

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

1. **Roll Call - all members present – Clr. Santos, Clr. Simard, Clr. Valley, Clr. DiZoglio, Clr. Drew, Clr. MacLaren, Clr. Marsan, Clr. Pesce and Chair Soto**
2. **Acceptance of the Agenda – Motion to accept the agenda by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. Santos – Motion to move Consideration of Appointments after Public Participation by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – 8 yes, 1 no (Clr. Drew) – Motion to approve the agenda as amended by Clr. Marsan, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – unanimously approved.**
3. **Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence** – Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio for a Moment of Silence for Jim Dawe, “Since 2018, Jim faithfully covered the majority of the City Council meetings as part of the Methuen Community Studios family. Every other Monday night residents could count on Jim being here, helping ensure that local government remained accessible to the community. Those who worked alongside him knew that Jim could never start a meeting without his McDonald's in hand. Jim was also an important part of the MCS production team and was always on scene in the MCS van covering parades, Methuen High School sports, and countless other community events. Beyond his work with Methuen Community Studios, Jim was also known throughout the community for decades of service as president of Methuen Little League. He made an immeasurable impact on generations of Methuen families, coaching and monitoring countless young people over the years. Through baseball, Jim taught not only the game itself but also teamwork, sportsmanship, and community spirit. Jim's dedication, dependability, and quiet presence will be missed by all who knew him.”
4. **Public Participation**
 - **Joseph McDonald, 40 Swan Avenue, Methuen -** Good evening. My name is Joseph McDonald and I live at 40 Swan Avenue in Methuen, Mass. And today I am here to speak about the MEVA bus strike that is happening. The streets of Methuen and the streets across the Merrimack Valley feel different right now. They seem more crowded. They seem more stressed. And for thousands of us in the Merrimack Valley, the bus company went on strike as of July 1st, leaving us citizens with a big question. How am I supposed to get where I need to go? The bus company and the mechanics we know are on strike; they are striking for fair wages, and they are striking for Saturday overtime. Saturday overtime has been a thing since 1976, and the company has not complied with it. As a daily passenger of MEVA, I rely deeply on the service they offer. Every single day I take the bus to commute back and forth to UMass Lowell where I study mathematics to become a future educator. Without this bus service, many residents like me who do not have a car or alternative means of transportation are completely stranded and relying on ride shares isn't an option right now. Ubers and Lyfts have become incredibly pricey because of the surge in demand caused by the strike. When the buses stop running, life doesn't just pause. Simple everyday tasks that keep our lives moving forward become major hurdles. It means I can't easily get to places I need to get to, such as the Nevins Library to return my library book that is due, or get to other stuff like other citizens, such as getting to the post office to take care of important mail. It means people can't get access to their work and earn a paycheck or get groceries to feed their families

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METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

and that's just a couple of reasons. There are so many more places around Methuen the bus goes to, such as the Loop that is serviced by three bus routes that Merrimack Valley Transit offers, the Merrimack Plaza serviced by three key routes, the Methuen Square which is also serviced by three key routes, and so many other places. People take the bus for so many reasons, to hang out with friends, to take it to work and back home. People take it to the gym, people take it to go grocery shopping, people take it to go see the scenery, people take it to school and university like I do, people take it to doctor and medical appointments, and the elderly and retired take it just to go out for the day and not be home all day. The bus strike has felt like the COVID-19 pandemic all over again. And let me tell you about a couple of residents in Methuen who have been relying on the bus. Julie, a resident of Methuen who relies on Meva to go grocery shopping and go out to places to the Loop with the bus strike happening, she can't get to these places. She had to get her groceries delivered during the strike and paid \$11 plus the total on top of what her groceries cost. On top of that, she's talking about paying like \$11 for a ride share to get to the Loop, to get to the train station in Lawrence, Massachusetts, and she's been taking the bus since 1996, so for 30 years. And we have Myra who's a resident of Lowell but is a worker here in Methuen. Right now, with the strike happening, she can't get back and forth to work, so she is missing days of work where she could be making a paycheck, but she relies on two buses to get back to Lowell. Some residents complained that they had to walk to their job or even call out from work, possibly getting fired from their job because of a bus strike. I really hope the bus strike comes to a halt soon because so many residents rely on the bus service each and every single day. Thank you."

- **Tim Vermette, 28 Weybossett Street, Methuen.** "I'm here for the Methuen Rail Trail. I'm the President. So, I watched the last City Council meeting, and I watched the discussion between you guys. So, you're all familiar with why I'm here and kind of what I want to do and work with the city. I've talked to a lot of you about it. I've also talked to the VFW and the union, the laborer's union, about this. So, part of the problem that I see is that there are questions that are unanswered and it's a loop that goes around and around and we never seem to get the actual answer and the problem solved. So, I'd like you guys to kind of find a medium ground of can we get the three parties together, the city, the union, the VFW together and figure out something one way or the other. It's either going to be yes or it's going to be no. So, if it's yes, please get that to that point and if it's going to be no, let me know and the rail trail will come up and figure something out on our own to possibly take care of those overhangs. We've been looking for funding as it is now. There are several different areas where we can get funding to fix that. I was talking to John Hadley today. He has an architect friend, and he was going to look at seeing if he could have that person come in and give us an estimate as to what it would cost to fix it. That way we have a ballpark, and we have a starting point and then from there we would look at hiring bodies and a company to do it. So, I don't have anything else for you guys. You guys know why I'm here and I appreciate your time. Thank you."
- **Alejandro Baez, 152 Center Street and member of the Methuen School Committee,** "Good evening members of the City Council, Mr. Mayor and the community as a whole. I am here to talk about contracts C-27-4 and C-27-5 which are the solar panels for the Tenney and the CGS schools. I am a member of the Methuen School Committee though my opinions reflected in this speech are not a part of the official record of the School Committee nor is it a reflection of the opinion of the School Committee or my colleagues on the School Committee. It's my personal opinion and I am here not to show grievance but to show a support for these contracts. We on the School Committee have

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

tried to enact reform, we've tried to create cost savings, we've worked, in my own opinion, with you on the City Council to improve the financial standings of the schools and I am personally thankful for each and every single one of you in that effort. Whether that be in your votes while you're sitting in that chair, while it might be attending events like graduation and like Read Across America and many others, your support has been shown and is greatly appreciated. So, with the solar panels it comes down to cost savings, it comes down to sustainability and it comes down to an overall holistic approach to creating a more sustainable city but more importantly in the now it is a cost savings mechanism that has been vetted by the administration and hopefully has been vetted by the City Solicitor with his consent and the consent of his office. Lastly, in support of this contract I'd also like to speak about another agenda item which is a proclamation for Victor Rivera Jr., a Methuen resident. I believe Victor is not here tonight so I hope that this matter gets tabled but being a recipient of the Harry S. Truman scholarship is honestly a huge deal for the city of Methuen as only one college student in every state wins this scholarship every year and it is a scholarship that embodies what public service a student is doing now but more importantly it is a commitment to public service in the future as the recipient of one of these scholarships is committed to public service for the first three out of the four years after college. So, I hope that the city of Methuen is proud of Victor, of all of our young leaders here in Methuen serving and in hopes and with the passion of serving and with that I hope that you consider the contracts for the solar panels as an affirmative vote. I'm a partner. Thank you for your service but most importantly for your presence for our students and families. Once again thank you."

5. Consideration of Appointments:

- **Lieutenant Michael Ferris - Deputy Chief – Motion to appoint by Clr. Simard, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Assistant Fire Chief Daniel Donahue, "Thank you all for having me here tonight. Before I get started on my written statement, I just wanted to say that both are gentlemen that we're putting before you tonight --- I'm sure every one of you know them. They are outstanding candidates. They volunteer literally hundreds of hours every year to this city. They cook for the seniors. They cook for the veterans. They cook at the Fishing Derby. They do all the shopping. They are all volunteering. They're at every city event. Both of these guys are just amazing candidates. So back to Lieutenant Ferris. Given the budget challenges we're facing today I'd like to emphasize that these promotions are contractual obligations. They're not new positions or discretionary promotions. This Deputy Chief position is fully budgeted and full of vacancy created by the retirement at the end of June by Deputy Chief Scott Sullivan. It's my pleasure to recommend Lieutenant Mike Ferris for promotion to Deputy Chief. Mike is the top candidate on the promotional eligibility list. No candidate has been bypassed. Since joining the Methuen Fire Department in 2008, Mike has demonstrated exceptional dedication, professionalism, and leadership. He served 14 years as a firefighter EMT before being promoted to Lieutenant in 2022 where he has successfully led engine and ladder company operations, supervised personnel, maintained apparatus readiness, and prioritized firefighter safety. Mike is a respected leader and mentor who takes pride in developing younger firefighters and fostering a culture of accountability and teamwork. His commitment to service extends beyond the firehouse through active participation in community events throughout Methuen. He's a familiar presence at city parades and volunteers at all local gatherings such as annual Fishing Derby, veterans cookouts, a senior supper, I could go on and on. Outside of a service to the community, Mike is a devoted father of his two sons ---

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

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METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

Logan, 21 and Ian is 16. He values the time he spends with his family and brings the same sense of commitment, integrity, and responsibility to his personal life that he demonstrates in his professional career. Mike is a graduate of the Mass Fire Academy and holds certificates as firefighter one and two, fire instructor, nationally certified EMT. He also earned an Associate's Degree in Fire Science from North Shore Community College. Combined with his extensive operational experience and proven leadership abilities, these qualifications have prepared him well for executive leadership within the department. Lieutenant Ferris possesses the character, experience, and vision necessary to excel as a deputy chief. I offer my strongest recommendations for his promotion and I'm confident he will continue to serve the city of Methuen with distinction. Thank you for your consideration and continued support of our department." - **UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – unanimously approved.**

- **Firefighter Eric Moreau – Lieutenant - Motion to appoint by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. Santos – Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Assistant Fire Chief Daniel Donahue, "I'm pleased to recommend Firefighter Eric Moreau for promotion to Lieutenant and respectfully request your support. This budgeted position fills the vacancy we created by Lieutenant Mike Ferris's promotion to Deputy Chief and satisfies the contractual apparatus staffing requirements. Eric is the top candidate on the promotional list, and no candidates have been bypassed. Since joining the Fire Department in 2015, Eric has earned the respect of both members and chief officers through his professionalism, leadership and dedication. His leadership skills were forged during his service in the U.S. Army where he rose to the rank of Corporal and Squad Leader. His service includes deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as well as support for the Boston Marathon. Eric is a graduate of the Massachusetts Fire Academy and holds certifications as nationally certified EMT, firefighter one and two, fire instructor, along with the Associate's Degree in Fire Protection Technology. He is committed to mentoring newer members while continuously advancing his own professional development. During 18 months as an Acting Lieutenant, Eric successfully supervised personnel, managed emergency operations, maintained accountability and ensured crew safety. His calm demeanor, sound judgment and effective communication consistently demonstrates his readiness for permanent promotion. Eric's commitment to the fire service extends beyond daily operations. He currently serves as a President of Local 1691, contributes to the Honor Guard and the PFF member assistance teams with strong focus on mental health. He is very active in the community and not only coaches but serves on the board for Methuen Girls Softball League. He's a devoted husband to his high school sweetheart of over 20 years, Stephanie, and proud father of their three children, Jaden, 18, Natalia, 13, Luciana, 11. Eric Moreau possesses the leadership, experience, education and character necessary to excel as a lieutenant. I'm confident he will continue to serve the citizens of Methuen with integrity and distinction and I strongly recommend him for this promotion and thank you for your continued support." Chair Soto said, "In my 31 months of service here as a Methuen City Council, I can honestly say that soon-to-be Lieutenant Moreau, I believe, has been very impressive on how he advocates for your department and I've seen him personally build his relationship with the previous body but also with this body. So I am a proud constituent having him serve us here in Methuen and I wanted to make sure I voiced that." - **UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – unanimously approved.**
- **Jordan Normandia – Veterans Service Officer - Motion to appoint by Clr. Marsan, seconded by Clr. Simard – Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard,

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

“Thank you Madam Chair. By way of introduction before I pass it off to Councilor Simard and Secretary Francisco Urena, former Secretary of Veterans Affairs at the state level, is here with us as well. I wanted to share just a couple of words regarding this appointment of a new VSO. As the grandson of a Korean War veteran and as somebody who has several members of our family serving an active duty right now in various places around the world, this is not an appointment that I take lightly. When it came time to begin the process of searching for a new VSO, we put together a committee to lead that process, turned to Councilor Simard, who of course is a member of the veterans community, and he shared what I thought was an outstanding recommendation to bring on board as part of this process the former Secretary, who is a deeply admired and respected member of the veterans community, to help guide the process and to help us arrive at a recommended candidate, who of course we have before you tonight. And Jordan, former Marine of course, former member of my team until recently as well, somebody with great municipal experience, especially in the context of working in a veteran setting previously. But with that, I will pass it off to Councilor Simard to share more about the process, and he can take it from there.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Simard, “Thank you, Mayor, and through you, Madam Chair. As a proud veteran, I just want to say thank you to the Mayor and for the Chair to allow me to serve on the committee to help choose our next VSO, and it's not, you know, an easy task because there were eight candidates that applied, and everyone brought something to the table, but the fact that we had Mr. Urena here to help us was like, you know, having an all-star help you. So, with that said, I'd like to offer the floor to Mr. Urena to speak about the process and share his thoughts on it. Thank you.” Chair Soto recognized Francisco Urena, “Good evening, Council President, Mayor, and Councilors, and I want to thank Councilor Simard for the invitation as part of this process. It was a very transparent, thorough process and you should be very proud of your Human Resources Department that facilitated such an opportunity to be able to do so. I was honored to be brought in early on and really formulated some of the questions. You know, you could gauge for knowledge, you could gauge for experience, but what you really captured was the passion. And with Jordan Normandia, I think that you really, Mr. Mayor, got it right. Three candidates were selected to be offered to the Mayor as finalists, and when I got the call from the Mayor, I knew that the process was followed. Jordan brings a vast experience here in Methuen from what I learned in his resume and in interviewing him, but what I also learned was the very candidates that came to that table were very passionate people who wanted to serve the residents of Methuen and really continue to improve upon the services and that every veteran deserves, not only those that are living here, but those that will arrive in your community every given year. There will be veterans coming in as service members going into the military. Whether they have roots in Methuen or they're looking to establish those roots, I think you have a great candidate tonight who will continue to serve as many great veteran service officers have done in the city. So, I really thank you all for the opportunity, and I wish you all the very best. I'm here as a resource, and if I could ever be of some support, please don't hesitate to call upon me. Thank you.” Chair Soto recognized Jordan Normandia, “Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the City Council, Mr. Mayor, Mr. Ureña, thank you. I just want to say thank you for the opportunity to speak with you regarding my potential appointment for VSO for the City of Methuen. As a United States Marine Corps veteran, public servant, and lifelong member of this community, I view this position not simply as a job, but as an opportunity to continue serving those who have served our nations and their

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

families. During my service the United States Marine Corps, I served as an administrative specialist with a focus on separations and retirements, helping Marines and their families navigate some of the most important and complex transitions of their military careers. I also served as an instructor for the Department of Defense's Transition Readiness Seminar at Quantico, Virginia, a congressionally mandated program designed to prepare service members for successful transition to civilian life. In that role, I taught Marines about veteran benefits, employment resources, educational opportunities, and services available to support them after their military service. Those experiences reinforced the importance of advocacy, attention to detail, confidentiality, and compassionate service. Following my military service, I continued my commitment to supporting veterans through several professional opportunities. While attending college, I worked on veterans' casework as an intern for the office of former Congresswoman Nikki Tsongas, assisting constituents as they navigated federal agencies and veterans benefit issues. That experience gave me an appreciation for both the complexity of the benefit system and the importance of strong advocacy on behalf of veterans and their families. I later continued supporting veterans through my work with the Haverhill Veterans Service Office, where I gained firsthand exposure to veteran's benefits administration and the challenges veterans face in accessing services and support. I was also previously a candidate for the Veterans Service Officer here in Methuen many years ago, reflecting on my long-standing commitment to serving our local veteran community. Professionally, my municipal career has provided me with extensive experience working directly with residents, navigating government systems, solving constituent issues, and coordinating across departments to deliver services effectively and efficiently. Through my work in municipal government, I've developed strong relationships throughout the city government and gained an understanding of how to advocate for residents while ensuring accountability and stewardship of public resources. Academically, I pursued education that complements both my military and municipal experience, earning graduate education public administration policy, and that strengthened my understanding of government operations, budgeting, management, and public service delivery. I recognize the responsibility that comes with this position and the trust that the City Council places in the individuals selected to serve our veterans. If confirmed, my commitment will be simple, to ensure that every veteran, every veteran family in Bethune is treated with dignity, respect, and professionalism, and receives every benefit, service, and opportunity they have earned through their service to our country. I respectfully ask for your support and for the opportunity to continue serving the city of Methuen and its veterans in this new capacity. Thank you for your time and consideration." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Marsan, "Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for your service, first off. Thank you. I hope we can see through this appointment of Mr. Normandia tonight. We need someone in the office; we need someone there full-time. I hope people know how passionate I am about the veterans and what support I give them, and I offer that to you, that if you need any type of help, I'm here to help and support you. I just hope my colleagues will do that. I think you'll do a good job. It's important that we have someone, and I think you can do it. So, thank you." Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, "Thank you to you, Madam Chair. Coming from a family of veterans, great-grandfather served in World War II. I have uncles that served in Vietnam, so I take this position very seriously as well. I'm not trying to make this into an interview, and the Mayor already knows, and I'm hoping he's going to speak upon that. My concern is in your previous role, there are people circulating that you were

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

responsible over duties that weren't fulfilled, and I just want to put that out into the public so we can clear this up." Mayor Beauregard said, "So, for the sake of transparency, Councilor DiZoglio and I had a conversation roughly a week and a half ago, and he had shared concerns regarding the day-to-day implementation of the city's trash program, and of course we're going to be getting into the trash program extensively tonight, I want to state in no uncertain terms that the city's trash program and the provision of Veterans Services are completely and utterly separate, and actually to a large extent I think irrelevant apart from one another. Now, with that being said, I think that there were some frustrations shared with me from the Councilor regarding things like, you know, the cart system and various aspects of the program, and again we'll get into this a little later in the agenda, but you know there were things that were established as part of that rollout that really in hindsight had no place in, say, the mayor's office in my opinion. Things that should have been, I think, in terms of tasks by the vendor, our DPW, it would be great if we had had a Sanitation Coordinator going back to 2021, 2022, she's sitting right here, but here we are in the process of fixing a lot of the broken elements of that system, and to Jordan's credit, he was placed in the position to be, in large part, the public face of the system that had some rollout issues right from the get-go, and he should not be held to any degree of blame for that. If anything, especially in the context of the trash program from September 2024 onward, I own, as the Mayor ultimately, issues that have occurred, and so I want to speak in total support of Jordan. I encourage you to consider him based on his qualifications as a veteran, as somebody who has, I think, excellent experience on the military side of this type of work, and obviously his knowledge of the inner workings of City Hall and his ability to work with our constituents and provide the services that our veterans need and deserve. We have many thousands of residents who are veterans, and so we owe it to them to ensure that they are being properly served, and I have every confidence that Jordan will do a fantastic job, and I hope you see fit to support him." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "Thank you, Madam Chair. First, Secretary Urena, thank you for your time to the City of Methuen during this. Mr. Normandia, thank you for your service to the country, and thank you for your service to Methuen. Like many people here, I come from a very deep military family. My grandfather was a 20-year Navy man. My best friend and cousin is a Chief in the Navy, currently serving, and my father was a Vietnam veteran. My father, when he came home, was very turned off by his military service because, at that time, it was a very ugly time coming home in that world, and he didn't take part in his military veterans' opportunities until much later in life. He, up until about five or six years ago, really didn't tout his veteran's status, and it wasn't until he needed some medical assistance and things like that that my siblings and I took the time and reached out to the VSO in Wakefield, where he currently lives, to ask to help him. And that VSO took the time and reached out to my father and did what he had to bring my father into what he needs and help him get the services he deserved for the time that he sacrificed for this country. And I hope when you are appointed tonight, if that is the will of the Council, that you will take the time and find those veterans that may be having a little bit of trouble dealing with their veteran status, reaching out to them, and being somebody who is at every parade and is at every VFW meeting and is in at every single thing that you could possibly do to outreach to those veterans and engage them, just like that VSO did for my father, who is now doing great and is receiving his services, and, you know, he wears his veteran hat proudly now. And I really hope that my fellow colleagues will join me in voting affirmatively for your appointment, and I hope that you will do a great job.

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

And as a member of the Veterans Committee for this Council, I look forward to hopefully working with you and discussing more things that we can do for our veterans in this community.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Simard, “Thank you, Madam Chair. Briefly, I just wanted to say that there was collaboration with Councilor Drew and Councilor DiZoglio as part of the Veterans Affairs Committee on this election. There were eight candidates. The top three went to the Mayor, and then with the help of Mr. Urena, thank you, sir, for being part of that group. Mr. Normandia was picked, and I'm 100% in support of this appointment. Thank you.” Chair Soto said, “So, I'm going to address the elephant in the room, just because nobody's saying it, but you're coming from the mayor's office, and as you can see, the Methuen Inquirer posted, is this a political appointment, or so the optics of it aren't the greatest, okay? Due to diligence of going out there and talking to the veteran community, there's mixed feelings out there. I personally like you. Some say, yes, you're going to do great in this position on the clerical side, but that you seem a little shy for the job. I don't share the same sentiment, but at the end of the day, the optics, what people are saying out there, you're basically being transferred from one office to the other. So, I'm glad that Mr. Urena is here, that Councilor Simard made a point of saying what the process was, but I just want you to know that when these things are stated out there, they don't help us in here, because of, you know, they're thinking we're moving friends around, and that's not what's happening.” Clr. Marsan spoke in support of this appointment. Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, “Thank you. Through you, Madam Chair. Coming from a family of veterans; my great-grandfather served in World War II. I have uncles that served in Vietnam, so I take this position very seriously as well. I'm not trying to make this into an interview, and the Mayor already knows, and I'm hoping he's going to speak upon that. My concern is in your previous role, there are people circulating that you were responsible over duties that weren't fulfilled, and I just want to put that out to the public so we can clear this up.” Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard, “So, for the sake of transparency, Councilor DiZoglio and I had a conversation roughly a week and a half ago, and he had shared concerns regarding the day-to-day implementation of the city's trash program, and of course we're going to be getting into the trash program extensively tonight. I want to state in no uncertain terms that the city's trash program and the provision of Veterans Services are completely and utterly separate, and to a large extent I think irrelevant apart from one another. Now, with that being said, I think that there were some frustrations shared with me from the Councilor regarding things like the cart system and various aspects of the program, and again we'll get into this a little later in the agenda. There were things that were established as part of that rollout that really in hindsight had no place in say, the Mayor's office in my opinion. Things that should have been tasks by the vendor, our DPW, it would be great if we had had a Sanitation Coordinator going back to 2021, 2022, she's sitting right here, but here we are in the process of fixing a lot of the broken elements of that system, and to Jordan's credit, he was placed in the position to be, in large part, the public face of the system that had some rollout issues right from the get-go, and he should not be held to any degree of blame for that. If anything, especially in the context of the trash program from September 2024 onward, I own, as the Mayor ultimately, issues that have occurred, and so I want to speak in total support of Jordan. I encourage you to consider him based on his qualifications as a veteran, as somebody who has excellent experience on the military side of this type of work, and obviously his knowledge of the inner workings of City Hall and his ability to work with our constituents and provide the services that our veterans

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

need and deserve. We have many thousands of residents who are veterans, and so we owe it to them to ensure that they are being properly served, and I have every confidence that Jordan will do a fantastic job, and I hope you see fit to support him. Thank you.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, “Thank you, Madam Chair. First, Secretary Urena, thank you for your time to the City of Methuen during this. Mr. Normandia, thank you for your service to the country, and thank you for your service to Methuen. Like many people here, I come from a very deep military family. My grandfather was a 20-year Navy man. My best friend and cousin is a Chief in the Navy, currently serving, and my father was a Vietnam veteran. My father, when he came home, was very turned off by his military service because, at that time, it was a very ugly time coming home in that world, and he didn't take part in his military veterans' opportunities until much later in life. He, up until about five or six years ago, really didn't tout his veteran's status, and it wasn't until he needed some medical assistance and things like that that my siblings and I took the time and reached out to the VSO in Wakefield, where he currently lives, to ask to help him. And that VSO took the time and reached out to my father and did what he had to bring my father into what he needs and help him get the services he deserved for the time that he sacrificed for this country. And I hope when you are appointed tonight, if that is the will of the Council, that you will take the time and find those veterans that may be having a little bit of trouble dealing with their veteran status, reaching out to them, and being somebody who is at every parade and is at every VFW meeting and is in at every single thing that you could possibly do to outreach to those veterans and engage them, just like that VSO did for my father, who is now doing great and is receiving his services, and, you know, he wears his veteran hat proudly now. And I really hope that my fellow colleagues will join me in voting affirmatively for your appointment, and I hope that you will do a great job. And as a member of the Veterans Committee for this Council, I look forward to hopefully working with you and discussing more things that we can do for our veterans in this community.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Simard, “Briefly, I just wanted to say that there was collaboration with Councilor Drew and Councilor DiZoglio as part of the Veterans Affairs Committee on this election. There were eight candidates. The top three rose to the level of going to the Mayor, and then with the with the help of Mr. Urena, thank you, sir, for being part of that group. Mr. Normandia was picked, and I'm 100% in support of this appointment. Thank you.” Chair Soto said, “So I'm going to address the elephant in the room, just because nobody's saying it. You're coming from the Mayor's office, and as you can see, the Methuen Inquirer posted, is this a political appointment? The optics of it aren't the greatest, okay? I did the due diligence of going out there and talking to the veteran community and there's mixed feelings out there. I personally like you. Some say, yes, you're going to do great in this position on the clerical side, but that you seem a little shy for the job. I don't share the same sentiment, but at the end of the day, the optics, what people are saying out there, you are basically being transferred from one office to the other. So, I'm glad that Mr. Urena is here, that Councilor Simard made a point of saying what the process was, but I just want you to know that when these things are stated out there, they don't help us in here, because they're thinking we're moving friends around, and that's not what's happening. So, with that being said, if there's no further comments, I'll take a roll call.” - **UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – unanimously approved.**

6. Organizational Business – none

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

7. **Presentations/Projects/Department Updates:** Update and presentation on the Trash Coordinator position and the progress that has been made to address the solid waste/tipping fee shortfall – Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard, “Thank you Madam Chair. By way of introduction, I’d like to share some thoughts. First of all, not to engage in any ‘Trash Talk’ of any kind. Sorry, I couldn’t resist. I’m quite excited about this presentation. And I’m excited especially to introduce to all of you our new Sanitation Coordinator, Carina Pappalardo. She’s an absolute Rock Star in our DPW and couldn’t ask for a better person to step up and to work on some long overdue fixes to our program --- helping it run more efficiently while providing education to our residents. In essence, dealing with a situation, back when it was originally rolled out earlier in the decade, involved the fleeing of the horse from the proverbial barn at great speed. I’ll pass this off to Director (Pat) Bower and Carina (Pappalardo) to walk us through some things that we’re working on.” DPW Director Bower said, “I share your enthusiasm, Mr. Mayor. I couldn’t be happier with what Carina has already accomplished thus far. I’m proud to say I knew it. Carina has been a Rock Star ever since we hired her 10 or so years ago. She still has the same energy and enthusiasm --- always smiling --- has really taken on the trash and recycling role long before it was even a role. She’s been helping and working with me to promote positive change for the city. We’re going to talk about what we’ve accomplished in the last 60 days since she was hired. Carts have been a topic for the last couple of months, I think prior to the budget season, there was some discussion about purchasing new carts. So, we wanted to just take this opportunity to talk about carts really quickly, and then I’m going to hand it over to Carina so she can talk about what she’s been up to. And then I’d like to suggest that in my last slide that we come back at a later time, next meeting or a couple meetings. Talk about the transfer station, Carina and I have been talking about it a lot and what an asset it is for the city and how important it is to maintain the things we can do there. Throughout the years we’ve talked about grants to replace the building and reinvestment there, but we’ll save that for a later date. But if you’d like to have us back, we’d love to come back and talk about that. So, I put together a presentation, I left one for everybody. I will post this on the city website tomorrow, and I do have the pages numbered, so I’ll go through the first few. I’m on slide number one, so I’m Patrick Bower, as you know, the Director of Public Works. With me is Carina Pappalardo, our new Sanitation Coordinator. Harvey sent a contingent of folks, including Matt Higgins, who is probably most known to everybody, who are all here to answer your questions later in the presentation or during the presentation, if you’d like to speak to them about anything. I’d like to point out, while that’s fresh, Carina’s had regular weekly meetings with them. They’ve been extremely productive, including last Thursday, right before the holiday. So, we had an incredible meeting with them. They’ve been very cooperative, and we’ve had some things that we want to change --- How we do things, how we deliver carts, how we do bulk items, and Harvey’s been more than helpful in our efforts. On slide two, just a quick purpose of this update, I’m going to talk about trash and recycling carts. Then I’m going to hand it over to Carina. One of the Councilors suggested that we should include what our needs are for this program so that we can get some help here and through the Mayor’s office. And then we’ll talk about coming back again. On sheet three, just a quick snapshot. We’ve had questions about what we have for stock. I mentioned earlier that we had purchased some carts not too long ago. Right now, we have 250 trash carts in stock. Some of those are with Harvey. They’re going to deliver those for us, and I can get into how that works. We have 25 recycling carts. Just as

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

another sort of piece of information here. Carina, since she started about 60 days ago, has issued 305 warnings or rejections. So, the warning is, hey, you better do this, you better do that, which typically leads to a discussion, which is excellent. That's what we want. And then the rejections are, the trash is left or the recycling is left at the curb. What we found, which you would sort of say intuitively, what we found now is that that generates a phone call to Carina. So, she's finding that she's spending a day or two in the office responding to residents, and that's taking her from her work in the field. So, that's something we need to address. We spoke with the mayor last week about getting her some help and sort of, we want to make sure that we're communicating well with our residents. But we want to make sure that we're utilizing Carina's time efficiently. So, we've talked in the past about our records for carts. And that's one of the things that Carina's going to be working on. So, every household got a cart. If you're in an apartment, you have got a trash cart and a recycling cart, and every household has got a trash cart and a recycling cart. And then when we rolled out the program, we offered an additional trash cart for \$100 a year. And then a recycling cart for free, because we wanted to promote recycling, which is something that we pay less for them to rid ourselves of than we do for trash. In that initial period, we got all the trash carts out, it went fairly well. Then we started delivering additional carts. People started finding that they weren't comfortable with one cart. Harvey was delivering carts; we were delivering carts. Some of the requests were coming into DPW, then they were going to the mayor's office. So frankly, it could have been better. We have a list right now of who got additional trash and recycling carts that we work from. Carina and I are not comfortable that that is reflective of exactly what's going on in the field. So, we'll come back to you with that information once we have some time to go through that and make sure it's accurate. So, we'll come back, or we'll distribute it before we come back, here's what we find. Harvey's offered to help us with that, so they're going to utilize their people in the field to track numbers of carts. So, then we can take the number of cart and compare that to the address on the list. So, if they see four carts and we only have two, we're going to visit that site. So rather than have Carina go house by house and do that, Harvey's offered to help us out. Tremendous help and another great offer from Harvey for us. When that's all complete and we have a short list, then we're going to spend some time going out and I'm going to help. I'm going to get people throughout DPW to help Carina with that so that we can do that efficiently. So, we do have a plan in place to reel that system back in, make sure that we have an accurate inventory of the carts that are in the field so that we're charging correctly for that, and we'll get that system going. I just wanted to point out that early in the system, so Mayor Perry spearheaded this effort. We had tried it years before that, I don't know if a lot of folks are aware of that, but we had tried it before, and it failed miserably. I don't think too many Councilors or the administration was fully in support of it. It didn't seem like a political win at the time, I don't think, but it failed miserably. So, we came back with it, and Mayor Perry was very much in support of this. So, we went out and we did numerous, too many, public information sessions where we sat and talked about trash and everything else. But they were very popular. We'd have 50 or 60 people at these events, and people brought up very pointed questions. What if I don't have enough room? What if I have six people, I have eight kids? So, I think Mayor Perry really wanted this to be a success, and he really didn't want it to be painful to anybody. But unfortunately, when you're transitioning to a program like this, there's going to be some growing pains. So, we initially offered the additional carts at \$100, we thought there was good value in that. But what we find from

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

talking to other communities is that's very inexpensive, and it's probably, I think, less than what we pay for the cart. So, I met with the Mayor last week, we're going to raise that to \$250 a year in Fiscal Year 2027, I think we decided on. And again, recycling carts are free, we want to promote recycling as much as possible. I mentioned earlier, I'm not going to get too in detail with it because I want Carina to talk about it, but the education and the warnings and the rejections have worked tremendously. So, Carina has gone out, I think she did 40 rejections the other day when I spoke to her. When we go back the next time, those people inevitably, the majority of them will call and say, hey, you missed my trash. No, we didn't, we rejected it. Here's Carina's number. So, Carina will talk to them, and when we go back next week, everything's fine. So, it's education. Some of those rejections may be a little sharp, maybe a bit of tough love, but it's working. Which is tremendously hopeful for us. So, 305 is great news in 60 days, but there's 15,000 plus households in the city. So, we must make a concerted effort on it. When we have repeat offenders, we want to rely heavily on education and on these warnings and rejections. But when we have people who are repeat offenders, and we need to resort to our fines, which this body established several months ago, we're working on a system for that. So, I spoke to the IT Director. There's new software being prepared by the company that handles our fees and fines in that process, which is an outside company. So, they're developing software that is applicable to what we're doing here. That should be ready in a couple of weeks. I talked to him about two weeks ago, and it was three to four weeks out then, so I'm just assuming that that's going to be ready in a couple of weeks. When we have that, Carina will be able to start administering those fees. I think the way we're doing it now, and the fact that we haven't been able to do fines yet, fines I should say, is fine, because I think Carina wanted to get ahead of it. And one of the things I'm going to ask the council for, and ask the mayor for, is funding for additional education and outreach. And what Carina was hoping to do, and I agree, is get a mailer out to everybody in the city. Let them know that there's a new sheriff in town, and remind them, maybe have a calendar in there, the calendar that you see online, with a magnet for the refrigerator, the way we used to do it in the old days, and do some additional outreach before we start really getting heavy on the fines. The last sort of information block here says 110 missed pickup calls to DPW, so that's calls to my office. There's an additional number, I think 57 of See-Click-Fix. My assumption is that many of those are redundant, and if there's a missed street that you're going to get everybody calling. So, it's the same issue, but you get multiple calls on it. So, slide four is just carts. Again, I mentioned I'm on slide five. Our current records are just a spreadsheet that was kept in the Mayor's office by the new VSO. He did a heck of a job, but I think there was so much going on outside the mayor's office that there was a lot of hands in it. And I think that created maybe some confusion on that. But we're going to reel that all back in. It's very accomplishable to get that reeled back in and have that inventory reconciled for us. What we're going to do when Carina spearheads the effort out in the field. So again, Harvey offered to help us with a number of carts. But when we go back out, each cart has a unique serial number on it. And we're going to go back and we're going to catalog each one of those serial numbers so that each address has an associated serial number. So that we know when they call, or when we get a call, my cart's missing. We know it's down the street, and we'll be able to, again, manage our inventory a little bit better. And that's what that last block speaks to. So, Counselor Drew questioned us about unauthorized carts. And really, the only unauthorized cart would be a cart that was erroneously delivered to a household. So again, we got requests in, requests were being

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

managed by three different groups. Sometimes, we suspect houses got that request twice, or maybe three times. Or they called two weeks later and said, hey, I haven't got my cart, and they were requested again. So, their cart was already in the works, they called to inquire, they got another cart. So, they just kept the cart, rather than say, hey, I got it. Some people would call and say, hey, I got an extra cart, we'd go and get it. But some people just keep them, because they're like, great, extra cart. So that's something that's going to clean up when Carina goes house by house, and with the assistance of what Harvey has offered. Again, fee collection status, no fines to date. We should be able to do that within a month or so. But everything we've done so far, and Carina's work out in the field, has been very successful. Our process for the delivery of carts has been that, again, it started early in the process. Harvey was doing it. Mayor Perry really wanted to bring that in-house, because he wanted to control who's getting what. And he wanted to be able to, when people were calling, to be able to tell them specifically when they were getting the carts. So, he asked us to handle the delivery through DPW, and that's what we did. So right now, we have carts available. We can get you a cart relatively quickly, two weeks would be a maximum. So, what's happening now is we're taking the requests. We're making sure that we're inventorying the request, and that it's making its way onto the list. And then we send that request to Harvey, who has some of our inventory at their place. And they're able to deliver those for us in a timely manner. And that's been working out well. I'm on slide eight. Anybody in the city, as of right now, can ask for an additional cart. They can ask for as many carts as they want. Again, the cost of that's going up from 100 to 250. Recycling carts are free. Most people don't want to have 15 carts in their driveway. So, we're not getting a lot of requests for three and four recycling carts, so it's not a huge deal. But there is no limit on that. I know in other places there are limits, and we can sort of do some research on, if you have a two-bedroom apartment, why do you need four trash carts? Again, the whole purpose of this program was to drive our tonnage down, our trash tonnage down, and get our recycling numbers to go up. So, it's something to think about that we want to manage those numbers. And then replacement carts, replacement carts are free, but the entire cart will not be replaced unless something happens to the cart and it's not repairable. If it's repairable, then we get it repaired. So, Sanitation Coordinator, again, Carina Pappalardo, has been doing an excellent job so far. I'm sure you're all happy for me to finally hand it over to her."

Sanitation Coordinator Carina Pappalardo said, "Hello, Councilors, Mayor, Madam Chair, I'm Carina. It's nice to formally meet you all. Just looking at this front page here, this is one of the trash barrels that made me laugh the most. So, someone piled, I think, eight additional trash barrels of trash bags in their barrel and taped it so the lid stayed partially closed in hopes that the trash would take it. It's masking tape, so as the truck flips it, it dumps. But this is an example of someone that needs at least one extra cart. They only had one. It's a simple request; it's \$100 right now. People just, without me doing the education aspect of this job, this family wouldn't have no idea. They fixed the problem; it hasn't been a problem since I've been back to this neighborhood three times. As far as field education, those orange tags that you see on the barrel let the residents know that the lids must be shut. It gives them resources to go online where they can request an additional barrel, and it also has resources where they can buy overflow bags. Yes, so over the last two months, we've done about 305 rejections, and honestly, it's been a lot more. There's been a lot more coaching, so as I'm going through roots and I'm finding trash barrels and lids open, if I see someone outside, I wait a minute, I wait and I have a conversation with them. This isn't an instant rejection; it's a lot of the times it

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

turns into a conversation more than anything else. And the people really understand what I'm saying, they just have no idea a lot of the times. Which is why I think mailers, when we get around to sending mailers out, it's going to be so imperative to this program, because the education aspect has been lacking since this program rolled out. A lot of people have no idea that we have overflow bags, that this is a program that we have in the city. It's just, currently it's going unnoticed. Yes, so most of these residents are fixing the problems right after our first conversations or after the first rejection. I try to go back to the neighborhoods that I hit, and the neighborhoods I am hitting are totally random. When we did this program last year, we were targeting neighborhoods. This route, I really wanted it to be, I wanted everybody to get a part of this program, not just certain areas, not just Oakland Avenue. I wanted the neighborhoods next door. I wanted the neighborhoods down the street. So, as we're going through, some of these houses have no experience with this program at all. So, if we went right into ticketing, you have probably 80% of Methuen that had no idea that we were rejecting trash. Where some of these other more populated neighborhoods already have an idea of what's going on, and they're just kind of waiting for it. Yeah, so the cart catalog, we're going to start working on that. It's honestly just been busy, just trying to get, to take all the phone calls I'm responding to all the See-Click-Fixes. Taking missed trash calls and illegal dumping, going out, reviewing these missed trashes, reviewing these barrel repairs, reviewing these missing carts, and doing education. It's, I'm doing the job of, I think, four people right now. So sometimes I'm a little slower in responses, but I'm responding the best that I can to all the issues that I'm currently facing in the position, with kind of minimal resources at days, I would say, at best. So yes, so last month we had 57 missed trash See-Click-Fixes. It was a holiday weekend, and during the holidays we have a lot of people that forget what day their trash day is. Trash will go out, even though it's two days later, it's preceding the weekend. So, we tend to get repeat calls from repeat neighborhoods over these holiday weekends. So, this number really, I don't think, is representative of our trash collection in this past month. I think it was more of, honestly, residents just not having the information they need to put their trash out on the proper day. So, response time, we're trying to do same day or next day response time. It depends on when the calls come in. Currently, my hours are six to two. Trust me, we work after hours, but these are my normal hours that I try to stick to. But if I'm getting a call at 2 PM, I will send it in to Harvey. If Harvey is still in our neighborhood, they will send the trucks back that same day. It's all dependent, so I have spent three days doing ride-alongs with Harvey in their trash trucks. So, I got to really understand their start to end day. It's a lot more complex than it seems. If you go to the dump at one o'clock, why can't you get back to your route to finish it? So, these days that I went, I was in the trash truck from anywhere, I think, between 9 and 10 AM. We went to the dump sites. We went to Covanta, or we went to WIN Waste, both are the two facilities, the incinerators that we use. So those times that we went, those are the slow times. We did not get to that facility and leave in under two hours. So, if we have the trash truck running routes, and let's say they get in at an unideal time at 1 PM. Sometimes they're not out of that facility until 4 or 5 PM, and it's something that we hear, but we don't understand. I had no idea until I sat in that truck in the heat with a truck full of trash, with 14 tons of trash behind me, and I waited, and I waited with that driver just to get through. So, these guys, it's not always feasible for them to go back the next morning, and I think that that must be understood, where sometimes it's not. So yeah, holiday timing, those guys, so they're going back for us some days, even when, I've received videos. So, we ask for photos. If

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

trash is missed on a holiday cycle, sometimes their trash just isn't out. Harvey records videos, or photos, a snapshot of the property. So, if your trash isn't curbside, sometimes during these holidays though, Harvey's going back for us when they don't have to go back for us. These are days when our residents aren't doing what they're supposed to. This is where the education aspect needs to come in handy, because they are working with us in more ways than it seems. So, I think that touches that slide. Before I touch on slide 12, Harvey did say that over the next six months, because they had some missed stops, they're trying to get us back on track. We're trying to work with them as well. They were going to give us another trash truck. So hopefully, in the next six months, we're going to have significantly less phone calls, and less See-Click-Fixes, and those trash wait lines, that trash wait time to dump is going to be reduced if we have an additional truck. So, I think them giving us resources that we need is definitely going to benefit us in the next few months. So currently, my hours are six to two. During the summertime, it's due to heat. We try to work earlier hours and get out earlier in the day. The rest of the year, it's seven to three. But like I said, those hours tend to extend sometimes, depending on what we have going on. Meetings don't wait. So yeah, I have communication with the area manager. I have communication with the driver manager. I have direct communication with some of the drivers and routes. So sometimes, I can reach out directly to a driver if we have something that needs to be addressed. It's been nice getting to know the guys. I mean, they've been working with us, and they have been giving me tools that I need to do this job. So, field issues, I've been responding to a lot of illegal dumping calls. I do my best when I can. And I know that the DPW guys are out also doing what they're doing. When I have to, I have them help me. But ultimately, right now, I'm driving around in an SUV, and I'm picking up trash when I can. I'm picking up a trash bag, trash bags on the side of the road with food waste that's been there for weeks. I don't have a truck. I don't have the right tools to do this job. I had to get the loader to meet me the other day down the road from the transfer station to pick up a treadmill. I can't put a treadmill in my SUV. I could barely drag it out of the woods. I don't have the right resources, ultimately, to do this job properly. I mentioned the curbside check. So, as I receive these See-Click-Fix requests, I do go out. I had a request recently about trash barrels on a vacant lot. And it's currently still open because I'm waiting to speak to the homeowner again. But the homeowner is currently working on the property. It's not a vacant lot, and I know that we have residents that get testy about these problems not being closed. And it's in their timely manner, but they are being addressed and they are being spoken for. It's a process that doesn't happen overnight, and they're not slipping through the cracks. They are checked. It's just a process that takes time when I'm one person doing the job of a few. So, the education, I have been working on a brochure. I'd like to send out, as Director Bower mentioned, I'd like to send out a brochure with the complete outline of this trash program. I'd like to send out a magnet that has our trash schedule on it, A week, B week. This is hazardous waste day; this is your leaf pickup. The residents don't have that information right now, and I can tell you it's difficult to find on city websites. It's not something that you can Google and find with your first click of a link. So, these are things that really have to get out to the residents sooner than later, especially, I would feel more comfortable ticketing if I knew that the education has been given. I think it's almost unethical to ticket without education. So currently, my resident will call the DPW or I will receive a See-Click-Fix, or someone will receive a See-Click-Fix and direct it to me. The DPW, me, that's me, we review it. And depending on the situation, it takes time. Rather, I'm checking it out in

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

person, or if it's missed trash or missed recycling, I'm contacting Harvey and then I'm waiting for the video, or I'm waiting for them to check the route and see if the truck has been there. Sometimes I'll get a missed trash call at 9 AM. Hey, the truck's normally here at 7. Not that this takes up resources that I don't have, but it does take resources, because then I have to get in touch with Harvey. Harvey has to check the trash routes and tell me that just, well, the truck, we have a different driver in route. The truck hasn't gotten to that area yet. And so, then I'm responding to residents and telling them, I'm sorry, your trash wasn't missed. It's 9 AM. They have till the end of the day. It's a new driver in route. They're just driving the route differently. So, it's, so basically, based on Harvey's field response, I'm going out and then confirming that these things have happened. And so, if recycling was missed, I go and check if it was missed. Harvey goes back, and then once it's picked up, they're confirming with me, and I'm closing out the problem on See-Click-Fix. So, it's many steps. So, yes, go for it." DPW Director Bower said, "So, on slide 14, these are just some of the immediate needs that have come up. I mentioned earlier that we found that a lot of what Carina's doing out in the field is generating additional phone calls and follow-ups. We met with the mayor last week and talked about the need for it, it would be nice for her to have a laborer. It would be nice to have some administrative help. Again, a pickup truck with a lift gate so that she never has to. And I've made it clear to Carina that I don't want her to be pulling things out of the woods or lifting things. She always has access to DPW, the way we've always done it, and a group of people. But the person that she is, I know that she's going to do it anyway, right? So, office space is difficult, particularly for DPW, we're scattered all over the city. So, Carina's just taken extra space at the transfer station, so she has a desk and file cabinet and a shower right now. Trash and recycling carts, we want to make sure that we have those available, so we need to start thinking about our next order for those. Again, I think we're down to only a couple dozen recycling carts. And then really, what's critical, you've heard us both mention it, is that education and outreach. And we'd really like to do that. I think Carina made a very important point here that the average person hasn't been paying attention and doesn't watch these meetings and doesn't know, just one day they got a cart. And they're just jamming as much stuff in it as they can, and it's three bags over the rim. So if we're going to step back and start administering fines, I think she's correct that we should start with the education effort. And that was Mayor Perry's desire as well. We were working on that just before he passed. So, if you have slide 15, you can just ignore that. So again, I mentioned earlier on, love to come back and do more of this. I know this has taken a long time and you have a heck of an agenda. We'd really like to come back and talk about the transfer station and what we need to do there. We had a fire there last year in a dumpster that was in the building off hours. That affected some of the equipment there. The building itself is decades old in need of repair. We've scraped our way right through the concrete on the floor where we pick up the material. So, we need some reinvestment there, and it's a tremendous asset. The property itself is an asset, but it's going to go the way of all things that are neglected very shortly. The scale that we use to weigh all of our C and D every winter freezes, and we're no longer able to use the scale. We have to estimate how much loads weigh, and if we're estimating low, we're losing money, and it's not fair to estimate high. So, we'd love to come back and talk to you about that and bring some solutions as well. As well as talk about anything else you'd like to talk about, bulk item pickup. Carina's been working on bulk item pickup with Harvey. That's against a service that Mayor Perry really wanted to make easy for residents. It's been simply overwhelming to the highway department, and

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

the city's losing money on that as well. So, Harvey's agreed to pick up bulk item pickup, and we're no longer going to carry that through the city. But we can talk about that next time, and anything else you'd like to talk about, we appreciate having to come in, especially when you have such a lengthy agenda, but thank you so much." Mayor Beauregard said, "If I could, I just want to chime in with a couple of additional thoughts. Just to circle back on the recent meeting that we had to talk about some of Carina's needs when it comes to doing her job as effectively as possible. One thought that we are in the process of exploring is utilizing our senior tax work off program. We have quite a sizable list of seniors that are looking to take part in providing services to the city in return for an abatement on their taxes. Certainly, a great help to our seniors, but also potentially helpful to us, especially when it comes to dealing with some of the administrative functions that we're struggling with. But beyond that, when it comes to identifying a suitable vehicle for this type of work, we are looking at past year's CIPs for additional prospects in that regard. And then, I know you mentioned next time, we're going to talk about bulk, and that's okay. But I wanted to reference just briefly a thought that I've had about the way that we've been dealing with bulk pickup. So up until now, if you are a resident of the city and let's say you wanted to dispose of a fridge or a couch or something that would qualify for bulk pickup, our system has been operating. It was designed in a way where I'm looking at it and it's like make it make sense, it just doesn't. Where Harvey provides bulk pickup services for a set amount for each item. And then, also at the same time, the city of Methuen, through our DPW, has been providing literally the same curbside service, albeit at a different rate for the pickups. We spend roughly \$7,000 a month on renting the truck for bulk pickups. And not to mention, we're all getting calls from residents about things like potholes and things that we look to DPW to help with. And one of the challenges that we have is that we have DPW employees helping to run this bulk item pickup operation when, in fact, Harvey provides the same service. So, to an extent, we're competing with our own vendor, providing a service that they could also provide. And it's taking attention away from other things that we really need to focus on. And so, this is one of the fixes that we are in the process of implementing where, to put it simply, we're going to be turning to Harvey to provide that service. The city's going to get out of the business of picking up bulk items, so we won't have to spend \$7,000 monthly to rent the truck. We'll be able to redeploy our staff to do other things. But then, the other thing that I want to mention, and I can't get into this topic without making this abundantly clear. So right now, we provide our seniors with up to four free bulk item pickups every year. We provide the service as a free service to our veterans. We're absolutely maintaining that. However, we're simply reworking things on the back end so that Harvey will be providing the service ultimately rather than us, in essence, duplicating that. So, we can get into that a little more next time, but I just wanted to share that because that is an imminent change and something that I think is significant and will help our DPW operate, I think, a lot more efficiently. Thank you." Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, "Thank you, Madam Chair. So, I love the presentation, but one of the biggest concerns I have is when you said VIN numbers. So, I went backwards, too, to history. Since the program has been rolled out, you guys have never tracked VIN numbers. And you don't have a system in place. So literally, Carina's going to have to go around one by one and write down a VIN number. That is going to be physically impossible for you to do in about a year. Let's be real. You're shooting with all the other jobs you're saying. So, I would like to, see, this is why I would like Matt from Harvey to come up, Madam Chair, because they might be able to provide us with

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

some tools that we can work with, if that's okay.” Chair Soto recognized DPW Director Bower, “So yeah, so just to reiterate, Councilor, Harvey's already offered to give us a count at each home. So, we'll be able to compare that to the list we have from the Mayor's office. So, we'll say 19 Central Street, four carts, and Harvey comes back and says they have five. So, then we go there, but I understand what you're talking about as far as...” Clr. DiZoglio said, “The question I want to have through Harvey, do they have a system that they could track the VIN numbers? And if not, they're going to have to go house by house to track down VIN numbers, track it to the addresses. So yeah, the serial numbers are hard.” Chair Soto recognized Matt Higgins from E.L. Harvey & Sons, “I worked for another company that they did the serial numbers, and it's tough, because when they do report a stolen, it's almost impossible. You're looking for a number that you're never going to find. I think we found it once before. The best bet is to just count the carts, just do it that way. And if they're stolen, they're stolen, because the VIN numbers, like I said, it's going to take forever. It's going to be tough, and it's kind of pointless in ways, because as a driver, I used to drive around looking for these numbers, and you'd never, never, ever find them, never.” Clr. DiZoglio said, “It's tough. Can I ask a question? And Matt, when the program was rolled out first, you would have gotten, there was times that I heard that you got calls that some house would have a cart, and you would tell them, yeah, we delivered it, and they would tell you just to give them another cart. So, there's a possibility houses might have two carts.” Mr. Higgins said, “Yeah, I think Pat was saying that that list is not fully right.” Clr. DiZoglio said, “There was a miscommunication at the beginning, 100%. I want it to be very, very, to that point, there are people that might have carts that are not being accounted for.” Mr. Higgins said, “I believe there is, yeah, because I still, like I was out there Tuesday driving a truck. I still go out there occasionally and drive if I have to, just to help out.” Clr. DiZoglio said, “But you see some stuff when you're out there driving around that you know that's not, there's some carts that people aren't supposed to have. Okay, so that's, I think that, and Carina, you're doing a fantastic job, I've heard from everybody. But as you're saying it, you're doing six people's jobs right now. And I feel like this system is so broken, and we're going through the ordinance tonight. And the question I have is, and I'm going to bring it up when we do the ordinances. Because we could talk about this all night. The system is way broken to the point that one person should, you're backing up four years' worth of broken.” Ms. Pappalardo said, “It's a start, it's more than what we've got right now.” Clr. DiZoglio said, “I totally get that, but when you're also having \$850,000 taken out of free cash to fix the problem right now. That's where I have a problem, and trust me, I'm not saying you're not doing enough work. I'm not saying that. I'm thinking you're just bogged down right now. And Harvey is, you're saying you guys could go out and what she needs, you could support her.” Mr. Higgins agreed. Clr. DiZoglio said, “So I'm going to hold also Harvey accountable now to getting also these barrels tracked down. And because if not, I'm still not going to agree to next year, the time just better go down. I'm not, this is ridiculous, and with the amount of work that we're putting in. Also, I just got the email, 41% of my barrel fees have been collected this year so far. So about 59% of people that have an extra barrel are not paying their fees. So that's my issue, and you guys are taking back over the barrel, correct? Yeah, we've taken it back. So, will you be able to find out those barrel fees that are not being paid for? I don't think that's in process yet, but we will be. Okay, because once we pass the ordinance tonight, I'm going to have an announcement here that you have 30 days to get those notices out. And the fines are going to be permitted for not paying barrel fees. And

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

I'm sorry, the education part, pay your bill. Everybody knows you have to pay your bill. And people are saying online, and I got a text message from Councilor Valley today that someone said he's been asking to cancel their barrel. I guess I'll hold on to my barrel because I'm not paying for it. So that is to me where I get aggravated, where other people pay their fees. And other people are taking advantage of a broken system. So that's where I'm at, but we could talk. But thank you for both of you, and for your presentations. I appreciate it." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "Thank you, Madam Chair. So, this presentation I requested, and it kind of stemmed from, I find myself on See-Click-Fix, and Carina, I promise I'm not picking on you or anybody in particular. It's just when I start seeing things at four years old, it's like, trash, it hasn't been picked up. Well, I hope it's still not sitting there. And what really kind of pushed this was obviously the \$850,000 was something that was kind of a very polarizing item in this Council a couple weeks ago. So, when I saw we had truck breakdowns over the last couple of weeks. So, we've had what seems to be three truck breakdowns in the last three weeks. Is that correct, Matt?" Mr. Higgins replied, "Yes. It does, we've been struggling a little bit, but yes." Clr. Drew said, "So then I hear that we may not see a truck for six months, an additional truck? Is that..." Mr. Higgins said, "We're getting an additional truck." Ms. Pappalardo said, "They're going to give us an extra driver and an extra stop. Within the route as of today." Mr. Higgins said, "Yes, so there were a couple internal problems we took care of. I've been out in a truck, and not finishing is not an option. We have a meeting with everybody. Tuesday I was in a truck to get out there to finish. It's going to be figured out, but we won't get those calls anymore. So, trucks break down, we'll make sure we're out there." Clr. Drew said, "We have an extra truck now operating in the city on all the routes. Wireless and license, okay. Okay, so my other question is, what's this app that we're supposed to have as of July 1st this year that was supposed to be rolled out? Is that in works? What's going on with that?" Mr. Higgins said, "I believe it's in works. Just about, there were a couple tweaks they had to do, but it will be ready soon. Fully ready." Clr. Drew said, "Do we have a timeline on that? Because I mean, the contract that we signed for the extension, number four on the extension, was clearly July 1st, 2026, shall do a mass rollout of EL Harvey's trash smartphone app to residents, and the residents can reach out directly to Harvey for any trash and trash cart related items." Mr. Higgins said, "It's in the works. We had a meeting last week, and there wasn't just, for some reason it wasn't putting, like if they put the address in, that wasn't working. So, we have a meeting with everyone tomorrow, I'll find that out tomorrow, definitely." Clr. Drew said, "Okay, because I mean, we signed this in March. Right, so you had three months to get this thing up and rolling and ready, and we gave you an extension under these terms. I mean, I printed out your whole contract. I know this thing better than I care to (know). Same thing with the truck. If the Director asks for another truck, I mean, you have ten days to get us a truck, right? If he doesn't think that we're adequately funding, adequately picking up our residents' trash. And from some of the missed trash pickups that we've seen with the downed trucks, that sounds like it's an issue." Mr. Higgins said, "It's been fixed since then. Moving forward, there won't be a problem. You see, if I have to get in a truck every day, I'll get in a truck to get it done." Clr. Drew said, "Okay, now to Director Bower, Carina. You said that recycle bins and trash bins, if people just order them, they get them. I have had a few people reach out to me and tell me that that's not the case. They've been rejected. So, I mean, we have a very low recycling bin back stock. So, if people are looking for a recycle bin and we're trying to promote people recycling, how do we get them that recycle bin? If we only have 25

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

extra carts in the city, I know a couple of people sent me theirs, and it said that we were only providing trash barrels or recycling bins to new construction or new residents to the city, and they weren't giving them to the existing residents of the city." Ms. Pappalardo said, "So currently, we have 25 recycling bins. You are correct, those recycling bins are going to new construction, to homes that don't have them, or recycling bins that are not repairable. We don't have enough trash bins to give to our residents. That's why one of my asks is, we really must get on ordering recycling bins. I have, I think, 50 recycling bins just waiting in my requests on OpenGov. But every other request, I've never denied a trash cart since I started. I took over OpenGov June 8th or June 9th. So, the trash carts are going out. I've issued, I think, 37 of them since being in position. The recycling bins are currently on hold until we have more. It would be irresponsible to give out those 25 carts on one day, when I have someone whose recycling bin would be run over, and it needs replacement immediately. Or someone whose wheel falls off, but I don't have a spare tire to put on it, because all our recycling barrels are gone. So currently, they're on hold. They haven't been denied. They're basically just waiting until we can get those recycling barrels." Clr. Drew said, "Sorry, I do have people literally send me the screenshot from OpenGov. It was probably before you that said denied. I will tell them to Program over. Re-up it to at least be on your radar." Ms. Pappalardo said, "Yep, if they put in a new request, I'll handle it. I have, like I said, I keep a list now of the dates I receive the request, the date I give it to Harvey, and then the date the residents receive it. We have a maximum of a two-week turnaround, but it hasn't taken us more than five days since we started." Clr. Drew said, "Okay, so I guess my next question's going to go over here to the Mayor and the CAFO. So, if people are paying \$100 to get a brand-new trash barrel, I think we had this discussion of where's the fund, right? We heard that we have to find a funding source, we must find a funding source. Is there a fund or an account that is specifically set up for the trash bins so that we can have that when Carina needs more barrels, when recycling bins are running low? We know where the fund is, because if people are paying for that, that should be a source, correct? Because that shouldn't be a reason that we can't give people barrels if they're paying for them." CAFO Duprey said, "Yep, so we have a solid waste revolving fund. So that's where the fees go in that we collect for barrels, it's where we get revenue from the extra bags that we sell. It all goes in there. We get about \$100,000 at this point at the 41% where we're at. We have about \$100,000 in revenue a year over the last couple of years. Part of that goes to fund or support the solid waste program, but those are where we've paid for barrels in the past." Clr. Drew said, "Okay, so what's currently in that account? And how do we get, Carina, the ability to order 150 carts, 500 carts, whatever that minimum may be, to get those on order?" CAFO Duprey said, "So we ended Fiscal Year 2026 with about \$113,000 in there, \$50,000 of which goes to support the solid waste program. So really, it's the net that's available is about \$62,000 to \$63,000. That's as of 6-30-2026, so it's probably a little bit more than that with the first week or two in the work that she's doing." Clr. Drew said, "So, if I remember correctly, the barrels we ordered a couple months ago was like 444 barrels for a total of 424,000 and change." CAFO Duprey agreed. Clr. Drew said, "So it sounds like there's \$60,000 there. I mean, have we put the request in to order more barrels?" CAFO Duprey said, "We have not." Clr. Drew said, "Okay, is that something that we have to approve, or is that something that the DPW approved? How does that work so we can make sure that Carina has the tools to ensure that we're rolling things out to our residents accordingly?" CAFO Duprey said, "So, we'd only need to come to Council if it was over \$25,000, the contract. And I think it's

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

just internally we need to get the PO done.” Clr. Drew said, “Okay, hopefully we can, maybe by August 1st in the next trash update, we can say that we've ordered X number of carts. That would be great. And then that, I mean, Matt, can you guys just please? By August 1st, I'd like to have some sort of update on this rollout of this app that contractually, that's what we signed on to. I'd like to see that done. And there's a lot in here that I still have to go through, and I don't want to bog this meeting down too much with compliance. So, Mr. Mayor, I don't know if there's an ability for your administration and the DPW to work with Harvey and come up just for the next meeting to have just a contract compliance checklist that everything here is being met.” Mayor Beauregard said, “Absolutely, and I think that this whole conversation speaks to something that can at times be relatively novel in the context of local government. And it's kind of simple when you narrow it down. Comes down to fundamental communication, right? Where it's important for a program like this for the left hand to know what the right hand is doing and vice versa. And that's why I think having Carina in this position is so critical. But also, I think, welcome change for us where we're able to have somebody who is quite literally living and breathing the trash program. And having that level of oversight over the different aspects of the way the program is supposed to function. Whether it's cart inventory, education, we've gone through the whole thing. And ultimately, having Carina and that level of oversight, I think, will make it all the more effective for us when it comes to getting a sense of, hey, cards are low, we need to place another order, confirm with the finance office about available funds, things like that. So, it's just important for everybody to be on the same page, and I think we're making tremendous strides to achieve that. And again, it's a big change, sounds simplistic, but ultimately, it is something that has been a pain point.” Clr. Drew said, “Thank you. Just one more thing, Madam Chair, if I may. Carina, just everything I've heard, everybody says you're doing a great job. I really am not picking on you to see click fix. I just have nothing better to do sometimes when I'm sitting at home at night. I promise, it's either that or scrolling TikTok. So, one other item, that Harvey, I'm assuming you're adding the extra truck. Because I've had people make complaints about being in the neighborhood before 7 AM, me included. I text Director Bower at 6:30 AM to go, and they've already blown through my neighborhood, and I'm pretty deep into the far side of the city. So, I'm assuming that's why we're adding the truck, on top of the reason that the trash trucks were going down?” Mr. Higgins said, “Negative, like I said, that was an internal problem that we took care of. Guys think they start early, they get out early, but 7 o'clock AM is 7 o'clock, and we've had multiple meetings since then, and they do understand now, or they'll be disciplined.” Clr. Drew said, “Okay, and I mean, Director Bower, I'm assuming that when they're alerted that there's a pre-7 o'clock meeting, there's liquidated damages in here that they can be hit with \$2,000 fine per occurrence, per truck that's in this city per day. So, I mean, I hope every resident that's watching, if you see a truck that's in the city before 7 AM, picking stuff up, doing their job, let's make sure that gets relayed. Thank you.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Santos, “Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for what you're doing. And I really, really admire the job that you're doing, because we needed someone that do the hands-on. But I just have a couple of questions for you. I'm from the Central District. Since the Central District has the biggest Latino-Hispanic population, and it's also where we have the more condensed multi-families, how are you communicating with the residents of the Central District?” Sanitation Coordinator Pappalardo said, “I'll start by saying I'm from Lawrence. I grew up in a very dense Latin community. This is not anything new to me. I

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

will not tell you that I speak Spanish fluently, but I know that I can say, no bolsas de plástico en el reciclaje. No plastic bags in the recycling bin. I know that I can tell you no construction material, no madera en el reciclaje. I can tell you that I can say a bunch of things that are easily communicatable and if I have any additional boundaries I feel like aren't being communicated, I have no problem pulling out Google Translate. I'm on the ground, I'll open the recycling, and I'll show them a plastic bag. I'll show them an item, and I'll put it in the trash bin if it's in the recycling, if it's not in the right place. I am able to communicate decently, I think, and just being where I'm from, and this is kind of the city that I've grown up in, it's not anything new. I'm doing my best." Clr. Santos said, "I really appreciate that, but just being, growing Latino community in Metzl, and not only in the Central District, but also in the whole city. I just want to make sure that everyone is informed the right way. So, once you are ready to send out the mailers, I feel it's not going to be enough. Because I'm going to tell you from my experience, sometimes I get just papers in the mail that I just, I don't even read. Because I don't have the time, or it's on my counter. So what else are we going to do to be able to educate our community to ensure that we are not going to start ticketing because they are overflowing their trash barrels?" Sanitation Coordinator Pappalardo said, "I have a number of educational pieces that I'd like to roll out. It's just a matter of time and help, really. I'd like a school program. I'd like to be part of science class. Let's go into these third graders and teach them what proper recycling is and different types of plastics. These are conversations that could be had with our youth. And who better police their parents than the youth? I think there's a number of things, like we can use Methuen TV, we can use the mailers, we can use numerous different platforms, social media. It's just getting there." Chair Soto said, "Before I go to Councilor Simard, I think also we should leverage our IT department. Maybe you can produce some videos for the website, and that's something you guys can discuss internally. Because I think you providing that information, and with AI now, it could translate it for you. As well, you'll be speaking in English, and it'll be saying it in whatever language. So, I think that's a tool we can leverage." Mayor Beauregard said, "I think that's a fantastic idea, Madam Chair. And along similar lines, just a thought that popped into my mind, perhaps we can get some help with translating. But I think of radio, tremendous resource, especially within the Latino community. And so, I think that that would be another thing for us to just take a look at in terms of getting the word out." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Simard, "Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you to Harvey, thanks for the presentation. After we approve this, I'm glad it was you, Corina, because I often go to the transfer station, and I've been seeing you there for years, and you definitely know what you're doing. And I know the transfer station, we have to tweak the fees and all that, and I'm looking forward to that discussion later on. I know we have a big agenda, but I think we can all agree that we're setting her up for failure if we don't give her the tools she needs. She needs help, and again, just one phone call, two phone calls probably takes an hour of your time during the day to get back to that constituent. After you hear from Harvey about missed trash, I would say you need at least two people to help you. A clerk in the office filling those calls, and then someone that you could say, hey, address this issue because it's something that I don't have to do, you can do that. So, and I think she needs a vehicle that she can pick up trash with a lift gate. So, I think, however, the funding, wherever it has to come from, I think as a Council, if we don't approve it soon, and we let it linger, then we're setting her up for failure come next April, May, when we have to do another transfer for free cash. So, and we've got to get the software up and running, we have to be able to ticket people. So, one

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

question I did have is if someone doesn't pay that additional \$250, are we taking their trash at that point? I would hope, because some people are not going to pay it, saying no, you said it's \$250, you know?" Chair Soto said, "I think that's an answer that has to be answered by the Mayor or the department. And we'll discuss it later." Clr. Simard said, "We can wait for the ordinance." Chair Soto agreed. Clr. Simard said, "But again, as a Council, we have to give Ms. Pappalardo the tools she needs so she can succeed. So, we're not saying, well, we failed. Because if she fails, we all fail. So, thank you." Chair Soto said, "So, when we had the debacle with the \$850,000, and then people showed up about, 'my God, my garbage is not going to get picked up.' I figured out, because of some statements that were made on this floor, or at the chamber, that we were picking up the garbage at the (Methuen) Housing Authority. And when I've gotten comments from constituents that they throw mattresses in there, furniture in their dumpsters, and all that. So, what I'd like to ask the department, and I can formally do it through the mayor, is for an audit to be done of what dumpsters we are picking up for, whether it's only the (Methuen) Housing Authority. And what MOUs do we have? Are we getting reimbursed by them? Because that's adding to our garbage, for sure. So, if that's something that we can figure out, and if it's that the Mayor wants to pick up their trash for free, then obviously we're paying for that, right? But I think that's adding to that tonnage that we're head over heels over. And that's on the agenda. So obviously, not until you do that research and that audit, you may not even be able to answer that clearly. But I think with Harvey as well, we need to figure out, A, is it going to continue to be the way it's happening now? Or B, what can we do to make sure that tonnage is not our responsibility and adding to what is going to account for what she's doing? Because we're having this conversation, but that accounts to what she's doing without her even going there, right? because you're going household, thank you." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "Madam Chair, just for clarification, there is roll off units within our contract with Harvey. And I believe Methuen Housing is part of that within the contract." Chair Soto said, "So we're paying for their garbage. That I figured out. What I want to know is why they aren't reimbursing us for that? Because they're not part of, the city per se is not responsible for their garbage. Shouldn't be anyways. Other cities aren't (responsible to pick up trash) for their Housing Authorities." Mayor Beauregard said, "Yes, I think just in the broader context of the trash program, it's, I don't say this to sound like it's a cliché, but it's a new day for the trash program. And we're in the process of trying to implement a reset and get a lot of things right that perhaps we're stumbling blocks right out of the gate. And so, I think every option needs to be on the table. Every aspect of this conversation I think is valid and we need to look at it." Clr. Santos said, "Okay, so Madam Chair, just a quick question to the Mayor. You mentioned earlier that we are renting a truck for around \$7,000 so DPW can use it to pick up oversized trash?" Mayor Beauregard said, "That's correct. In essence, providing a duplicative service that Harvey is also capable of providing it." Clr. Santos said, "So why are we doing that then?" Mayor Beauregard said, "Well, so this is one of the things that the city has been doing for some time. And I think that it's kind of crazy that we're doing that. And so, it's one of the changes that we're implementing currently." Clr. Santos said, "So we're not going to continue to do it?" Mayor Beauregard said, "No." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "Thank you. Carina, Director Bower, Harvey. So again, looking at the extension that we offered, number five, I just want to know, are we using, it says contractor agrees that when they deploy a bilingual employee with city staff is periodically requested or needed to support Spanish speaking residents. I just want to make sure that we're utilizing that

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

with Harvey.” Sanitation Coordinator Carina Pappalardo said, “So whenever I need Pedro, Pedro's there with me. Pedro's there right by my side acting as an aid. I've also got to ride on a truck with Juan. Juan is also a Spanish speaking employee. They are providing that resource if I need it. I don't ask for it all the time. But when I do ask for it, it's available almost immediately.” Clr. Drew said, “Perfect, thank you. I just want to make sure everybody has the appropriate access that's needed.” Chair Soto said, “Okay, with that being said, thank you for your time. Thank you for your presentation. Thank you, Harvey, for always showing up.”

8. Reading and Acceptance of Minutes from Previous Meetings:

- **Special Meeting May 26, 2026 - FY'2027 Municipal Budget, Second Read – Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio - UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – unanimously approved.**
- **Monday, June 8th, 2026, Regular Meeting - Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio - UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – 8 yes, 1 present (Clr. Pesce)**

9. Proclamations/Correspondence: ~~Citation for Victor Rivera, Jr.~~ MOVED TO August 3, 2026 CC agenda.

10. Mayor's Report - Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard,

- “Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the Council. Before I begin my report, I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge, as we referenced previously, **the passing of Jim Dawe**. As the Council already recognized, Jim unexpectedly passed away yesterday. On behalf of the city, I want to extend my deepest condolences to his family, friends, and everyone at Methuen Community Studios. For many years, Jim generously volunteered countless hours as a coach, and by helping bring local government events and community programming into the homes of Methuen residents. He never sought recognition, but his work made a tremendous difference by strengthening the connection between our community and the events taking place throughout our city. On behalf of the city of Methuen, I want to thank Jim for his years of dedicated service. He will be deeply missed, and our thoughts and prayers are with everyone who knew and loved him.
- As we begin a new fiscal year, I wanted to provide a few updates on some of the initiatives that continue to move our city forward. As everyone knows, we recently reached a landmark **agreement with the PEC to transition the city's health insurance to the Group Insurance Commission**, effective January 1, 2027. I truly believe this is one of the most significant structural reforms our city has undertaken in many years. The agreement is expected to save taxpayers and health insurance subscribers at least \$11.2 million in premium costs alone through Fiscal Year 2030, while providing employees and retirees with a broad selection of high-quality health plans, significantly lower deductibles for many subscribers, and HRA reimbursements to help offset certain out-of-pocket medical expenses. Even before the transition officially takes effect, we're already seeing the benefits. Through reduced stop-loss costs and administrative fee loads, we're looking at approximately \$1.9 million in immediate savings right out of the gate. I want to thank the PEC, our consultants at NFP, a lot of acronyms here, and everyone who worked collaboratively to make this agreement possible. It demonstrates what can

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

happen when people come together to solve difficult problems. The city has submitted its letter of intent to the Group Insurance Commission, which they accepted, and we continue moving forward toward implementation on the 1st of January. Tonight's agenda, as Member Baez indicated previously, includes another significant opportunity to generate long-term savings for Methuen taxpayers.

- You'll be considering agreements with **Select Energy for rooftop solar installations at the Tenney School and the CGS**. These projects require no upfront cost to the city and are expected to generate more than \$3.9 million in net energy savings over the next 20 years while reducing energy costs and increasing sustainability. We have Brian Herr. He's a representative from Select here with us tonight who will be available to answer questions once we get to that portion of the agenda. Also on tonight's agenda are three resolutions involving city-owned properties that will help advance our efforts to create new housing opportunities in Methuen. Together, these projects represent what I think is an important step toward expanding housing options for seniors, veterans, and residents while responsibly redeveloping underutilized public property.
- Housing, as we all know, remains one of the greatest challenges facing our community and communities across the Commonwealth and, frankly, the country, and these projects continue our commitment to creating more opportunities for Methuen seniors, veterans, and working families to stay in our community.
- I also have some exciting economic development news. Congratulations to Mike Sarno and everyone at **Mass. Cabinets on receiving state economic development incentive program tax credits to support the company's continued expansion here in Methuen**. I had the opportunity recently to appear before the Massachusetts Economic Assistance Coordinating Council to advocate for their application, and I'm grateful that the Commonwealth recognized what this company means to our community. **Mass. Cabinets is investing more than \$8.5 million into its Cross Street facility while creating 25 new jobs over the next three years**. Perhaps most importantly, despite receiving competitive incentives from neighboring New Hampshire, the company chose to stay and continue investing right here in Methuen. That's a great vote of confidence in our community, our workforce, and our city's future, I think. So, thank you to Mike and his team, along with Director Wilson, for helping make this possible.
- Regarding the **MEVA strike** that has interrupted public transit services in Lathuan and across the Merrimack Valley, as of today, conversations between MEVA leadership and the union are ongoing. I learned today and passed along the message from Administrator Noah Berger regarding a meeting that is planned for tomorrow morning. He's continued to keep area mayors and members of the legislative delegation in the loop throughout the process. Like everyone else, I remain concerned that, I actually should say not concerned, I was certainly concerned about the service provided, or lack thereof, for residents who rely on public transit, but I remain hopeful that an agreement can be reached as quickly as possible so residents who depend on public transit can once again access the services they rely on.
- I'd like to remind residents that beginning this **Friday, July 10th, City Hall and most city administrative offices will begin our temporary Friday closure schedule as part of this year's furlough program**. Administrative offices will continue operating on their normal schedules Monday through Thursday. There will be no interruption to police, fire, EMS, Meals on Wheels, deliveries, operating hours at the Nevins Library, trash and recycling collection, transfer station hours, or any other regularly scheduled public work

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

services. These temporary Friday closures are one of several steps we're taking to responsibly address our fiscal challenges while protecting the essential services that our residents rely upon. We understand that these Friday closures may be inconvenient and we appreciate everyone's patience and understanding as we work through these fiscal challenges. Impact bargaining with our employee unions remains ongoing and we'll continue keeping both the Council and the public informed as those discussions move forward.

- This summer, families in Methuen can take advantage of **Summer Eats**. It's the Massachusetts summer meals program that provides free nutritious meals for all children and teens ages 18 and under while school is out. No registration, ID, or proof of income is required. This is a program that's governed by the Federal Department of Agriculture administered at the state level. Four Summer Eats meal sites will help ensure local children continue to have access to healthy meals throughout the summer and the sites **include the park on Gill Ave, the library, the Tenney Street Park and Playground, and the Y on Haverhill Street**. Folks can visit Methuen.gov to learn more. We have a whole write-up about the different locations and the times that they'll be there.
- I'd like to congratulate Chief McNamara and every member of the **Methuen Police Department on once again achieving re-accreditation through the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission**. This recognition reflects years of hard work and demonstrates the department's ongoing commitment to professionalism, accountability, and excellence and this is something that we most certainly will strive to maintain in years to come, along with hopefully, I know it's ambitious in terms of the goal, but something that would be great is for our department to achieve national accreditation before long.
- Separately, as previously announced, the city is beginning the process of selecting our next chief of police in light of **Chief McNamara's upcoming retirement**. We'll be conducting a comprehensive search utilizing a professional executive search firm and a search committee to recruit, evaluate, and recommend the strongest candidates for that position. It'll be open to qualified internal and external applicants who are post-certified or eligible for post-certification in the Commonwealth. Chief McNamara leaves behind a stronger department than the one he inherited and our objective here is simple. We want to identify the individual best prepared to build upon that progress and lead this outstanding department into its next chapter.
- Regarding some upcoming events, tomorrow afternoon, we'll officially kick off our **partnership with Cambier Consulting** as we launch a more aggressive citywide grant strategy to pursue additional outside funding opportunities. I'm excited about the opportunities that the partnership will create to help bring more state, federal, and hopefully private grant funding potentially back to our city.
- On Wednesday, we'll hold our **kickoff meeting with Weston and Sampson and KBA**. It's a regional New England-based architectural firm as we begin **planning for the city's future police, fire, and DPW facilities**. This represents the first major step in what will be a thoughtful long-term planning process, and we'll continue keeping the council informed as that work progresses. I know this is an issue. Of course, Councilor Santos has been inquiring about it and so we'll keep the Council in the loop.
- This Saturday, separately speaking of a different loop, I hope everyone will join us this Saturday at the Loop for **Methuen's semi-quincentennial Independence Day celebration**. Try saying that 10 times fast. It starts at 5.30 p.m. Fireworks will be, I

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

believe, after nine o'clock. We'll have, of course, fireworks, live music, food, trucks, games, activities for kids, and plenty of family fun as we continue celebrating Methuen's 300th anniversary, but also, of course, the 250th anniversary of our country's founding.

- Next Thursday at 11 a.m., we're going to be welcoming another new business to our community with the grand opening of Namaste Bazaar. It's in the former Joanne Fabrics location at the Village Mall on Broadway. It's a family-owned market and cafe. They are going to be offering authentic Indian groceries, fresh produce, spices, prepared foods, chai, baked goods, and other popular Indian street food. We're excited to welcome, this is yet another locally-owned business to Methuen. We wish them every success in the world. From what I can tell, there doesn't appear to be anything quite like this, at least in the immediate vicinity, so I'm hopeful that they'll have great success in our community.
- Finally, I'd encourage everyone to attend the city's **Disability Pride Fair**. It's being organized by our Commission on Disability. It'll be held at the Y on Haverhill Street from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, July 25th. The event is free and open to the public and it's going to feature vendors, music, games, face painting, community resources, and activities for all ages. And this month, we'll also be **raising the flag of Puerto Rico** for the first time at Methuen City Hall which is exciting. So, thank you, Madam Chair, Councilors, happy to answer any questions. I'll see you on the other side with the request list.

11. CAFO Report – Chair Soto recognized CAFO Maggie Duprey, “Thank you. Excuse me. I did send an email out to the council earlier this evening with an updated CIP report. That's going to be as of 6-30-26. So, it's really where we're ending the fiscal year. I'm happy to answer any questions once you've had a chance to review them. I know obviously you haven't had a chance. So, whether that's at the next meeting or in between, I'm happy to answer those questions. The **Searles (Estate) expense update**; aside from the general monthly utilities, we have just spent \$139,611 on debt service interest payments to roll the bond anticipation note over for another year. That was included in Fiscal Year 2026's budget, but that is something that was spent on the Searles (Estate). So, I just wanted to mention that here. Another question I'm looking at, I went through the requests. The Treasurer-Collector has posted, and Councilor Valley's not here, so maybe I'll wait for that one. But the Treasurer-Collector did post and advertise the accounts payable twice. So, the clock on recouping those funds or being able to take those funds in has started for those, which is great. Hopefully we'll be able to see some of that revenue in Fiscal Year 2027 towards the tail end. But I do think that we'll be able to see whatever shakes out from there. She's currently preparing the amount for this past year. So, that will start the clock, and then we're looking at 2028. So, this will be an ongoing revenue stream, hopefully. Guaranteed deposits are under review. Those are a little bit trickier because a lot of them are very old. So we're trying to make sure that we have the correct information about who to advertise for. But we're getting that figured out so that we can get those done, and we're hoping to get those advertised for the first time before the end of the summer. And lastly, payroll. We have really taken great strides to figure out what our plan is going forward. We have a go-live date set for January 1st, 2027. It's all steam ahead. We had discussed doing it in October, but all agreed that the cleanest way to do it would be at the calendar year, whereas the W-2s change over at that point. So, it would just make it easier for employees to be able to finish one and start another, as well as training and the processes goes. So, we're going to start that in the new year. We have a consultant that's working with us to alleviate some of the internal transition, especially having lost a payroll person. So, we've resolved to work alongside our IT department. And we're meeting with Tyler Technology at least every other week to make sure

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

that we hit that target. Happy to answer any other questions that you have.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, “Thank you, Madam Chair. You mentioned the payroll going live on January 1. Talked about going in October. How much are we talking cost to the city from October to January versus, are we talking an extra \$50,000 that we’re paying out to?” CAFO Duprey said, “No, so, and it’s not going to exceed what we have budgeted for in the Fiscal Year 2027 payroll budget. So, it’s all within what we have. The plan fits within the funding that we already have.” Clr. Drew said, “So if we had gone in October, would there be any savings to the city?” CAFO Duprey said, “Potentially, but I don’t think it’s the right way to go because it’s not the cleanest. And we also want to make sure that we’re training all of our employees because this is going to be very different. And so, making sure that we do it the right way the first time, January is the right way to go.” Clr. Drew said, “I’m just, you know, we were talking about being in a financial straight and all these different items. I just want to know every dollar that we’re looking at of maybe there was a savings of \$20,000. Okay, maybe it’s not worth the headache. But if it’s a significant amount, maybe it is worth that headache. And that’s what I’m just trying to figure out.” CAFO Duprey said, “Yep, absolutely. It was significantly less than that. For the year, we’re looking at \$60,000. So, for three months of that, it’s really...” Clr. Drew said, “About \$15,000.” CAFO Duprey said, “For what it’s worth, for what we’re going to get by not doing it then, it’s worth the January date.”

12. Requests of Councilors

- **Does the Methuen Housing Authority currently receive trash collection services through the city’s municipal trash contract? (Req. of Chair Soto)** – Mayor Beauregard said, “So just so you all know, I know we’re going to kind of start at number seven, but I do have a meeting with the Director of the Housing Authority on Wednesday, just to get up to speed on what’s going on with everything over there. And certainly, I’ll bring up the trash consideration as well.”
- **Buildings Audit RFP Status update - (Req. of Clr. Drew)** – Mayor Beauregard said, “The buildings audit RFP, I’m going to channel Chief of Staff McCarty. I think he had a conversation with Councilor Drew about the prospect of the parks and recreation or something along those lines. The committee working on some thoughts for the RFP.” Clr. Drew said, “Yes, I’m working on the parks one. That’s why I took that one off. This one’s just for buildings. I’m working with Director Angelo to get that squared away along with my other Parks Committee members.”
- **City employee email signature standardization (Req. of Clr. Drew)** – Mayor Beauregard said, “Email signatures haven’t really been at the top of the list, but certainly worth a conversation. I know it’s of importance to the Council.”
- **Fire Department fees update (lift fees and ambulance rate adjustment) (Req. of Clr. Drew)** – Mayor Beauregard said, “We have an item on the agenda tonight that’s going to deal with this. We mentioned during the budget process talking about bringing our ambulance fees a little more up to speed with other communities in the area. Beyond that, we have a new lift assist fee. Just to be clear, this is, I think, an area where there may be some confusion. This doesn’t deal with charging residents that have a fall at home. This would be for assisted living facilities, nursing homes, and the like that. They have a staff, but due to insurance liability reasons, they do not pick up a resident who has fallen and they are otherwise uninjured. They call the fire department to come and do that for them. And so many other municipalities charge a fee to the facility to provide that service for them. And so that’s what we’re doing here. For the first time, it’s a service

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

that we provided for free, but when it's something that's commonly paid for by an assisted living facility, nursing home, potentially insurance, who knows how that plays into it. But why are we not charging for the same thing that other communities are charging for? It only makes sense, I think.

- **HHSI permit fees review and update status (discussed during FY2027 Budget Workshop) (Req. of Clr. Drew)** – Mayor Beauregard said, “HHSI permit fees, the Board of Health - I received an update from Director Tegan Zampach about this. She shared that the Board of Health has been in the process of updating their fees. They're looking at separately some of the building permit fees and the like and trying to make sure that we keep up with, in essence, the market so that we are not undercharging for some of these things. So, I'll have a more comprehensive update, Councilor Drew, on that. I'll follow up with her.”
- **SeeClickFix clean-up and follow-up (Clr. Drew)** – Mayor Beauregard said, “See-Click-Fix, this is something that, I've actually had this conversation with, I know it's something that Director Bower mentioned, but also our Chief Information Officer, Luis Santiago, has brought this up in the past as well, the need to just, I think, do a little bit of a better job at keeping up with when something is truly taken care of, close it out. So, that's something that perhaps we can circle back about See-Click-Fix and see if we can maybe have a little bit more of a, I guess, effective approach to when something is done, just get it out of the queue. If it's not completed, as Carina mentioned, there are some circumstances that they're waiting for, some type of information from the homeowner regarding a particular issue. I can see how that can potentially pave the way for some issues with closing things out, but that's something that we can certainly follow up on.”
- **Boards and Commissions appointment and reappointment status update, including current vacancies, expired terms, members serving beyond their allowed term or maximum service time, and the administration's timeline for filling or replacing those positions (Req. of Clr. Drew)** – Mayor Beauregard said, “Boards and Commissions: I haven't really had a chance to dive into an update here. We did kind of go gangbusters on appointments in recent months, and there are some Boards and Commissions that need to be updated. Many of them have been updated, but there are a handful that have not, which we will address with the Council. I think it might be helpful for us, just thinking out loud, we did put out a social media push recently, encouraging people to apply for some of these openings, and we did get quite a rush of people who applied.” Chair Soto said, “If I may, Mr. Mayor, that was one of my initiatives in the first term, and he did appoint about 12. There was some attrition from two members that couldn't serve, but you did about 12 members. I was keeping track back then. So, he did appoint many new members, but some were reappointed.” Mayor Beauregard said, “And there are a couple of Boards that need to be brought up to speed as well. So, what I could do is we can maybe circle back and get the latest list to you and look at some of the areas where we need help. And I think that that could be a great opportunity for us to make another push on social media. Specifically, hey, we need help on XYZ board and trying to get applicants and leveraging our network. So that's something that we'll keep on that.”
- **Request that the City Solicitor provide an update on the ownership of the Depot Overhang associated with the Laborers Union building. Please include the current ownership status and indicate whether any title or deed information has been identified for the property (Req. of Clr. Valley and Clr. Drew)** – Mayor Beauregard said, “I don't have anything new regarding the property. I know this is something that

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

I've spoken at length with Tim Vermette. Actually, owe Andy Hillebrand a call regarding just the Rail Trail aspect of this whole conversation. I know it is something that is important to the Rail Trail Alliance, and for that reason, it's something that we're talking about. But I'll defer to the Solicitor. That's a legal situation, and there have been opinions provided, I believe, Mr. Solicitor, by John Foskett that we unearthed, so we can follow up on that." Solicitor O'Neill said, "Yes, and I will share those with the Council."

- **Mayor Beauregard said,** "And then I'm going to add in a couple of other things that are new that I didn't mention, and I'm going to think of more as we go, and I guess I'll save them for next time. But I wanted to share that as of today, **the Marsh Grammar School now has their new boilers**, which was a project that ran into some issues in the past, but that's been settled, and those are in place now. We have a couple task forces that have been meeting. We're circling back with the **Human Trafficking Task Force**. There have been some problem spots that have potentially been popping up. There was one social media post that I had seen at one point, and I tried to find it so I could chime in on the comments to share an update, but I couldn't find it. It's somewhere out there, but there is a facility in Methuen that had been on our list that we were keeping tabs on. Now, an issue that we've run into is that in one instance, this is a facility that's over off of Swan Street. The state gave them a license to operate, and so that's something that we're following up on with folks at the state level. This is an issue that I know Governor Healy, Lieutenant Governor Driscoll have placed a strong emphasis on trying to get after and address in our local communities, and so when we have, for instance, a state agency providing authorization, that certainly complicates things for us in terms of local enforcement when we've had issues with any particular facility. So we're trying to keep on top of that as best we can. If folks are seeing things that ought not be happening, our ask is for folks to continue to reach out to the PD, but especially our inspections outfit because we have been utilizing that significantly in terms of actually trying to get after this issue from an enforcement standpoint using our municipal code. Another thing that I wanted to mention as well, we have ongoing meetings, even during the summer, **regarding school facilities**. That conversation never stops. We have on the agenda tonight the **replacement of carpeting at the Marsh**, which is long overdue. Same material that we used before at the Timony. So, this is something that I think will be good for us to tackle continuously as we try to get through all of them. I have a list of maybe 30 other things that I'm kind of drawing a blank on, but we'll have a longer list, I guess, for next time. Thank you." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Valley, "Okay, Madam Chair. Yes, I have a question. Through you to the City Solicitor, I didn't get, what is the information that you're going to share with the City Council regarding the depot overhang?" Solicitor O'Neill said, "We had interactions in the past. In 2019, this issue was sent to outside counsel for analysis, so I will share that analysis with the Council that was previously done." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "Thank you, Madam Chair. Through you to Mr. Mayor. So just a couple items, because it looks like it was a lot of the questions I had. The Fire Department on the lift fees, I hope that we can, if that passes tonight, we will send also over to those facilities so that the staff that work there know if there's a problem, like an actual emergency, to call. Don't just think like, oh, because somebody fell. No, don't call them. We don't want to get the fee. Please make sure that that gets pushed through so those residents don't fall and get hurt and not call, because they're worried about the fee." Mayor Beauregard agreed. Clr. Drew continued, "As for the permits, I really would like an actual date, and as I think we've established at

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

this point, I'm very, I like to know the days when we're going to get information. So, if you can give me (a commitment) at the September meeting, we'll see something." Mayor Beauregard said, "So this is, in real time, an update from the director of HHSI. Fee update for tonight, health-related fees have been updated, new fees have been posted to the website and updated in OpenGov. We're working internally on proposed changes for building department-related fees. So, what I'll do is I'll follow up with her and get more of a definitive sense as to exactly what has been changed and communicate that with the Council and, of course, share that maybe on the website as well." Clr. Drew said, "Okay. So, onto the next one is See-Click-Fix. As I mentioned during our trash presentation, I have been spending a lot of time on See-Click-Fix because sometimes I have to sit at home because I have the kids. As I'm going through it, there's 1,911 items that are either open or acknowledged. 550 of them happened this year. So, over the last four or five years, there's 1,500 in backlog that haven't been addressed. So, can you please push your department heads to close their items that are complete? Because a lot of them are just frivolous items and not to pick on the trash, but there are some that say trash is missed back in 2022. So, what I hear from a lot of residents is See-Click-Fix is an abyss. Things just go there to die. You don't get any response from anybody. You don't have any follow-up from anybody. So, we want the community at large to utilize this platform to help us. And I mean, I look at it, I see the dots all over it. The thing's got chickenpox. But if you got rid of a lot of these items, you could probably clear half of those things away and make it look a little cleaner. There are going to be lingering issues that need to be fixed because they're big problems. I get that. But this is a significant issue when it comes to people closing out and following up with things. So, can we please make a concerted effort to see that number come down and maybe have a report of what's left open in the next meeting?" Mayor Beauregard said, "I think that's a great idea and we absolutely should aim to do that. Something that Mayor Perry would do quite frequently during his own mayor's reports, he would actually go through and provide updates to the council regarding See-Click-Fix activities, tickets and the like, and sharing updates regarding usage of the platform, but also the number of tickets for various items and how things are being resolved. And so perhaps that would be a good thing for me to continue to do. So, I think one thing that I'll certainly aim for going forward is to bring that practice back and maybe have a See-Click-Fix update for the Council regarding the things that are being requested by residents, but also resolutions for these issues, even if it's looking at it from a statistical standpoint. And that also, I think, gives us more of a sense as to how many residents are using it. I think that's all helpful information for us to have generally, but I think that will have the effect of keeping me a little more on my toes as it relates to ensuring that things are being dealt with accordingly from a constituent services standpoint. So I think that's a good idea and I'll do my best to work on that." Clr. Drew said, "Thank you. And one final item. As for the boards and commissions and appointments, I know we had some people come through this year that we approved according to our own website, going through all the boards and so forth. There's 43 total expired members. That's just information we have on our website. So, either we have stale information or we just need to update the people. 29 people have no term listed. Then we have some vacancies. We have three members expiring this year. I just want to make sure that we're trying to stay up on these things because there are people that are interested in trying to serve on boards. And to have 43 expired positions on numerous different opportunities for people to come and be part of our community, I think that's something we need to push and do better on

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

because 43 expired terms, I know you've only been mayor for a year and a half roughly and this is not your fault. A lot of these are lingering past issues. So, I'm not holding you to that, but I think we need to start to address getting some of these people up to date and getting other people involved in our community." Mayor Beauregard said, "I couldn't agree more. I think that one of the things that we need to do is take a look at the website, the information on the website versus the actual roster that we have because I would virtually guarantee that we do not have 43 expired people considering the amount of appointments that we've been trying to..." Clr. Drew said, "It accounted for the people that we appointed this year. Also, there were people there that are listed that we approved them in March or we approved them in April. So, a lot of them are in there, but there are people here that are just lingering. There's a lot of over expired appointments." Mayor Beauregard said, "So, I'll have to check on the exact number, Councilor. I don't have it off the top of my..." Clr. Drew said, "Happy to hand this to you after the meeting." Mayor Beauregard said, "But I will say that we've made a really concerted effort to try to bring as many of the boards up to speed as we have been able to consider the applicant pool. I did earlier this year ask for myself to be added to the distribution list whenever a new application comes in just so I can see for myself exactly who's applying for what. And I can definitively state that we have had not even a trickle. I haven't seen a new application come through in quite some time. So I think that that presents a great opportunity for us to maybe make more of a repeat push to try to encourage people to actually apply because the fact of the matter is we do not, we absolutely do not have a rush of people banging on the door to serve in these various capacities. And I think to an extent that's a marketing opportunity for us." Chair Soto said, "But I think it's also fair for you, Mr. Mayor, to ask the counselors to also help you make that push. Because when I did that, that's, I mean, I probably sent seven recommendations. They weren't all appointed, but I think we could help with that as well."

13. Public Service:

Grants: Public Service Grant 301043582 Temple Drive, Westgate Circle, Jewel Circle National Grid will replace existing direct buried cable with a conduit system – **Motion to approve by Clr. DiZoglio, seconded by Clr. MacLaren** – **Discussion** – Chair Soto said, "Thank you. I think the Solicitor has an announcement." Solicitor O'Neill said, "I sent you an email earlier today. Just because we had a lot of movements with the meetings and the times and places, we did have some people receive notice of this grant, public service grant for 6:45, and we're well beyond that. But I just wanted to ask the Council to call for any public participation, if there is any on this item, because the residents in that area received notice for a later time than when we started originally. It won't interfere with the voting on it, but we should give them the opportunity to do that." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "Thank you, Madam Chair. To you or the Solicitor, if we approve this here, does this get a second read or is this just a single read item?" Solicitor O'Neill said, "No, it would just be a single read. One read." Clr. Drew said, "Okay, because I had had questions for the member, for the gentleman from National Grid about the curb-to-curb and getting that information, and he said that his project manager would have to get that information to us. So, to approve this, I'm going to be a no (vote) because I don't have that information." Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, "Through you, Madam Chair, to the solicitor, so if we were to table this, would that hold it up to the point where we could lose the grant? This is just allowing

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

them permission to do the work.” Solicitor O’Neill said, “There’s no money involved. You may want to ask, I don’t know what, I think he said that the work wasn’t going to happen. I heard the work wasn’t happening right away, but we may want to ask him. (The National Grid representative was not there.) Solicitor O’Neill said, “I believe I heard that, that the work wasn’t imminent, so.” Clr. Drew said, “He had mentioned that there was a backlog at National Grid, so he doesn’t see this happening until the tail end of this, into the fall, possibly early next year. So, my concern is if we’re having this and we’re signing this, I want to make sure that there’s a caveat that does put them to require curb-to-curb of any asphalt disruption.” - **Motion to table by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. Santos - UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – 6 yes, 2 no (Clr. Marsan & Clr. Simard) 1 absent (Clr. Pesce) - TABLED**

Licenses:

- Solar Project License Agreement between City of Methuen and Solect Energy Development LLC – Tenney Grammar School located at 75 Pleasant Street, Methuen, MA 01844 - **Motion to approve by Clr. DiZoglio, seconded by Clr. Santos – Discussion** – Mayor Beauregard said, “As I mentioned earlier, Madam Chair, we have Brian Herr from Solect Energy available to answer questions.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Marsan, “On page five of our packet here, about the warranty for the roof, do we have a written warranty for our roof? Yes. And are we asking them for one? Page five, number five. C1.” Mayor Beauregard deferred to Solicitor O’Neill, “I have no idea. I have no idea about that, whether we have a, that clause simply says if we do have one, that they’ll be consistent with preserving that warranty. I do not know whether the school has such a warranty presently or not. One of the buildings needs a full new roof, so there will be a warranty on that roof. One of the two schools has, will need a new roof before the project can proceed. So, everyone would have a warranty.” Clr. Marsan said, “So with that being said, Mr. Mayor, if we’re getting a new roof for one of these two schools, will that be happening before we put solar on? And then we have a warranty in place? Obviously, it is, but we don’t have that.” Mayor Beauregard said, “Yes, to clarify the issue with the property that had the imminent roof need is the Timony. And so that was originally in the mix as part of this conversation. And we ended up taking that out, considering the fact that they do need a new roof in the very near future.” Clr. Marsan said, “So, we just don’t know if we have warranties for the roofs that we have on the two schools that we’re doing now.” Mayor Beauregard said, “I just don’t want to speak out of turn. I can confirm that with the administration.” Solicitor O’Neill said, “Right, but I’m not sure I understand your question. The clause only protects our warranty. It requires them to do work consistent with preserving whatever warranty exists. So, if none exists, then I don’t know how old those roofs are. I mean, the School Department would be able to answer that question.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, “So my knowledge, the Timony has the newer one, because it literally fell apart like a few years ago, and they had to replace that whole roof.” Mayor Beauregard said, “Very recently, not recently in the context of like in the past couple of months, but in the past few years.” Clr. DiZoglio said, “Yeah, it was like two, three years, because I was on the School Committee. So that roof, but I think it should, and I don’t want to speak out of turn either, but I don’t think it has a warranty on it, from my knowledge. I don’t remember on the School Committee we were ever told about a warranty. But I’d rather you follow up with Superintendent. But from my knowledge, it was never brought to us --- the warranty. We just assumed because you put a new roof on and it falls through; you’re

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

hoping that the people would come back and fix the roof. And it's one of those things that you're hoping that you don't need to discuss in a meeting. And you're hoping whoever signed the contracts has a warranty on it. So, if we could follow up on that, that'd be great.” Mayor Beauregard said, “Yes, in both instances, the Tenney and the new roof, that was before my time. So, I'll have to reach out to the administration to confirm that. I just don't want to speak out of line.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Marsan, “If we do, or do we have to do a load analysis, engineering to save the weight? I know we change air handlers on a roof. We do the same ones in kind, and we have to do an analysis on the roof.” Mayor Beauregard said, “I think it would be helpful if Mr. Herr could approach the podium and maybe share some insights as to exactly the type of...” Mayor Beauregard said, “And I think it would be helpful to maybe have a little more of a rundown from Solect regarding the specific type of product that we're looking at. Because I think there may be some misconceptions about what we're talking about in the context of solar panels. It's not what some might think it means.” Mr. Herr of Solect Energy said, “Sure, thank you for letting me participate this evening. I'm a Select board member in my own town in my 5th term. In particular to the warranties, we have to inspect the roof with the warranty holder, meaning the membering manufacturer. And if MSBA money was involved, which would likely go up to the roof, it's required that a warranty comes as part of that. We inspect the roof with the warranty holder. We issue a document stating what we're going to do. They issue us a document back saying the water warranty will remain in effect. Once you finish the work, and we re-inspect it, we'll do one more. And then we get the document continuing that warranty for the rest of the term of that warranty itself. And typically, like 20 years, you'll end up having whatever is left on it re-instated after you do it. So, it's a part of the process that we do all the time. Specific to the structural question, is the roof, is the building strong enough to hold an array up on the roof, and averages about five to six pounds per square foot, we have a structural engineer, an independent structural engineer, not our structural engineers. We have engineers, but we have an independent person come with their own professional license. They review the structure, which is what's underneath the roof, the pillars, the posts in here. And then they issue a report with their stamp on it. That goes to your building department then as part of the building permit. And they inspect that report to make sure it is solid and will withstand the weight of the array. In general, you're getting two schools with solar on the roofs. You're going to save about \$4 million over 20 years. You will pay nothing for this to happen. We invest the money. We get a return on that investment over about an 8-to-10-year period, depending on the sunshine and how much production comes off that roof over a period of time. Power Options is your partner in this process. And they monitor everything that we do per bid that we gave them. They're a nonprofit entity created by Massachusetts Clean Energy Council. And so, they are your watchdog for you, if you will. And they have sanctioned this whole process and will continue to do it right through construction and into operations.” Mayor Beauregard said, “Just to provide some clarity regarding the funding source for the prior roof projects, our understanding is that there was not any involvement from the Massachusetts School Building Authority or administration when it comes to funding. So that may not be applicable in these two instances.” Mr. Herr of Solect Energy said, “We should double check that, Mr. Mayor. I suspect it's the membrane manufacturer, not the contractor that issues the warranty. I suspect there's probably one still there, if it's new, within like the last 10 years.” Brian Herr is Senior Vice President for Select Energy based in Hopkinton, Massachusetts. I oversee all the development, engineering, logistics

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

stuff for the company, sales, everything kind of incorporated there.” Chair Soto asked, “Who gets the RECs (renewable energy credits)? Do we get them or do you get them?” Mr. Herr said, “So the way this works for the city is you guys will buy electricity from Select Energy over a 20-year period through the power purchase agreement for about three cents a kilowatt hour. You're probably paying, I don't know, 18, 19, 22, 24 cents a kilowatt hour. That three cents a kilowatt hour that you pay Select over a 20-year period is three cents for the entire 20-year period. It's a fixed rate PPA (power purchase agreement). So as electricity always goes up in price, your price will be the same over a long period of time. So, it's a discounted price and all the incentives and everything kind of gets thrown into the pot. That's what creates the revenue stream for us over a period of time. That's how you guys save money and that's how we make money over that period.” Mayor Beauregard said, “So we have, of course, our municipal power aggregation program where residents who participate in the program, they receive their electric supply through this aggregate system. And we're locked in at 12.8 cents per kilowatt hour through December of 2027. And that's a notable discount compared to the national grid basic service rate that everybody else out there pays. So just to illustrate the significance of the savings, at least for us on the municipal side, granted that's residential, but just to demonstrate, I guess, the impact of an investment in solar in the context of bringing that per kilowatt hour rate down. Just a thought.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, “Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to kind of go off of what everybody else was asking. So, it sounds like we don't really know how old these roofs are. I really want to speak to that. If we have to replace the roof at CGS, who's taking the panels off?” Mr. Herr said, “So that expense would go to the city of Methuen if that were to be the case. We generally do not want to put solar on roofs that have to be replaced. So, we will make sure that that's not the case or do everything we can to observe that. We're about to spend \$2.5 million dollars to do this work. And we don't want you to take off the roof to fix it, the roof itself. So, we'll make sure that's part of the process.” Clr. Drew said, “So you've done your research. But you know that the roof is within a certain amount of time.” Mayor Beauregard said, “And that's why, a good example, as I mentioned, is the Timony, where the Timony is in dire need of a new roof. It was originally in the mix as it relates to solar. And there had been some effort made by, quite a bit of effort, for the city to try to seek grant funding to help cover the cost of a new roof at the Timony. And that was largely predicated on an investment in solar. So that's how a lot of this came to be in terms of renewing this conversation last year. Granted, that grant funding did not pan out. There were other schools in the Commonwealth that were determined, apparently, to have more significant need than we did. But nevertheless, I think that speaks to the fact that we're trying to make this investment in keeping with utilizing roof space that doesn't need to be fixed imminently, that has been recently addressed.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, “Just a quick correction to Councilor Drew. We do know how old the Tenney is. It was like in the CGS as well, because we repaired those roofs. The Tenney was 2023.” - **UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – 6 yes, 2 no (Clr. Santos & Clr. Drew) 1 absent (Clr. Pesce)**

- Solar Project License Agreement between City of Methuen and Solect Energy Development LLC – Comprehensive Grammar School located at 100 Howe Street, Methuen, MA 01844 - **Motion to approve by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio - UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – 6 yes, 2 no (Clr. Santos & Clr. Drew) 1 absent (Clr. Pesce)**

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

Contract(s):

C-27-1 - Brox Industries, Inc., 1 Tech Drive Suite 310, Andover, MA 01810, for Bituminous Concrete Type 1-1, Bituminous Concrete Cold Patch F.O.B. and Delivered for the City's Paving Season FY'26. Through the Department of Public Works in the Amount of \$111,425.00 (Winter Months 12/1-3/31 - \$55.00) - **Motion to approve by Clr. Simard, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce)**

C-27-2 - Kitchen and Floor Décor, Inc., 19 Fortune Drive, Billerica, MA 01821 for Marsh Grammar School – Removal of Carpets & Cove Base and Installation of VCT Tile & Cove Base - **\$83,375.00 - Motion to approve by Clr. DiZoglio, seconded by Clr. Santos – Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Clr. Marsan, “Did we do a test for asbestos on the glue, on the carpet? So, I don't want to speak to the Timony, that's why I'm asking.” Mayor Beauregard said, “So, the issue really centered on aspects of the building that were older, like for instance, there are parts of the Timony that are original that were from 1964. The Marsh, my understanding is that similar instance where there are parts of the building that certainly are quite old, but I don't want to be potentially speaking out of turn. As I said, my understanding is that this is not an issue at the Marsh. It doesn't require abatement at the Marsh.” Clr. Marsan said, “Sorry, the timing typically doesn't make it an issue. It's just, if we didn't, I don't want to get into it and say we're doing it and then they find out it's hot and then we...” Mayor Beauregard said, “Yeah, Ian Gosselin has accounted for all that in the planning. So, for instance, the abatement was required at the Timony. However, in this instance, if memory's serving me well, that's not an issue at the Marsh. And if it were, there would be probably a separate measure here to address the abatement piece.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, “I did have a chance to speak with Mr. Gosselin before this. He said that it's the same thing we went through the last time. He said it's the same material. Everything looks, it's exactly the same. And he's done all his due diligence. And this is something that he learned his lesson from last time. So, he didn't want to walk in with more tile from last time he was here.” - **UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce)**

C-27-3 - Valerio, Dominello & Hillman, LLC, One University Avenue, Suite 300B, Westwood, MA 02090 – Contract for Legal Services – Fiscal Year 2027 - **\$5,000.00 - Motion to approve by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, “Thank you. I guess this is a question to the Solicitor. Do we know roughly what matters this will be handling?” Solicitor O'Neill said, “Yes, we have used this attorney for several things, some of which he assisted with questions regarding the transition to the GIC for work that's already been done, working with the labor unions. He is also working and representing the city in the Greg Gallant appeal that has been appealed to the appeals court, the civil service appeal. So those are the primary two matters that he's working on.” Mayor Beauregard said, “Just to clarify, this is attorney John Foskett's firm. He's been an essential partner for us for many years now.” Solicitor O'Neill said, “Yes, and he gives us a very good estimate of what he thinks it's going to cost. That's why you see the number in there. And if for some reason we use him for something else, I'll come back to you with a new estimate of whatever it is he's working on. But he's pretty accurate about what he charges us and generally sticks to that.” Clr. Drew said, “Thank you, that was going to be my next question, was is this a cap, or is, and if there was any more, you'd come back to us.” Solicitor O'Neill said, “It's not really a cap, but I would come back to you with an additional request. Thank you.” Chair Soto said, “I have a question, Mr. Solicitor. John Foskett's office, can this Council still use them?”

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

They have to let you know, or they can call him directly?” Solicitor O’Neill said, “Generally it would go through our office.” - **UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce)**

C-27-4 - Power Purchase Agreement between the City of Methuen and Solect Energy Development LLC for the Tenney Grammar School located at 75 Pleasant Street - Motion to approve by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. Marsan – UPON VOTE – 7 yes, 1 no (Clr. Drew) – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce)

C-27-5 - Power Purchase Agreement between the City of Methuen and Solect Energy Development LLC for the Comprehensive Grammar School located at 100 Howe Street - Motion to approve by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – UPON VOTE – 7 yes, 1 no (Clr. Drew) – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce)

14. Other Officers and Committee Reports - none

15. Unfinished Business

Resolutions:

TR-25-75 - Resolution for the City Council to Lay Out and Accept Cooper Lane as a Public Way (remove from the table) – Motion to remove from the table by Clr. Marsan, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio - UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce) – Motion to approve by Clr. Marsan, seconded by Clr. MacLaren – Discussion – Chair Soto recognized Clr. Marsan, “So we got all the correspondence that we were lacking at the last meeting. I believe the Solicitor's on board tonight with our Conservation and DPW Director. And he was the builder, developer sent us the check that we were looking for through Community Development for the sidewalk fund. So, everybody has signed off on it now. So, this is the next step in the process for us to accept it for the residents. They're the ones who need it. They're the ones who keep calling and saying, when are we getting our street accepted? So, it's why I keep speaking of it, because I keep getting the phone calls.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, “Thank you, Madam Chair. And they already get their trash picked up. It's not a private way?” Chair Soto said, “No, they don't.” Clr. DiZoglio said, “So we would then have to go to make sure Harvey and Carina then distribute their barrels in a timely manner. Once we accepted that street. So just throwing that out there.” Solicitor O’Neill said, “I just want to clarify that street acceptance does not automatically include trash pickup. That's a matter for the Mayor. It may be the matter for other things, but as a legal matter, public acceptance of a street does not necessarily include trash pickup. As it does with there are other streets in the thing where we've accepted them as public that are part of development. I just want to clarify that. I'm not saying that the mayor hasn't decided to do that. I'm just saying it's not an automatic part of street acceptance.” Chair Soto said, “I have a follow-up question to Councilor DiZoglio, or maybe I'll let you finish, because you may.” Clr. DiZoglio said, “So that's confusing to me, because once you accept them, they are now a public street. So, they are getting plowed. And now we're not going to pick up their trash?” Solicitor O’Neill said, “I don't make these laws. I'm just telling you that under state law, it, trash. So, I will say, as with respect to this development, when it was permitted, there's a provision in there, like there is for many of the condos that we've seen over the years that says that the developer will pay for trash pickup. Can the city pay for that once they accept it? It certainly can, but it's at the city's discretion whether to do that, because there's no ordinance here that says anything to the contrary, that we will automatically include trash pickup for every street that we accept, and it's not part of the state ordinance. And plowing is a different matter. So that goes along with the street because it's part

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

of keeping the street safe and putting it into the repair. It would automatically become part of the streets that we maintain and repair on a regular basis. That is included. But I just want to clarify that because I know there was talk about that, and that's a question for the Mayor and for the CAFO and for the Council." Clr. DiZoglio said, "Through you Madam Chair, and if we want to look at these, depending on the development, because condos, yeah, I totally agree with you, but on certain streets that maybe are not a development, but they said they were a development, technically the Council can then pass an ordinance to change that, correct?"

Solicitor O'Neill said, "You can pass any ordinance if the Mayor signs it, or you override it."

Clr. DiZoglio said, "And then we've done that." Mayor Beauregard said, "So this is something that I, this has been a topic of interest I know for some time, and I've actually shared with the Chair my interest in sitting down with her to do some planning and talk about this in greater detail from a 30,000-foot view standpoint, at least at the outset before we get into specifics. But I'm hesitant to make any commitments right here and now. I need a hot second to think about this. But we'll circle back on that." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess this would be to the solicitor or the mayor. So, I'm assuming the reason why we wouldn't just pick up trash when we accept the road is because contractually, we only have an X number of single-family homes and so forth within the contract that we signed with Harvey. So, if we were to make any sort of additional homes that were making them required to pick up, we would have to put an addendum to their contract." Solicitor O'Neill said, "I have not reviewed that contract recently, so I don't know how it deals with expansion, but I don't think that's the primary reason. The primary reason is we have lots of developments, as we've seen with the condo developments in the past that have language in their homeowner's association or condo agreements that say they will be responsible for trash pickup. And so, it's not part of what we're picking up as part of a street acceptance. Can we do it? Well certainly, the city can do it, but it's just at the city's discretion. So, I don't think it has anything to do with it, there is a provision in that development that says the developer will provide trash pickup for the residents." Clr. Drew said, "Is Cooper Lane a condo association?" Solicitor O'Neill said, "It does have a homeowner's association, yes. Okay. And in fact, that development's a little different than some others. They have responsibilities for, and this was one of the things that I was working with Councilor Marsan on. They had a responsibility. The drainage swale on that street for the street itself is in people's backyards. So, it was put in that way. And so that was one of the issues that was holding this acceptance up because that swale hadn't been cleaned and wasn't in good condition and repair. And we would not want to accept a street like that and then us have to go and clean that out. And so, they have done that. We asked them to do that, and they went and did that. So that is done. And Councilor Marston is correct. Everything that we've asked them to do to make sure that the street is ready for acceptance and that we won't instantly be hit with any kind of financial costs because of that acceptance they've taken care of. And the developer has paid the sidewalk fee that he had agreed to pay as part of his permitting as well." Clr. Drew said, "Okay, so we're just, hopefully we get this through, prove the road, and then we'll deal with however we have to with the trash." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Simard, "Thank you, Madam Chair. I just think the million-dollar question would be the two people who came and spoke from Cooper Lane who were in favor of it. They spoke about the fact that we're going to pay for their trash. And who do they call? They call us or are they going to call the developer? So that's the million-dollar question and it's just going to be added to the ongoing list of HOAs who don't get trash pickup or recycling and it's just going to cause a problem. So maybe we can put on record for those residents who came up here to say, call your developer, not us." - UPON

VOTE – unanimously approved – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce)

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

TR-26-53 – A Resolution Requesting that the Mayor & Chief Administrative & Financial Officer Conduct an Insurance Review & Obtain Competitive Quotes & Options for City Insurance Coverage to Promote Transparency, Fiscal Responsibility & Accountability (*Sponsored by Councilor Yanilda Santos*) - **Motion to approve by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio** – **Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard, “Briefly, Madam Chair, just want to share a timeframe update. We're going to have this bid up online. The goal is to have it, obviously, as soon as we can, but definitively no later than the next meeting date. So, that will allow us to proceed with the bid process, get some comprehensive information about what's out there. We've been with the same company going back to 2005. So, this is going to be, I think, a very helpful exercise, helping us find ways to save some money, hopefully, and ensure that we're able to provide insurance. The goal is to get it at a reduced rate compared to what we're paying now. And so, I think going out for bids is prudent and a very smart decision. So, thank you, Councilor Santos, for bringing this forward.” – **UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce)**

Ordinance(s):

TO-26-12 – Ordinance to Amend the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance to Rezone Parcel of Land Fronting on Arcadia Street for Commercial Improvement (remove from the table) - **Motion to remove from the table by Clr. DiZoglio, seconded by Clr. Santos - UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce)** – **Motion to approve by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. Simard** – **Discussion** – Chair Soto recognized Clr. Marsan, “So, we had our public hearing with the CD board, and everybody. They sent over their favorable recommendations. Once again, I just think this is a sad piece of property that's on Merrimack Street. These people are willing to invest all this money to take down a building that needs to be addressed, put up a nice new structure, they're investing in the community, they're doing what we want. They're redeveloping a, I can't say blighted, but a sad piece of property, and we need this. So, I don't see how we can't vote for it. Thank you.” Chair Soto recognized Jonathan Stark-Sacks, “Good evening, Councilors. Thank you for hanging in there. My name is Jonathan Stark-Sacks. I'm from Johnson and Bornstein LLC, 12 Chestnut Street in Andover. I'm a little low-tech with you tonight. I understand that you already reviewed a PowerPoint which we prepared last month, so I'll give you a very quick refresher of what we're doing here with the illustration here. So, this portion here is 298 Merrimack Street. It's sort of this odd end of a hockey stick or boot shape, and it has this sort of chunk taken out of it, the edge here, which is part of the adjacent parcel. All three of these parcels are owned by my client, K&K Realty. These two are used together as a single-family residence lot, but they're two separate lots currently. So, what we're proposing to do is essentially square off, to the extent possible, this Merrimack Street parcel, and include that entirety in the neighborhood business zoning district to allow a little bit more room to do a redevelopment of the project, of the property, I should say, because of the way in which there's this carve-out at the edge here and the way the setbacks operate. There's not anywhere we could put a building on there and comply. So even with this rezoning, we are going to be going to the zoning board to get variances for the project, but this is just the first step to sort of make the redevelopment make a little bit more sense in terms of where the building can be placed, the improvement of the parking and the circulation. Currently, it's just an empty parking lot that you can kind of get in from any direction, which is not ideal for safety and circulation. So, we'll be planning to improve that, and the remaining residence lot will be fully compliant with zoning with frontage lot area and won't be affected and will remain a legal single-family lot. So that's sort of the overall pitch. I think we had some

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

renderings in our PowerPoint. My apologies for not having that again for you tonight, but I'm happy to take any questions that you might have about the project or just the first step here." Chair Soto noted that the packet included the renderings of the project and recognized Clr. Drew, "Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a question. I know you said that your client owns the two properties right next to it. I'm in agreement. I think we need to help develop, and I'd love to see commercial properties come in. Have you done any further outreach within that neighborhood of the other neighbors and seen if there's any blowback by any of it, anything like that?" Mr. Stark-Sacks said, "We particularly made concerted efforts to reach out to the neighbor who's right here, sort of most close to the property. I'm not recalling the address. But my client did speak to him early on, and he seemed to be supportive of the idea. Unfortunately, he's had trouble contacting him, and we've tried many times. He, I believe, works nights, so it's been a bit difficult, but it's not for lack of trying, and certainly everyone who is required to receive legal notice of what we're doing has done so. So, I mean, that would be what I would say in terms of our outreach efforts." – **UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – unanimously approved – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce)**

TO-26-16 as amended - An Ordinance Amending "Section 9-52. Trash and Recyclables Collection" of the Methuen Municipal Code (*Sponsored by Councilor Ryan DiZoglio*) – **Motion to approve as amended by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. Valley –**

Discussion – Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, "So I started discussing that at the last meeting and then we had to just vote on it. So, I just want to carry on from the last time. Basically, me and Haleigh (Reisman) that works in the Solicitor's office (as First Assistant Solicitor.) I do want to commend her. Before I go into it, if you look on the back, this is a perfect description of how we did it. A lot of it was on Google Doc and us researching and writing notes inside the Google Doc and basically bouncing off ideas to form this ordinance. So, I really appreciate Haleigh (Reisman) putting up with my notes and logging and submitting it to her because we couldn't always talk on the phone because I'd be working and she'd get out of work and we just did it at nighttime, just leaving notes in to make sure as we went through this process. So, a lot of teamwork working with her and I appreciate her for her efforts that were put into this. So, I do want to go back. We finished after we talked about the additional barrel fees and fines. So as of July 1st, as of right now, because we're past July 1st, I would like to ask for the start of the approval, we start initiating the 30 days to all the fees to residents. If residents receive additional barrels after July 1st, everything will be prorated. July 1st to September 30th will be 100%, October 1st to December 31st will be 75%, January 1st to March 31st will be 50%, and April 1st to June 30th will be 25%. Residents will still have to pay the yearly fee announced for July 1st because it hasn't been approved, or we would have to wait until probably next meeting to vote on how the next barrel fees would be for the coming year. Late fees, after July 1st, homeowners who do not make the renewal payment or receive a late notice with a fine of \$100, a monthly late fee added to the bill. Late fees will continue monthly until the full amount is paid, including the yearly fee. After six months, late fees and yearly fees will be added to the homeowner's tax property bill, and that's how it would be moving forward. So, Councilor Summat stepped out to answer that question. We are not taking their barrels away. What will happen is we're just slopping it onto their taxes, and they'll basically be paying for the barrel up to that point. Cancellation, we are having issues with that, and this is what I would request. In addition to the homeowner having the ability to request a cancellation for the additional barrel at any time upon the receipt of confirmation for the yearly fee due on July 1st, the homeowner will have the option to accept or cancel, ignoring the email or not clicking either option will result in a fee being issued on July 1st.

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

There will be no refund on fees if canceled after July 1st. Upon cancellation, DPW or trash collector will retrieve the additional barrel. So, it will be left up to Harvey or the DPW to coordinate to get rid of that, and there's no excuse for it. Because before, nobody knew how to retrieve these barrels. From the research, it was either DPW, and then it was Harvey, and then back to DPW, and then there was nobody assigned to actually monitor these barrels to retrieve, or even when people, I talked to residents that wanted to cancel it at one point, it took them up to a few months to get their barrel retrieved. Now, it'll be up to the administration and Harvey to discuss that, to move forward." Chair Soto said, "Can we discuss that specific section for one second, Councilor? Then I want to give the floor to the Solicitor, because I think he has a comment, and then I'd like to say something." Solicitor O'Neill said, "So, at the last meeting, I think the Mayor had some concerns, and I apologize, we've been, as you know, extremely busy with the GIC, and the PEC, and with the budget, and I don't think that the Mayor's had a chance to actually go through this with his issues, so I leave that to the Council's discretion. But I will say, regarding the late fees, that there are constitutional problems with imposing \$100 per month late fee, it's not legal to do that, so we'll need to make some changes there. You can impose a demand fee, and then add interest onto that, but \$100 per month on a \$200 or \$100 fee would be deemed excessive, so it would be too much for this kind of thing. Some other language changes that I think the council needs to consider, I don't know if we want to do those now, or we want to give the Mayor a chance to chime in and bring it back for another meeting. I do have some additional changes that I think would be necessary, like, with respect to, just for an example, the cancellation piece, there's sort of a little too much detail in here about getting an email and then canceling with an email, we're not really set up for that. I think it would make more sense to have, if a homeowner doesn't want their barrel anymore, let's have them bring it back, and when you bring your barrel back, you can get it off your bill, so things like that that are just operational, but I defer to the Mayor in terms of those operational issues, but the late fee piece definitely has to be addressed." Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard, "Thank you, Madam Chair. So, just to do, as the Solicitor mentioned and chimed in. During the last meeting, one of my concerns was that we were, in this text, eliminating any reference to, like, a warning." Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard, "Clr. DiZoglio said they added that language back in. Which, as I go through this, I see that it was added in there, so I think that that is a good thing, certainly a concern that I had at the outset, so thank you for addressing that, just, you know, considering the residents' perspective, especially on top of all of this. This is my lead into the next point I want to make. Actually, before I get there, I just want to mention there's references to the late fees, references to \$100 late fees. I just want to be clear that, right now, as we sit here, the fee for an additional cart is \$100, right? The intent, one of the budget assumptions, there are two budget assumptions, is that, for 2026, the intent is to collect the \$100 fee, and now that we're in the new fiscal year, because that was one of the aspects of the revenue picture that we were looking at, but on top of that, there will be a subsequent adjustment to the renewal fee to be at the \$250 level. So, just keep that in mind. That's not really reflected here. This is more dealing with, like, late fees and the like, which I know need to be addressed, but just to remind you of that. And I have just one thought that might be helpful to ensure that we're putting out, in essence, a fully cooked product here for our residents. I think it might be helpful to bring our new Sanitation Coordinator, perhaps, into the circle as we're drafting this. I think, certainly, having help from the legal office is terrific, and you're certainly well-served by our legal office, but that deals with, I think, issues from a legal standpoint, of course, whereas if we were to, perhaps, bring Carina into the chat, so to speak, she may be able to provide us with some insights relative to what she's seeing and hearing on the ground in terms of

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

implementation. For instance, I think a very helpful insight was simply the fact that there are a good many residents they're not watching right now. They may not be aware of some of the rules that exist, and so she's spoken about some of the educational issues that need to come into play here, keeping in mind that, I think there was a lot of public discussion about the new parameters of the program back when it was rolled out, but now consider that it's been going on half a decade since that happened, since there's really been that widespread trash talk, so to speak, not to use my dad joke again. Just a thought about how to maybe ensure that we are being perceptive, of course, trying to meet needs of the city, but also considering things from the residents' perspective, especially in the context of education, it might be helpful to have Corrina in the room. Just a thought." Clr. DiZoglio said, "So, to respond to that, especially with the late fees, like I said, I did not know that, just I went through legal and it seemed like that was fine. I'm happy to change that, but where it comes to this portion about education, I'm going after, and I'm being really honest, I'm going after the 60% that don't pay their fees, and they haven't been paying them in four years. That is not fair on the 40%, which, and I will say this, there's people in this room. Councilor Marsan, did you pay your fee?" Clr. Marsan said, "Just paid it the other day." Clr. DiZoglio said, "I'm sorry, I don't feel bad for people that say that, oh, I didn't get the email, because they have, and if they didn't, that's on our part, and I would love for them to prove it, because they are not paying their fees, and they know they're not paying their fees. I've seen them on Facebook saying, I'm going to keep my barrel, because I've been asking to cancel it, nobody's coming to cancel it, I'm going to keep it and not pay for it. That, to me, is not fair to Councilor Marsan, and to the other people, and I'm sorry, I feel like Methuen does this to a lot of people. They're afraid to fine people that are breaking rules because they're worried that it's going to return back on them as politicians, and that's been history of Methuen. And I'm sorry, I believe in the people that pay their bills, they pay their fees, they'll pay for their permits when they have to, and people are not doing it on certain occasions. That makes me the bad guy, I'm happy to be the bad guy. I'm here because when taxes go up again, because we're not collecting the revenue, we're not collecting, and the CAFO can speak on that, we are not collecting revenue properly. So, vote, we'll be the first ones to raise taxes on everybody, and when I vote no on it, it's because of that. And I'm sorry, that's the context that I'm living in right now. Every time I dig up something, there's people breaking the rules on the floor. And it costs everybody else, our seniors, and everything. I'm going after them, that's who I am, after. I'm after the people that break the rules of Methuen." Chair Soto recognized Clr. MacLaren, "Thank you, Madam Chair. I would just like to point out that I think that there's a really obvious middle ground here. I don't choose to believe that 60% of our residents are abusing the system intentionally. I mean, I just, that's a very, very high statistic, and I have more confidence in our Methuen residents than that. That majority tells me that there's an issue in us passing the information about fees along to them. I just cannot fathom that a majority of Methuen residents are intentionally not paying when they know that they are supposed to, legally. I also see what you're saying, that there's definitely an issue on our part of drawing a firm line, and you can't abuse this system. And I am certain that there are people, as you say, that are intentionally abusing it. But I don't want to demonize the 60% of people, because that, to me, identifies a very clear issue that we must address with education, in addition to being firmer with these fines. But I don't think it's fair to tack on an extra \$100 every month, and assume that the entire 60% is going to be like, well, shoot, now I have to pay it, without doing the work on our part of educating them, and making it very, very clear that this is what's going to happen, right? Thank you." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Santos, "I just want to add to what Councilor McLaren said. I feel this is a great idea, and I will support it 100%. But before we get here, there's so many steps that we need to take. There are steps of education, like Carina was saying here earlier, and she's

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

going to be doing that. So, I feel that once our community is educated about how the trash and garbage system is going to work, then we can implement something like this. I feel that \$100 late fee is just too much. But it's a great idea. I just feel that we're not ready to implement this to our city right now." Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "Thank you, Madam Chair. I agree with both Councilors from the Central District, but I also agree with Councilor DiZoglio. One of the things that I seem to be finding in Methuen is we kick the can down the road, we keep kicking the can, and sometimes we have to just get some things done. So, with that, I don't know if the Solicitor, if we can make an amendment to this on the late fees. That seems to be the sticking point here." Solicitor O'Neill said, "We sure can. I have others as well. We can certainly start doing it right now." Chair Soto said, "For recommendation, Councilors, to the extent of what the Solicitor expressed earlier with the changes and the revisions that the Mayor's office has to do, as he stated, he hasn't really gone through it, I think this should be tabled again. It's a recommendation on my part. And then you guys bring it back." Clr. DiZoglio said, "And I'm happy to table it. I'll be setting up meetings because I'm off all school vacation. So, I hope everybody is able to meet with me on a weekly basis to get this done, because that's how I'm bringing it back to the next meeting. But we went up \$100 on our parking, all right? We didn't do education. We didn't do that. And I have lived here for 27 years. One of the biggest problems that we had in Methuen was there's no parking. So, you can't have parking bans, or we have to be very cautious, the words were used. And we went up right \$100. I've never seen streets so empty in Methuen so quickly when they went up to \$100. And all the people that I grew up with will probably agree with me on that one. So sometimes you have to do that to get the point across to people. It did with the parking. So, when we say, well, education and all that, this program's been out for four years. I don't feel bad for people that put your plastic, so you can't throw plastic away. I don't even know what to say about it, because people know. There are people out there that do know, and they just don't care. And there's people, maybe they're not educated, but most of them know where to put their recycling and shut the lid and all that. When that program rolled out, my father, the worst person at recycling, learned how to recycle, all right? So, I'm happy to offer a motion to table." - **Motion to TABLE by Clr. DiZoglio, seconded by Clr. Santos – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce) - TABLED**

TO-26-17 – An Ordinance Amending “Section 8-7. Municipal Charges Lien” of the Methuen Municipal Code (*Sponsored by Councilor Ryan DiZoglio*) – Motion to approve by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – Discussion – Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, "Thank you, Madam Chair. To the Solicitor. Mr. Solicitor, past General Law, Chapter 40, Section 58, refers to local charges or fees. Can the city lien trash fines?" Solicitor O'Neill said, "Yes. And this will let us do it. And that hasn't happened. We haven't been doing that, which is one reason why we're not getting paid. So, once they go on the tax bill, they'll eventually get paid. They might not get paid right away, but they'll become part of that process. And interest will start to accrue on those as well. So, passage of this will allow us to start doing that for that \$100. And once the new fee is instituted in due course, it'll allow for that." Clr. Drew said, "Okay, and then just one other quick thing is, what's the notice to appeal? What are the rights that exist before these hits the tax bills?" Solicitor O'Neill said, "So, they wouldn't have a right to appeal this on the tax bill because it's like a yearly fee. They would have appellate rights regarding fines. So, as to the ordinance, I wasn't addressing any of the fine piece. The fines are at your discretion for like the mixing of trash and recycling. But that section I was referring to was just the yearly fee for the barrel. It's a different thing, but there is no appeal of a fee." Clr. DiZoglio said, "Yeah, but for a fine, there is an appeal process." Solicitor O'Neill said, "Correct, for the fines, there'll

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

be an appeal book to the hearing officer and then to court after that, if they really have an issue with it.” Clr. DiZoglio said, “And if I could touch on that real quick, Madam Chair, really quick. What it was prior, it was the DPW director that was doing the appeal. So, when you look at Pat (Bower) was doing this and he's the (City) Engineer and DPW Director. And then we were going to ask him to do appeals where anybody, through you, Mr. Solicitor, really quick, anybody could be an appeal person assigned, correct? Like really you could assign it to anybody.” Solicitor O'Neill said, “It could be, but it will be through our (Legal) office.” Clr. DiZoglio said, “Yeah, but you know what I mean? So that's why we took it out. We scratched out Jack's basically being the appeal officer for this. And we just put it on to anybody that is designated to be assigned, which will be through the Solicitor's office.” Solicitor O'Neill said, “There is actually a city ordinance that requires there to be a city hearing officer. And we've sort of been quasi doing that. But once we start issuing these, there's going to be a lot more hearings. So, we will formalize that process. So, it's very clear.” Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard, “I'll be as quick as I can. So, I think when it comes to enabling the city to collect fees for trash through this mechanism, this solves one of the most prominent issues related to collection of fees. So, this one, I think, is a no-brainer to equip us to be able to do this. You look at other municipalities; they do the same thing. I think this idea; I first heard this was from Councilor Valley. You would share it, I think, Lowell?” Clr. Valley said, “Last year, yes in Lowell and Haverhill.” Mayor Beauregard said, “So this is common and helpful, I think, for us.” – **UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce)**

New Business:

Resolutions:

TR-26-67 - A Resolution Declaring the Pleasant Valley School Property, 180 Pleasant Valley Street, Parcel ID #1109-78E-45 in the City of Methuen as Surplus Property and Authorizing the Same for Sale and Redevelopment – Motion to approve by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. Valley – Discussion – Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard, “Thank you, Madam Chair. So, I'll be quick again for the sake of time. I worked on this with the Solicitor. He helped draft the specifics here in the language. And we are trying to cast as wide of a net as possible in the context of an RFP for not only Pleasant Valley, but also the other two properties that we're looking to surplus for the purpose of developing new housing in our community, namely for Methuen seniors and veterans. We do have in here reference to residents on a more collective basis, but really the intent is to hone in on providing additional housing opportunities for these two populations that I think anytime I'm at the senior center, you hear people clamoring for opportunities for more affordable housing so the folks can stay here. Folks don't want to leave. And so, this will allow us to expand our inventory, even if it's by a modest amount. I think anything is helpful given the situation that we're dealing with. But the thinking, just so you can get a sense of the why, we don't have a specific minimum established here in any of these simply because we're talking about in the case of PV and potentially Currier, buildings that are going to have to be taken down. You know, there's a lot of unknowns in terms of what the market is willing to bear. So, this really allows us to cast as wide of a net as possible. The Railroad Street property, which we'll get to in a little bit, there's really nothing there now. So, it's a little more straightforward. But when it comes to these two school properties, that's what we're looking at. And again, another thing that I've mentioned before, especially in the context of school properties, my intent will be to put the proceeds towards helping with capital investments in our schools, which we all know has gone many years with issues pertaining to neglect and the like. And so, this will hopefully allow us to drive some more resources into our

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

schools. The funding would have to be put to capital use. So, it only makes sense to invest in school buildings that we are currently relying on now using these former school buildings. Thank you.” Clr. Santos recognized Clr. Drew, “Thank you, Madam Chair. So, Mr. Mayor, we got \$100,000 offer for the Searles. I don't want to see an RFP come through with a joke of an offer for this. I mean, land is not something we're going to get more of. So, to put a minimum to it, I mean, you can buy this open parcel of land that has small amounts. I just don't understand why we would have a minimum. And then my next question is, it looks like, and I hope maybe I'm reading it wrong, but we're waiving the requirements on section 2020 for abutter notification. Am I reading that wrong?” Solicitor O'Neill said, “That's correct.” Clr. Drew said, “So, if they want to build something, they don't have to notify the abutters?” Solicitor O'Neill said, “No, it's just for the surplus declaration.” Clr. Drew said, “So we don't have to alert the abutters that we're selling the property?” Solicitor O'Neill agreed. Clr. Drew said, “And then when they want to build, they still have to notify?” Solicitor O'Neill said, “They do. And there'll be an RFP process as well. These all have to be disposed of by request for proposal.” Chair Soto said, “You can make amendments to these resolutions too.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, “Thank you, Madam Chair. When I was on the School Committee and we released these buildings back to the city, I was very strong about how I want to go about Pleasant Valley Street due to the fact of traffic. And we could use that space for many things. I pleaded maybe possibly a new fire station or new things like that. So, and I'm still concerned. If you go up there, I live right around the corner now in Colonial Village, and the traffic was literally backed up just the other day. So, when you add more cars down there, living down there, pulling out this, I just see what possibilities that it could do to that area. So that's how I feel about that. I have fellow members in the audience that know that I felt this way a year ago. And I still think that all we do is to build residential. And it's constant. It's so easy to build a residential building, but we can't build a brand-new commercial area downtown. So, I don't know how I feel about that, about voting on this tonight, on this. And it's nothing against, I know our schools are in dire need, and I know the surplus will be going on, but I have to think about the residents in that area as well, and what it's going to do to that area. So, until I see a traffic study or something of that sort, I can't vote yes for this reasoning for that bill.” Solicitor O'Neill said, “So, I would just add, just so the Council has full information, that both properties fall within the Conservancy District. So, before anything gets built, there will need to be a zoning change. So, it will come back before you yet again, once there's a proposal. Usually, maybe the Mayor will bring that back before he issues the RFP, I don't know. But there's more pieces to this process where you'll have additional input, because both of those schools are in the Conservancy District, which doesn't allow for residential housing right now. But that doesn't mean you can't put them out, but people will bid on them. Same with the Searles, when we did that RFP, there was no guarantee that the city would rezone for a potential purchaser. I will say, obviously, you're going to expand your pool of interested parties if you rezone ahead of time. But that's, again, at the Mayor and the Council's discretion.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. Drew, “One last question to the minimum sale price. I don't know, it's sticking to me. You say you want to hold it so we can cast a wide net. I mean, if we put \$100,000 on this, how much are we closing that net? Any idea, or are we...” Solicitor O'Neill said, “So all I'll say to that is that the Pleasant Valley School is pretty much considered a teardown. The other school, the Currier, I think the general consensus is it could be rehabbed into housing. So, I think the Mayor --- we had discussion about that with the Economic Development Director. The thought is, obviously, if it is a teardown, and I think it probably is, that's going to involve some pretty extensive investment to do that. Doesn't mean we wouldn't get any money. The city, doing an RFP, is never obligated to accept any bid. But I think the thought was, anyone that comes that's serious about

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

development there is going to say, I'm going to have to invest some serious money raising this site and preparing the site for development. And so, it's going to limit what they're willing to pay for it. But certainly, you can set a minimum. I mean, there's no harm. I think that the intent was just to try to learn from what happened with the Searles Estate that we set a price that turned out to be too high, obviously, and didn't allow for flexibility in terms of what people proposed. We're never under an obligation to accept any bid, though." Chair Soto said, "I think in comments of the Searles, whether we price it at \$1,000 or \$5 million, we were never going to get bidders on that because we restricted that property specifically. And again, this is my personal opinion, one specific buyer. So, we can talk numbers all day, but the criteria we set there were specifically for one buyer. So, Councilor, are you making a motion or are you still thinking about that? I know Councilor Santos had her hand up, but I have a curiosity question on the floor for you, Councilor Marsan, because that's your business. What would someone in this market pay for a building like that to build housing? The PV? Give or take." Clr. Marsan said, "It's still worth almost a million dollars, I would say, the PV school. I think someone would be willing to pay if they're going to put multiple units of housing there. It's only going to cost them \$50,000 to tear it down. It's not like it's a million dollars to tear it down. It's a brick building." Chair Soto said, "There's supposedly environmental issues there too, though." Clr. Marsan said, "But there are everywhere. We've just got to deal with it. It's not like that's going to scare people away. They don't make any more land." Mayor Beauregard said, "So, something just for informational purposes. So, there's more acreage at the PV site than would otherwise meet the eye from the road. There's like a garage in the back that the DPW has used, and I think some additional parking back there. So, there's a decent amount of space there. But something that I had done when we were getting all this ready a while back, I was looking at the GIS map, taking a look at these two parcels, and PV zone conservancy. Interestingly enough, something that was kind of a little odd, the Currier School property on Boylston Street, that up until the past couple of years had been the home of the adult learning center. It had been a school property. That parcel is zoned multifamily already, which I thought was interesting. So that would not require a zoning change. PV would." Chair Soto said, "But the appropriating body can do that anyways. I mean, if they're going to sell it for a million dollars, and they know in the future they're not going to block that from coming through, this is the appropriating body. So be cognizant of what you're going to put on this as a number." Clr. Drew said, "Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to make an amendment to the minimum. RP sale by without a minimum of \$125,000." Motion to amend by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – **UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – 2 yes, 6 noes (Clr. Santos, Clr. Simard, Clr. Valley, Clr. MacLaren, Clr. Marsan and Chair Soto) MOTION FAILS** – Chair Soto recognized Clr. Santos, "I wanted to add to what Councilor Marsan stated about the price of this property. Is there any way we can get a market appraisal done or an inspection done? So that we can have an idea on how much the property costs. Just put it on the market for a fair market value. This is a question for the Mayor." Mayor Beauregard said, "So I'm just curious, were you referring to doing an appraisal of everything including the building as it exists that would need to be torn down?" Clr. Santos said, "Correct. A market analysis with an idea of how much the property value is. So that we can put it on the market because at the end of the day, we want to get the most revenue for our city because that's what we need at this point." Mayor Beauregard said, "Yes, so I think when we talk about municipal property and posting an RFP for disposing of a municipal property, it's a bit different than say, putting a commercial or residential property on the real estate market and setting a price and then going through that process. What we do for municipal properties is we go through this public bidding process where rather than going out there, say on the MLS and saying that a property is worth XYZ and that's how much we want for it at a minimum, on

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

the flip side with an RFP, it's purely conditional and we have no obligation to accept whatever comes in. But I view the exercise of going out for the RFP, soliciting the bids, that will give us a sense of what the market is likely willing to put forward in terms of an investment. And so, all we do on our side is we establish the criteria for judging the bid responses and we set out preferences that we would be hoping for. But ultimately, I think in terms of going out for analysis, I think the RFP process would provide that information as to what the market would be willing to bear. And then from there, I think we would be able to take a look at the proposals that people submit and get a sense of what folks are willing to pay and choose the highest and best value for the city from that standpoint." Clr. Santos said, "So then we're going to be on the same process of the Searles Estate. So, anyone can come in and just offer \$1,000 for the property?" Mayor Beauregard said, "Yes, and we would be under no obligation to accept it. And the thought that we had in terms of crafting the framework for RFPs for these properties by trying to keep it as, I don't want to say loose, but by not putting restrictions on the parameters that we would be establishing, it would give us a sense to hear from as many organizations or individuals as we possibly could to hear ideas and review what the realistic options are because it would involve likely some teardowns." Clr. Santos said, "I just feel that we need a realistic number to start off." Mayor Beauregard said, "So, the thing to just to be cognizant of is that we do have an assessment card from the Board of Assessors that outlines the value of the properties from an assessor standpoint. For instance, PV, we stated in the resolution, it's in the fourth paragraph stating the assessed value of roughly \$1.5 million for PV. So, we have that in terms of the Currier, the assessment card was \$690,000 roughly. So, that information we have, but what we don't have is exactly what say XYZ developer would be willing to pay the city to acquire the land, obviously acquiring the building and then needing to invest in taking it down in all likelihood and then from there investing in whatever new build they would be establishing in order to achieve the goal of creating some new housing in our community. So, the RFP process would give us, I think, a lot of insights into the information that you're looking for. It's tough for us to, in essence, I think, put the cart before the horse and try to get ahead of the market. Does that make sense?" Chair Soto said, "If I may, I transferred the gavel over to my Vice Chair today, Mr. Mayor. If the RFP, and maybe this is a motion I'm making, I'm not 100% sure yet, the RFP can clearly state the properties valued per our Assessor's office at \$1.5 million, whatever that number is in the resolution. Not so much as our asking price, but obviously when I go, when I bid on a property through an auction process, not that I'm comparing it to the RFP, but somewhat similar, I'm competing, and I see what the valuation of that property is, I tend to pay more because I want that property. So, if your RFP could clearly state the value of this property on there, I think that those applying would probably pay a little more than \$1,000. So, I guess that's a request, not because the resolution says the value already. Sure. Let's see." Mayor Beauregard said, "So, a thought that I have, just in response, and I don't know if the solicitor needs to chime in here, but if it's the will of the council, if it's simply a matter of indicating what the assessed value is, I'm happy to commit to doing that, and I certainly would follow through with that, but if, as a safety measure, if the council wanted to amend the resolutions and indicate on the second page that the council is hereby requesting me to formally do that, I mean, I'm on board either way, however you want to achieve that, but I'm willing to commit to that." Chair Soto said, "Mr. Solicitor, could you provide the language to add that as a bullet item?" Solicitor O'Neill said, "Sure. I mean, **the Mayor shall clearly state the current assessed value of the property in his RFP proposal** (request for proposal.)" – Chair Soto said, "Sure, clearly state the assessed value, right?" Solicitor O'Neill said, "Of the property in the request for proposal." Chair Soto said, "Of the property in his RFP proposal. I'm making that motion, by the way. I think that's a fair request, where we're not putting a price, but we're

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

basically saying this is what we appraise it at.” Mayor Beauregard said, “Yeah, I’m on board with that, that makes sense.” Chair Soto said, “Oh, thanks. I need the motion.” - **Motion to amend TR-26-67 by adding “The Mayor shall clearly state the current assessed value of the property in his RFP proposal” by Clr. Soto, seconded by Clr. Drew – UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – unanimously approved – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce) - Motion to approve as amended by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. Valley – UPON ROLL CALL VOTE - unanimously approved – 1 absent (Clr. Pesce)**

TR-26-68 - A Resolution Declaring the Currier School Property, 36 Boylston Street, Parcel ID #914-105-63 in the City of Methuen as Surplus Property and Authorizing the Same for Sale and Redevelopment - Motion to approve by Clr. Marsan, seconded by Clr. Santos – Discussion – Chair Soto recognized Solicitor O’Neill, “I just want to point out, this one does have a minimum, so if you don’t want a minimum, you’d need to take it out.” – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 2 absent (Clr. Pesce & Clr. Simard)

TR-26-69 - Resolution Authorizing Acceptance of \$15,795.31 for Fiscal Year 2027 Commonwealth of Massachusetts State 911 Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Grant - Motion to approve by Clr. DiZoglio, seconded by Clr. Drew – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 2 absent (Clr. Pesce & Clr. Simard)

TR-26-70 - Resolution Authorizing Acceptance of a \$168,186.09 Fiscal Year 2027 Commonwealth of Massachusetts State 911 Department Training Grant - Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. Santos – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 2 absent (Clr. Pesce & Clr. Simard)

TR-26-71 - Resolution Authorizing Transfer between various FY26 General Fund Personal Services and Other Expenses budgets (*EPA Requested*) – Motion to approve by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. MacLaren – UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – unanimously approved – 2 absent (Clr. Pesce & Clr. Simard) – Motion to approve EPA by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. Santos – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 2 absent (Clr. Pesce & Clr. Simard)

TR-26-73 - A Resolution Declaring the Property at 30 Railroad Street (Parcel ID #716-14-16) in the City of Methuen as Surplus Property and Authorizing the Same for Sale and Redevelopment - Motion to approve by Clr. Santos, seconded by Clr. DiZoglio – Discussion – Chair Soto recognized Mayor Beauregard, “Thank you, Madam Chair. So, this is another example of a property that we’re talking about tonight. We don’t have a preferred minimum here. It’s a vacant lot right now. So, if you wanted me to include the information from the Assessor, I would be happy to do that. Not sure if you wanted to formally amend it but just wanted to point that out.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, “Is that property just zoned a certain way? Just right across the street is like a, I think it’s like a garage.” Mayor Beauregard said, “Yes, so this is the intersection with Thwaites Market and the bridge. Alvin Alicon, he’s got a business there. And then across the intersection leading up to St. Mary’s and Bellevue and that whole, the roundabout in Lawrence. It’s heading towards that area and it’s on the right side across the street from the car business.” Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, “So, quick question, is it zoned for anything right now or is it...” Solicitor O’Neill said, “Zoned for multi. It’s a very small lot. So, even if someone bids in it, they’re going to have to go before the zoning for various relief. - UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 2 absent (Clr. Pesce & Clr. Simard)

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

TR-26-74 - Resolution Transferring Funds from Edwin J. Castle Fund to Methuen Literacy Project/Nevins Library and Methuen Public Schools/CTE Early Childhood Care - Motion to approve by Clr. Drew, seconded by Clr. Santos – UPON VOTE – unanimously approved – 2 absent (Clr. Pesce & Clr. Simard)

Ordinances:

TO-26-18 Ordinance to Amend Section 8-5A of the Municipal Code of the City of Methuen to increase ambulance rates and charges and establish new lift assist fee – Motion to approve by Clr. DiZoglio, seconded by Clr. Santos – Discussion – Chair Soto recognized Clr. DiZoglio, “Chief, just one concern. Well, it's not a concern. So has this always been available to charge these facilities?” Chair Soto recognized Assistant Fire Chief Daniel Donahue, “Yes, it's become a lot more common in the last few years. There have been some issues that some cities and towns have come across with the facilities, then passing the charge on to the residents. So, we must be careful how we word it. We don't word it as a fee. Okay, I think it needs to be more as a fine towards the facility, not towards the actual patient. So, they can't pass it on to the patient.” Mayor Beauregard said, “That's something we would absolutely want to avoid that. We also want to avoid, as Councilor Drew mentioned, any new hesitation, because they don't want to skirt having to pay a fee, so they don't call for help. Like, that would be crazy. So, we would certainly need to fine tune the language.” Assistant Fire Chief Daniel Donahue said, “Just a point of information. Portland Fire has been very, very forthcoming with information to our department about this. We've contacted several departments. Portland is a great model. And what they did was sent some of their fire prevention captains out to educate these businesses and show them different ways that their facility can assist their patients without maybe as much liability. You know, there are things, Hoyer lifts, which are on wheels. They can bring right over and lift, and strap the patient in, lift them up. So, their workers aren't hurting their backs as well. So, there are ways that we can educate these facilities as well. And we're not going to just send them a letter and that's it. We're hoping to work with them. Because it is a concern, maybe they won't call us if somebody falls in and is seriously hurt, right? So, we want to work with them, but we don't want them to abuse the system either.” Mayor Beauregard said, “And I already said this earlier, but I just want to reiterate, just so that the social media misinformation machine doesn't kick into gear over this. This is not a fee to residents. This isn't as if somebody is elderly and they fall at home and they call for help and we're going to charge them for help for that. That's not what this is. This is specifically geared toward the business entities, the assisted living facilities, nursing homes that rely on us for help and to provide that service because they are, in some cases, unable to for insurance reasons. And we don't charge for that. Other municipalities do. And so, if we have a service that we're providing, I think it does make sense and it is fair to ask some of these facilities that are collecting untold amounts of money that they're already making, they can chip in for a service that the city has otherwise provided for free for many years.” Assistant Fire Chief Daniel Donahue said, “In some of these facilities, we are responding to hundreds of times a year for lift assists.” Clr. Drew said, “Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't know if it's late. Maybe I heard it wrong. We don't want to label it as a fee. We want to label it as a fine. Because it's labeled as fee

METHUEN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, JULY 6th, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER, Ranger Road

nine times here.” Assistant Fire Chief Daniel Donahue said, “This is something that just came to light. You know that one of the departments that said they had to change the way they did things because they were charging a fee. And the assisted living facility was just able to pass that fee along.” Mayor Beauregard said, “It's not a fine which would be for like an infraction, right? This isn't something that we're not trying to penalize the business entities. So, it technically, I mean, a fee is a fee, right? And what we're doing is we're providing a service. And we're, in essence, establishing this new system by which these business entities would pay for these services, which is, in my opinion, a fee, right? So maybe it's a matter of, well, it's a service fee. That's a good way to put it. So maybe it's in communication to these entities, perhaps, that we can clarify some of these things. But in my opinion, a fee is a fee is a fee.” Clr. Drew said, “Mr. Solicitor, is there any question there on that, whether it goes one way or the other?” Solicitor O'Neill said, “Yes, it can be a fine.” Clr. Santos said, “Through the Chair to Mr. Mayor, so before you chose this amount, did you check with the other municipalities to see how much they were charging for the same services?” Assistant Fire Chief Daniel Donahue said, “Yes, and this is not a random amount.” CAFO Duprey said, “I actually included a breakdown in my financial impact statement that shows where the \$500 came from. It's literally like the hourly rate of a Lieutenant, the hourly rate of three firefighters, the FEMA rate for ambulance, the FEMA rate for fire engine, and fuel insurance maintenance. It comes out to be just under \$498,000, so we rounded up to \$500. And that is right in line with what other communities are charging.” – **UPON ROLL CALL VOTE – unanimously approved - 2 absent (Clr. Pesce & Clr. Simard)**

Motion to adjourn by Clr. Marsan, seconded by Clr. Santos at 10:36 PM – unanimously approved, 2 absent (Clr. Pesce & Clr. Simard)

**Respectfully submitted,
Assistant Council Clerk
Lisa Yarid Ferry**

I do hereby certify the foregoing minutes were approved by the City Council by a unanimous vote on August 10, 2026.

Linda Gagnon
COUNCIL CLERK