

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**March 6, 2024**

The meeting was called to order by President Murphy-Romboletti at 7:02 PM

The Clerk called the roll. Present Members in person 12 (Anderson-Burgos, Bartley, Devine, Givner, Greaney, Jourdain, Magrath-Smith, Murphy-Romboletti, Ocasio, I. Rivera, J. Rivera, Sullivan). Present Members on Zoom 1 (Vacon).

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

President Murphy-Romboletti stated that as it was the first March meeting, member of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade Committee and the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) had been invited.

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to enter the Chambers and be presented with proclamations.

The Manchester Pipe Band filled the chambers with celebratory bagpipe music, to the enjoyment of all.

Councilor Bartley stated that this was the tenth time inviting in the Parade Committee as well as the second time inviting the AOH to the first March meeting. He then thanked the Manchester Pipe Band for filling in, noting that the Caledonian Pipe Band had usually been there but were unavailable. He then invited Joseph O'Connor to the podium to introduce dignitaries from the Hibernians.

J. O'Connor, President of the AOH, introduced Paula Paoli, Ladies President of the AOH. He then stated that their motto was friendship, unity, and true Christian charity, emphasizing that their award recipients lived that every day. He then introduced Patty Clayton as their Woman of the Year, John Gaughan as their Man of the Year, and Jim Kelly as their Christian Charity Award recipient. He also introduced Barbara Twohig, the AOH Ladies State President.

Councilor Bartley thanked Councilor Devine for putting her providing her calligraphy skills to write out the proclamations. He then introduced Hayley Feyre Dunn, President of the St. Patrick's Parade Committee.

H. Dunn stated that this annual tradition was one the committee's favorite events of the year to have their award winners and Colleens honored. She then noted that they would be marching through Holyoke in just 11 days. She then introduced the year's grand Marshal, Mary Lynch, affectionately known as Auntie Mary and described as the grandest of Grand Marshals. She then

introduced Citizenship Award winner, Billy Harbilas, who was unable to be present that evening. She stated that he had helped to run the St. Patrick's Road Race for over 30 years, the committee's largest annual fundraiser. She also introduced Rohan Award recipient, Stephanie Joyce. She then introduced O'Connell Award recipient, Johnny Driscoll. She also introduced Gullivan Award winner, Susie Howard. She also acknowledged that the JFK Award winner, Mike Gorman, play-by-play commentator for the Boston Celtics, would be honored the weekend of the parade. She added that Dr. Catherine B. Shannon would be honored in a breakfast the morning of the parade. She then explained that Dr. Shannon had been instrumental in conversations during the Northern Ireland peace process many years earlier. She then introduced the Collen Court, Grand Collene Elizabeth Gourde, as well as Natalie Morris, Hunter Edwards (unavailable to attend), Taryn Ryan (also unavailable), and Miss Congeniality Amelia George. She then stated that the parade would have over 25 bands, a dozen floats, along with new entertainment.

President Murphy-Romboletti thanked the committee for coming in. She added that as a Parade Committee member, she understood the effort it took. She also thanked Councilor Bartley for starting the tradition, noting all of the coordination it took.

Motion was made and seconded to take a roll call vote that for the purposes of this meeting would be applicable to all motions to receive, to refer items to committee, remove items from the table, place items on the table, package items together, comply with items, or suspend the rules, unless there is an objection. Motion passed on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 13--Nays 0--Absent 0.

The name of Councilor Jourdain was pulled to head the roll call voting.

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to take up order 66 out of order.

Councilor Givner- Ordered, that the Honorable City Council accept the revised proposal for 689 Main Street (Assessors Map 055, Block 00, Parcel 009) as described in the letter (attached) previously submitted as a communication to the City Council.

Councilor Bartley stated that he would recuse himself from all votes related to this item.  
--> Received and referred to the Development and Governmental Relations Committee.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

(22:50)

Helene Florio, 31 Wellesley Road, expressed that she was baffled by the intensity of the Council to get into the weeds on whether to put the CPA question on the ballot. She noted that it was approved to be put on the ballot at the request of multiple taxpaying citizens and businesses, those who pay the bill for the city. She then emphasized that putting it on the ballot would be honoring its own

promise. She then suggested that it was not fair to vote against it because of individual opposition to it. She also suggested that there was misinformation being spread, adding that the businesses who paid the bulk of the extra tax could not request an abatement. She also suggested that the wording of the question did include information that people had to apply annually for an exemption. She also stated that the cost of living was increasing daily. She then demanded that the question to be put on the ballot.

Lori Belanger, 16 Roland Street, expressed her support for putting the CPA question on the ballot. She then emphasized that the CPA would not be going away, noting that the result of the question would either keep it at 1.5% or reduce it to 1%. She then suggested that everything else being debated beyond just putting the question the ballot was a secondary matter. She then suggested that points about small residential averages may be convenient for those making those points but was not accurate and was a misuse of stats. She then explained that the businesses who already paid double the residential rate were getting the biggest bill contributing into the fund. She added that they also did not have an opportunity for any exemption. She then asked that the questions be put on the ballot to allow the voters to speak.

Kristen Sykes, 280 West Franklin Street, expressed her desire to see Holyoke become safer for walking and biking. She then stated that she was the Chair of the Holyoke Biking and Pedestrian Committee. She then explained that their goals included providing recommendation to the City Council on related safety issues as well as to provide a forum for residents and community organizations to raise related issues, and to assist the city in developing bicycle and pedestrian systems, to educate and do public outreach, to use biking and walking as a means to improve the health of residents, and to work with the city's planning agencies. She highlighted a recent newspaper article that focused on a ride in motor vehicle crashes in the commonwealth, including many involved pedestrians and bicyclists. She also emphasized that there were two fatalities in the city in just the last couple weeks. She also expressed support for Councilor Givner's traffic safety pledge efforts.

Lyn Horan, 100 Southampton Road, stated that she spoke to three other city councils in the area and found none of them only allowed the public to speak for 90 seconds. She suggested that this was not long enough to speak on any of the complex issues in the city. She then suggested that when so few people vote or have faith in government, only allowed 90 seconds was not showing people that the city wants them to participate. She also

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to take up item 59 out of order.

Councilor Devine stated that she would have a Finance Committee meeting on March 29th and that this item could be discussed then.

Devine-ORDERED that 2 separate votes be taken by the City Council on the Community Preservation Act (CPA) as follows:

#1 whether to reduce the percentage from 1.5 % to 1%

#2 vote to put the CPA results from this question on the ballot

Councilor Devine stated that she filed this to help clear up confusion over whether it needed to be one vote or two.

---> Received and referred to the Finance Committee.

### **L Aid ON THE TABLE**

(33:45)

President Murphy-Romboletti asked if this was to remain on the table.

Councilor Givner stated that she had been in touch with HG&E and the resident where the proposed light would be. She then explained that the resident did not agree with the terms so a pole petition would be submitted at a future date.

Motion was made and seconded to remove item 1 from the table.

Councilor Givner- With community support, order that a street light be installed between 31 and 33 O'Connor Ave on the odd side of the street. There have been multiple vehicle break ins here. A light would provide pedestrian safety and deter vehicle break ins on this very dark section of the street.

-Ordinance / Copy to DPW

---> Given a leave to withdraw

Motion was made and seconded to remove item 2 from the table.

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order that the ballot question approved by the City Council be placed on the ballot on November 4, 2024 as referenced in the 9/26/23 decision by Judge Mulqueen.

Ballot Question

Shall the City of Holyoke amend the current Community Preservation Act real estate surcharge, as established in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of Chapter 44B of the Massachusetts General Laws, and which amendment of such surcharge is permissible pursuant to Section 16 of Chapter 44B of the Massachusetts General Laws, and approved by its legislative body, from 1.5% to 1.0%, a summary of which appears below?

(with revised dates) 8

Community Preservation Act Ballot Question and Draft Summary Ballot Question

Shall the City of Holyoke amend the current Community Preservation Act real estate surcharge, as established in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of Chapter 44B of the Massachusetts General Laws, and which amendment of such surcharge is permissible pursuant to Section 16 of Chapter 44B of the Massachusetts General Laws, and approved by its legislative body, from 1.5% to 1.0%, a summary of which appears below?

#### Summary of Question

On October 3, 2023, the City Council voted, without taking a position, to place a question on the ballot which will allow voters to reduce the current Community Preservation Act real estate surcharge from 1.5% to 1.0%. The question will be approved, and the real estate surcharge shall be so reduced, if a majority of the voters voting on the ballot question vote "yes". The question will not be approved, and the real estate surcharge shall remain the same, if a majority of the voters voting on the ballot question vote "no"

On November 8, 2016, the voters of the City of Holyoke voted to accept Sections 3 to 7 of Chapter 44B, known as the Community Preservation Act (hereinafter referred to as the "Act"). By accepting the Act, a funding source was established to enable the City of Holyoke to: (1) acquire, create and preserve open space, which includes land for parks, playgrounds and athletic fields; (2) acquire, preserve and rehabilitate historic resources such as historic community buildings and artifacts; and (3) acquire, create, and preserve and support community housing to help local families meet their housing needs. By accepting the Act, a surcharge of 1.5% was assessed on real estate on an annual basis beginning in Fiscal Year 2018. Exempted from the surcharge are: (1) property owned and occupied as a domicile by any person who would qualify for low income housing or low or moderate income senior housing in the city of Holyoke, as defined in Section 2 of the Act; (2) \$100,000 of the value of each taxable parcel of residential real property; and (3) \$100,000 of the value of each taxable parcel of class three, commercial property, and class four, industrial property as defined in section 2A of said chapter 59. A taxpayer receiving a regular property tax abatement or exemption will also receive a pro rata reduction in the surcharge. Any taxpayer seeking a low income or senior exemption shall apply for said exemption annually to the City of Holyoke.

Recommended that the order be adopted, as amended, deleting November 4, 2024 and replacing it with November 5, 2024, as well as deleting October 3, 2023 and replacing it with March 6, 2024.

#### UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Jourdain stated that this should only need to be a brief discussion, emphasizing that this was just about changing the surcharge from 1.5% to 1%. He then asked that the people be able to vote, just as they were allowed to vote when it was adopted. He also noted that this wording was approved by the Law Department just as it was in 2016. He then suggested that the Council could not manipulate the language but that the Law Department set the ballot summary. He added that it needed to be neutral language.

Councilor I. Rivera stated that his previous decision against it was not about not wanting the people to vote but had concerns with the legalities of the process. He added that even it went through in a way that did not make sense the first time, it did not mean it needed to follow that same process

this time. He also suggested that Holyoke was the only community doing it this way. He then stated that he would vote yes if it was two separate votes but would not vote if it was two steps done in one vote.

Councilor Magrath-Smith stated that the City Solicitor's office was interested in the Council looking at the summary language and adding in a chart showing how a yes vote would affect representative households. She added that the Auditor was looking at approving some draft language. She suggested that the summary language was not yet finalized.

Councilor Anderson-Burgos stated that he supported putting the question on the ballot. He then questioned why the earlier order filed by Councilor Devine was referred to the Finance Committee if there was still an issue. He then stated that he would not currently support voting for this.

Councilor Greaney expressed his support for putting the question on the ballot. He questioned why it should be put off any longer. He added that the people should have a say and had a right to vote on it. He added that the current balance in the CPA fund was \$1,789,415.

Councilor Vacon noted that by state law, the question had to be put on the ballot in the same way as when it was approved. She then asked that the voters' rights be respected and that the question be put on the ballot. She also emphasized that Atty Degnan already advised that a motion to combine the two facets into one motion was in order and that the Council could move forward and be in the correct legal process.

Councilor Bartley expressed his support for taking it as two votes. He then made a motion to reduce the CPA surcharge from 1.5% to 1%. He added that another motion could then come after that vote. Councilor Vacon seconded the motion.

Councilor Jourdain stated that while he may support that, he suggested that there was unanimity in favor of putting the question on the ballot. He then suggested that if there was to be a second question, it could be discussed in the Finance Committee. He noted that in that order, there was a second question to just leave it as is. He suggested that there couldn't be a question to just leave it as it was, adding that was what a no vote would be.

Councilor Givner suggested that nobody was arguing against the CPA ballot question as it was written. She then suggested that nobody was looking to stall this matter but had legal concerns about how the process was proceeding. She then agreed with the idea of voting on the two parts separately.

President Murphy-Romboletti clarified that the motion was to reduce the CPA tax from 1.5% to 1%.

Councilor Devine asked if it would be a roll call vote.

President Murphy-Romboletti stated that it would be.

Councilor Jourdain stated that it would be voting to reduce and then subject to approving the ballot question.

Councilor I. Rivera asked for clarification if this would be a process of taking two votes or putting the two questions into one vote.

Councilor Jourdain stated that the proposal was to vote on this one and then a motion would be made to take up the second part.

Councilor Devine suggested that would happen in Finance.

Councilor Jourdain stated that may be correct because the Law Department would need to provide language.

Councilor I. Rivera clarified that the question was whether or not the Council wanted to put it on the ballot. He suggested that was the first vote that needed to take place. He then suggested that the second vote would need to be reducing it. He then suggested that was the way it was originally supposed to be done but was not done that way.

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to allow Atty Bissonnette to address the Council.

Atty Bissonnette stated that before the question can be approved for the ballot, the legislative body must endorse the change. He then stated that the second question would be to place it on the ballot.

Councilor Devine called the motion.

President Murphy-Romboletti reiterated that the motion was to reduce it from 1.5% to 1%. She then stated that there would be a second question.

Councilor Bartley clarified that just one question was up at the moment.

Councilor Jourdain stated that as long as it was clear in one vote that it was both to reduce the rate and put it on the ballot, it could be done all in one vote, or it could be done in two votes.

Councilor Bartley emphasized that the motion was only to take the first step of reducing the rate from 1.5% to 1%. He added that this would address the concern about process that have been raised.

Councilor Greaney suggested that what should be done was to put it to the public whether or not they wanted to reduce it.

President Murphy-Romboletti that the roll call would be to reduce it from 1.5% to 1%.

Councilor Greaney suggested that the Council was not voting to reduce it.

Councilor Bartley stated that the Council was voting to reduce it.

Councilor Jourdain clarified that voting to reduce it was a procedural step then it could be put on the ballot.

Councilor Sullivan asked Atty Bissonnette if the question could go on the ballot for the voters if the Council voted not to reduce it.

Atty Bissonnette stated that it was procedural requirement and that the state would not accept it. ---> Report of Committee on the question to reduce the CPA from 1.5% to 1.0% received and Denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 5 (Bartley, Greaney, Jourdain, Ocasio, Vacon)-Nays 8--Absent 0.

\*Note: the vote was reconsidered later in the meeting.

Councilor Anderson-Burgos stated that his father, Leonides Ortiz, passed away on February 27th. He then stated that many in the community knew him as Louis, or the real mayor of the city as an inside joke, or Picanpey. He then stated that Leo was a veteran, a caring loving father, and had died of a broken heart after the passing of his wife. He then thanked everyone who had reached out to him. He stated that it had been hard to take it on. He then asked that his family be kept in everyone's prayers and that there be a moment of silence.

A moment of silence was observed for Leionides Ortiz.

Councilor Devine asked for a reminder of the previous vote.

President Murphy-Romboletti stated that it had been 5 to 8.



Councilor Vacon made a motion to reconsider the previous action on item 2. Councilor Bartley seconded the motion.

Councilor Jourdain suggested that it could be sent to Finance.

Motion to reconsider approved.

---> Received and referred to the Finance Committee.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

(56:35)

From Mayor Joshua Garcia, letter re-appointing Ms. Elizabeth A. Larivee of 198 Pleasant St. in Holyoke, to serve as a member of the Commission on Disabilities. Ms. Larivee will serve a three-year term, expiring March 2027.

Councilor Bartley stated that while he was making a motion to confirm right away, he could withdraw it anyone had questions for the candidate. He noted that it was a reappointment and that he had only heard positive things.

---> Received and appointment confirmed.

From Mayor Joshua Garcia, communication regarding two orders filed by Councilor Ocasio.

---> Received and referred to the Public Safety Committee.

From City Clerk Brenna Murphy McGee and Admin. Assistant, minutes from the February 20, 2024 meeting.

Councilor Vacon stated that there was some factual information that was incorrect in the public speaking section of the meeting. She then explained that it was stated that there was no exemption that had to be filed annually for the CPA surtax. She then asked that it be clarified in the minutes that "exemptions to be community preservation surcharge are available to eligible moderate income seniors 60 and over and low income residents. An application for exemption from the CPA surcharge must be filed annually by April 1st." She then explained that a statement was made that a publication went out that was lying about that exemption but it was in the law. She then suggested that this was not user-friendly to people who were low income because of the annual requirement.

Councilor Bartley made a motion to refer the minutes back to the Administrative Assistant and the City Clerk to work with Councilor Vacon on tweaking the minutes.

President Murphy-Romboletti stated that Admin Asst Anderson-Burgos was looking for clarification on what was being asked.

Councilor Bartley suggested that he communicate with Councilor Vacon on that question, and then provide a new copy of the minutes.

Councilor Devine seconded the motion.

---> Received and referred to the Administrative Assistant and the City Clerk.

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to take up item 6 through 9 as a package.

From Treasurer Rory Casey, Holyoke Public Schools Top 100 Salaries Report, Holyoke Elected Officials Salaries Report and City of Holyoke Top 100 Salaries Report.

Councilor Bartley noted that the reports had been posted to the website.

---> Received.

From City Auditor Tanya Wdowiak, budget reports

---> Received.

From Councilor Bartley, communication regarding HEDIC fund balance - Oct 2023

---> Received.

Communication from Councilor Bartley, regarding Stabilization Accounts

Councilor Bartley suggested that people review these to see how much were in these funds.

---> Received.

From Board of Fire Commission, minutes from the January 10, 2024 meeting

---> Received.

### **PETITIONS**

(1:02:20)

Petition from Holyoke Housing Authority for a zone change for various addresses on South East Street. the current zone is IG and the proposed zone change is DR.

---> Received and referred to the Ordinance Committee.

Petition from Dylan Bradford of 42 Arnodale Ave, for a Special Permit for a Home Occupation.

---> Received and referred to the Development and Governmental Relations Committee.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

(1:03:20)

President Murphy-Romboletti stated that the St. Parick's Day Parade was coming. She stated that councilors should arrive at Kmart plaza by 10 a.m. She noted that several councilors would be attending the Ambassador Award breakfast that morning.

She then stated that the Peck School groundbreaking would take place on March 8th, around 4 p.m., and that councilors should arrive by 3:45 p.m. at the main parking lot.

She then stated that Homework House would hold their adult spelling bee on April 25th. She noted that she would be one of the judges.

She also stated that Providence Ministries would hold their annual fundraising on April 26th.

She then stated that she spoke with the mayor and Veolia about the street sweeping schedule. She then explained that there would be new ways to notify the community about the schedule.

She also stated that the City Hall staff appreciation breakfast would be on March 15th at 9 a.m.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

(1:05:50)

President Murphy-Romboletti stated that she recuses herself from votes on cannabis industry special permits due to her full time job being a nonprofit that receives sponsorships from the cannabis industry. She then asked Councilor Jourdain to fill in for her for this item.

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to allow Councilor Jourdain to temporarily chair the meeting.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order Petition of ACMJ for a special permit extension for the Marijuana Manufacturing Establishment at 532 Main St (026-03-012)

have considered the same and Recommended that the special permit extension be granted with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant put their corporation into good standing with the Commonwealth
2. That the applicant provide updated site drawings to the Council.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor I. Rivera stated that ACMJ was asking for an extension due to minor alteration. He then explained that the plans would remain the same but they would need to prolong the process of the plan. He added that they would be building it out in phases rather than all at once due to not having all of the capital raised yet.

Acting Chair Councilor Jourdain asked if those were the only two conditions.

Councilor I. Rivera stated that they were. He then noted that the letter of good standing was received earlier that day.

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to take up Late File C out of order and to take final action.

From Steven Fontana, Notice of Good Standing for ACMJ, Inc, at 532 Main Street  
---> Received.

Councilor Vacon noted that the original standard conditions would remain on the permit.

Councilor I. Rivera expressed his understanding that since they were already approved, they didn't need to be approved again.

Councilor Bartley made a motion that the original conditions be added.

Original conditions from the special permit's original adoption on January 18, 2022 were:

1. That the owner of the building always pay the commercial property tax rate to the extend allowed by federal, state, and local laws for the duration of the Special Permit.
2. That the business retains a minimum 30% Holyoke residents for non-security jobs.

3. That the hiring preference be given to security personnel that are retired Holyoke police or are a retired member of another police department that now lives in the city of Holyoke.
4. There shall be no marijuana consumption allowed on site.
5. That the hours of operation be set according to City ordinances.
6. That the applicant must abide by Massachusetts General Laws and guidance's from the Cannabis Control Commission.

---> Report of Committee received and Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 11--Nays 0--Absent 1 (Greaney)--Abstain 1 (Murphy-Romboletti). President Murphy-Romboletti did not vote or participate in the discussion.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order That a handicap sign be placed in front of 799 High St. for Francisco Rivera Chevere, Placard # PL1770918, Exp: 04/16/24.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be adopted.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor I. Rivera stated that the Disabilities Commission approved the position, noting that it would be a couple places down but would provide what the resident needed. He noted that the issue had to do with parking spaces being available in front of the building.

Councilor Devine noted that the handicap placard was about to expire.

Councilor I. Rivera suggested that Councilor Ocasio could reach out to the resident to give them a heads up.

Councilor Ocasio explained that the parking space would go into a spot a little farther between two driveways.

Councilor I. Rivera noted that it was originally going to be put where it wouldn't work, and that the spot chosen would make sense for the resident.

Councilor Ocasio stated that she spoke with the resident that day and he was wondering how long it would take. She added that the spot was always being used by other people, forcing him to have to walk farther.

Councilor Givner stated that she had a constituent recently receive a \$300 ticket for having an expired placard and that it could not be fought. She emphasized the importance of keeping it up to date.

---> Report of Committee received and Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 13--Nays 0--Absent 0.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that an ordinance be created to allow wind turbines for residential use. See attached model type rules.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order A zone change to Holyoke's marijuana ordinance be adopted to extend the time from two to three years that a special permit so granted may exist until it lapses. See OPED letter dated 11/3/22 for background and rationale. The city council would thus adopt MGL Chapter 40A language that allows municipalities to extend permits from two to three years.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that Zoning Ordinance 4.4.6 "Location of Accessory Structures" be updated to align with zoning in our neighboring municipalities in an effort to allow more flexibility on residential lots. -Send to Ordinance and request Building Commissioner study be shared with all City Council members.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order to amend the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance to reflect the following: (54) a zone change to BG for the parcels 091- 00-062 & 091-00-063 (a future SP condition item could be, to join both parcels by ANR).

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order to amend the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance to reflect the following: (2) Section 7.2.13, amend text by adding the BG zone to the others currently listed (BH, IG, BE).

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order to amend the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance to reflect the following: (1) Sec 4.3, amend table to allow Motor Vehicle Sales (use) in BG by Special Permit (CC).

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order to amend the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance to reflect the following: (3) Create a new Special Permit for allowing the non-conforming use in a historic structure in BG zone.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith



David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that the City Council review Section 7.10, Marijuana Facilities, to ensure that the review process is business sensible and that the review process for obtaining the Special Permit is being adhered to by Ordinance; amendments to this Section may be proposed and approved as part of this discussion.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that the City Council add a Section for Battery Storage Facilities to the Zoning Ordinance (Section TBD) to reflect technology advancements and future need for such installations; new facilities will be reviewed through Section 10.0, Major Site Plan Review.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that the City Council review Section 5.3, Special Permit to Exceed Height Limitation, in order to allow increased building height for all uses and additional zoning districts. Ensuring the allowable height may be increased by Planning Board Special Permit and in conjunction with those projects meeting the applicability of Section 10.1.2, Major Site Plan Review.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that the City Council review Section 6.4, Signs, in its entirety in order to make changes to the existing Ordinance to further refine and streamline the signage regulations.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that we create an ordinance to allow backyard hens in residential zones.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order That the city revisit previous legal language to create an ordinance allowing backyard chickens in residential areas in an effort to enhance food equity.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Israel Rivera  
Linda L. Vacon  
Meg Magrath-Smith  
David K. Bartley  
Jenny Rivera

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor I. Rivera stated that the reason for withdrawing them was because they had legally expired their time to be acted on. He suggested that any councilors wanting any of these addressed should refile an order.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

(1:21:25)

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "MA DEPARTMENT OF FIRE SERVICES FY24 FIREFIGHTER EQUIPMENT GRANT, \$17,245.53, NO MATCH" grant and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said grant.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be adopted.

Committee Members:

Patricia Devine  
Kocayne Givner  
Michael Sullivan  
Kevin A. Jourdain  
Linda L. Vacon

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Devine stated that the Fire Department was awarded the grant to use for three rescue harnesses, ballistic gear, and thermal cameras.

---> Report of Committee passed two readings and Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays-- Yeas 13--Nays 0--Absent 0.

Approved by the Mayor.

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "MA DEPT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES-ARPA SPENDING BILL EARMARK, \$90,000, " and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said grant.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be adopted.

Committee Members:

Patricia Devine  
Kocayne Givner  
Michael Sullivan  
Kevin A. Jourdain  
Linda L. Vacon

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Devine stated that this would be used for the Animal Control Officer. She added that this would help improve animal welfare and mitigating related nuisances. She added that the planned to expand animal control services, educational outreach, partnering for spay and neuter services, as well as essential supplies to enable more effective response to complaints, as well as enhance officer training.

Councilor Greaney asked if there would be additional personnel.

Councilor Devine stated there would not be.

---> Report of Committee passed two readings and Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays-- Yeas 13--Nays 0--Absent 0.

Approved by the Mayor.

President Murphy-Romboletti stated that items 30 and 31 remained in committee.

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "MASS STATE POLICE-PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS, \$40,000, NO MATCH" grant and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said grant.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be adopted.

Committee Members:

Patricia Devine  
Kocayne Givner  
Michael Sullivan  
Kevin A. Jourdain  
Linda L. Vacon

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Devine stated that the grant was intended to support interagency cooperation to target violent crime in the city through working with the State Police.

---> Report of Committee passed two readings and Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays-- Yeas 13--Nays 0--Absent 0.

Approved by the Mayor.

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, NINETY FIVE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND 00/100 Dollars (\$95,800) as follows:

FROM:

12101-51107 PATROLMEN \$95,800 TOTAL: \$95,800

TO:

12102-52410 R&M MOTOR VEHICLES \$8,000

12102-52500 R&M BUILDINGS 2,000

12102-53010 DATA MAINTENANCE 13,000

12102-53030 PRINTING 2,000

12102-54220 SUPPLIES-OTHER 500  
12102-54800 M/V FUEL 37,000  
12102-54830 M/V SUPPLIES 32,000  
12102-57301 LEGAL DEFENSE 1,300 TOTAL: \$95,800

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be adopted.

Committee Members:

Patricia Devine  
Kocayne Givner  
Michael Sullivan  
Kevin A. Jourdain  
Linda L. Vacon

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Devine stated that the Police Chief explained what the transfer would be used for, which was listed in the text of the order.

---> Report of Committee passed two readings and Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays-- Yeas 13--Nays 0--Absent 0.

Approved by the Mayor.

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order that the City Council be provided with a report of retirement payouts for the Police Department for the past 20 years.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order has been complied with.

Committee Members:

Patricia Devine  
Kocayne Givner  
Michael Sullivan  
Kevin A. Jourdain  
Linda L. Vacon

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Devine stated that the requested information was provided.

Councilor I. Rivera noted that he arrived a little late to that meeting as he was attending the Holyoke High School basketball game, where the team won and made it to the Elite 8. He then

explained that the intent was to give the public insight into what gets paid out. He suggested that this could be done on a regular basis. He also noted that officers were getting sick time and vacation time paid out in addition to their retirement payouts, sometimes reaching 6 figures.

Councilor Devine noted that a lot of this was through collective bargaining.

Councilor Jourdain noted that 2023 was not provided in the report.  
---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order From Holyoke Police Department, response to Councilor Israel Rivera's order asking for the report of payouts for the Police Dept form the past 20 years.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order has been complied with.

Committee Members:

Patricia Devine  
Kocayne Givner  
Michael Sullivan  
Kevin A. Jourdain  
Linda L. Vacon

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Devine noted that 35 went with 34.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

President Murphy-Romboletti stated that item 36 remained in committee.

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "FY23 TDI EQUITY, \$38,550, NO MATCH" grant and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said grant.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be returned to the Auditor.

Committee Members:

Patricia Devine  
Kocayne Givner  
Michael Sullivan  
Kevin A. Jourdain  
Linda L. Vacon

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Devine stated that this was being returned to the Auditor as the grant was not going to be accepted.

Councilor Bartley asked why it wasn't going to be accepted.

Councilor Jourdain stated that the Finance Committee discussed this at length and that he would prefer not to rehash that discussion. He noted that there was a lot of nuance.

President Murphy-Romboletti stated that OPED requested that it be disposed of.

Councilor Jourdain stated that OPED had second thoughts and it should be left at that.

Councilor Bartley explained that the purpose of the committee report was to give an abridged summary of what happened at the meeting. He emphasized that a couple sentences at least of what happened would help the public who may not have watched the subcommittee meeting.

Councilor Devine suggested talking to Aaron Vega, OPED Director, for more information. She added that it had something to do with leases to the ARtery that shouldn't have been done.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

(1:35:10)

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to take up items 38 through 46 as a package.

The Committee on Public Safety to whom was referred an order that members of the Fire Commission come into Public Safety to discuss the recent issue concerning firefighters obtaining their EMT certifications.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order has been complied with.



Committee Members:

Jenny Rivera  
Israel Rivera  
Patricia Devine

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor J. Rivera stated that Fire Chief Kadlewicz and Fire Commission Chair, Jeff Trask, discussed this item. She then stated that the department had an evolution in mandating EMT certification as a condition of employment, with the requirement that they attend academy within two years. She added that there were accommodations for those with diagnosed learning disabilities.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Public Safety to whom was referred an order that honorable city council request the chief of police come into public safety to discuss the potential development of a traffic division solely focused on mitigating traffic issues throughout the city of Holyoke.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order has been complied with.

Committee Members:

Jenny Rivera  
Israel Rivera  
Patricia Devine

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Public Safety to whom was referred an order that the police department present an update on the goals or steps taken to address some of the concerns raised out of the MRI audit.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order has been complied with.

Committee Members:

Jenny Rivera  
Israel Rivera  
Patricia Devine

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor J. Rivera stated that a report was provided showing items being categorized as green,

yellow, or red based on their status, with green indicating complete, while yellow were works in progress. She also noted that a field training program was discussed, including challenges. She also stated that the audits suggestion to ring in civilians to fill some roles was a funding and feasibility issue.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Public Safety to whom was referred an order that the city council work with the mayor and school superintendent to address the reinstatement of bus services for Lyman Terrace as soon as possible, as a matter of public safety. This has been a service they have received for the past 20 years.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order has been complied with.

Committee Members:

Jenny Rivera  
Israel Rivera  
Patricia Devine

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor J. Rivera stated that the Joint City Council and Schol Committee spoke on this the previous year. She then explained that providing buses for one area would necessitate providing them citywide. She also stated that walking school buses were implemented to mitigate issues during the winter. She added that questions came up regarding state law governing providing buses based on distance from schools.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Public Safety to whom was referred an order In the interest of public safety, that a traffic safety pledge be created, in good faith, and that this pledge be taken by all city employees and officials. All city employees and officials should be expected to model righteous behavior by adhering to speed limits and following all traffic laws, ESPECIALLY when using CITY VEHICLES. How can we expect our community to respect its laws if city employees are blatantly disregarding them.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order has been complied with.

Committee Members:

Jenny Rivera

Israel Rivera  
Patricia Devine

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor J. Rivera stated that there was a need to increase enforcement as well as community involvement to promote safe driving, noting the increase in accidents and fatalities. She added that it would start with an effort to have city officials, later expanding to other city leaders and business owner, take a safe driving pledge. She then stated that people could provide their picture to create a pledge graphic that people could share on their social media pages.

Admin Asst Anderson-Burgos shared a screenshot of the pledge graphic.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Public Safety to whom was referred an order that the city provide an update on any antiracism and diversity training already in place for employees, and update on how it can be improved.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order has been complied with.

Committee Members:

Jenny Rivera  
Israel Rivera  
Patricia Devine

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor J. Rivera stated that Kelly Curran, Personnel Director, discussed efforts to address racism, equity, and inclusiveness, highlighting recent training sessions attended by department heads. She added that there were also bias and sexual harassment trainings attended by 309 employees, with a plan to train the rest of the employees. She also stated that a survey would go out to employees on workplace culture. She also noted that Councilor I. Rivera brought up making the training on racism and diversity mandatory for all employees.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Public Safety to whom was referred an order that we create a Food Economy Coalition to identify and propose innovative policies, programming, and/or project solutions to improve the Holyoke food system and food entrepreneurship. Recommendations will be made to aligned bodies, such as the Office of Planning & Economic Development, the City Council, and relevant city departments (eg. DPW, BOH, etc.)

have considered the same and Recommended that the order has been complied with.

Committee Members:

Jenny Rivera  
Israel Rivera  
Patricia Devine

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor J. Rivera stated that this was being complied with as the process had gone through the Ordinance Committee and adopted the previous year.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Public Safety to whom was referred an order that the City council invite the Department of Public Works as well as the Parks & Recreation Department to a Public Safety committee meeting to address the upkeep and or improvement of Laurel St. Park.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order has been complied with.

Committee Members:

Jenny Rivera  
Israel Rivera  
Patricia Devine

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor J. Rivera stated that another two orders had been filed later that addressed the lighting and the fountain at the park.

Councilor Bartley emphasized that this was a small and beloved park. He then recalled that CDBG funds were utilized to repoint and rebuild the fountain. He emphasized the value of the many parks throughout the city.

Councilor I. Rivera stated that he and a local resident noticed that the benches had been removed, which led him to learn from the Parks Department that they were temporarily removed in order to fix the wooden slats and repaint the benches. He noted that the fountain was to be renamed for a former Ward 3 councilor,

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Public Safety to whom was referred an order That the DPW seek an alternative solution for rock salt. Salt is corrosive to vehicles and roads, and can contaminate drinking water and be toxic to wildlife.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order has been complied with.

Committee Members:

Jenny Rivera  
Israel Rivera  
Patricia Devine

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor J. Rivera stated that the DPW previously had concerns about the prohibitive cost of exploring alternatives to the currently used materials.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

(1:49:50)

The Committee on Public Service to whom was referred an order From Mayor Joshua A. Garcia letter appointing Mr. Axel Fontanez, 71 Lynch Dr. to serve as an Associate of the Board of Appeals for the City of Holyoke: Mr. Fontanez will serve a three year term; said term will expire on July 1, 2026.

have considered the same and Recommended that the appointment be confirmed.

Committee Members:

Juan Anderson-Burgos  
Carmen Ocasio  
Howard Greaney Jr

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Anderson-Burgos stated that Mr. Fontanez was impressive, as was his resume. He added that Mr. Fontanez was active in the community, serving as the Housing Director for Providence Ministries, ambassador for the Chamber of Commerce, and co-owned his own business.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Public Service to whom was referred an order From Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, letter appointing Ms. Patricia Normand, 36 Pleasant St. to serve as a member of the Conservation

Commission for the City of Holyoke: Ms. Normand will replace Ms. Chelsea Gazillo and will serve Ms. Gazillo's remainder term; said term will expire on February 1, 2025.

have considered the same and Recommended that the appointment be confirmed.

Committee Members:

Juan Anderson-Burgos  
Carmen Ocasio  
Howard Greaney Jr

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Anderson-Burgos stated that Ms. Normand successfully ran a bakery with her husband in Northampton for 33 years. He also stated that she was a member of the Holyoke rows boathouse and was an active member in multiple communities. He also stated that she impressed everyone on the committee.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Public Service to whom was referred an order From Mayor Joshua A. Garcia letter appointing Ms. Zaisha Robert, 267 Walnut St. to serve as a member of the Historical Commission for the City of Holyoke; Ms. Robert will replace Luis Salazar and will serve a three year term; said term will expire on December 1, 2026.

have considered the same and Recommended that the appointment be confirmed.

Committee Members:

Juan Anderson-Burgos  
Carmen Ocasio  
Howard Greaney Jr

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Anderson-Burgos stated that Ms. Robert graduated from Holyoke Community College, worked for SR Commercial Realty, volunteered for EforAll, and was on the Board of Directors for the YMCA. He also stated that her work in real estate would be instrumental on this board, noting her passion for preserving original architecture and understanding that there was something to be learned for future generations.

Councilor Greaney stated that all 3 candidates were very impressive and were good choices by the mayor.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Public Service to whom was referred an order that a Tree be planted out front of city hall near the Dwight side in order to have a Permanent tree for lighting purposes.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Juan Anderson-Burgos  
Carmen Ocasio  
Howard Greaney Jr

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Anderson-Burgos stated that the mayor conveyed that no active discussion was taking place on this idea so the order could just be withdrawn.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Public Service to whom was referred an order From Mayor Joshua A. Garcia letter appointing Ms. Rosanna A. Lopez, 253 Sargeant St. to serve as a member of the Board of Appeals for the City of Holyoke: Ms. Lopez will replace Ms. Mary Monahan and will serve Ms. Monahan's remainder term; said term will expire on July 1, 2024.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.

Committee Members:

Juan Anderson-Burgos  
Carmen Ocasio  
Howard Greaney Jr

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Anderson-Burgos stated that there were questions that came up regarding Ms. Lopez serving on two committees. He added that Paul Burns-Johnson was nominated and appointed instead.

Councilor Bartley recalled that Mr. Burns-Johnson was approved last year. He noted that Mr. Burns-Johnson worked at the PVRTA and had been to the Council a couple of times to discuss a bus stop on

South Street. He then recalled that Councilor Jourdain raised the issue of someone serving on two committees at once, and that an opinion was requested but had not been provided.  
---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

(1:58:25)

The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred an order That OPED come to the D&GR committee to discuss how to help people start new small businesses in the city.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order has been complied with.

Committee Members:

Kocayne Givner  
Michael Sullivan  
Carmen Ocasio  
Juan Anderson-Burgos  
Patricia Devine

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Givner stated that the Director of OPED, as well as representatives from EforAll and the Chamber of Commerce, were invited for the discussion. She noted that the presentations included different ways to start a business, and the types of assistance that was available. She noted that both organizations worked closely with OPED. She added that they would be working to show video through Holyoke Media for easier public access to the information that was provided.

Councilor Jourdain stated that the meeting was more than they had hoped for in filing the order. He then stated that everyone did a phenomenal job providing a lot of great information. He then emphasized the value of having videos of online presentations showing step-by-step guides. He suggested that this could lead to people from across the country seeing the information and starting a business in the city, or providing the information to someone here in the city who may not know where to start. He added that they also learned about the resources and grant funding available, as well as the professional services to help guide people.

Councilor Ocasio stated that the presentation provided a lot of great information. She then noted that she was able to explain to people afterwards about visiting the website and finding the information they needed.



Councilor Givner emphasized the importance of presentations like this in getting people information on programs they may not know about.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred an order That the DPW Director and Board Members be invited to a Dev & Gov Relations Committee meeting to update the council on the status of operations, projects, and initiatives.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order has been complied with.

Committee Members:

Kocayne Givner  
Michael Sullivan  
Carmen Ocasio  
Juan Anderson-Burgos  
Patricia Devine

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Givner stated that a lengthy presentation was given by the DPW Director, Carl Rossi, as well as the Board of Public Works Commissioners, Libby Hernandez, Mary Monahan, and Joe Kietner. She then explained that the information they shared included finding new candidates for tree climbers, that they were still looking for a City Engineer, shortages on drivers for their highways and bridges division, leading to delays in work such as line painting and street repairs. She added that they had garbage trucks and wood chippers that were old and needed to be replaced. She also noted that they planned to roll out new recycling totes to residents. She also stated that appreciated funding they received for training for the first time in many years. She added that they discussed projects that would impact the sewer rate. She also noted that there was exciting information on green infrastructure, noting that Holyoke was the forefront of this focus, adding that these kinds of projects helped attract talent that may not find similar projects in many other places. She also stated that the integrated management plan as well as the long term service agreement were discussed.

Councilor Sullivan stated that the long term service contract of 20 years would likely come in at around \$200 million. He emphasized that it tied into economic possibilities through changes in technology but would also be a part of addressing other issues such as climate change impacts. He also extended an invitation for other councilors to go with him on a tour of the wastewater treatment plant. He also emphasized the need to provide the DPW with the resources it needed.

Councilor Devine commended Councilor Givner for holding a great meeting. She then noted that bios on the DPW Director and their commissioners were provided, showing how well qualified they all were.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

### **ORDERS AND TRANSFERS**

(2:11:15)

President Murphy-Romboletti implored councilor not to debate items that would be sent to committee.

Magrath-Smith - That Section 8.1.9 be amended to include the following language after the last sentence: Requirement to submit new technical data If the Town acquires data that changes the base flood elevation in the FEMA mapped Special Flood Hazard Areas, the Town will, within 6 months, notify FEMA of these changes by submitting the technical or scientific data that supports the change(s.) Notification shall be submitted to:

- NFIP State Coordinator  
Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
  - NFIP Program Specialist  
Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region I
- > Received and referred to the Ordinance Committee.

Magrath-Smith. I. Rivera- Ordered, that the Fire Chief communicate a written plan for supporting firefighters to successfully complete their EMT Certifications, especially for those who have previously failed to pass the exams required and are approaching the two year deadline.

Councilor Magrath-Smith suggested sending this to the Public Safety Committee.

Councilor Jourdain suggested that this could just be adopted right away and asking the Fire Department to do it without needing a meeting to discuss it.

Councilor I. Rivera stated that he would prefer not to blindsides the department, forcing them to feel like they have to do it without having a conversation about it first.  
---> Received and referred to the Public Safety Committee.

Magrath-Smith, Greaney- Ordered, that the Director of Economic Development and Planning come into the Finance Sub-Committee to discuss the use of cannabis impact fee funds and future implications for us as a city.

Councilor Greaney asked to be added to the order.

---> Received and referred to the Finance Committee.

Vacon- Ordered that a handicap sign be installed at 34 Maple Crest Circle Apt F, for Victor Acoasta. Handicap Placard number PL6370776.

---> Received and referred to the Ordinance Committee.

Murphy-Romboletti- Ordered, that Ordered that the City Council sign and support the attached amended Resolution to create a state-authorized cultural district for at least (10) years to be named the Puerto Rican Cultural District.

---> Received and referred to the Public Service Committee.

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to take up items 60 and 61 as a package.

Devine- Ordered, that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, THIRTEEN THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED FORTY TWO AND 00/100 Dollars (\$13,342) as follows:

FROM:

11411-51103 PRINCIPAL CLERK - ASSESSOR \$13,342

TOTAL:\$13,342

TO:

16912-52420 REPAIR & MAINTENANCE WISTARIAHURST \$13,342

TOTAL:\$13,342

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Monday, March 6, 2024.

Joshua A Garcia, Mayor

---> Received and referred to the Finance Committee.

Devine- Ordered, that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, FOUR THOUSAND SEVENTY AND 10/100 Dollars (\$4,070.10) as follows:

FROM:

12201-51105

TOTAL:

TO: FIREFIGHTER

\$4,070.10 \$4,070.10

12201-51101 FIRE CHIEF \$4,070.10  
TOTAL:\$4,070.10

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Monday, March 6, 2024.

Joshua A Garcia, Mayor  
---> Received and referred to the Finance Committee.

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to take up items 62, 63, and 64 as a package.

Devine- Ordered, that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, TWENTY SEVEN THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED THIRTY AND 00/100 Dollars (\$27,430) as follows:

FROM:  
12942-53010 CONTRACTED SERVICES-FORESTRY \$27,430  
TOTAL:\$27,430

TO:  
12941-51104 TREE CLIMBER \$27,430  
TOTAL:\$27,430

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Monday, March 6, 2024.

Joshua A Garcia, Mayor

Item was initially referred to Finance.

Motion was made and seconded to reconsider the previous action on item 62.

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Sullivan stated that he was seeking to adopt this right away, emphasizing that the city had been trying for 10 years to get another tree climber funded and someone was finally hired.

Councilor Devine agreed with taking it up right away, noting that the Finance Committee wouldn't have a meeting to be able to take it up until March 20th. She added that it was time to give the DPW what they needed.

Councilor Vacon noted that the department would finally be able to put a truck into use.

Councilor Jourdain stated that he was encouraged to see they finally hired someone. He suggested they follow up later with details.

Councilor Devine clarified that it would be two new people.

Councilor Jourdain expressed his understanding that this transfer would be for the remainder of the fiscal year. He then asked if the plan was to have two full time employees going forward.

Councilor Sullivan stated that they already had a city forester, clarifying that it wasn't two new full times but just adding a tree climber that had not been filled for years. He then explained that this would allow them to get twice as much work done, noting that contracted services were paid at the prevailing age.

Councilor Ocasio stated that this was exciting, noting that a lot of trees in South Holyoke were leaning against buildings, impacting asthma issues and causing bugs to get into apartments, forcing people to keep their windows closed.

---> Passed two readings and Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays---Yeas 13--Nays 0--Absent 0.

Devine- Ordered that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "Friends of City Hall" \$10,000 donation and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said donation.

#### Sec 2-509 - Grant Reporting

Any city department, of which has received grant funding by approval of the city council pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, or any other authorizing criteria, shall within a reasonable period of time, but no later than 60 days from the conclusion of said grant, generate a detailed report which outlines the planned outcomes with the documented actual results. Said report shall be submitted to the city clerk for addition to the city council's next agenda.

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Monday, March 6, 2024.

Joshua A Garcia, Mayor

---> Received and referred to the Finance Committee.

Devine- Ordered, that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "MASS DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES GREEN COMMUNITIES COMPETITIVE GRANT, \$197,404, NO MATCH "grant and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said grant.

Sec 2-509 - Grant Reporting

Any city department, of which has received grant funding by approval of the city council pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, or any other authorizing criteria, shall within a reasonable period of time, but no later than 60 days from the conclusion of said grant, generate a detailed report which outlines the planned outcomes with the documented actual results. Said report shall be submitted to the city clerk for addition to the city council's next agenda.

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Monday, March 6, 2024.

Joshua A Garcia, Mayor

Councilor Bartley commended the City Clerk and the Administrative Assistant for working to add the verbiage on grant reporting, emphasizing that departments should be on notice about the ordinance requirement.

---> Received and referred to the Finance Committee.

JOURDAIN, Greaney - Ordered, that the Joint City Council and School Committee have a standing order to report to the City Council on meeting topics originating from the School Committee.

Councilor Jourdain stated that he spoke with the Administrative Assistant on this item. He then explained that this was being done as a courtesy to the School Committee so that when they file orders that are discussed in Joint Committee meetings, this would allow those items to be reported to the City Council as part of the committee reports.

Councilor Greaney asked to be added to the order.

Councilor Jourdain stated that the Joint Committee would be meeting on March 14th. He noted that the rotation meant that the City Council was hosting Joint Committee meetings this term.

President Murphy-Romboletti asked to clarify, on behalf of the Administrative Assistant, if the order needed to be referred to the Joint Committee in order for those items to be reported out.

Jourdain stated that the adopted order would allow items to be reported out. He suggested that it be copied to Charter and Rules to perhaps create a rule on this.

---> Received and Adopted. Copied to the Charter and Rules Committee.

**LATE FILED ORDERS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

(2:24:15)

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to take up Late Files A and B as a package.

Jourdain- That the Water Commission and Manager come to the finance committee for an annual financial update to discuss the status of their finances, projects and rates.

---> Received and referred to the Finance Committee.

Devine- Ordered, that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, FIFTEEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 Dollars (\$15,000) as follows:

FROM:

14101-51105 SR CIVIL ENGINEER \$15,000

TOTAL: \$15,000

TO:

14261-51300 AUTO EQUIPMENT MAINT-OVERTIME \$15,000

TOTAL: \$15,000

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Monday, March 6, 2024.

Joshua A Garcia, Mayor

---> Received and referred to the Finance Committee.

President Murphy-Romboletti - Order that the City accept Lynn Ann Drive and Richard Eger Drive as public ways.

Councilor Vacon recalled that she filed orders on this last April. She then asked if this was filed due to the survey having been completed.

President Murphy-Romboletti stated that the Law Department asked her to refile this in order for them to be eligible for Chapter 90 funds.

Councilor Vacon stated that she thought they were already with the Board of Public Works but was happy to see anything get done to get the work accomplished. She then asked if it needed to go into the ordinances.

Councilor Jourdain stated that there was a process to accept the road, and that a public hearing would be held involving the DPW. He then explained that continuances and discontinuances of streets has usually gone to the Public Safety Committee.

Councilor Vacon asked for clarification on how to get this accomplished as quickly as possible.

Atty Bissonnette stated that once the City Council adopts the streets, and then takes the meets and bounds prescribed by the Engineer for the road layout, it could then be adopted and sent to the state to be added to the Chapter 90 funds equation for the city.

Councilor Vacon suggested that this be adopted as laid out by the Engineer and the Board of Public Works.

Councilor Jourdain suggested that there needed to be a hearing.

Councilor Vacon asked if the Board of Public Works had done that yet.

President Murphy-Romboletti stated that she did not believe so.  
---> Received and referred to the Public Safety Committee.

Adjourned at 9:30 PM

*Brenna Murphy McLee*