



Portsmouth, NH City Council Regular Meeting October 13, 2026

Eileen Dondero Foley Council Chambers

Tuesday, October 13, 2026, at 7:00 PM

Minutes

1. Non-Public Session

Assistant Mayor Kelley moved to close non-public session and to seal the meeting minutes. Seconded by Councilor Moreau.

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Work Session (when applicable)

3. Public Dialogue Session (when applicable)

4. Call to Order (7:00 p.m. or thereafter)

Mayor McEachern called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

5. Roll Call

Present: Mayor McEachern, Assistant Mayor Kelley, Councilors Cook, Tabor, Blalock, Bagley, Moreau, Flynn and Hopkins

6. Invocation

7. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor McEachern led the Pledge of Allegiance.

8. Acceptance of Minutes

A. Minutes and Actions of September 28, 2026, City Council Meeting

Assistant Mayor Kelley moved to accept and approve the minutes of the September 28, 2026, City Council meeting. Seconded by Councilor Cook.

Motion passed unanimously.

9. Recognitions and Volunteer Committee Reports

10. Public Comment Session

There were 5 speakers:

Sue Polidura presented the request of a Paul Revere Plaque to commemorate a midday ride of Paul Revere in Portsmouth during the American Revolution. Funding is not being requested.

Peter Coddington is in support of a Paul Revere Plaque especially as we celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the United States. He would like to see Portsmouth take credit for happenings before Paul Revere's infamous midnight ride. He thanked the Council for their service.

Tony Keating, Newcastle, NH, shared his perspective on the Paul Revere plaque initiative. The request is well documented in the presented proposal. He thanked Mike Geanoulis, Sr. for researching and documenting this historic event.

Tyler Garza, on Zoom, is in support of Agenda Item 15.C, ADU tax exemption

Mike Geanoulis, Sr., Newcastle, NH, spoke about the event the plaque will commemorate. He is donating, as a gift to the Portsmouth Public library, the historical account of this event.

Councilor Moreau moved to take Agenda item 13.B out of order - Letter from Curtis Hermann from the New Hampshire Sons of the American Revolution, Sue Polidura and Michael J. Geanoulis, Sr., Historians, requesting permission to donate and install a new Paul Revere Marker in Market Square. Seconded by Councilor Bagley.

Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda item 13.B taken out of order - Letter from Curtis Hermann from the New Hampshire Sons of the American Revolution, Sue Polidura and Michael J. Geanoulis, Sr., Historians, requesting permission to donate and install a new Paul Revere Marker in Market Square.

Councilor Bagley commented on Portsmouth's involvement in the American Revolution and thanked those involved in this proposal.

Councilors Cook and Blalock echoed Councilor Bagley's comments and shared their favorite American Revolution stories.

Mayor McEachern also supports the placement of this plaque and the importance of documenting Portsmouth history throughout the city.

Sue Polidura asked for permission to share Mr. Geanoulis 's poem, "Shots Not Heard Round the World", about this event, and asked if Mr. Geanoulis could read his poem aloud.

Councilor Tabor moved to refer to the City Manager with authority to act. Seconded by Councilor Moreau.

Motion passed unanimously

Councilor Bagley moved to suspend the rules and allow Michael Geanoulis, Sr. to read his poem aloud. Seconded by Councilor Moreau.

Motion passed unanimously.

[Shots Not Heard Round the World.pdf](#) 

Assistant Mayor Kelley moved to suspend the rules and bring Agenda item 15.A out of order - Municipal Building Blue Ribbon Committee Recommendation. Seconded by Councilor Moreau.

Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 15.A taken out of order - Councilors Cook and Tabor

- Municipal Building Blue Ribbon Committee Recommendation

Councilor Bagley feels this is a solid municipal building plan and he supports it. It is a phased project. All the bonding will not be done all at once.

Councilor Cook was originally skeptical about this plan because she thought the scope was too large, and the cost was too great. Overtime she learned the committee worked hard to limit the scope, so what is needed gets done. She explained that the money would come from the existing CIP budget.

Councilor Tabor commented that this project will last many years and serve the City well. He believes this project can be done as efficiently as possible without having to look at a new location to meet the needs of the Police Department. He feels this is a tremendous value for the money. City Hall will be rehabilitated and enhanced in a better way to serve the public. He is in support of this project.

Councilor Moreau thanked the building committee for the work that has been done. The space has been used wisely. She is in support of this project.

Councilor Blalock commented that this project has been discussed for over 10 years. He asked what is going to happen to the rock room?

Councilor Cook talked about increasing storage through basement space being added to additions.

Mayor McEachern thanked key players who worked on this project. He also thanked Councilors Tabor, Cook and Bagley for their work serving on this committee. He appreciates the efforts to find savings for this project.

Councilor Bagley also thanked Joe Almeida for his work on this committee and keeping an old building running.

Councilor Cook moved to accept the recommendation of the Municipal Building Blue Ribbon Committee regarding Final Concept C, including the revised third and fourth-floor and HVAC and electrical upgrades, as the preferred design concept for the Municipal Complex Upgrade, consistent with the revised project cost estimate and phasing plan, for a total project cost estimate of \$58.6 million, and update the existing CIP element sheet in the FY28-33 CIP. Seconded by Councilor Tabor.

Motion passed unanimously.

11. Public Hearings and Vote On Ordinances and/or Resolutions

- A. Public Hearing and Second Reading to amend Chapter 10, Zoning Ordinance, City of Portsmouth Zoning Map, be amended to change to the district boundary of the Historic District

- **PRESENTATION**

Assistant Planning Director, Peter Stith, explained the proposed amendments, the reasons to change the boundary, the proposed boundary, parcels that will be affected, Historic District Amendments and the implementation plan.

- **CITY COUNCIL QUESTIONS**

Councilor Moreau gave some context to the boundary.

Councilor Blalock asked if property owners have been notified. All 74 properties have been notified via certified mail.

- **PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS**

Mayor McEachern opened the public hearing.

Brad Landon's questions were explained through the presentation.

Councilor Bagley said his neighbors are in favor of the changed boundary.

Councilor Moreau mentioned other areas will be assessed at a later date.

Councilor Cook explained this ordinance brings Middle Street in line with Historic District Rules. It mirrors what had been done on Islington Street.

Councilor Blalock would like to see the historic district celebrate the historic buildings for Portsmouth.

Mayor McEachern closed the public hearing.

Councilor Tabor moved to pass second reading and schedule a third and final reading as presented for the October 26, 2026, City Council meeting. Seconded by Councilor Blalock.

Motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Moreau moved to suspend the rules and bring forth third and final reading. Seconded by Councilor Blalock.

Motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Moreau moved to pass third and final reading as presented. Seconded by Councilor Cook.

Motion passed unanimously.

- B. Public Hearing and Second Reading amendments to Chapter 10, Zoning Ordinance, which will remove most parking regulations from the Zoning Ordinance to the Site Plan Review Regulation (except one and two-family dwellings)

- **PRESENTATION**

Assistant Planning Director, Peter Stith, explained the proposed zoning amendments regarding parking regulations, a history of parking, changes to site plan review regulations, parking flexibility, changes not being made, and implementation.

- **CITY COUNCIL QUESTIONS**

Councilor Cook asked about the site planning regulations. How does this procedure work? Peter Stith explained that the Planning Board has simplified the process in line with site plan regulations. Councilor Moreau echoed his answer. Councilor Tabor commented on the site review parking standards in the packet. It is much simpler.

Mayor McEachern asked questions about parking and conditional use permits. Will parking be a part of the site plan and come before the Planning Board with every

application? It changes from a conditional use permit to a site plan review through the Planning Board.

Councilor Bagley feels we should be eliminating parking requirements. He feels we are taking a complicated thing and making it more complicated.

Councilor Moreau explained we are making things less complicated by putting it into site plan review.

Councilor Tabor thinks looking at parking requirements over time and putting it as a part of the site plan to be presented in front of the Planning Board is a step in the right direction.

Councilor Cooks feels this is a step in the right direction in order to approve housing.

Mayor McEachern added how this relates to the City's zoning ordinances. He is in support of these amendments.

Councilor Moreau requested redline site plan regulations in the ordinance in advance of third and final reading.

- **PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS**

Tyler Garza, on Zoom, is in support of these changes and the efforts to bring this forward.

Mayor McEachern closed the public hearing.

Councilor Moreau moved to pass second reading and schedule third and final reading as presented for the October 26, 2026, City Council meeting. Seconded by Councilor Bagley.

Motion passed unanimously.

12. City Manager's Items Which Require Action

- A. Acceptance of Drainage and Turnaround Easements and Additional Right-of-Way and Approval of McMaster Drive as New Street Name for Property Located at 86 Farm Lane
City Manager Conard explained the background of this request.

Councilor Flynn moved to authorize the City Manager to accept and record the drainage easement, turnaround easement, and conveyance of the additional right-of-way in substantially the same form as the documents contained in the agenda packet and approve McMaster Drive as the name of the new public street. Seconded by Councilor Hopkins.

Motion passed unanimously.

13. Consent Agenda

Consent Action - No items for this meeting

14. Presentations and Written Communications

- A. Request from Attorney John Bosen on behalf of property owners at 107 Ledgewood Drive for a Zoning Map Amendment

Assistant Mayor Kelley moved to refer to the Planning Board for recommendation and report back. Seconded by Councilor Cook.

Motion passed unanimously.

- B. Agenda Item 13.B taken out of order - Letter from Curtis Hermann from the New Hampshire Sons of the American Revolution, Sue Polidura and Michael J. Geanoulis, Sr., Historians, requesting permission to donate and install a new Paul Revere Marker in Market Square

- C. Email Correspondence

Assistant Mayor Kelley moved to accept and place on file. Seconded by Councilor Bagley.

Motion passed unanimously.

15. Mayor McEachern

- A. Acceptance of Resignation

- MC (Mary Claire) Rodriguez-Abbot from the Portsmouth Energy Advisory Committee

Councilor Flynn moved to accept with regret the resignation of MC (Mary Claire) Rodriguez-Abbot from the Portsmouth Energy Advisory Committee and send a letter thanking MC for her service to the City. Seconded by Councilor Hopkins.

Motion passed unanimously.

- B. Appointments to be Considered

- Zachary (Zach) Dombrowski for full member to the Economic Development Commission
- Matthew Jeffers for alternate member to the Economic Development Commission

- C. Appointments to be Voted

- Alanna Lang appointment to the Behavioral Health Task Force
- Meganne Fabrega reappointment to the Library Board of Trustees
- Alice Carey reappointment to the Conservation Commission

Assistant Mayor Kelley moved to appoint as presented. Seconded by Councilor Cook.

Motion passed unanimously.

16. City Council Members

- A. Agenda Item 15.A taken out of order - Councilors Cook and Tabor

- Municipal Building Blue Ribbon Committee Recommendation

- B. *Councilors Tabor, Blalock, and Moreau

- CIP Citizen Request Subcommittee Report Out

Councilor Moreau gave an overview of the CIP Citizen requests. There are 27 requests this year. Seven they acted on. 14 requests are existing projects. There are five that are better off in another process. There was one request where the committee asked for more information and a report back from the Recreation Board before moving forward. She highlighted a tree project. There is a request for a Banfield Road sidewalk.

Councilor Blalock thanked the citizens for their requests. He highlighted a sidewalk request on Jones Avenue. There was a request for a disc golf course as well as a request

for a hockey ball court.

Councilor Tabor mentioned a bicycle path and fixing the intersection at Dennett Avenue. There was also a request to research a zero-waste plant.

C. Councilor Bagley

- ADU Property Tax Exemption

Councilor Bagley moved to request that Portsmouth's Delegation to the General Court file legislation for the 2027 session authorizing cities and towns to adopt a local option property tax exemption on the added assessed value of newly created accessory dwelling units, for a period of up to 20 years, as outlined below. Seconded by Councilor Moreau.

Councilor Bagley explained why he likes this proposal.

Mayor McEachern discussed how this request relates to the Housing Action Plan. It also has the potential to create more senior housing.

Councilor Cook hopes this is something that can pass at the State level. She feels this should apply to RSA 79-E.

Assistant Mayor Kelley would like to have an understanding from the City Assessors as it relates to tax exemption. There are a limited number of lots that can be converted to accessory dwelling units. She would like the maximum sized ADUs allowed on lots. She would like to have a report back from the Assessing Department.

Councilor Bagley would like to know how many accessory dwelling units have been built since 2017.

Councilor Moreau mentioned the last Housing Committee meeting reviewed the first draft of the proposed changes to RSA 79-E. Feedback was given about changes they would like to see and have should have more information towards the end of this year or the beginning of next year.

Councilor Cook mentioned the deadline for filing.

Motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Bagley moved to request that the City Attorney report to the Council on whether tax relief under RSA 79-E:4-c, as amended in 2026, could apply to newly created accessory dwelling units. Seconded by Councilor Moreau.

Motion passed unanimously.

D. Councilor Hopkins

- Parking & Traffic Safety Committee Action Sheet and Minutes of September 3, 2026

Councilor Hopkins moved to approve annual renewal of Valet License Agreement with LAZ Parking Limited, LLC for Portwalk HI, LLC as presented. Seconded by Councilor Blalock.

Motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Hopkins moved to approve annual renewal of Valet License Agreement with LAZ Parking Limited, LLC for Parade Residence Hotel, LLC as presented. Seconded by Councilor Cook.

Motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Hopkins moved to approve and accept the action sheet and minutes of the September 3, 2026, Parking & Traffic Safety Committee Meeting Seconded by Assistant Mayor Kelley.

Motion passed unanimously.

17. Approval of Grants/Donations

- A. Donation to the Senior Activity Center Luncheon Fund - \$1000 from Charlotte Dura and Robbin DiPierre

Assistant Mayor Kelley moved to accept with thanks a donation to the Senior Activity Center Luncheon Fund from Charlotte Dura and Robbin DiPierre in the amount as presented in the attached Gift and Donation Submission Form. Seconded by Councilor Blalock.

Motion passed unanimously.

- B. Granite United Way Opioid Abatement Responsive Grant Round 4 Award - \$13,000

Councilor Moreau moved to accept a \$13,000 Round 4 Opioid Abatement Response Grant from Granite United Way and authorize the City Manager to execute the Grant Agreement as presented. Seconded by Councilor Flynn.

Motion passed unanimously.

- C. Point of Graves Cemetery Donations

Councilor Cook moved to accept with thanks donations for the Point of Graves Cemetery Wall Replacement from Sharon Fulton, Patricia & Richard Bagley, Dan Corcoran, and Kathryn Lynch, in the amounts as presented in the attached Gift and Donation Submission Forms. Seconded by Councilor Tabor.

Motion passed unanimously.

18. City Manager's Informational Items

- A. Amended Resident Access Parking Pilot (RAPP) Program Policy

City Manager Conard noted that a Q1 update on the RAPP program will be presented at the October 26, 2026, City Council Meeting.

19. Miscellaneous Business Including Business Remaining Unfinished At Previous Meeting

Assistant Mayor Kelley mentioned the postponed New England BIPOC Festival, due to the recent Nor'easter, has been rescheduled to October 25, 2026, at Strawberry Banke, from 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

20. Adjournment (At 10:30 pm or earlier)

Councilor Moreau moved to adjourn at 9:06 p.m. Seconded by Councilor Blalock.

Motion passed unanimously.

Sally A. Kellar

SHOTS NOT HEARD ROUND THE WORLD

By Michael James Geanoulis, Sr.

Listen my children, and be aware,
The sins of King George were everywhere.
He sought to enslave and tax beyond reason,
To seize powder and arms in a snow-driven season.
But the spirit of patriots was all that George wrought.
For it's true, they then knew, a war must be fought.

It mattered not, to Liberty's Sons and Paul Revere,
That problems could rise and prove quite severe.
That ye olde Portsmouth and New Castle's fort,
Were three score miles distant from ye Boston port.
And they but least cared, that travel on horse,
In the snows of December, was risky of course.

Most vital it was, if freedom be got,
New Hampshire be told, about the King's plot.
They should if they could, preempt the King's dash,
And seize for their own, that New Castle stash.

Not long after the arrival of Paul,
With his call for all to rise and stand tall,
Drummers drummed and runners ran,
To spread the news of his honorable plan.

From Kittery and Rye, from Dover and Brentwood,
By the hundreds they came, to help where they could.
They schemed and contrived to befuddle the Master,
Who sought to control those barrels of powder.
To ensure that instead, they'd be able to fight,
The upcoming war they thought proper and right.

So too, they knew, with gunpowder needed,
And knowing King George will likely advance,
To Fort William and Mary, they quickly proceeded.
Their future success they would not leave to chance.

It was freezing and snowing, that day in December,
When three hundred and more, rose as a member.
At first, they began with a subtle demand,
But the fort's captain rejected the plan,
Firing braces of balls as his deadly rejoinder.

At that signal they came, like bees in a swarm,
Some wading ashore in waters not warm,
To face cannon and musket as possible fodder,
But since no one was hurt, 'twas trivial bother.

That all escaped death, seemed like a clue,
Divine intervention came out of the blue.
To be candid and honest and perfectly frank,
Cannons and muskets fired at them point blank.
But the creator of lights was supportive, they said,
When the Crown was unable to paint the ground red.

Return fire came not from the rebels who saw,
Brute force would suffice though substantially raw.
They demanded and failed to get keys to the store,
But access was gained with the leverage they bore.

One hundred barrels of gunpowder they won,
With more arms next day for another ton.
From two days of raids at His Majesty's fort,
Their quest for freedom had much more support.
This initial assault on the much-hated Crown,
Gave birth to America, a place of renown.

And so it is, we're proud to remember,
And ever be glad to repeat this report,
That on two snowy days of '74 December,
The people had taken His Majesty's fort.

*Mike
Geanoulis*

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