

TO: KAREN S. CONARD, CITY MANAGER  
FROM: JUNE H. PHILBROOK, DEPUTY CITY CLERK  
RE: MEETING MINUTES AND ACTIONS TAKEN AT THE PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2026  
PRESENT: MAYOR McEACHERN, ASSISTANT MAYOR KELLEY, COUNCILORS COOK, TABOR, BLALOCK, BAGLEY, MOREAU, FLYNN AND HOPKINS (via Zoom)

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**Mayor McEachern called the meeting to order at 7:18 p.m.**

1. Non-Public Session

**Assistant Mayor Kelley moved to close the Non-Public Session and seal the minutes. Seconded by Councilor Blalock and voted.**

2. Acceptance of Minutes – February 17, 2026, City Council meeting

**Assistant Mayor Kelley moved to accept and approve the minutes of the February 17, 2026, City Council meeting. Seconded by Councilor Blalock.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

**Councilor Cook voted to suspend the rules and bring forward Item 19. - City Manager's Informational Item A. SchoolCare Update. Seconded by Councilor Moreau.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

3. City Manager's Informational Items

A. SchoolCare Update

Deputy City Attorney McCourt provided Mayor McEachern and City Council Members and members of the public with an update regarding the health insurance coverage provided to school employees by SchoolCare, a public Risk Pool governed by NH RSA 5-B. Deputy City Attorney McCourt advised that SchoolCare presented the City with a bill for \$1.57 Million last fall as an assessment. This assessment was not authorized by our contract with SchoolCare, its own policies or the state law, RSA 5-B. Deputy City Attorney McCourt advised that City leaders have proposed a settlement of this claim and that they would be addressing to the SchoolCare Board of Directors on Friday, March 6, 2026.

4. Recognition and Volunteer Committee Reports - Public Art Review Committee (PARC) 2025 Year-End Report

**Councilor Cook moved to accept the Public Art Review Committee (PARC) 2025 Year-End Report as presented. Seconded by Councilor Flynn.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

5. Public Comment Session – There were 7 speakers. Mary Lou McElwain (Kelli Barnaby), Anne Poubeau (Bicycle & Pedestrian Blue Ribbon Committee), Don Margeson (Kelli Barnaby), Beth Margeson (Kelli Barnaby), Petra Huda (Kelli Barnaby), Matt Glenn (Bicycle & Pedestrian Blue Ribbon Committee), and Tyler Garzo (State Street)
6. Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Portsmouth Fire Officers Association, Local #4039

**Councilor Moreau moved to approve and accepted the proposed MOA as presented. Seconded by Councilor Tabor.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

7. Approval of Memorandum of Agreement with Portsmouth Police Civilian Employees Association, NEPBA Local #11

**Councilor Blalock moved to approve and accept the proposed MOA as presented. Seconded by Councilor Bagley.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

8. Acceptance of Easements for 1465 Woodbury Avenue

**Councilor Cook moved to authorize the City Manager to accept and approve a Community Space Easement and an Access Easement for Water Services in a substantially similar form to the Easements contained in the agenda packet. Seconded by Assistant Mayor Kelley.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

9. Acceptance of Easement for 550 Sagamore Avenue

**Councilor Blalock moved to authorize the City Manager to accept and approve an Access Easement for Water Services in a substantially similar form to the Easement contained in the agenda packet. Seconded by Assistant Mayor Kelley.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

10. Consent Agenda

- A. Letter from Jillian Tartt, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, requesting permission to hold the Walk MS: Portsmouth event on Saturday, May 30, 2026

**Councilor Moreau moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Assistant Mayor Kelley.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

11. Email Correspondence

**Councilor Moreau moved to accept and place on file. Seconded by Councilor Flynn.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

12. Housing Action Plan Follow Up

**Councilor Tabor moved to request the City Manager report back at the March 16<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting on how the Planning & Sustainability Staff will implement creation of a Housing Action Plan by July working with Boards and Committees. Seconded by Assistant Mayor Kelley.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

13. Evaluation of Community Power Participation

**Councilor Bagley moved that the City Council request the City Manager Conard to prepare and present a report outlining the process, timeline, financial implications, and contractual considerations associated with withdrawing from Community Power with an amendment to schedule a future work session with the Portsmouth Energy Advisory Committee and Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH). Seconded by Councilor Moreau.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

14. Establish a Bicycle & Pedestrian Blue Ribbon Committee

**Councilor Hopkins moved that the City Council establish a Blue Ribbon Committee to support the implementation, evaluation and public engagement related to Portsmouth's Bicycle & Pedestrian Network Plan, and Complete Streets Policy. Seconded by Councilor Cook.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

15. Acceptance of Donation to the Senior Activity Center Luncheon Fund 13 in memory of Senior Activity Center Member Sandy McCann on behalf of her daughter Kerry Kenney - \$500.00

**Councilor Moreau moved to approve and accept the donation as presented. Seconded by Councilor Cook.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

16. Acceptance of Donation to the Portsmouth Police Department from Portsmouth residents Paul Gormley and Kimi Iguchi - \$1,000.00

**Councilor Flynn moved to approve and accept the donation as presented. Seconded by Councilor Bagley.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

17. Approval of Granite United Way Opioid Abatement Responsive Grant (2) Award - \$13,000.00

**Councilor Blalock moved to accept up to \$13,000.00 from the Opioid Abatement Community Grants Program and authorize the City Manager to enter into the Grant Agreement as presented. Seconded by Councilor Tabor.**

**On a unanimous roll call vote 9-0, motion passed.**

18. City Manager's Informational Items:

- *Report Back on Childcare Access and Quality Improvements – City Manager Conard provided an update to Childcare Access and Quality Improvements and encouraged Mayor McEachern and City Council members to review the attachment within the City Council Digital Packet which offers a response to Councilor Hopkins's request.*
- *Report Back on Two-Way Traffic Recommendation for State Street – City Manager Conard provided an update to Two-Way Traffic Recommendation for State Street advising that after careful review of the Two-Way Traffic Study conducted by Wall Consultant Group (WCG) in 2023, that a trial is not recommended for Two-Way Traffic on State Street during the Congress Street construction work. The study additionally found that under two-way traffic flow, the roadway would operate with acceptable congestion, with minor changes to vehicle delay, but that during Memorial Bridge lifts, vehicular traffic would be shifted between Market Square and Middle Street corridor.*

19. Adjournment

**At 9:26 p.m. Councilor Moreau moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Assistant Mayor Kelley and voted.**

Respectfully submitted:

June H. Philbrook, CNHDMC  
Deputy City Clerk

*Disclaimer: To access the full video recording of this meeting, please [click here](#).*