



**CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, AUGUST 7, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.
Conference Room A
City Hall Complex, 1 Junkins Avenue
Portsmouth, NH 03801**

- 1. Welcome and Call to Order** – 10:02 a.m.
- 2. Roll Call** – Councilor Kate Cook, Councilor Vincent Lombardi, and Councilor John Tabor all present. Also present was Deputy City Manager Suzanne M. Woodland and Of Counsel Robert P. Sullivan.
- 3. Review and Approval of Minutes** – Councilor Lombardi moved to approve the June 26 2023 minutes. Councilor Tabor seconded and all in favor. Committee members discussed an edit to the draft of the July 31, 2023 minutes. Councilor Tabor moved to approve the minutes as amended. Councilor Lombardi seconded. All in favor.
- 4. Old Business**
 - a. Sidewalk Policy**

A motion was made by Councilor Tabor to suspend the rules and move this matter forward in the agenda to accommodate the speaker. Seconded by Councilor Lombardi and all in favor. Councilor Cook provided a summary that the City Council referred the sidewalk policy to this committee for consideration. At the last meeting the Director of Public Works appeared and provided input.

Historic District Commission Member, David Adams, spoke regarding the HDC's current emphasis on pavers in driveways and other unit material. Pavers fit better aesthetically with the existing brick sidewalks in various areas in the HDC.

Councilor Cook posed the question about whether brick sidewalks should be required in front of historic homes outside of the HDC if the brick sidewalks currently exist there.

Councilor Tabor mentioned that Cabot and portions of State are outside the HDC but have historic homes.

David Adams prefers continuity of sidewalk material. Allowing homeowners to buy brick in front of their own residence presents inconsistent look and raises fairness issues. Discussion of how certain streets have changed in the last twenty years and different hardscapes. Discussion of change in hardscaping to achieve a better look.

Councilor Lombardi wondered why one side of Middle Street is brick and one is concrete. Discussion of a previous petition from residents to keep a whole block brick. Discussion of how brick sidewalks end rather abruptly in some areas.

Discussion of stone sidewalks that remain on Fleet Street, Washington Street and Marcy Street. Question and discussion as to whether they can be retained in some form when the sidewalk is rebuilt while still achieving ADA compliance.

Several questions were identified for follow up with public works.

b. Sustainability Blue Ribbon Committee (SBC) Conversion Ordinance

Motion by Lombardi to allow the SBC to move forward to the City Council with option 1 presented unless the survey being conducted by the SBC contradicts that and then the alternative presented by the SBC will move forward to the City Council. Seconded by Tabor. All in favor.

c. Election Disclosures -Governance Committee was satisfied with the current draft and it will move be brought back to the next meeting for possible vote and moving it forward to the City Council.

d. City Council Preliminary Draft Ethics Policy

The Governance Committee members discussed a draft. Attorney Sullivan will be working on additional and modified language to bring back to the next Governance Committee meeting.

5. Public Comment

Petra Huda (comments on sidewalk policy, SBC Ordinance draft, elections disclosure, and ethics policy draft).

Zolita Morgan (general comments on role of staff on committees, comments on communication between the City Council and administration).

6. Announcements

Next meeting is September 11, 2023 (start time may be delayed depending on September 11 ceremonies).

Councilor Lombardi moved to adjourn. Councilor Tabor seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Meeting Minutes prepared by

Suzanne Woodland, Deputy City Manager/Regulatory Counsel

Minutes Approved: October 10, 2023