

TO: KAREN S. CONARD, CITY MANAGER

FROM: KELLI L. BARNABY, CITY CLERK

RE: ACTIONS TAKEN AT THE PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2025

PRESENT: MAYOR McEACHERN, ASSISTANT MAYOR KELLEY, COUNCILORS TABOR, COOK, DENTON, BLALOCK, BAGLEY, MOREAU, AND LOMBARDI

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1. **Voted** to close the Non-Public Session and seal the minutes.
2. Portsmouth High School – Holiday Ensemble Performance – Eric Gagnon led the Portsmouth High School Ensemble by conducting the performance of seven holiday songs.
3. Acceptance of Minutes – November 6, 2025 – **Voted** to approve and accept the minutes of the November 6, 2025, City Council meeting.
4. NH Building Officials Association Code Official of the Year - Shanti Wolph – Mayor McEachern, the City Council and City Manager Conard recognized Chief Building Inspector Shanti Wolph for his outstanding work as the NH Building Officials Association Code Official of the Year.
5. Safe Water Advisory Group Report – Andrea Amico, Co-Chair of SWAG highlighted their work over the last year. She spoke regarding quarterly updates provided by SWAG for the City. She asked Mayor McEachern to reinstate SWAG for a two-year term ending on December 31, 2027. She reviewed SWAG's revised mission statement "To review and communicate the latest science on the health and environmental effects of PFAS, to monitor federal and state level legislative changes, and to anticipate policy changes that could impact the City of Portsmouth. To discuss topics relevant to the City's drinking water quantity, water quality, preservation and conservation efforts, and water infrastructure projects. To discuss public health aspects of water quality, support and provide public education about drinking water topics, and take initiative-taking stances to protect and conserve water quality and quantity.
6. Portsmouth Energy Advisory Committee 2024-2025 Year-End Report – Councilor Tabor reported on the customers using community power and the money saved by residents using community power. He spoke on solar array being installed at the Jones Avenue landfill and laying the groundwork for what could become a major municipal renewable energy asset.
7. Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Affordable Housing 2024-2025 Report – Assistant Mayor Kelley and Councilor Tabor provided the Affordable Housing Report and said that this is the toughest issue for the City Council, and measurable progress has been made. The committee set its mission statement created in March 2024 as "Recommended policy changes that would secure permits for at least 500 units of diverse, affordable housing by the private and public sectors over the next two years while promoting market conditions to ensure long-term affordability and accessibility for all income levels."

8. Holiday Lights Contest Winners for 2025 – Mayor McEachern announced the results of the contest winners. Kids Choice Winner – 580 FW Hartford Drive; Kids Choice Runner-up – 170 FW Hartford Drive; Creative Winner – 520 FW Hartford Drive; Creative Runner-up – 3 Sanderling Way, Traditional Winner – 752 South Street and for the Traditional Runner-up for the first time ever there was a tie. Traditional Second Choice – 660 Middle Street and 114 Cabot Street.
9. Outgoing Councilors Josh Denton and Vince Lombardi – Mayor McEachern said as tradition, we present outgoing Councilors with a City chair of their choice. He said that Councilor Lombardi chose the traditional captain's chair that is here in front of the dais, and when it came to choosing a chair for Councilor Denton, we took into account that an actual chair might take up too much room in his home so we commissioned a stool which was made by Portsmouth resident and amazing woodworker Jonathan Bock at the Port City Makerspace. He stated that the seat is black walnut, the legs are a species of mahogany, and on the seat is an inlaid brass engraved plate with the City seal.
10. Public Comment Session – There were four speakers: Buzz Scherr (Police Memorandum of Understanding), Petra Huda (Memorandum of Understanding and City Charter); Roy Helsel (School Vouchers, Hodgdon Way and Cate Street traffic); Tyler Garzo (via Zoom) (Resident Parking Program).
11. Approval of Police Proposed Memorandum of Agreement – On a unanimous roll call 9-0, **voted** to approve the proposed Memorandum of Agreement with the Portsmouth Police Patrolman's Union.
12. Resident Access Parking Program Policy Approval – **Voted** to refer the program to the Parking & Traffic Safety Committee for their next meeting.
13. Access Easement for Water Services for Property Located at 921 Islington Street – **Voted** to authorize the City Manager to accept and record a Water Service Access Easement Deed in a substantially similar form to the easement deed from PWED 2, LLC contained in the agenda packet.
14. Access Easements for Water Services for Property Located at 361 Hanover Street – **Voted** to authorize the City Manager to accept and record Access Easements for Water Services in a substantially similar form to the easement deeds from 361 Hanover Steam Factory, LLC and form to the Powerhouse Realty Trust contained in the agenda packet.
15. Consent Agenda – **Voted** to adopt the Consent Agenda.
  - A. Letter from Annie Zampitella, Wentworth-Douglass Hospital and Conventures, Inc., requesting permission to hold the 2026 Seacoast Cancer 5K on Sunday, September 20, 2026 (**Anticipated action – move to refer to the City Manager with Authority to Act**)

- B. Letter from Maria Stephanou, Alzheimer's Association, requesting permission to hold the 2026 Annual Seacoast Walk to End Alzheimer's on Sunday, October 25, 2026 (***Anticipated action – move to refer to the City Manager with Authority to Act***)
- C. Letter from Jenna Raizes, Portsmouth Little League, requesting permission to install temporary signage at the Plains, Hislop, and Central Fields for the 2026 baseball season (***Anticipated action – move to refer to the City Manager with Authority to Act***)
- D. Letter from Jenna Raizes, Portsmouth Little League, requesting permission to install registration-promotion signage at Central and Plains Fields until March 15, 2026 (***Anticipated action – move to refer to the City Manager with Authority to Act***)

- 16. Email Correspondence – **Voted** to accept and place on file.
- 17. Letter from Caleb & Samantha Ginsberg, New Hampshire Soccer Club, LLC requesting permission to Host World Cup Watch Party on Pleasant Street with Street Closure Friday, June 12, 2026 – **Voted** to refer to the City Manager with Authority to Act.
- 18. Acceptance of Resignation – Mandela Pruett from the Arts and Cultural Commission – **Voted** to accept with regret the resignation of Mandela Pruett from the Arts and Cultural Commission.
- 19. Appointments to be Voted – **Voted** the appointments of Robert P. Sullivan as a Regular Member and Mike Lucas as an Alternate Member to the Zoning Board of Adjustment.
- 20. End of Term Update of African Burying Ground Memorial Park Stewardship Committee – Assistant Mayor Kelley reported over the last 20 years, the purposes and work of the African Burying Ground Committee has evolved and changed depending on the tasks presented, memorial design, fund raising, construction and reinterment of remains. She asked that the Committee be reestablished with a reconsidered mission.
- 21. Report Back from Governance Committee – **Voted** to sunset the Governance Committee.
- 22. Parking & Traffic Safety Committee Action Sheet and Minutes of December 4, 2025 – **Voted** to approve and accept the action sheet and minutes of the December 4, 2025, Parking & Traffic Safety Committee meeting.
- 23. Update on Tax Bill Status – City Manager Conard announced that the tax rate was set by the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration at \$11.51. She reported that tax bills will be mailed on December 24, 2025, with payments accepted starting Monday, December 29, 2025. She stated that the new tax rate is six cents lower than the estimated rate in the FY26 adopted budget due to greater than expected property growth. She advised the City Council that \$200 million in property development this year has strengthened the City's tax base.

24. Adjournment – At 9:25 p.m., **voted** to adjourn the meeting.

Submitted by:

Kelli L. Barnaby, MMC/CNHMC  
City Clerk