



CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, December 15, 2025  
City Hall Complex, Conference Room A  
1 Junkins Avenue, Portsmouth, NH

1. **Welcome and Call to Order:** The commenced at 11:00 a.m.
2. **Roll Call:** Assistant Mayor Joanna Kelley; Councilor and Chair Katherine Cook; Councilor John Tabor; and Councilor Vincent Lombardi were present.  
  
**Staff:** Jane Ferrini, Senior Assistant City Attorney was present.
3. **Review and Approval of the Minutes of the October 6, 2025 meeting:** Councilor Tabor made a motion to approve the October 6, 2025 minutes of the Governance Committee. Councilor Lombardi seconded. All in favor. Meeting notes of the November 10, 2025 meeting were also presented, however there was not a quorum at this meeting and therefore a vote to approve these notes was not necessary.
4. **End of the Year Governance Report:** Councilor Cook presented a draft four-year report outlining the accomplishments of the Governance Committee. Councilor Cook stated that she will present a report back to the City Council at the December 22, 2025 City Council meeting. Councilor Cook then provided a summary of the Committee's accomplishments, and stated that the process of revising ordinances sometimes took three to six months, involved obtaining public input and assistance by Staff to ensure the revisions met the anticipated outcome. Councilor Tabor asked that the report be submitted to the City Council packet.
5. **Sunsetting of the Governance Committee:** Councilor Cook advised that she would submit a motion under her name at the next City Council meeting to sunset the Governance Committee. She explained that the ordinance cleanup work has been done, and that the advice and work that the Legal Department has provided to the Committee on ordinance amendments will continue because the remaining work is not policy or Council driven, but legal updates. Councilor Lombardi expressed concern about the Charter and suggested that a Charter Committee be created. Councilor Cook stated that a Charter Committee is required by law if revisions are made to the Charter and has spoken with the Mayor about this. If changes are made in the future, the Governance Committee may be asked to reconvene to make sure any Charter revisions are in line with City ordinances. The Governance Committee is a committee of the City Council and will need to be sunsetted by motion of the City Council. Overall, the Committee is very pleased with its accomplishments and feels it has done its job.

6. **Public Comment:** None
7. **Adjournment:** Councilor Lombardi made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Tabor seconded the motion. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:  
Barbara Zulkiewicz

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