some problems because I mean in some ways, who wants to take a position knowing that ultimately, they can never be promoted to a supervising role? But on the same hand, I think of let's say a father and a son going into the same line of work. If they both want to work within the city that they love and that city is Methuen, it's a shame that they can't do that. I'd love to hear --- I know that the Human Resource Director is here. I'd love to hear her perspective on this and I'd love to hear what the Chair has to say but that was really my only thought process behind it. I don't want to limit families who have chosen to go into the same career path from working in our city.” Chair Soto recognized Gina LaGreca, Human Resources Director, “Thanks. Good evening, Councilors. In that case, if there were a father and a son and one of whom got promoted, I think it may conflict with the state ethics law under Chapter 268. So, I think in that sense, we may have that issue regardless. I think one of the things that was pointed out to me today is that there are some very large departments in the city, for example, DPW where some of the departments don't even interact with the others. They're in completely different locations so one of the things that I wanted to bring tonight was considering whether we want to amend this in some way to read as ‘divisions within a department’ or also in the HHSI Department there are the building and the health divisions; Those two Departments rarely interact. So, I think if there were people that were working on equivalent levels that were not interacting, we may not necessarily want to prohibit them but that's just a suggestion.” Chair Soto said, “So, my question is you said, ‘divisions of the department’. Do you have a copy of the ordinance in front of you? Is there a specific section where you'd like that added?” HR Director LaGreca said, “Under policy under subsection B, it states department. I think it may be helpful and preserve the intent of the ordinance. If we said division of the department in that location as well as in section C and D.” Chair Soto said, “So, in in letter B, C and D?” HR Director LaGreca said, “Yes.” Chair Soto said, “Thank you. Before that amendment is made on the floor, are there any further questions or discussion?” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Pesce, “I was wondering how that would work. Like in C, no family member of persons holding the position of Department Head. Do we have division heads?” HR Director LaGreca said, “We do have division heads. I was also thinking about the superintendents who would be Superintendent of a completely different division. It's something to consider. I know that the intent is to read this broadly but there are certain positions in the city that really have little to do with one another although they're in the same larger category.” Clr. Pesce said, “Can we send this back perhaps to our Solicitors and broaden it to something like a supervising role? My issue would be and the only time I really think this gets affected, again, is if one relative has supervision over the other. If you have a direct interest --- if you're affecting them in some way. I don't know if we can default to something more broad like a supervising interest or supervising role on that other family member. I think is what the word is ‘family member’. It doesn't matter if their division head --- they might be a manager. I don't know the titles --- we have in our divisions or within our different departments

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

so long as I don't have authority to control the job function or job promotion in any way of my family member, I don't necessarily see it as an issue. Do we know how many current employees we have now that if this were implemented prior would fall under this?" HR Director LaGreca said, "I would say there's over ten relatives in the city. It's hard to quantify it because one person could be related to multiple people. When I was trying to put this together, it was kind of a mess, but as far as supervising another family member, I would say that there there's one instance that I'm aware of." Clr. Pesce said, "I don't think we should have any instances of family members supervising other family members but that's just my opinion. I'll let someone else talk." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "My main question to this is really what's driving this to coming in front of us tonight. What was the catalyst to this?" Chair Soto said, "Councilor, this was a conversation I had with HR and then the recently hired Assistant Solicitor in November of 2025. It was a conversation that I had with a constituent that expressed that the summer jobs or summer work available through the city of Methuen would particularly be given only to city employees. So, if you see this nepotism ordinance even though it's spelling out specifically the family members because what we had was very vague and was very short. This actually spells it out; it states and includes the summer work. So, it's actually the most stringent in the state right now compared to Plymouth, which was the most stringent. They did not include the summer work, but I made that change for this ordinance so that's what brought that up in November of 2025." Clr. Drew said, "OK, I'm just wondering. Obviously, nepotism hiring can be problematic, but when people are qualified for jobs, that's what you need sometimes --- that's what happens. But looking at the current way it's written... 'no appointed or elected official shall appoint or vote for appointment of any person related to him or her by blood or marriage or any clerkship office position, employment or duty when the salary, wages, pay or compensation is to be paid out of public funds.' I mean it seems pretty clear that all of that is if your family is in charge of you, you shouldn't be able to be hired. This seems like it's a very overkill ordinance, in that sense, like it's very stringent." Chair Soto said, "For clarification, Councilor, are you saying that we should be allowed to vote? Is that what you're telling me --- that I'm trying to understand. You said it's overkill because of its specificity because it's too specific? Is that what you're saying?" Clr. Drew said, "It seems that way considering I mean what we have on record now says anybody who is a family member by either blood or marriage and even further up it does clarify the family members according to it in the wordage. I'm just wondering the purpose of this." Chair Soto said, "I guess I'm confused --- are you speaking about the current ordinance in the municipal code or what I brought forth which is mimicking Plymouth? Can I have clarity on that?" Clr. Drew said, "I'm saying what we have currently seems sufficient for what we currently need. I just feel like this is a very heavy-handed item." HR Director LaGreca said, "I think we would benefit from an updated ordinance in this respect from many updated ordinances. I would never oppose that. That said, I think and if the solicitor can correct me if I'm wrong, but I think that specific section may be already in the state ethics provision. So, I don't oppose it." Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, "One of my concerns is section D. If two employees in the same department become family members after effective date of this policy, I'm going to make a joke about this. If all of a sudden,

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

say John and I were working in the same department and our parents got married. We would have to vacate because our parents made that decision. I just feel like it is because he's my stepbrother, now at that point at 37 years old and if I've been working in this department for 15 years and he has too, one of us has to vacate in 90 days. I feel like that's unfair, especially if we're both doing a good job. I just feel like that that policy to me is --- I get it. If I become a stepdad and all of a sudden, I try to get my kid a job and he's not qualified. I would say and he's already in this position. I still feel it's unfair that a kid or someone has to leave a department because someone gets a promotion or stepbrothers and sisters become about while we're working. I feel like that if event took place --- that's my concern. If that were to happen, one of the two parties would have to vacate, and I feel like they can't decide amongst themselves then human resources would have to make that call. I'm concerned about what happens if we're both 15 years in, we've never had a problem and we've always come to work on time. We've done everything that we are being asked of by the city and then all of a sudden because our parents got married now, as stepbrothers, then one of us has to leave. If not, Gina would have to decide who to fire. How is she supposed to come up with that decision and be fair for either party?" Chair Soto said, "I think HR and I will let her answer this --- I think they would just decipher to what other department that person would go to because we're talking about --- you're talking about a very specific circumstance that could potentially happen, I agree. But does it happen here regularly in Methuen?" HR Director LaGreca said, "Not since I've been here." Chair Soto said, "OK so, if and when, then your department would have to make that call, correct?" HR Director LaGreca said, "That's correct. I also think by adding 'division of the department', it might minimize these chances even further. If there were two laborers --- there are so many different divisions of DPW that you wouldn't necessarily be firing somebody. You could put somebody in an equivalent position just in a different division of the department so that might help as well." Clr. DiZoglio said, "So, what happens if those divisions don't have spaces so then does it knock off someone at the bottom that just came in and just got hired?" HR Director LaGreca said, "I think we go to the CAFO and beg for funding. I think the funding from one position could likely be moved with it to another equivalent position, so I don't foresee funding as an issue in that regard." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Marsan, "Thank you. So, I like the part about a foreman, or a supervisor is not able to oversee a family member --- that's not a bad thing. But as far as two siblings working in the same department, that happened to be one's in the tree department and one's working down at the treatment plant. So, if we can word it like the HR Director was saying and somehow within division so that Councilor DiZoglio's scenario doesn't really come up and as long as they're not supervising each other. If we have two siblings that are working side by side, that's not the end of the world. One's not telling the other one what they have to do. It's not their supervisor so maybe we could clarify D and if we put in that division clause where it should be and how it should be worded so that it broadens it more so that they're not in a supervisory role, that's all I'm looking for. Thank you." Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard, "Thank you Madam Chair. You'll hear no resistance from me when it comes to adopting a good government measure like this. But I just wanted to share some feedback that I had received from the DPW Director as well. It's just

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

conversations with Superintendent Angelo historically or at least in recent years ---- they've hired every kid who has applied for these summer opportunities regardless of who they've been related to simply because there haven't been this huge amount of people applying for these opportunities which speaks to something new that's happening. School Committee member Alejandro Baez is spearheading this effort to have for the first time a high school job fair which will really help us get the word out about these opportunities. That'll be held in the next few weeks. Anyway, that's going to go a long way in terms of advertising these opportunities and getting the word out there and so certainly the more applicants that we have certainly the healthier the process will be, probably speaking, so I wanted to share that on behalf of DPW. Thank you." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Simard, "Sure, I agree with this somewhat but there was some wording that I'd want to change. I'd be in favor of a table so we could tweak it well like our Councilor and the Solicitor says. We can massage it, but I don't like the idea of shaming employees that are hard-working that have been here for years and who maybe followed in their mother or father's footsteps and want to work for the city of Methuen. And then we're going to shame them even more saying all right well I'm not in violation because I was hired before, but I got to declare that now so now I'm on the hit list. It's just I think we have got to change the wording and as far as voting on something if I think there's a there's a conflict, I'm calling State Ethics and I'm going to get confirmation. I'm going to declare it on the floor and I'm not going to vote if they say I can't vote but I think we've got to tweak it on a few things where we're not as, I think, abrasive to some of our employees so that's how I feel. I'd be a no vote if we were to vote now." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Pesce, "I am in agreement with a lot of what was said, obviously and I would agree that this needs to be tweaked a little so I will make a motion to table." **Motion to TABLE by Clr. Pesce, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio - UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

11. Chair Soto made a public statement, "I wanted to respectfully, as the Chair of this body, I wanted to let you know that the Council should not be viewed through the lens of which votes are favorable and which votes are not. We were each elected to show up, ask questions, deliberate and exercise our legislative authority. That's exactly what we're here to do. We are the checks and balances that are part of this process, and our votes are not personal. I don't want this body to be discouraged when an outcome is not what you expect it to be. And, as Council Chair, I just want to protect the integrity of the body. With that being said, I don't want there to be any sense of favoritism out there. And I do not believe that the Council should be ridiculed for doing the work that it was elected to do. My hope is that we can move forward with mutual respect from our side and your side, accepting our roles without creating any further division of this body ---- that the public may see as a disagreement. We may not always vote the same, but we should always be able to govern in a way that respects the process and respects the people that we all serve. I would appreciate moving forward with your cooperation when something is not voted in your expected manner. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. The floor is yours."

12. Mayor's Report – Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard, “Thank you, Madam Chair for the statement. I appreciate that sentiment and with all due respect I hope that those sentiments are echoed back my way as well by members of the Council so with that, I'll dive right into the Mayor's Report:

MEVA Crosstown Bus Route Update: Mayor Beauregard said, “MEVA recently launched a new bus route that significantly expands public transportation access across our city. Starting on Monday April 6th, the new Route 25 introduced a cross-town bus service for the first time in recent memory. Operating Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 6:20 PM, buses run approximately every 80 minutes between the Loop in Merrimack Plaza along Haverhill Street, Mystic Street and Lowell Street. The route also serves major shopping areas and community destinations along the corridor improving mobility for residents, seniors and workers across the city. As part of the city's ongoing partnership with MEVA bus service within Methuen will remain fare-free helping remove transportation barriers for residents and making it easier to access city services, businesses and community resources. You can find out information about the route schedules and other details at mevatransit.com.”

Leaf/Yard Waste Pickup Update: Mayor Beauregard said, “DPW began seasonal leaf, yard waste, and brush collection on Monday, April 6th, and collection will run through November. Just as a reminder to residents, leaves and yard waste must be placed in paper bags only—no plastic bags. You can also use barrels, but they must be clearly marked as yard waste. For brush and branches, those cannot be bagged. They need to be tied in bundles—no more than four feet in length and four inches in diameter. Leaves and yard waste are picked up on your regular recycling day, so that's the day to have everything out and ready. And for residents who prefer to handle it directly, you can also bring leaves, yard waste, and brush to our Transfer Station.”

Autism Awareness Event: Mayor Beauregard said, “Also on April 6th, we held an event here at City Hall to recognize Autism Awareness Month. There was a speaking program and a flag-raising ceremony – I'd like to thank Wanda Santos and the Commission on Disability for putting the event together. It helped reinforce that Methuen is a community that values inclusion, understanding, and support for individuals and families navigating autism – and we're proud to continue building a city where everyone feels seen and supported.”

VSO Update: Mayor Beauregard said, “I want to take a moment to highlight the outstanding work happening in our Veterans Services Office. The office is open, active, and making a real difference for the men and women who have served our country. Acting VSO Tim Sheehy – a Marine veteran of Operation Desert Storm – has stepped up in a big way. He's not just keeping the office running; he's going above and beyond, including personally helping bring veterans to grocery stores to make sure they have what they need. He and Jessica Kalil have been doing a great job, and we're grateful for Tim's leadership during this transition. At the same time, we're moving forward with the search for a permanent VSO. The job posting is now live, and I've been in touch with local veterans about participating in the search committee, which will be led by Councilor Simard and former Secretary Francisco Urena of the Massachusetts Department of Veterans Services.”

Grant Writing Update: Mayor Beauregard said, “We have an item on tonight's agenda that would transfer the funds to cover the grant writing service – it'll be funded out of professional services line item in the FY'2027 Budget so having the funding source firmed

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

up will allow us to move forward with finalizing our contract with the vendor. The goal we outlined in the RFP specs is to obtain roughly \$3 to 4 million in new grant funding above and beyond what we already receive through entitlement grants and the like.”

Paving List: Mayor Beauregard said, “Regarding the 2026 paving season, we have received 2 bids for the full depth reclamation work. We anticipate they will be ready for review at the May 4th City Council meeting. Once the contracts are executed, DPW will coordinate with the contractor to establish a construction schedule. Work is set to begin later in May. We are also planning to proceed with the other side of the paving equation --- milling and paving; however, that work will require a separate bid process. DPW intentionally staggers these types of paving work for a couple of reasons. Full depth reclamation is more involved from an operational standpoint, and sequencing it first allows us sufficient time to address any field conditions or unforeseen issues. In addition, staggering the work helps us better manage police detail availability, which can be challenging if all roadway operations occur simultaneously.”

FY’2027 Budget: Mayor Beauregard said, “We’re also of course engaging in preparations for the FY’2027 budget which similar to most other municipalities in the Commonwealth. All of them, from what I’ve heard, they’re dealing with similar types of budget crunch and so we’ve been engaging in conversations with Department Heads but also looking for some creative ways to generate new revenue, savings and the like. But the long and short of it is that we are in a place now we’re over the course of time, government at the local level has grown in both size and spending so at this point we’re dealing with a decrease in Federal aid. State aid isn’t coming in at a fast enough clip for us to keep up and we’re at a point where we’re needing to make some difficult decisions. And so, we’re having those conversations now and ultimately on the 8th of May we’ll be presenting the City Council with a budget, and we’ll have to balance that budget, of course, in Methuen, a place that would never in a million years and rightfully so support an override. We have to do without that type of tool in our toolkit so we’re doing all we can to tighten our belt and make sure that we are able to leverage our resources in a way that allows us to have a properly balanced budget without needing to go to the taxpayers for more money. So, that’s long and short of my report for tonight. We will answer some more questions during Requests of Councilors but that’s my report for now. Thank you.”

Upcoming Events

- Armenian flag raising – genocide – Friday, 4/24 at 12 pm
- Earth Day cleanup – Saturday, 4/25 at 10 am
- Girls softball opening day – Saturday, 4/25
- Ribbon cutting, newly renovated Xfinity store at 70 Pleasant Valley Street, Monday, 4/27 at 11 am
- MHS/youth center job fair, 4/30 at 2 pm

13. CAFO Report – Chair Soto said, “Madam CAFO, you’re next on the agenda and I believe you only have to review the projections for the past and future funding sources. I see an email you just sent right before we sat here. If you don’t mind, I’ll give the floor to Clr. Pesce because this is her item and then we can go from there.” Clr. Pesce said, “I was just looking for this. I didn’t expect it to turn into such a big ask. I apologize. I just I don’t know if you want to go over the numbers.” CAFO Duprey said, “I was going to go over it now. I only gave it to you. I haven’t given it to everyone, so I was just going to go over it now. So,

first of all, I want to appreciate your patience with me on this and not quite understanding exactly what we were looking for. The last meeting provided the clarity that I'm hoping is going to get you what you were looking for so that was helpful. So, if every current employee in the city, not including the schools, but on the city side, were to take four weeks off as allowed by the Executive Order, it would equate to a cash value of about \$2.5 million. This isn't a cash benefit necessarily. What we were looking at is to try and see if it were to be a cash value, what would it be --- that's assuming every single current employee were to take those four weeks, that's what it would be --- it would be about \$2.5 million. For this past experience, we have documented 13 employees that have formally taken parental leave since 2023 in the last two and a half years. So, I just wanted to give you that scope of the 13 that we have documented, that would be about \$65,000 --- again, cash value for those four weeks if they had all taken the four weeks. I'm just kind of showing you that range similar to how we've done it in the past. I do want to note that right now, part of this benefit is that it needs to be bargained with the unions and so a MOU has been provided to each of the unions as far as getting into an agreement about this parental leave --- none of which has been currently signed. At this point, if they haven't been signed, they are not subject to the benefit. As of right now, the only people who are eligible for this benefit are unaffiliated and Department Heads." Clr. Pesce said, "Thank you and I just want to say two things irked me about this. While I think it's a wonderful benefit for our employees and I do not disagree with it in any way shape or form. I'm so happy that it's being offered to them. At present, the two things that irked me about it was one that we didn't have the financial impact because to me it was very reminiscent of again, when I was putting forward the insurance which again we had an astronomical number but in all actuality it would have been very minimal but that was never presented. So, that's what we're getting here. There's the astronomical potential cost of \$2.5 million but in actuality we're hoping that it's going to be much less than that. And then, the second thing was I just wish this had been done through collective bargaining. I think it would have been a great tool for negotiation and it's the Mayor's decision, obviously, and again I understand why we are offering this benefit. I'm in complete agreement with that, just the way to have implemented it, I felt should have been through collective bargaining but that was it. Thank you for this and this is exactly what I was looking for."

14. Requests of Councilors

- **Echo Lane Sewer Connection – Update on the proposed sewer connection for Echo Lane, including whether there is a tentative schedule for when the project will begin, so residents can be kept informed (Request of Clr. Valley to the Mayor and DPW Director)** – Mayor Beauregard didn't have an update on this item. He will follow-up with the DPW regarding this project.
- **What is the status on the plan to rebuild or replace Police/Fire/DPW buildings? (Request of Clr. Santos)** – Mayor Beauregard said, "Clr. Santos has a request regarding the status of the plan for Police, Fire and DPW facilities. At the next meeting, we have the contract for Weston and Sampson. It would be an expansion of their scope. We already have been working with them regarding the DPW building and so Director Bower has been able to secure for us draft of an agreement so we'll have that hopefully on the agenda on May 4th for your consideration and that would

allow us to expand our scope officially with Weston and Sampson. They've been helpful in terms of providing some guidance but the real meat of the services they offer can be provided through that expanded scope. That'll be the next step for the Council to consider in that regard which is great."

- **Request for a report done by the State on the Oakland Avenue Bridge (Req. of Clr. Santos)** – Mayor Beauregard said, "There's also a request for a report done by the State regarding the Oakland Avenue bridge. As far as I am aware, I did some digging and I haven't seen an exact report from the State regarding the bridge. However, it is listed as a project that they have on their list for replacement. The challenge, of course, is an official timetable for that. The state is dealing with a lot of other significant infrastructure issues on top of this and so you know there's no guarantee about the time frame for full replacement. But nevertheless, regarding the issue that we have there now with the bridge deck, we have cost estimates for the repair. We're looking at roughly \$60,000 for the bridge deck repair. I want to acknowledge Senator Payano and State Representative Estella Reyes for putting forth an effort to get the funding needed for the repair project. Once that is complete, I will be able to ensure that it's safe and reopen it. I don't want to keep it closed pending the full replacement given the fact that that could be an extended period of time. As long as we're able to fix the issues and have it certified that it's safe for passage, we'll have that reopened and again I want to thank the State Legislative delegation for their help."
- **Status of New Trash Barrel order delivery and distribution (Req. of Clr. Drew)** – Mayor Beauregard said, "Regarding the barrel issue: I know Councilor Drew had this on the agenda. Anything that was new, in terms of new requests, we've been fulfilling those without issue."
- **Update on construction project on Lowell and East Capitol Street when it will resume and expected completion. (Req. of Clr. Marsan)** – Mayor Beauregard said, "Councilor Marsan was looking for an update regarding Lowell Street and East Capitol Street and that project work is underway again now and the expected timeline for completion is we're looking at six weeks. That's something that we will follow up on and hold the contractors to so we can ensure that's finished in short order."
- **Update where we are with collection of fees for second and third trash bins residents purchase. Specifically, on year 2,3,4, and how many are out there? (Req. of Clr. Marsan)** – Mayor Beauregard said, "Regarding the fees, the plan for the fees is to collect them this spring for this current year but as part of our contract extension with Harvey, this is one of the aspects of the program that we're going to be passing off to Harvey because it is something, from the start, they should have been dealing with --- the payment collection process etc. and anything regarding the carts. That's built into the agreement that we recently locked in with them for the final extension year for that contract so that's something we're taking care of for the final time this spring, but Harvey will pick that up." Clr. Marsan said, "Just a question on that. So, the extra barrels that are out there right now. I know I have one so the city's the one that contacts me. I pay for it online so Harvey's going to take that all over now so they're going to be able to find all the ones that we have out there?" Mayor Beauregard said, "Yes, so we have that in our records through OpenGov."

Thankfully, it's automated through that mechanism so we have a sense of what's out there, so we'll be able to follow up on that but also offload that to Harvey with that system." Clr. Drew said, "So to Councilor Marsan's point, they'll accept the payments? They'll bring all that in on their own? Didn't we have a position for that person to be checking the barrels and making sure that everything was captured across the city? That was one of the reasons that we brought that position in?" Mayor Beauregard said, "Yes, so the goal with that position is to accomplish a couple of different things. First of all, to ensure that the ordinance is followed but also to hold the vendor accountable to ensure that the vendor is living up to their end of the bargain. But beyond that, there's this issue where we haven't had anybody out there consistently in the field to, in essence, have the city's eyes on the program from soup to nuts including the barrel issue. So, this is part of what the sanitation coordinator will be helping us address in terms of keeping everything on the level in terms of the cart system, but when it comes to collecting the payments and dealing with the back end of things, that's something that we want Harvey to address. That's a function that isn't appropriate in the context of what DPW is trying to do." Clr. Drew said, "And we're going to have some sort of oversight within our own office to be able to track the amount of money that's coming in so that it doesn't disappear anything like that?" CAFO Duprey said, "So, the idea would be that they will handle the billing and we will collect it. The remittance of those bills will come here so they won't be collecting it. They will be sending out the bills, and they'll be tracking it and staying on top of it to make sure that people do pay their bills, but we will actually collect the funds."

- **Discussion and possible action regarding lack of restroom access at youth baseball fields, including delayed water service, public health and sanitary concerns, and request for administrative response. (Req. of Chair Soto)** – Mayor Beauregard said, "Regarding another request on the agenda: this is relative to the lack of restroom access at the youth baseball fields including delayed water service, public health and sanitary concerns and requests for an administration response." Chair Soto said, "Mr. Mayor we could discuss that later in the meeting. The Parks and Recreation Committee actually put a resolution on the floor this evening so I think we could talk about that then unless you want to elaborate on your response." Mayor Beauregard said, "Yes. That would be fine. Happy to talk about it more when we get to it but just for some context, this involves some issues that took place at the ball fields back in March. And in this context, Superintendent Angelo had communicated with the league officials regarding the lack of bathroom access specifically in the month of March. Of course, we live in New England and with overnight freezing temperatures leading into March, the water for the bathrooms couldn't be turned on at that time due to the freezing temperatures and the likelihood of issues with pipes. But at this point, it's on and there's no issue but the crux of this circles back to time in March when I think there were some misplaced communication perhaps among the officials where the city had been letting them know that the water's not on due to the temperature still being too cold and I think there was a desire for the kids to have access to the fields anyway so that was from what I ascertain the issue there."

- **Request to the Mayor to provide an update on the proposed closure of the maternity and neonatal services at the former Holy Family Hospital, including any actions the City has taken or plans to take to address the impact on residents and access to care (Request of Clr. Valley)** – Mayor Beauregard said, “Something else on the agenda this is a request of Councilor Valley’s request. So, from what I understand from my own conversations with Diana Richardson --- she’s the CEO of Merrimack Health --- the intent is to convert that space at the former Holy Family site from a maternity type of section to med-surg and the intent was to do some reshuffling in terms of personnel and have maternity services be focused in Lawrence at the old Lawrence General Campus. But, from the sounds of it, their plan is to repurpose that ward for med-surg operations. In terms of anything the city can do, we’re limited, in terms of our ability to provide guidance. Anytime I’ve had conversations with representatives from the hospital, it’s such a vital resource in terms of public health for our community. So, looking back at the Steward debacle, for me, I look at the hospital with gratitude for Lawrence General in their work in terms of saving it and keeping it open. So, I understand that there are some consolidation needs. They have just to ensure that they’re able to remain financially viable so these are the types of decisions they’re having to make in order to maximize the resources they have and of course continue to do their best to provide patient care to residents in Methuen but long and short of it is that it sounds like it’s a more of a repurposing of that ward or other medical purposes. That’s the latest that I have there.” Clr. Valley said, “Thank you, Mr. Mayor I know it is a nonprofit and there’s not much that the city can do but I received multiple phone calls from constituents concerns about the 85 jobs that are being affected. I know the city cannot do anything about it but some of them are Methuen residents.” Mayor Beauregard said, “Yes. They are one of our largest employers and something that I will share. If you think about it, there’s been a maternity ward on the premises at that hospital site going back many decades and so one of the saddest aspects of this is that this is going to be the first time since I don’t know --- the 1950s perhaps or whenever the hospital opened --- that people aren’t going to be born in Methuen. That is a sad development but ultimately, I know their goal is to ensure the financial viability of the hospital broadly speaking. They’re doing the best they can, and I understand that but at the same time I do appreciate the impact on people who work at the hospital and live in Methuen who rely on the hospital for those services. We’ll do all we can to stay in touch with leadership and ensure that they’re able to keep those doors open in Methuen.”
- **Parks Audit RFP status update (Req. Clr. Drew) - Buildings Audit RFP Status update (Req. Clr. Drew)** - Regarding the RFPs for the parks and facilities this was a request of Councilor Drew. We recently had a very productive meeting with representatives from a company called Trane spelled T-R-A-N-E. They’re out of Wilmington. They shared information about conducting a comprehensive facilities audit through something that’s called the energy management services framework which is provided to municipalities through a component of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 25A. It’s an opportunity that could give us a structured state compliant path to help benchmark our buildings and conduct a detailed assessment and identify some priority upgrades across both city and school facilities. The goal of program

like that is to focus on identifying improvements that can be financed particularly through energy savings so this is something that I think is worthwhile to explore further especially since the groundwork is already largely laid at the state level and this would allow us to engage in that more detailed analysis regarding our facilities.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, “Thank you Madam Chair. Mr. Mayor, you spoke about the audits. You briefly went into the building one. We talked about TRANE --- I will work with you on that to review those proposals as they come through. You didn't mention anything on the parks RFP --- where that stands. When we discussed this back in mid-February, we discussed trying to get it out in April. You said you'd try to have it out at the start of April. I know we're into a hectic budget season. I just want to know if there is movement on this. Has it been moved at all?” Mayor Beauregard said, “So, the timetable that I initially shared was perhaps ambitious given where we're at in terms of the budget preparation process and the challenges there. But this is something that we're continuing to discuss during these meetings --- certainly keeping it top of mind for us. We're going to get to a point where my goal is as soon as humanly possible, having a contract on the agenda as a result of that process so I would encourage you and certainly any of the Councilors who are interested. Let's keep it on the agenda. Let's keep it in the discussion so that even as other issues come our way and we're forced to deal with putting out the various fires that may arise on a day-to-day basis, this is something that we're continue to be reminded of so nothing yet, but we'll be pushing on.” Clr. Drew said, “My only concern and as I expressed to you, is when we get into this grant season, which is going to start, and we want to make sure that we're not left out in the cold again and try to get some grants taken care of for our parks across our city.”

- **Permanent VSO position posting – Req. of Clr. Drew and Clr. Simard** – Chair Soto recognized Clr. Simard, “Thank you, Madam Chair. Two things: Mr. Jensen sent an email to me as the Chair of the Veterans Committee, and I checked with the Chair. We thought it'd be more appropriate to read it during the Mayor's talk because it relates to the VSO position so with that said, I'll read the letter from Paul Jensen, our former VSO. ‘My name is Paul Jensen. I live at 17 Fairways Lane in Methuen. I am the former Veteran Service Officer for the city of Methuen. I am here not to represent myself but to represent the more than 3,000 veterans and veteran family members in our community. Since my departure, the city has not had a full-time veteran service officer and there's been no apparent effort to post the position or begin the process of selecting a new candidate. In the meantime, veterans in the city of Methuen have suffered from the lack of full-time representation. My concern is that the longer this delay continues, the greater the risk that this role becomes a political appointment. That would be a mistake. This position should be filled with an open and transparent process guided by a committee composed primarily of veterans to ensure the selection of someone who truly understands and cares about the needs of fellow veterans. While the position may formally report to the Mayor, the Veteran Service Officer serves a unique and essential role. One that ultimately answers to the veterans of our community. Mayors come and go but the needs of our veterans and the debt we owe them remain constant. I urge the Council to immediately post the position and begin the process of identifying, selecting and training a qualified candidate for this critical role. Our veterans deserve nothing less.

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

Thank you for your attention. Respectfully, Paul Jensen.' So, with that said, the position was posted today. Francisco Urena has offered his assistance, not only with the process but also helping the Mayor select the right candidate. I just wanted to read that. Thank you for that." Chair Soto said, "Excellent news." Clr. Simard said, "And I have one more thing if I could. During the Mayor's thing, I just, for the record, I just wanted to, at the beginning of the Mayor's Report, the Chair gave you a stern warning. For the record, she does not speak for me. I think the bar has been set very high with social media posts not only from this Council but also the Mayor's office. Sometimes we're gonna agree, sometimes we're not gonna agree. But if you want to post, I have no problem with that. I know it's gonna be in good taste, but she does not speak for me and like I said, you know, if we're gonna post, you should be able to post, it is what it is. I don't post but, you know, have at it. Thank you."

- Request to Chief McNamara – Discussion on removing the 2-hour parking in the downtown area and feasibility of extended parking
- To the City Council - Discussion to revitalize the Lowell Street Bridge (Clr. DiZoglio)
- **Clr. Pesce added Pickleball Concerns to this list** – Chair Soto recognized Clr. Pesce, "Thanks I wanted to add for our next meeting, Mr. Mayor. I think the whole Council has probably received emails about pickleball. I think it was exactly a year ago that this was brought before the Council. I know the Administration and Superintendent Angelo. I think everybody worked to try to mitigate the situation. Unfortunately, it looks as though it had problems that haven't really been alleviated, and according to what I received, I think we all did. Even the police had to get involved with it at some point because of an altercation involving the pickle courts in the neighborhood. So, I just want to put this on. I'm assuming that some discussions --- I know Superintendent Angelo has already reached out. I'm sure you're working on something so if we can just put it on Request of Councilors so that we can get an update going forward." Mayor Beauregard said, "Yes, that would be fine. And something to share with you regarding that. You'll probably recall last year, we made an effort to install some soundproofing mechanisms at the pickleball courts and from the sounds of it, as you referenced. In some of these communications we're hearing from neighbors who don't feel the sound barriers were tremendously effective in their mind. And one of the neighbors had reached out and shared some stories about how municipalities have been reversing course altogether and removing them. I don't think that that would be something that anyone would want to see in Methuen unless perhaps you're one of the neighbors there. But, nevertheless, that's something that we need to engage with the residents on and try to see what else we might be able to do to help. It's something that sounds like it's an issue in any municipality that has that type of recreational facility. So, I think one of the things that we always like doing is taking a look at what other municipalities are doing that works in terms of mitigating some of these issues. Perhaps it'd be smart for us to take a look at some of the municipalities where this has been a controversial topic and see if there's any ideas out there that have been implemented successfully so that's something that we can take a look at." Clr. Pesce said, "Thank you."

15. Public Service:

Grants: None

Licenses: None

Contract(s):

C-26-82 - Rise Group, 195 Frances Avenue, Cranston, MA 02910 for Marsh Boiler Replacement Purchase a Riello Array High Efficiency Condensing Boiler in the Amount of \$796,689.00 (This includes a t Year Extended Warranty) - **Motion to approve by Clr.**

Pesce, seconded by Clr. Santos – Discussion – Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard, “Thank you, Madam Chair. This involves, of course, the Marsh School boiler which was a subject of some controversy last year regarding the procurement process. I had a conversation with Ian Gosselin the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations and mentioned that I'd be willing and happy to speak to this tonight. So, there were some concerns last year regarding things like the warranty. There were concerns about the procurement process and, in this case, this has been done properly through the city system. We have a more expensive warranty built into it and this will help us get after a capital project in our schools that is absolutely of critical importance. It's well past its useful life and it is something that we had hoped to have fixed last year but going forward this will allow us to get after the project and have a solution for this issue. Thank you.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Valley, “Thank you, Madam Chair. Through you to the Mayor, I didn't see anything in the contract about the disposal of the current boiler. Who will be responsible for that, the city or the contractor?” Mayor Beauregard said, “Well, speaking from remembering how this was dealt with last year, and I have to follow up on that to get a more definitive answer about the mechanics of how that would be dealt with by the vendor. From what I can recall, the last time this project had initially started, the vendor had been taking care of dismantling or beginning to dismantle the boiler and so my understanding is that it's something that the vendor would handle. We wouldn't have to worry about that but if you would like, I can confirm that. Just to be safe, that's my recollection.” Clr. Valley said, “Thank you.”- **UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

C-26-83 MB Tractor & Equipment Route 125, PO Box 487, Plaistow, NH for (2) Two Zero turn Mowers with hopper baggers and FRT suitcase weight 25lbs, for the DPW – Environmental Division in the Amount of \$48,888.60 - – **Motion to approve by Clr.**

Valley, seconded by Clr. Santos - Discussion – Chair Soto recognized Clr. Santos, “I have several questions about this. Just for informational purposes, what is going to happen to the current machine that we cut the grass with? What's going to happen to the current lawn mower?” Mayor Beauregard said, “In terms of the Environmental Management Division of DPW, they're working with very old equipment in a lot of cases and so this will help to upgrade what they already have. The Superintendent is Mark Jordan. This will allow for the replacement of some of that older equipment and it's funded through the CIP and so the funding is available through that mechanism. And then, in terms of procurement, I know that's come up in the past, it's funded through a state contract. This is simply an upgrade of some of the equipment that they need but they need newer versions of it.” Clr. Santos said, “So, the old equipment, does it get sold?” CAFO Duprey said, “If we have equipment similar to perhaps an old mower that we're not no longer using, then we will bring it to Council. Usually, we do it about once a year. We'll bring a list of surplus equipment to Council consisting of vehicles or mowers or equipment or things of that nature that we no

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

longer need, and we want to surplus and usually we auction it off. Once the Council agrees to surplus the list, and it would be a detailed list. we then work with an auctioneer to then auction that off and then we get the revenue for anything that's sold." Clr. Santos said, "Another question I have is who's responsible to make sure that we are getting the best deals when we buy this kind of equipment?" Mayor Beauregard said, "So, like any purchase, in the context of government, it's governed by state procurement statutes. This came up in a different setting recently where a resident reached out with some very good questions about, for instance, the purchase of some IT equipment. And there was the question about if you look at say what you can spend in the private market for some of these products, it's a lot more competitive than what we're seeing say on a Council agenda when it comes to some of these products. And so, with government, when we have to go out for services or products, we go out to these state contracts. We must pull a certain number of quotes in some cases and so that way we default to whatever the best or lowest expense would be for us to take advantage of in that process. It's really governed through that structure. It's not really a matter of going out and shopping on our own say, going to Lowe's or Home Depot or something like that. We do it through say, for instance, this is through a CommBuys state contract and so those are already built by the state and it's simply a matter of us going to the state contract to identify the best options to meet our needs." Clr. Santos said, "So not only that we are paying a fair amount but also we are getting the best quality." Mayor Beauregard agreed. - **UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

C-26-84 Woodard and Curran, 40 Shattuck Road, Suite 110, Andover, MA 01810 for Engineering services for Old Ferry Road Culvert Replacement – DPW Project in the Amount of \$144,000.00 - **Motion to approve by Clr. Valley, seconded by Clr. Santos – Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, "Through you Madam Chair to the Mayor. Was this done with an engineering report or is this a different location of Old Ferry Road with former Mayor Perry?" Mayor Beauregard said, "So, this is funded through the CIP. This is for the engineering services for that project and so this will be the basis on which further work is done." Clr. DiZoglio said, "So quick question: What Mayor Perry did --- what was that for? Because I heard that there was the same project. There was supposedly money that was promised. I think I heard rumors about this --- about the promise for renovations of that and I was just curious about --- is this the same project?" Mayor Beauregard said, "Well, this ties into funding that had been secured from Congresswoman Trahan. We have an opportunity to access that federal funding for that project. This had been lined up a while back, I think during Mayor Perry's term, and so this will allow us to finally get after that, but this is only for engineering." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "So, after this engineering studies done when do we expect to see something done with the construction point?" Mayor Beauregard said, "So, I don't have that specific timetable off the top of my head, but I am happy to follow up with Director Bower and the folks from Woodard and Curran who will be working with us on this but also we've worked with representatives from McClure. The Deputy DPW Director is here and could perhaps elaborate further." Deputy Director Garcia said, "Thank you. Good evening, Council. So, this contract is going to help us finalize the design. They have already started doing a preliminary design. They were getting all the data from the watershed that the area creates and working with McClure. They're the consultants helping us design the roadway on Old Ferry Road to make it a little bit wider and safer because it's been an issue for the businesses

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

that are there. They're going to utilize some of the information from McClure and finalize the design for the proposed culvert. Now, in terms of when it's going to get constructed. As soon as we have the design, we'll have an estimate of how much is going to be to do the replacement of that existing culvert and then we're hopeful that by next year, we'll get the construction going for that culvert." Clr. Drew said, "So, you're anticipating a design by the end of the year. You should have all your documents and designs to be able to come back with a cost of what this will be to try to get it done." Deputy Director Garcia said, "Absolutely. I think by the end of the construction season, we'll have a construction estimate and a design and then from there. We'll go out to bid and then by then, it's best to wait for next year construction season to get that going for that culvert." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Marsan, "Thank you. There's been a lot of discussion about whether this road had been accepted or not accepted on the Unaccepted Ways Committee. Our Solicitor looked at this. We've been back and forth, and it's been determined that it is accepted; it was done as a county road back in either 1948 or 1966 so all that documentation is in hand. The Clerk has certified it. Just to put that to bed that this is an accepted way so we can spend our money on it." Chair Soto said, "So it's accepted in our eyes, but it is not accepted in the State. That's the email I received today from DPW, so just for clarification." Deputy Director Garcia said, "I think that they don't have the documentation. We just have to let them know that it is accepted and then what they'll do is that they will update their GIS system online. And then we'll see that." Chair Soto said, "But I also want to point out that this is something we have to do with a long list of streets that we have. And we're picking and choosing. I don't understand why and I'm agreement that this is a safety issue over there on Old Ferry Road but as we do for some, we must do for all. I want to just publicly state that we got to work on that unaccepted road list. Thank you." Solicitor O'Neill said, "So, I can address that. We're not randomly picking and choosing. It has to do with whether the road pre-existed at a certain date and we are going to go through and I know the Unaccepted Ways Committee knows this --- That we are trying to go through that list to see if there is sufficient evidence for us to do the same thing that we've done with Old Ferry Road in terms of documentation to support that it was accepted. So, we will go through that list and to the extent that we can establish that by maps or other things. Because these are roads where no resolution or town meeting vote exists, if the roads existed and were public before a certain date, then they can be considered accepted. We have to go through them individually." Chair Soto said, "I appreciate that Mr. Solicitor. My point is I sent this question over to the CAFO earlier --- was it FY'2024 that this was allocated for? So, to my point with a street that's not accepted at the state level, we've allocated \$144,000 for the engineering of that. We haven't done that for others, so my point is let's get to it and let's do it for the others as well." Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, "So now that we're on this, with Old Ferry Road being accepted but not at the state, what do we need to do to get it so the state accepts it, so we could receive funding for it and then that could help with improving the road. What do we have to do to do that?" Deputy Director Garcia said, "So, I will contact District 4 engineers. I'll let them know that there's a discrepancy on their end when it comes to this portion of street and let them know that it is accepted. Then, I will just provide them all the documents that we have with some prior maps, all the language that we have, all the research that the Solicitor did and provide that to them and what they'll do is they'll just record that on their end and then they will update their GIS." Clr. DiZoglio said, "Once we do that, then could we receive funding that could possibly help with this project

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

down the road?" Deputy Director Garcia said, "Potentially yes, we could use Chapter 90 for this and other locations. There are other streets and roads that say are accepted and we could do this type of work which in this case we were lucky with this portion where we have well the solicitor did a lot of the legwork but either way if we had this information we could just let them at MassDOT know hey this is what we have and then okay and then we'll just update their data." Solicitor O'Neill said, "So, this was, just so you know, this was submitted to MassDOT --- Mike Welsh submitted this quite some time ago and he's still waiting for confirmation on several of the roads. He submitted evidence --- some were resolutions that were found --- some more evidence like this that was confirmed by the Solicitor's office. So, there are a number of outstanding, but MassDOT is aware of this one and they generally will rely on our opinions for that purpose for Chapter 90. It doesn't mean we'll get more Chapter 90 funding, but it means that we, to the extent it's available, can use it for those purposes. Sometimes it results in more funding." Deputy Director Garcia said, "I do want to say for the record. When I was at the Essex Highway County Association, there was a representative from MassDOT and he let us know hey if there's any discrepancies well you know what we have in terms of information and what the cities and towns have in terms of what the status are for the roads, please let us know so they're relying on us to let them know hey this is good or this doesn't look good." Chair Soto said, "Okay, so since we're talking about that they're unaccepted ways, Mr. Michael Welch, since he was just referenced, his contract is out. Is that going to be renewed, Mr. Mayor, for that work to continue?" Mayor Beauregard said, "So I had spoken with Mr. Welch in recent months about working with us on that broader project to have the website the map where you can actually see Unaccepted Ways, the DPW and the GIS specialist to have that up and running. As far as I'm aware, his work is largely finished just in the context of his contractual relationship with the city but if there's a desire from the Council to take a look at further utilization of the services, we'd have to discuss that with them." - **UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

C-26-85 W. B. Mason, 274 Cummings Park, Woburn, MA 01801 for Community Development Office Redo Keeping with same design as other offices in the Amount of \$73,454.63 - **Motion to approve by Clr. DiZoglio, seconded by Clr. Simard – Discussion –** Chair Soto recognized Clr. Valley, "Thank you Madam Chair. Through you to the CAFO. I just have a question regarding the CIP. Can you clarify if the unspent funds in the CIP roll over until the next fiscal year?" CAFO Duprey said, "Once the amount has been approved by Council and bonded similar to the FY'2024 CIP, then that money is set aside for that purpose, and it will roll until we use it or the Council chooses to repurpose it." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "I don't want to sound like a stickler but we're looking at a \$74,000 refresh of an office in what looks to be a very difficult budget season. I feel like it's a little not proper in my mind that we should be spending \$75,000 to move desks but that's just my opinion." CAFO Duprey said, "I just want to note these are not budgeted funds. These are not additional funds. These are funds that were already put aside set aside and bonded and so these are funds that we already have for this purpose. And if we don't use them, they will sit there and they could actually count against us at a certain point, but these are not budgeted funds." Clr. Drew said, "So, when you say they're budgeted, I understand that we budgeted for them in the capital expenditures. But, like you just said, if they don't get used you can repurpose them into other items, yes?" CAFO Duprey said, "You can repurpose

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

them through resolution, yes, but those have already been bonded which means we're paying debt on that whether we use it or not." Clr. Drew said, "So you took out loan to do this?" CAFO Duprey said, "We did, yes." Clr. Drew said, "So we're paying debt service regardless." CAFO Duprey agreed. Solicitor O'Neill said, "They're also just restricted revenue. They can't be used for just anything. They're not general budget revenue that can be used for other things." Clr. DiZoglio said, "So, was this project done by the previous Council that approved it and then the debt happened or was it budgeted? I'm just wondering because if you're asking for approval and it's already done why you ask?" CAFO Duprey said, "So, the project is not done. The funding is in place, so we've already asked for the funding the funding has been put in place now we're asking to do the actual project." Mayor Beauregard said, "Just to provide some further clarity. There have been other offices that have undergone the same type of revamp under the same context that this was established back in FY'2024. This is one of the straggler projects, so to speak, that had not been taken care of up until now but it's part of a broader effort that has been underway for some time in other offices." Clr. DiZoglio said, "So, like Councilor Drew was saying, if we repurpose it, the debt's still there that you have to pay it correct?" CAFO Duprey said, "You would have to repurpose it for a like project because when we issue debt, not to get overly complicated, but when you issue debt, it's based on the asset. So, the furniture and how long it would take to depreciate. You can't repurpose equipment for a building, for example, because it's not comparable so we would have to repurpose it for a like project. Most likely a building improvement or small equipment type thing but yes that's money that we're going to owe whether we utilize it right now or not." Chair Soto said, "Thank you. So, for clarity, that could be repurposed for the 2nd Floor Conference Room that's a hundred years old down on the second floor." – **UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – 4 yes, 5 no (Clr. DiZoglio, Clr. Pesce, Clr. Santos, Clr. Valley and Chair Soto) – Motion Fails**

C-26-86 An Employment Contract by and Between the City of Methuen and Daniel Donahue – Assistant Fire Chief – **Motion to approve by Clr. Pesce, seconded by Clr. Santos – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

16. Other Officers and Committee Reports – CC Public Safety Committee – Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, "Yes thank you Madam Chair. So the public safety committee met today. We did go down to the Rail Trail Tunnel in last few weeks to look at the Bird Sanctuary. We had conservation down there and talked about clearing a path. We have to go to the Conservation Commission to get approved to cut down trees and stuff like that because it might disturb habitats. Also, we brought up a new ordinance that we are going to be working on. Lawrence just recently passed a new ordinance regarding dirt bikes that are causing havoc to our neighborhoods, especially during the summertime. The ordinance says that gas stations are to refuse to sell them gas. The Chief has that ordinance. We're going to try and bring it to the Council in the next few weeks and have you guys vote on that. Madam Chair Soto has been working on that and has an ordinance that we're going to be working on. Hopefully we can bring you through that. Also working on handicap parking is also a major thing that we are working on. And we're working Assistant DPW Director Garcia and with National Grid to install lights on the Rail Trail."

17. Unfinished Business

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

Resolutions:

TR-26-32 A Resolution Accepting Sections 21 to 23 of Chapter 32B of the Massachusetts General Laws for the Purpose of Evaluating Health Insurance Options (Req. of Mayor Beauregard) (*remove from the table*) – **No motion was made – REMAINS ON THE TABLE**

TR-26-35 A Resolution Authorizing an Expenditure of \$1,700 from the Castle Fund to the American Legion Post 122 for the Memorial Day Parade (Requested by Mayor Beauregard and the Commission on Trust Funds) – **Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – Discussion – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

TR-26-36 A Resolution Proclaiming Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month in the City of Methuen (Sponsored by Chair Soto, and Councilors DiZoglio and Valley, and co-sponsored by Mayor Beauregard) - **Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. Valley – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

TR-26-37 A Resolution Transferring Custody and Control of the Currier School to City Government (Requested by Mayor Beauregard) - **Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. Santos – Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, “Just for public record, and again through you Madam Chair to the Solicitor. By me approving this, he still has to come back to us to determine if he was going to sell it for a service and what he wants to do with the building, correct? Solicitor O’Neill said, “Correct. It will still need to be surplusd to be sold or transferred. We’ll have to come back before Council.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Valley, “Thank you Madam Chair. And through you to the Mayor. I saw the maintenance is like close to \$40,000. Can those two properties be like winterized and shut the utilities up and maybe save that money now that we were expecting the budget that we know it's not going to be?” Mayor Beauregard said, “Yes. That's certainly a great question. So, when it comes to the Currier School, there's no active use there at all. This is slightly different from say the Pleasant Valley School where there's still some storage space there for the School Department. But also, that's the location of the city archives and the like and so that's certainly something that we could aim to reduce. But at the same time once this is surplusd, I'm motivated to get this into a state where we can generate revenue for the city and get it into the hands of prospective developers so that we can ensure that it ultimately achieves the end goal which is to convert these two parcels into new housing opportunities for our residents, our veterans, our seniors. Anytime I'm at the Senior Center one of the loudest things that I hear is we need more housing for seniors especially people who are just being priced out of their home and so in terms of long-term maintenance costs, my expectation is that we're not going to be holding on to these are very long.” – **UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

TR-26-38 A Resolution Transferring Custody and Control of the Pleasant Valley School to City Government (Requested by Mayor Beauregard) – **Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. Pesce – Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard, “Thank you Madam Chair. This is something that's come up in conversation from what I've heard recently regarding the archive situation. I have been in touch, in the past, with Dan Gagnon and others from the historical groups who take care of preserving

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

the archives and organizing them and properly storing them etc. At this point, a major part of this project is going to be to relocate those archives and so if the goal is to move on getting these properties out there to the private market, one key component here is to ensure that we have a location for the archives. There are several different possibilities that we can consider whether it's the Provincial House or the Estate or other possible resources that are available to us. We're looking at that, so I just wanted to state that publicly because I know it's an issue of concern." - **UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

TR-26-39 A Resolution Authorizing Acceptance of an FY26 Green Communities Grant Award from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (Requested by Mayor Beauregard and Director Wilson) - **Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. Santos – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

TR-26-40 A Resolution Accepting Section 9A of Chapter 200A of the Massachusetts General Laws Relating to the Disposition of Unclaimed Property (Req. of Clr. Valley) - **Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

Ordinance(s): None

1. New Business:

Resolutions:

TR-26-41 A Resolution of the Methuen City Council to Name the Field at Burnham Road in Honor of Mary McDonough (Req. of Clr. Pesce) with the support from State Representative Ryan Hamilton - **Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Clr. Pesce, "Thank you. This is something that I'm excited to bring forward but before we do that, we have to make sure that we follow procedure. Two things - one there is a Scribner's error my maiden name has 2 n's (Zanni) so if we can just fix that. And then, what I'd like to do is according to TR-22-70 we have to post this for a public hearing before we can go forward with it so I would ask for a motion or I'll actually make a motion to table to a public hearing." - **Motion to table to a public hearing by Clr. Pesce, seconded by Clr. Drew – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

TR-26-42 A Resolution Requesting the City Implement a Seasonal Restroom Policy for Non-City Use of City-Owned and City-Operated Athletic Fields (Sponsored by Clr. Drew, Clr. MacLaren, and Clr. Valley) - **Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. MacLaren – Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "Thank you Madam Chair. This resolution came to the Parks Subcommittee's attention as there was a question from a constituent regarding the bathrooms and the usage. We had a conversation with Director Angelo about the problem, and he let the fields know that they won't have use of the bathrooms. As a plumber by trade, there was only six days in March that we were overnight over freezing, so I tell you there was a major problem with frozen pipes in New England. The other part to this speaking with Director Angelo, was we will be incurring the cost to put the Port-O-Potties in these fields to allow the people to use them and have the sanitary conditions. But these groups that are using the fields are outside entities and they

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

collect their own fees and we will be incurring costs. This resolution here is to ensure that we're not going to incur that cost going forward, and we'll ensure that the facilities are made available to the groups by their own group in order to utilize our fields. It does leave enough flux in here for the Parks Department to use their own discretion whether they need to open the fields or they have that ability because the weather has turned because we all know sometimes Spring comes a little earlier but this is going to allow us to have to have a framework for the Parks Department to make sure that those are captured." Chair Soto said, "I have a question, maybe it's to the Recreation Director or maybe to you Councilor Drew. Have the sports organizations that are using our field been communicated with that this was being brought to the table so that they understand that now carry the burden of the cost? Understanding that some of these expenses for the students to be able to participate are usually at cost to maintain it, low for participation?" Superintendent Angelo said, "That has not had been a communication I've had with these Leagues yet. Obviously, this is the first ongoing conversation we're having here at the table to discuss this. It's something I will definitely have a conversation with them about. With that in the best respect, I would also like to say that the City is very supportive of our youth groups. I'm very thankful to everyone at the table, the Mayor's Office, that we don't charge user fees to utilize our fields either. So, this is a conversation that I would be having with them. Obviously, we want to get those bathrooms on as soon as we can to make sure that we have that. I think that this resolution came up from the subcommittee and I want to thank everyone in the subcommittee for working on this. It kind of protects both. It protects the city and the infrastructure but also ensures that any of the users have an opportunity to utilize restroom facilities while using the field. We want to get the kids out on the fields as soon as possible. We don't want to hold them off because sorry guys we don't have bathrooms so we can't let anyone in the field. I think this is a great solution to an issue that got brought up by one of the constituents." Chair Soto said, "Yes, so a follow-up question: regarding communicating with those running the sports programs and incurring the cost. Would pushing the season be an option other than having to because I thought that would have been an easy fix if they could have moved like baseball is it that started in March and we think it could start in April?" Superintendent Angelo said, "It depends. The tough part about saying okay we started on April 15 is once we've had kids that have been bound up in the houses all winter long as in the spring season in itself is it's very short and especially with the weather that we get during the springtime where yeah it's cold a bit but then we might get rain for two and a half weeks. They don't want to run spring sports into summer vacations and there's different summer leagues that run into it so you really have a 10-week stretch to get all these spring sports in. So, pushing off the start of it would put them in a really bad bind in terms of scheduling to ensure that the kids have the great opportunity to participate." Chair Soto said, "OK, I also have something to point out. At the top of TR-26-62 it says "ordinance" but then on the inside it says "resolution" so I understand it's under a new resolution. Solicitor O'Neill said it was his error and that he meant to correct it. Chair Soto recognized Clr. Santos, "I just want to bring something to the table. So, are we going to charge other towns to use our fields, and is Methuen going to be charged when our kids go and play in another city?" Superintendent Angelo said, "Methuen Youth Baseball does not get charged to utilize the facilities here in the city. Outside rentals will get charged for portable bathrooms like the ones that are plastic." Chair Soto said, "What do the port-a-potties cost per day?" Superintendent Angelo said, "So, I will tell you that I rent a lot of port-o-potties

through events so really your setup costs about \$125 to \$135 dollars with a weekly fee of \$100.” – **UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

TR-26-43 A Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of \$42,500 from General Fund Accounting Personal Service Expenses to General Fund Accounting Other Expenses to Appropriately Fund Expenditures for Grant Writing Services (Requested by the Mayor and CAFO) - **Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – Discussion –** Chair Soto recognized Clr. Valley, “Thank you, Madam Chair. Through you to the CAFO: I see here the grant administrator. Will that serve a different purpose? Is it a grant writer or a grant administrator?” CAFO Duprey said, “So, it's a grant administrator but that's how we budgeted for it this year. We don't have a grant administrator so during the FY'2026 budget process, we put \$42,500 in in the accounting line on the personnel expense line assuming that we were going to hire someone. Upon further discussions and going through an RFP process, we've decided that instead of hiring someone, as we don't think that we need a full-time person, we wanted to contract with someone. So, we would need to then pay that expense out of the other expenses so still within the accounting but instead of in personal services it would be other expenses.” Clr. Valley said, “My understanding is that a grant administrator managed the funds awarded. So, who's going to write the grant?” Mayor Beauregard said, “I can provide some additional context. In terms of the RFP for grant writing services, the response that we received was largely in keeping with what we had outlined in the specs for the RFP which was, right now, we don't have and we've never really had a dashboard. We've never had an overarching strategy. Typically, departments just go out and they'll do their own thing in terms of getting grants, which is good and we've secured funds through that, but we really need to have a streamlined version of that and having that dashboard on top of the procurement services going out and actually helping us with applications. Not just applications, but also once we get the grants the closeout aspect compliance all of the above that's the type of service that we would get through say, a grant administrator, would include writing. It would include development of the dashboard but also the follow-through aspect as well.” Clr. Valley said, “What about the compensation? It's going to be like an hourly rate or just fee for grant secure or procure?” Mayor Beauregard said, “For the responses that we got, very similar to what we see in Haverhill where it's an hourly rate up to a certain amount and so the contract that we would bring before the Council would include a ‘not to exceed annual minimum’ so it would be on an hourly basis up to a certain amount. And something else I think I may reference this during my report, but I'll share it again. We were very specific in the specs where our goal is to generate a minimum range of three to four million dollars annually in new grant awards above and beyond say entitlement grants and so we were specific in terms of the goals and we would certainly need to hold the vendor to that in order to justify the expense that we'll be asking for.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, “Mr. Mayor, so just explain the thought process behind outsourcing this to a third party versus bringing somebody in and having that person on staff full-time doing this for us constantly. Would it cost too much?” Mayor Beauregard said, “Well speaking from the city's experience, and the CAFO could certainly elaborate here. That this was during Mayor Perry's time in office. The city had, for a time budgeted for and posted an actual grant writer position and I don't know if it was an issue perhaps with a salary that was too low or what but it didn't generate significant interest at all. And so, when you look at other municipalities I've referenced in the past many times,

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

the City of Haverhill. They have an interesting system where they contract with an individual --- I think it's a retired teacher who focuses on applying for state grants and then also they contract with a federal lobbying firm out of Washington --- Merchant McIntyre --- they pay this firm in essence I think it's like an \$8,000 monthly fee but what they do is they go out and they secure federal earmarks. It's more of a lobbying effort on behalf of the city and so we had engaged in initial conversations with, for instance, that firm on the recommendation of Haverhill and the issue that some of these firms have and the reason why this is taken longer than hoped for it's that with Merchant McIntyre we wouldn't be able to contract with them because of the fact that we're in the same congressional district as the city of Haverhill and in turn they would be dealing with a conflict issue because we have the same member of Congress that Haverhill does. So when it comes to getting those types of federal earmarks, they would need to be going directly to members of Congress on our behalf and so there's a conflict issue with some of these companies and so the other thing too is we had some discussions with some folks who shared an interest in possibly working with us as a contractor to try to help secure grants and we had some concerns about experience and we'd be making an investment in a service. We want more of a track record that we can rely on in terms of moving forward and so that's what the thought of going out to the RFP, going out to the market to get a sense of actual companies that can help us with this and so long and short of it this has been a very long road where the city has in the past attempted to post the position. Had little luck in terms of finding the right candidate. But then you look at other municipalities and what we're anticipating budgeting for in FY'2027 would encompass a full-scale effort along the lines of what Haverhill is doing where we would have an effort for state grants but also available space in the budget to contract with a federal lobbying firm perhaps in Washington even like other cities do to help us with securing additional support in the feds." Clr. Drew said, "So, your anticipation of the vendors that we're going to be looking at in the RFP there would be two different vendors --- one local state and one federal --- so this hundred and fifty thousand that you're going to allocate roughly will be for two different vendors." Mayor Beauregard said, "That's correct. So, the thinking is that the more local vendor, we would be able to work with them mainly on the state grants but also working with them all as well as on building the dashboard and getting that system set up that we currently don't have. And beyond that, when I speak about the government relations firm that would be more of like a lobbying effort which I view is separate from setting up a dashboard and working with us on applications and the like so I'm really modeling this after a real successful approach. Thank you." – **UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

TR-26-44 A Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of \$40,000 from Free Cash to the General Fund Accounting Other Expense Budget Line to Fund Necessary Payroll Processing Expenditures (Requested by the Mayor and CAFO) - – **Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. Valley – Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Clr. Marsan, "Question to the CAFO, why?" CAFO Duprey said, "As you may or may not know, we've been working with Munis which is our accounting finance software to implement payroll services through Munis so that it's all connected and interconnected. Right now, we currently use Harper's payroll services --- that's who we've used for a very long time and that's how we process payroll every week. That's the city and the School Department uses them as well.

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

Our original goal was to implement during Fiscal Year 26 to get that off the ground and therefore be able to back off Harper's. So, we only budgeted for a little more than half a year at Harper's. Unfortunately, that process is taking longer than we had anticipated and the school isn't as far along as the city is, so their implementation is not going to go as quickly as the city's is. Both the city's and school processing fees come out of this one line. So, we are asking for funds to cover the remainder of this fiscal year in order to continue payroll services with the goal, at this point, right now to implement payroll on the city side as of 7-1-2026." Clr. Marsan said, "So the next question is when will we get Munis up?" CAFO Duprey said, "Well, Munis is up so the finance system is phenomenal and works wonderful. So, the goal right now is to get the HR modules and payroll --- two different modules working and live 7-1-2026. That's again on the city side so there will still be costs for Harper's on the school side because they're not going to be ready to implement at that point." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Valley, "Thank you Madam Chair. Through you to the CAFO. I received the breakdown that you sent to me for all the invoices paid to Harper's. I noticed in September 2025 you paid over \$12,000 but in November only \$4,800. So why is that difference from one month to the other?" CAFO Duprey said, "So, I would have to specifically for those two I'd have to pull up but generally when you see an increase like that it's because they're doing reporting for us. So, you might see a blip around year-end or around fiscal year-end where we pay a little bit more because they've done ADA or some kind of ACA, I'm not ADA, ACA reporting for us, so we have to pay for that separately. Or there's more payroll in one month versus another month, so we pay per payroll. The city pays every week, so we have some months where we're paying five, we have some months that we're paying four so there'll be blips there. And then on the school side they pay every other week so again they might be one month there there's three payroll and there's other months there'd be two. So, there's fluctuations there but usually when you see the bigger amounts it's because they've done some kind of reporting for us. They do our W-2s. You'll see a fluctuation there where we pay that invoice you know once a year where that's a bigger one." Clr. Valley said, "So, Munis hopefully, will be implemented by July 1st." CAFO Duprey said, "That's our current goal." Clr. Valley said, "Are you anticipating \$60,000 for April, May, and June for three months?" CAFO Duprey said, "The ask is \$40,000." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "Thank you Madam Chair. I wasn't on the Council last year budget time but I do remember sitting over there and there was a line item cut for \$40,000 for these payroll expenses because as I believe it was said --- correct me if I'm wrong --- this has been a long-standing thing that had to have been done for this year. So, what we're essentially doing is putting back the money that was cut out of last year's budget because we did not hit a benchmark." Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, "So from my understanding from the school side, how long have we had Munis? Because from the school-side I know we've had it for like two to three years. So, 24 was the first full fiscal year that we were utilizing Munis. How much are we paying from Munis every year?" CAFO Duprey said, "A little over \$200,000." Clr. DiZoglio said, "And we still don't have it up like after two years? Like can I ask what is the issues of getting it up and running? Like I said, I'm not part of the department. We're paying \$200,000 a year for a program that we don't have fully running yet after two years. I feel like is not worth it or what's the difficulty of getting it up and running?" CAFO Duprey said, "So that amount is for all of the different

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

modules. So included in that dollar amount is the financials that the city and the school are both using and so those are fully functioning. The HR and payroll piece we are we have very antiquated records that we have currently. So, everything that we are trying to put into Munis, a good portion of it, is manual. So that's taking people off their day-to-day jobs, day-to-day work, processing payroll weekly, etc. and taking and having them manually put all this information together. It's taken an enormous toll. That's one of the reasons why the school department's behind is they haven't been able to give the amount of attention needed at this point just because of the needs that they have day-to-day. We don't have somebody who's solely set just to do this. If I had someone who I could say this is your job you know 40 hours a week, you're going to get it done, it would be a different conversation. Anybody who's working on this project has a full-time job with us doing other things. So, and that's not an excuse. I would have loved to have gotten this done earlier but that's what's taking its toll. All our accruals are on paper and in Excel. So, all that needs to be pulled together, put into something that we can then bring into Munis. So ultimately yes, Munis is going to be fantastic because it's going to be all at the at the key. Somebody in HR puts in somebody just and I'm not trying to overshare but like for example right now, new hire comes in. New hire goes to HR; they go through the process. We literally have a three-part form that goes from HR to the department head, to me, to the mayor, physically signing off on them. Then it goes back to HR, then it goes to payroll. I mean this is all physical papers moving along. So, it's very antiquated but because of we're starting with having to move things from this to this. So again, it's not an excuse. I really, really want this done and the push is to get it done. But it's just it's taken an enormous amount of time and effort." Clr. DiZoglio said, "So the thing I want to ask because I know on the school side sometimes when we when it comes to our documents that we wanted to scan through, we hired an entity to kind of get all our records up to the computer. Does Munis provide someone to help you with your documentation? Obviously, we must pay for it, but would that be what would be the cost for that for them to come in and say okay we will scan all your documents for you to get you up." CAFO Duprey said, "Now, we have someone who's coming in and working with our department are the handful of people that we've put on this. We have someone from Tyler Technologies who owns Munis. They come in at least once a week whether it's virtually or in person and meet with these people for an entire day and walk through and literally helps them put stuff in and it's very hands-on. We had them here last week or the week before for three full days in person. I believe they're coming back next week for three full days in person. So, we're getting it done. We weren't maybe utilizing that before so it's a great idea that's kind of how we've kind of upticked the process because we weren't utilizing them quite as much and we're paying for those services those trainings through the HR budget training budget right now. So, we've taken steps to expedite this at this point but again the just the in-house we don't have the people to just take off other things to put on just this." Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, "So my next question is how long is it going to take with all this help because I don't want to cut anything from your budget next year where you're coming back and asking we need forty or fifty thousand dollars from Free Cash again. So, the question I'm asking will this be done before the budget? Probably not." CAFO Duprey said, "Before the budget? Well, the budget's due in two weeks so I don't know." Clr. DiZoglio said, "So, when do you see this being completed?" CAFO Duprey said, "So, our goal right now on the city side is to go live 7-1-2026. Right now, that's still our goal. Like I said we meet with them every week so we'll be able to update you and I'm

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

happy to, if you want to put that on the CAFO section so that I can kind of give you updates at each meeting until we get closer to 7-1. I'm happy to do that. But right now, that's the goal. Again, that's only on the city side. The school will not be there. So, there will be money budgeted on that line at least for the School Department." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Valley, "Thank you Madam Chair. I just want to add today I had a conversation with CIO Santiago today and he explained to me the Munis has to be implemented in five phases, and it does take time because if you do it all at once might create chaos. He even mentioned it to me in another municipality; it took them 10 years to fully implement it. And he also told me that by July 1st payroll and HR should be all set. Another thing that we need to take into consideration is we have employees that are not maybe computer savvy or technological and they need to be trained. So that's why the process is taking so long." Chair Soto said, "I have a question Madam CAFO. So, we're paying 200k for Munis and how much per year for Harper?" CAFO Duprey said, "It's about \$90,000 to \$100,000 without assuming that we're not like just as status quo." Chair Soto said, "Okay so that's 300k for these systems for us to have." CAFO Duprey said, "Yes, the 200 though is not just the payroll module. I can get you the breakdown of what is related to payroll." Chair Soto said, "But a portion of that let's say \$25-50,000 would go to payroll. So, this I think, and I may be mistaken --- I think Clr. Simard was on that Council when Munis had to be implemented. So, it's interesting that was 2019, was it? Am I mistaken was it 2019 or 2020?" CAFO Duprey said, "The first year we went live was 2024." Chair Soto said, "Yes, it took us four years to go live because I remember that Council was really frustrated when we were here in 2024. So, I guess there's this theory in accounting that I hear a lot and it was implemented in my company. You start from today on, so you just explained how you have a three-part document that goes from one office to the other office to the other office. If saying okay starting this new employee, we're now digitizing and we're getting rid of paper and that in an era of AI where I'm assuming through Mr. Santiago some tool could be implemented. If that could be done from then on, I think your process would probably become easier. I'm just throwing that out there because come July 1st, Madam CAFO, and this isn't up and running. This is the one thing that weighs very heavily on you as our CAFO and it's that one thing that and out there when we talk to constituents, they say you were brought in to basically implement the system. So, with that being said, I know it and hear everything at the table, I know it's been a struggle. I know but I feel that at some point we have to really go from this paper and I don't want to say accommodating employees but moving from pen and paper into that system. So, thank you for the 300,000 because that is a steep amount of number. So, I'm going to go over to the vote." Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard, "Just wanted to state briefly that in terms of the CAFO, her role goes way beyond the implementation of Munis. She was brought in --- and Councilor Simard can attest to this at that time --- when our city was in fiscal crisis and worked diligently to help get us out of the ditch that we were in and correct many of the financial issues that had been in place and so I just wanted to state for the public that her role goes well beyond Munis and I know others would attest to that. Thank you Madam Chair. – **UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – 6 yes, 3 no (Clr. Drew, Clr. Marsan & Clr. Santos)**

TR-26-45 A Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of \$850,000 from Free Cash to Be Transferred to DPW Solid Waste Disposal Expenses to Fund Necessary Tipping Fee

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

Expenditures (Requested by the Mayor and CAFO) - **Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. Santos – Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Clr. Marsan, “Question to the Mayor. I listened to your speech the other night and you said that we saved \$200,000 in trash and recycling and now we need \$850,000 and I understand tipping fees but that's all part of trash and recycling to everyone.” Mayor Beauregard said, “So those are savings in Fiscal Year 27 that we were able to secure through the expansion of the contract with Harvey. So we had owed a set amount for the purchase of carts over the life of the contract and we had still an outstanding balance that we had to pay for Harvey in terms of the carts and so as part of that process of extending that agreement one of the things that we were able to negotiate was having a significant chunk of that money that we would have owed on carts in the last year taken out in return for the opportunity for us to extend. They were very motivated for that and so that was regarding Fiscal Year 27 not a current year savings that is in the ballpark of relevancy when we're dealing with this issue. So, when it comes to the tipping fee situation we presented a number in the budget last year. I had actually kind of gone out ahead and made a cut to that line item myself before presenting it to the council and when it was finally here for the council's consideration there were further cuts made to that line item and so interestingly enough this \$850,000 this is roughly very similar to that amount that had been cut in during the budget process last year. I think the amount that we had seen cut was up to \$750,000 so the amount that we're projecting that we're going to need is in the ballpark of where the cut had been made last year and so you know I guess this speaks to last year's budgeting process but nevertheless apples and oranges when we compare needing to fill this gap for the current year and say savings achieved going forward for Fiscal Year 27.” Clr. Marsan said, “To the CAFO, how much have we ... so it was always that citizens were way against doing the cuts at the beginning right, and I was an advocate for it because I we were going to have all the savings. So, do we really save? It seems like we're always appropriating more money for it and this bothers me because it's coming out of --- you want to take it out of Free Cash --- this is going to be a million dollars out of Free Cash and I don't think it should come from there but we have to spend you know we have to pay the bill somewhere but do we I guess at some point can we come up with and a spreadsheet to say what we're saving on tipping since we've gone to the?” Mayor Beauregard said, “So, we do have data, I think, I may have shared it at a recent meeting that outlined the difference in what the city had in terms of actual tonnage say in 2021 compared to today. There has been a meaningful decline in terms of the actual tonnage output from the city but the issue that we've dealt with along with other municipalities is just these rising costs as it relates to the actual tonnage and so one of the challenges that we've had is there are instances where some residents will dispose of actual trash for example in their recycling bin and so that happens quite frequently there are times also when you even if you take a drive down Pleasant Street during trash day you'll sometimes see barrels that are literally overflowing right and so in essence if you have that scaled out across the city in any type of statistically a meaningful way the issue that we're going to run into is the higher output in

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

trash beyond what we're providing for through the cart system that's contributing to the cost drivers as well so this speaks to the fact that we had the act of bringing in a Sanitation Coordinator. We've spoken about this several times and so now that we have that officially set, we budgeted for it, we've made a hire for that position. The goal is to generate savings by way of enforcement and ensuring that we are going through the process of ensuring that the ordinance is being followed. Ultimately, that is the reason why we're doing that it's a structural change that is designed to help generate savings through the enforcement mechanism. As long as we have trash going into recycling bins and those trash bins just overflowing it is negating the purpose of the trash program and that's why I think it circles back to the need for greater enforcement." Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, Through you to the Mayor. You're saying you already made a hire for the sanitation coordinator?" Mayor Beauregard said, "Correct. I am waiting on signing off on the three-part form as the CAFO referenced." Clr. DiZoglio said, "So, I know I just approved to TR-26-44 and but \$850,000 to me is concerning because I look at this as we try. Many of my subcommittees and fellow Councilors here are trying to do projects in the city. This is always an issue where we can't do projects because we're always finding something that we have to find in the budget from Free Cash where we could take money out of Free Cash and put it towards matching on grants but we're always worried about that 10% threshold and we can't spend money to match on grants but we could do it by people cutting from budgets which I understand things happen but it's really bothering me. \$850,000 to me to go to go to so many things in the city to make the city better and I get people made the budget and had to make cuts." Mayor Beauregard said, "So, ultimately, when the budget process was completed total of seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars have been cut from the line item which is I guess not precisely the amount here but it's in the ballpark." Clr. DiZoglio said, "I'm saying that and it's just it's frustrating because we keep spending Free Cash on things like this when we should be matching grants or doing something like that. Hopefully, with the grant writer, that's going to help. I just hate using Free Cash on that large amount. I don't know how I'm going to vote on this and I'm going to be completely honest." Mayor Beauregard said, "I couldn't agree more, Councilor, and something that I will say is I think this is a helpful lesson collectively for everyone in local government where you know in a couple of weeks we're going to be presenting a budget and that budget will have a line item for tipping fees and although the temptation is going to be there to make cuts, this is one of those areas we just have to keep in mind that the projections that the CAFO has established in terms of the amount needed to cover that cost, they're very much in line with the reality as we're seeing this current fiscal year very much in the ballpark. So, my encouragement collectively is when we see that number although it might be tempting to make a cut, we should just remember exactly what you're saying. There is very likely if we do make a cut to come a time in the spring of 2027 where we'll have the same conversation again, so it is a helpful reminder for all of us." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "Thank you Madam Chair, Mr. Mayor, Madam CAFO, I think it'd be very helpful to this body if at the next

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

meeting if you would be able to bring maybe the last three years or four years of trash. What we've seen go up just in a spreadsheet. Show us what we've spent, what we should have spent, and then maybe the allocation of the new position coming in and what we're forecasting for trash barrel fees income, the potential savings that we may see with this position so that we can better inform ourselves when it comes to budget time. So that we don't have to just leave a balloon number sitting in the tipping fee. So, we can see something that might be tangible. I think that would be very helpful. I don't know if you can have the DPW Director work with you to put that together but I think that would be something this body would utilize.” Mayor Beauregard said, “That's a fair ask we'll work on that.” Chair Soto said, “I have a question Madam CAFO. What happens if this body votes down the \$850,000? We have an outstanding bill. Do we have a city full of trash just in perspective of the damage? Because this seems like an item just like snow. Is it the snow? And when you guys bring that in front of us, it's like one of those items that even though I want to vote no because we didn't budget appropriately or whatever the case may be I mean what else can you do? So, my question is, what happens if that doesn't pass on Free Cash? What's the outcome?” CAFO Duprey said, “I would have to sit with the Mayor and the DPW Director and make that decision. Is there something else in the budget that we're not going to do in order to cover those or are we going to skip weeks with trash because we're not going to be able to afford the tonnage? We'd have to make those decisions.” Chair Soto said, “ Then I have the question of --- I know we have weekly trash service --- are there any communities --and I haven't done this research --- I'm thinking right on the spot --- any communities that do bi-weekly trash? Have we looked at and I guess that's a question to the Mayor when he was looking at this. I know you hired the person to mitigate. Do we burn our trash? I don't know what are the options that we have?” Mayor Beauregard said, “We actually do utilize a waste to energy services to an extent but when it comes to looking at what other municipalities are doing, there's another Mayor down in Medford, who just changed to they call it pay as you throw and her constituents in Medford, from the sounds of it, are on the verge of rioting with this change. There are municipalities that are trying new things in terms of additional charges to residents to dispose of trash. I think that would be a difficult proposition here in Methuen but there are municipalities that are identifying ways to try to reduce the cost for the municipality. There are municipalities in the Commonwealth that are out of the trash business entirely and it's all private. You see that up in New Hampshire quite a bit and so again I think our residents expect trash service in terms of they're paying taxes and they expect that and we owe it to them to provide that. There are municipalities just for the sake of sharing this, in response to your question, that are looking into other options because it is something that is increasing in terms of cost this is one of I call it out one of our budget busters and it's an annual issue and cost are going up.” – **UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – 5 yes, 4 no (Clr. DiZoglio, Clr. Marsan, Clr. Santos & Clr. Valley)**
MOTION FAILS – Free Cash Transfers mandate a 2/3 affirmative vote)

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, April 21st, 2026 @ 7:00 P.M.

GREAT HALL, SEARLES BUILDING

TR-26-46 A Resolution Authorizing the Acceptance and Expenditure of a Brownfields Redevelopment Fund Grant from the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency in the Amount of \$75,000 (Requested by the Mayor and Director Wilson) - **Motion to approve by Clr. Valley, seconded by Clr. Santos – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

TR-26-47 Resolution Issuing a Letter of Support to Andrea Campbell for the State Auditor's Audit of the Legislature, as approved by the voters on Question 1 (Request of Clr. Pesce) - **Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. MacLaren – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

Ordinances:

TO-26-12 Ordinance to Amend the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance to Rezone Parcel of Land Fronting Arcadia Street for Commercial Improvement (Request of Applicant K & K Realty Trust represented by Johnson & Borenstein, LLC, Attorneys at Law) (Table to Joint Public Hearing with Community Development) - – **Motion to table to a Joint Public Hearing with the Community Development Board by Clr. MacLaren, seconded by Clr. Valley – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

***** (See agenda item # 10 – This item was taken out of order at the City Council meeting) TO-26-13** An Ordinance Amending the Methuen Municipal Code, Section 4-1 (J) Nepotism (Req. of Chair Soto) – **Motion to approve by Clr. MacLaren, seconded by Clr. Valley – Motion to TABLE by Clr. Pesce, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio - UPON VOTE – unanimously approved.**

Adjourn – 9:35 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Yarid Ferry
Assistant Council Clerk

I do hereby certify the foregoing minutes were approved by the City Council by a unanimous vote on May 18, 2026.

Linda Gagnon
COUNCIL CLERK