



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

1. **Welcome and Call to Order** – 10:04 a.m.
2. **Roll Call** – Councilor Kate Cook, Councilor Vincent Lombardi, Councilor John Tabor all present. Also present, Suzanne M. Woodland Deputy City Manager/Regulatory Counsel (DCM)
3. **Review and Approval of Minutes** – Councilor Tabor moved to approve the August 7, 2023, meeting minutes, seconded by Councilor Lombardi and approved. Councilor Lombardi moved to approve the meeting minutes of September 11, 2023, as amended, seconded by Councilor Tabor. All in favor.

4. **Old Business**

a. **City Council Draft Ethics and Transparency Policy**

The Committee had a robust discussion regarding the draft policy particularly as to the new language under paragraph 2, Transparency. The committee members reached consensus to add the following language at paragraph 2: “A point of order could, without limitation, include a request for a legal opinion to the whether the discussion is appropriate or lawful under RSA 91-A and/ or to request a vote of the City Council as to whether to proceed with the discussion topic.”

There was an opportunity for public comment, but there were no comments.

Motion by Councilor Lombardi to approve the draft of the policy with the additional language discussed and to bring it forward to the City Council. Seconded by Councilor Tabor. All in favor.

b. **Sidewalk Policy**

The DCM reviewed the updates to the draft of the Sidewalk Policy which included identification of the current streets outside the HDC that have brick sidewalks.

There was an opportunity for public comment, but there were no comments.

Motion was made by Councilor Tabor to approve the revised sidewalk policy and forward to the City Council for consideration. Councilor Lombardi seconded. All concurred.

c. Municipal Disclosures (Chapter 1, Article IX, Section 1.901)

Committee members reached consensus on language relative to disclosing affiliations with local organizations in which one holds a fiduciary position such as trustee, director or other officer. Councilors Tabor and Lombardi were not in favor of new language to require the completed disclosure forms to be made available on the City website. Councilor Cook preferred to have those disclosures made readily accessible on the City's website but agreed to move the draft ordinance changes to the City Council for consideration without such language.

Public Comment from Tom Neis (provided suggestions as to how to tailor the financial disclosures to accommodate public concerns; additional comments on transparency and election disclosures as to contributions and expenditures)

Motion by Councilor Lombardi and seconded by Tabor to move the draft ordinance changes to Chapter 1, Article IX, Section 1.901 to the City Council as a request for scheduling first reading at the November City Council meeting.

- 5. Announcements** – Next meeting October 23 if needed. Remaining outstanding items are any remaining conversions of blue-ribbon committees to standing committees.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Lombardi, seconded by Tabor. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 11:32

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

Meeting Minutes prepared by:

Suzanne M. Woodland, Deputy City Manager/Regulatory Counsel

Minutes Approved: November 13, 2023