



**CITY OF HAVERHILL
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 7:00 PM**

**Theodore A. Pelosi, Jr. Council Chambers, 4 Summer st, Room 202
In-Person/Remote Meeting**

Present: President Sullivan, Councilors Basiliere, LePage, Ferreira, Jordan, Rogers, McGonagle, and Lewandowski

Remote: Councilors Toohey and Hobbs Everett

Absent: Councilor Michitson

City Clerk: Kaitlin M. Wright

1. OPENING PRAYER

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING

COUNCILOR FERREIRA STATED SHE REVIEWED THE MINUTES AND FINDS THEM IN ORDER.

MOTION BY COUNCILOR FERREIRA TO RECEIVE, SECOND BY VICE PRESIDENT JORDAN

PASSED YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (MICHITSON)

4. ASSIGNMENT OF THE MINUTES REVIEW FOR THE NEXT MEETING

PRESIDENT SULLIVAN ASSIGNED THE MINUTES TO VICE PRESIDENT JORDAN

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR:

5.1. Mayor Barrett requests to introduce Director Claire Hailson, Cathy Merchant and Ben Graves to discuss their ongoing efforts at *Ruth's House Inc* and to announce they will be hosting a *Trivia Night* at *Salvatore's Restaurant* in Lawrence, MA on March 21st from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm 12-C

Claire Hailson and Ben Graves addressed the council, providing updates on upcoming events. She stated they will be hosting a trivia Night scheduled for March 21st from 6:30 PM to 9:30 PM at Salvatore's Restaurant in Lawrence. She noted they are planning for the fall a fashion show at the Merrimack Golf Club, with a call for models to participate. She also highlighted the positive events taking place at Ruth's House.

6.4 Councillor Basiliere requests to introduce Lisa MacDougall, of the *Haverhill Exchange Club* to speak regarding the upcoming annual *Exchange Club St. Patrick's* fundraiser 33-G

Lisa MacDougall of the Haverhill Exchange Club addressed the council. We are holding our annual fundraiser on March 17th 7:30-9:30AM at the Haverhill Country Club. The proceeds of this fundraiser go to the prevention of child abuse. You can go to HaverhillExchangeClub.com to purchase tickets.

6.2 Vice President Jordan and Councillor Lewandowski request to introduce and recognize Paul Prue for running the Bradford Common concert series for the past 16 years 33-E

Vice President Jordan introduced Paul Prue, who has volunteered for the Bradford Common Concert Series for the past 16 years. In addition to organizing the event, Paul has managed the sound for the bands and musicians. His efforts are greatly appreciated by the community.

Councilor Lewandowski praised Paul's 16-year involvement, noting that it was longer than most Vegas residencies. She highlighted how the concert series has been a perfect example of bringing the community together, offering an



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opportunity for people to meet, reconnect, and enjoy great music.

Mayor Barrett, a long-time neighbor of Paul, shared how Paul consistently put on great shows every Friday night. She noted that people developed a routine around the event, meeting friends, socializing, and enjoying music. The event was highly appreciated by both neighbors and attendees from all over the city.

Vice President Jordan announced that Team Haverhill would be taking over the concert series. The concerts will be moving from Fridays to Thursdays and will run from July 10th to August 14th, from 6:00 PM to 8:15 PM. There will be two rain dates scheduled for August 21st and 28th.

Mayor Barrett, Vice President Jordan, and Councilor Lewandowski presented him with a citation in recognition of his 16 years of service to the concert series and the community.

Councilor Hobbs Everett asked how people can participate in the concert series. Vice President Jordan stated this year we have all the acts scheduled. If you have anyone interested in playing, please connect them with me.

6.1 Vice President Jordan and Councillor Ferreira would like to welcome City Assessor Christine Webb to speak about tax abatement programs available to residents ahead of the April 1st filing deadline

33-D

Councilor Ferreira introduced Christine Webb, City Assessor, to discuss various tax abatement programs available to homeowners. The deadline for applying for these exemptions is April 1st.

Christine Webb explained several homeowner tax exemptions, which require yearly applications and residency verification. An exemption for homeowners who are 70 years old by July 1, 2024, based on lower income and assets. An exemption based on lower assets. Exemptions for service-related veterans or their widows/widowers with disabilities ranging from 10%-100%, requiring a DD214 and a percent disability letter. An exemption for homeowners who are legally blind, requiring a letter from the Commission for the Blind. Exemptions for widows/widowers of police or fire personnel killed in the line of duty and parents of military personnel who died during active duty. Haverhill offers an additional 40% above the state exemption base, as voted on by the City Council for fiscal year 2023. Under the Hero Act, 100% disabled veterans are now eligible for 100% exemption on one vehicle registered in their name. She reminded residents that the deadline to apply is April 1st. Applications can found online, at the office, or mailed. For further assistance, residents can contact the office via assessors@haverhillma.gov or 978-374-2316.

Councilor Ferreira asked the following questions. How many households take advantage of the programs, can they use multiple exemptions and what is the impact on the city budget. Christine Webb reported 549 households accessed the program for fiscal year 2024, most of which were veterans, with 200 being widows/widowers or 70+. She clarified that for multiple exemptions that applicants are given the highest exemption, but two disabled service veterans in a household can each qualify for their own exemption. She explained that with the current 40% increase, the city is liable for \$220,000, and while the state reimburses part of the base amount, it does not increase reimbursements for higher exemptions.

Vice President Jordan highlighted that Haverhill has the second-lowest tax rate in the area, with Lawrence having the only lower rate. Christine Webb provided a chart comparing Haverhill's tax rate with surrounding communities, and it was suggested that the chart be shared online and on Facebook.

President Sullivan noted we have one citizen who filed a public participation form.

Michael Morales, a resident of 37 Coachman's Lane, addressed the council regarding the struggles faced by Haverhill's seniors. He emphasized that many seniors, dependent on Social Security, are finding it difficult to balance property taxes



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with fixed incomes. Morales urged the council to consider adjustments to the senior abatement program, including reducing the residency requirement from 10 years to 5 years. Lowering the age requirement from 70 to 65. Doubling the \$4,000 exemption and raising income and asset limits. Increasing the \$700 tax exemption to provide more significant relief. He called on the council to implement these changes to help ease the financial burdens on seniors.

5.2 Mayor Barrett submits Ordinance to amend the Code of the City:

**5.1.1. Ordinance Relating to Commission on Disability Issues; Amend Chapter 11
Boards and Commissions, Article IV**

File 10 days 43

Related communication from Lisa Mead and Michael Reilly, City Solicitors

MOTION BY COUNCILOR MCGONAGLE TO PLACE ON FILE, SECOND BY VICE PRESIDENT JORDAN

PASSED

YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (MICHITSON)

**6. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCILLORS TO INTRODUCE AN INDIVIDUAL(S) TO ADDRESS
THE COUNCIL:**

6.1. Moved to beginning of agenda 33-D

6.2. Moved to beginning of agenda 33-E

6.3. Councillor Basiliere requests to introduce Mary Ann Barry, Charlie Eugerio and
Robert Hakesly to discuss winter parking concerns in their neighborhood and offer
suggestions for improvement 33-F

Councilor Basiliere highlighted parking issues in Wards 1, 2, and 3, noting an increase in cars on the streets that haven't changed. He mentioned that after hearing from residents, he would motion to send the issue to a sub-committee for further discussion.

Mary Ann Barry, a resident of 3 Altamont Street, shared her concerns about parking. She explained that people from Broadway often take the parking spots on her street, even after she shovels them, citing that they claim it's public parking. She also mentioned concerns about speeding on her street and expressed uncertainty about the solution. Councilor Basiliere and Ms. Barry discussed possible residents only parking.

Terri Lemieux, speaking on behalf of Charlie Eugerio, who was unable to attend due to illness, discussed parking issues at 9 Norfolk Street. She explained that her son and her neighbor's son both have plow trucks and plow from 1 Norfolk Street to the dead end. She mentioned two tenants on Primrose Street who park wherever, causing congestion. Terri requested an exemption from the even-odd parking regulations for her property, noting that she has 100 feet of frontage where she has always parked in front of the telephone poles.

Robert Hakesly, 13 Tremont Street, expressed concerns about parking ticketing practices. He stated that in his 38 years of residence, he has received only two tickets. He criticized the high number of tickets issued before the first snowstorm, citing that \$70,000 worth of tickets were issued up until January 11th, before any plowable snow had fallen. He also proposed introducing grace periods for parking, particularly in the spring and at the beginning of winter, to offer relief when weather conditions are favorable, without compromising public safety or access for emergency vehicles. He suggested this change could be implemented by January 1st. President Sullivan encouraged Mr. Hakesly to present his full proposal at a subcommittee meeting.

Councilor McGonagle suggested sending to subcommittee and include representatives from the Police Department, DPW, and Engineering to discuss the matter fully.



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Councilor Basiliere asked about the total number of streets and miles in Haverhill. He also highlighted the cost of having a police officer tie up for 30-45 minutes to handle a vehicle issue, suggesting that the cost of a \$25 parking ticket is less expensive than the cost to the city for police time.

Sgt. Lynch provided details, stating that there are 1,400 streets and 298 miles of paved roadway in the area. He also mentioned personally towing 7 out of the 75 cars over a two-day period, which were unregistered, uninsured, and included stolen vehicles.

MOTION BY COUNCILOR BASILIERE TO REFER TO PUBLIC SAFETY SUBCOMMITTEE, SECOND BY COUNCILOR MCGONAGLE
PASSED YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (MICHITSON)

6.4. Moved to the beginning of the agenda

33-G

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION- REQUESTS UNDER COUNCIL RULE 28

8. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS FROM CITY OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES:

9. UTILITY HEARING(S) AND RELATED ORDER(S):

9.1. Petition from Mass Electric dba National Grid requesting underground electric conduits at Kenoza av - Work #31047617

Hearing April 1

44

MOTION BY COUNCILOR ROGERS TO HEAR ON APRIL 1ST, SECOND BY COUNCILOR MCGONAGLE
PASSED YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (MICHITSON)

10. HEARINGS AND RELATED ORDERS:

10.1. SPFL 25-1; Hearing Application from Robert Coluccio for the *Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority* requesting an amendment to their original flammable licenses granted in 1925 and 1926, to store 22,000 gallons of diesel fuel aboveground and 22,000 gallons of gasoline underground at 123 Railroad av 25

President Sullivan opened the special permit hearing.

Robert Coluccio from Web Engineering Associates addressed the council regarding the replacement of an old underground diesel tank with an above-ground tank. He explained that the current diesel tank is aging and located near the river, prompting concerns about safety and environmental impact. He emphasized that above-ground tanks are more environmentally friendly and safer. Coluccio also discussed the need to update licenses for both the gasoline and diesel tanks, as the current licenses are outdated.

Ed Nutter, Facilities Manager for MEVA, stated that he had been at the site for 20 years and acknowledged that the diesel tank was outdated. He expressed support for replacing the underground tank with an above-ground one, citing safety and environmental benefits.

President Sullivan asked if anyone would like to speak in favor? No one spoke

President Sullivan asked if anyone would like to speak in opposition?

Donna MaCaron, 11 Verndale Street questioned whether the tanks were related to the buses or trains and raised concerns about the safety of storing fuel near residential areas. She asked how safety would be ensured.



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Robert Coluccio responded that the Fire Department and State Fire Marshal would oversee safety, including compliance with NFPA codes. He explained that the new above-ground tank would be double-walled and fire-protected, reducing risks.

Bert Lessert raised concerns about the potential for flooding and whether above-ground tanks would be safe in the event of a flood. He questioned if underground tanks were safer in this case.

Robert Coluccio reassured that the above-ground tanks would be anchored and designed to withstand floods. He noted that, unlike underground tanks, above-ground tanks could be better inspected and maintained.

President Sullivan closed the hearing.

Motion by Councilor McGonagle, Second Councilor Rogers.

Councilor Basiliere expressed support for above-ground tanks, highlighting that they would be easier to inspect and maintain. He noted that the double-walled design of the new tank would reduce risks.

Councilor Ferreira asked for clarification about the status of the underground tank. Coluccio explained that both tanks were regularly inspected and maintained, and that the gasoline tank was newer than the diesel tank.

President Sullivan stated, Madam Clerk, can you please call the roll.

City Clerk Wright: Vice President Jordan-yes, Councilor Basiliere-yes, Councilor Hobbs Everett-yes, Councilor Ferreira-yes, Councilor Lewandowski-yes, Councilor Toohey-yes, Councilor McGonagle-yes, Councilor LePage-yes, Councilor Rogers-yes, President Sullivan-yes

10 Yeas, 0 Nays, 1 Absent (Michitson)

President Sullivan: That Passes.

11.APPOINTMENTS:

- 11.1. **Confirming Appointments**
- 11.2. **Non-Confirming Appointments**
- 11.3. **Constables**
- 11.4. **Resignations:**

12.PETITIONS:

- 12.1. **Applications Handicap Parking Sign:** *with Police approval*
- 12.2. **Amusement/Event Application:** *with Police approval*
- 12.3. **Auctioneer License:**
- 12.4. **Tag Days:** *with Police approval*

12.4.1. *HHS Boys Lacrosse, April 12 & 13*

8-H

MOTION BY VICE PRESIDENT JORDAN, SECOND BY COUNCILOR LEWANDOWSKI

PASSED

YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (MICHITSON)

- 12.5. **One Day Liquor License –** *with License Commission & HPD approval*



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12.6. **ANNUAL LICENSE RENEWALS:**

- 12.6.1. **Hawker Peddlers License- Fixed location – w/Police approval**
- 12.6.2. **Coin-Op License *Renewals* – with Police approval**
- 12.6.3. **Christmas Tree Vendor – with Police approval**
- 12.6.4. **Taxi Driver Licenses for 2024: with Police approval**
- 12.6.5. **Taxi/Limousine License with Police approval**
- 12.6.6. **Junk Dealer /Collector License with Police approval**
- 12.6.7. **Pool/Billiard**
- 12.6.8. **Bowling**
- 12.6.9. **Sunday Bowling**
- 12.6.10. **Buy & Sell Second Hand Articles with Police approval**
- 12.6.11. **Buy & Sell Second Hand Clothing**
- 12.6.12. **Pawnbroker license - with police approval**
- 12.6.13. **Fortune Teller with - Police approval**
- 12.6.14. **Buy & Sell Old Gold – with Police approval**
- 12.6.15. **Roller Skating Rink**
- 12.6.16. **Sunday Skating**
- 12.6.17. **Exterior Vending Machines/Redbox Automated Retail, LLC**
- 12.6.18. **Limousine/Livery License/Chair Cars with Police approval**

13.MOTIONS AND ORDERS:

- 13.1. Order – Authorize to pay bills of previous years and authorize payment from current year departmental appropriations as listed:

<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Account</u>
Combustion Service Co of NE	\$5,502.00	Water Dept
Total: \$5,502.00		10-C

MOTION BY VICE PRESIDENT JORDAN, SECOND BY COUNCILOR MCGONAGLE

PASSED YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (MICHITSON)

14.ORDINANCES (FILE 10 DAYS)

- 14.1. Ordinance re: Vehicles and Traffic, Handicap parking at 24 Fifth Avenue
File 10 days 11-E

MOTION BY COUNCILOR MCGONAGLE TO PLACE ON FILE, SECOND BY VICE PRESIDENT JORDAN

PASSED YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (MICHITSON)

15.COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCILLORS:

16. UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF PRECEEDING MEETING:

- 16.1. Document 37; Ordinance re: Amendment of License fees for Flammable
Material Storage *filed February 27th*



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Related communication from City Clerk, Kaitlin M Wright and City Solicitors, Lisa Mead and Benjamin Roberts

MOTION BY COUNCILOR LEPAGE, SECOND BY COUNCILOR ROGERS

PASSED

YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (MICHITSON)

17.RESOLUTIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS:

17.1. Mayor Barrett presents the following proclamation: March 17, 2025, as *Irish American Heritage Month* in the City of Haverhill

Mayor Barrett read the proclamation into the record.

45

18.COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

18.1. Councillor Colin LePage submits the *Minutes and Recommendations* of the *Administration and Finance Committee* meeting held on February 18, 2025, for acceptance and approval

18-C

Councilor LePage read the minutes into the record.

MOTION BY COUNCILOR LEPAGE, SECOND BY VICE PRESIDENT JORDAN

PASSED

YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (MICHITSON)

19.DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE STUDY

20.LONG TERM MATTERS STUDY LIST

21.ADJOURN:

MOTION BY VICE PRESIDENT JORDAN TO ADJOURN, SECOND BY COUNCILOR ROGERS

PASSED

YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (MICHITSON) **ADJOURNED: 20:42**