

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**November 21, 2023**

The meeting was called to order by President McGee at 7:04 PM

The Clerk called the roll. Absent members: 0 Present Members in person 11 (Anderson-Burgos, Bartley, Givner, Jourdain, Maldonado Velez, McGee, McGiverin, Murphy-Romboletti, Rivera\_I, Rivera\_J, Tallman). Members present on Zoom: 2 (Puello, Vacon)

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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, refer items to committee, remove items from the table, place items on the table, package items together, or suspend the rules, unless there is an objection.

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

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

MCGEE -- Ordered that the City Council invite in all the newly elected Councilors-Elect.

Motion was made and seconded to take final action.

Councilor Jourdain stated that this would be for all remaining meetings during the term.

President McGee noted that incoming councilor, Patti Devine, was in attendance.

---> Received and Adopted.

Councilor Bartley stated that a tradition had been started the previous year when he and Councilor Tallman attended the Mayor's reception for the Volleyball Hall of Fame induction and had a volleyball signed by that year's inductees. He then stated that the plan was that the ball would be donated to the Hall of Fame the following year. He then thanked Admin Asst Anderson-Burgos for getting a new ball signed by the current year's inductees to be displayed in Council chambers as an emblem of the sport's significance to the city's history. He then stated that he would deliver last year's ball to George Mulry at the Hall of Fame.

**LAI D ON THE TABLE**

Councilor McGiverin stated that he had heard nothing regarding negotiations with the dispatchers and the city.

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, SIX THOUSAND AND 00/100 Dollars (\$6,000.00) as follows:

FROM:

12101-51117 E911 DISPATCHERS \$6,000.00

TOTAL: \$6,000.00  
TO:  
12101-51910 STIPENDS \$6,000.00  
TOTAL: \$6,000.00 Recommended that the order be adopted.  
---> Laid on the table.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public signed up for public comment.

### COMMUNICATIONS

(5:45)

From Mayor Joshua A. Garcia letter reappointing Mr. Morris M. Partee, 127 St. Kolbe Dr. to serve as a member of the Board of Appeals for the City of Holyoke: Mr. Partee will serve a three year term; said term will expire on July 1, 2026.

---> Received and appointment confirmed.

From Mayor Joshua A. Garcia letter reappointing the following individuals as Commissioners of the Council on Aging for the City of Holyoke:

Susan Aiken, 359 Linden St.

Sean Gonsalves, Holyoke Board of Health

Julita Rojas, 337 Sargeant St.

Kyong Cruz, 107 Martin St.

Nicole Perrier, 1706 Northampton St.

Priscilla Garcia, 89 Brooks St.

Dian McCollum, 20 Easthampton Rd.

Cappie Glica, 19 Concord Ave.

Barbara J. Grady, 44 Edward Dr.

Len Brouillette, 179 Morgan St.

Mr. Wayne Klinge, 22 Dale St.

Also, Appointing the following as a commissioner of the Council of Aging,

Jose (Rafi) Merced, 781 Hampden St. #2

they will serve a one year term; said term will expire August 2024.

Councilor Tallman noted that Jose Merced was a new appointee and asked if anyone had an issue with appointing him along with the other reappointments.

Councilor Jourdain suggested that he be appointed with the others.

---> Received and appointments confirmed.

From Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, letter appointing Brenna Levitin, 48 Vernon St. to serve as a member on the Library Board of Directors for the City of Holyoke: Ms. Levitin will replace Ms. Julia Santiago and will serve her remainder term; said term will expire on February 2025.

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

From City Clerk Brenna McGee and Admin. Asst. Jeffery Anderson-Burgos City Council Minutes from Oct 17 and Nov 9

---> Received and Adopted.

From Lisa Ball, legal opinion regarding Sec 2-162 of the Holyoke City Ordinances

---> Received.

From Assistant City Solicitor Jane Mantolesky regarding Canal Row License Agreement

---> Received.

Update from Daniel F. O'Sullivan in regards to Holyoke Media.

---> Received.

Petition for Speed Humps on Sargeant and St. Jerome Streets.

Councilor Bartley clarified that the letter was not asking for speed humps but for a traffic light. He added that they would need around another 60 signatures for that street. He reiterated that while they used a speed hump petition form, the letter was not asking for that.

Councilor Tallman added that they were asking for either a raised sidewalk or blinking light.

Councilor Bartley suggested that it should be referred to Public Safety.

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

Grant Completion Form: FY23 Urban Agenda Grant Program.

Councilor Bartley suggested sending this to a committee to have a quick review for informational purposes. He also suggested doing this more regularly.

President McGee suggested sending it to Finance.

Councilor Bartley stated that Finance was already busy.

Councilor Rivera\_I asked what the grant was on.

Councilor Bartley stated there were a few of them. He then reiterated that he wanted to send it to a committee just for informational purposes.

Councilor Murphy-Romboletti suggested DGR, noting that a lot of the grants were governmental.

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

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to take up items 11, 12 and 13 as a package.

From Board of Public Safety minutes of August 23, 2023.  
---> Received.

From Holyoke Economic Development and Industrial Corporation minutes of November 29, 2022 and August 24, 2023.  
---> Received

From Board of Fire Commission Meeting Minutes from Sept 21, Oct 19, and Nov 6  
---> Received

### PETITIONS

(12:15)

Petition of OM Holyoke gas LLC, Meet Patel, Manager of 820 High St. for a Motor Vehicle Service Station with fast food and/or convenience goods

Councilor McGiverin suggested that the special permit may no longer be needed. He noted that there used to be a special permit for a convenience store on the same site with a gas station. He suggested that with a change of ownership, they may have been told they had to transfer the permit. He asked that the Law Department clarify before a public hearing was set up.

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

### PRESIDENTS REPORTS

(12:40)

President McGee stated that the Tree Lighting and Parade of Lights would take place on December 2nd, beginning at 3pm at the Merry-Go-Round and Children's Museum, followed by music, along with cookies and hot chocolate at City Hall, with the tree lighting taking place at 6pm.

He then reminded that incoming councilors should reach out to Admin Asst Anderson-Burgos to confirm if they will be attending the MMA conference in January.

He also stated that the Public Service Committee would be holding interviews on December 6th to fill one or two openings for the Community Preservation Committee and that those interested should go to the city website.

He then stated that there would be a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Donovan's on December 1st at 1pm.

He then thanked Admin Asst Anderson-Burgos for bringing in cupcakes for councilors.

He then presented honorary badges to councilors, noting that Councilor Jourdain recently shared the history and worked to ensure the tradition returned.

Councilor Rivera\_I stated that the Charter School would be announcing the opening of their new gym.

President McGee stated that it would be on December 2nd at 8am.

Councilor Rivera\_I stated that there would be a community dinner on December 9th at Kelly School, in collaboration with OneHolyoke CDC.

President McGee thanked the police chief for getting the badges done.25

### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

(17:25)

President McGee stated that there were no reports from the Ordinance Committee.

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order From Community Preservation Committee, Revised scope of work for FY23 CPA Wistariahurst restoration of damaged porch structures project.

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

#### Committee Members:

Joseph McGiverin  
Kevin A Jourdain  
Will Puello  
Juan Anderson-Burgos  
Peter Tallman

#### UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor McGiverin stated that this was a change of scope of a project that was already approved. He then offered a reminder that the porch and beams were rotting out at the Wistariahurst Museum and in dire need of replacement and repair. He added that the cause was the wisteria vine growing on the building. He then explained that their solution was to separate the vine onto a trestle.

---> Report of Committee received and Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 12--  
Nays 0--Absent 1 (Jourdain).

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to take up items 16B, 16C, 16D, as well as Late File F, G, and H as a package.

Councilor McGiverin stated that the Finance Committee met to discuss the supplemental budget and that all of these items were related to that. He then explained that the late files were due to the mayor separating Ezekiel's Plan out of the supplemental budget and provided a separate transfer that should be referred to Finance for a relook. He noted there were concerns expressed about the funds being allocated and the future revenue support for the plan. He then stated that the other late files were the supplemental budget with the removal of that one item as well as an amended recap sheet. He added that the money to ratify the contracts were in the supplemental budget.

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order From Lisa Ball, City Solicitor Settlement agreement by and between the City of Holyoke and the Holyoke firefighters Local 1693.

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

Committee Members:

Joseph McGiverin  
Kevin A Jourdain  
Will Puello  
Juan Anderson-Burgos  
Peter Tallman

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor McGiverin stated that the contract was multi-year, and that the budget had enough funds to pay for the negotiated increases. He added that the total amount of the increases added up to \$770,553, which would include two different units. He then explained that for firefighters, the acceptance of active shooter requirements was tied to annual percentage increases. He added that the other unit was dispatchers which has their own annual increases. He noted that additional language changed included training, compensation, as well as a reduction for future hires in the buyback formula. He then emphasized that while the committee recommended the adoption of the contracts, the actual vote would be adopting the funds in the supplemental budget.

Councilor Jourdain stated that the raises for the department were deserved, especially with inflation and the cost of living. He then noted that one concern he expressed was that it was the one department that did not have a random drug test policy that needed to be negotiated. He then suggested that it should be made a priority in the next contract or in a memorandum of agreement. He emphasized that it was an inherently dangerous job with employees operating heavy equipment.

Councilor Tallman expressed his support for the contract and the work of the Fire Department. He then clarified that Unit B was the Alarm Division.

Councilor McGiverin suggested that these first two items be voted on and then take up the budget.  
---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order From Lisa Ball, City Solicitor, Agreement between The City of Holyoke and Local Union No. 1693 of the International Association of Firefighters, AFL-CIO.

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

Committee Members:

Joseph McGiverin  
Kevin A Jourdain  
Will Puello  
Juan Anderson-Burgos  
Peter Tallman

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

Councilor McGiverin stated that Late File H was an updated recap sheet but was a moving target that was expected to still change before the tax rate vote was to be taken.

From Tanya Wdowiak, City Auditor, 2024 Updated Tax Recap 11-21-2023  
---> Received.

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order From Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, supplemental budget.

have considered the same and Recommended that the order be referred to the full Council.

Committee Members:

Joseph McGiverin  
Kevin A Jourdain  
Will Puello  
Juan Anderson-Burgos  
Peter Tallman

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor McGiverin stated that this was likely the largest supplemental budget he had seen and was complex in terms of what the mayor was attempting to do. He then stated that one of the three biggest discussions was with Carl Rossi, Superintendent with the DPW. He then explained that the only impact on the sewer enterprise fund was the addition of ARPA funds to help pay for infrastructure items. He then stated that the Chief Kadlewicz discussed the Fire Department budget, with the big portion of the additions going to fund the union-negotiated contract. He added that the Police Department took the biggest portion of the time. He then stated that the mayor spoke on Ezekiel's Plan, which was a response to a trend happening in the city with gun-related incidents, notably a recent tragedy on Maple Street. He then explained that the plan was a solid proposal for police work that should be looked at more. He then emphasized the concerns were about the revenue source, noting that the current source was \$1 million of ARPA funds. He then stated that the additional increases were for a crime analyst. He also noted that in every budget that had an impact, there were reductions, some being due to budgeting for supplies that were not needed or for positions that were never filled. He then emphasized that the reductions had an impact on the recap sheet, specifically funds available to be transferred for the next six months. He then noted that the Auditor expected additional surpluses to be created as time goes on. He then explained that several department heads were in attendance, but also noted that some budgets were not impacted. He added that the remaining increases were salaries for the NAGE and PSA contracts, increases for performance evaluations of department heads, as well as employees in the budget by ordinance.

Councilor Jourdain asked if the process would be to go page by page the same as when the budget is normally voted on.

President McGee asked to clarify that Late Files F and G were replacing 16D.

Councilor McGiverin clarified that along with the supplemental budget, there were several other documents providing, including a summary, a work plan, as well as a worksheet breaking down what the budget was doing. He then explained that the only difference with the previous supplemental book was

that the funding for the Ezekiel Plan was coming out of the supplemental budget and was in a separate late file.

President McGee stated that they could not be separated out, which was why it came in as a late file.

Councilor McGiverin stated that the late file was not in line item form while the budget was line item.

President McGee expressed concern about voting for the supplemental budget if the \$1 million or Ezekiel's Plan was being taken out. He suggested that voting on it was accepting it.

Councilor McGiverin suggested that following a page by page review, motions to cut line items could be acted on one at a time, and then the budget would be voted on as amended. He suggested that the amendment could include a note that the \$1 million for Ezekiel's Plan was removed by the mayor prior to the vote.

President McGee suggested that it just be cut knowing that it would come back.

Councilor McGiverin stated that while that might be the best way procedurally, he emphasized that the documentation of the vote would be that the Council voted against it even if it did come back before the Council.

Councilor Rivera\_I asked for clarification if some things included in the \$1 million were not also in the budget, such as raises or funding for a housing navigator position. He then suggested that if it was, it didn't make sense to separate it out.

Councilor McGiverin stated that the \$1 million was labeled as Ezekiel's Plan. He then explained that there were items in the budget funded by ARPA, not just Ezekiel's Plan. He then stated that while there was nothing wrong with that, there were concerns about the long term impact on the budget.

President McGee suggested that the mayor may be able to address the concerns.

Motion was made and seconded to allow Mayor Garcia to address the Council.

Councilor McGiverin suggested that there would not be a lot of questions beyond debate, noting that many were answered in the committee meeting.

Councilor Vacon noted that in the initial supplemental budget, the initial tax increase was 7.51%. She then asked if removing Ezekiel's Plan changed the percentage to around a 6.5% increase in taxes.

Mayor Garcia expressed an understanding of where there may be confusion, noting that the supplemental budget was also leveraging alternative revenue sources outside of taxation.

Councilor Vacon expressed her understanding that it would be 6%.

Councilor Jourdain stated that with Ezekiel's Plan, the budget would increase the levy by \$4.5 million, a 7.5% increase that amounted to unsustainable growth. He then expressed concern with some of the pay increases, emphasizing that those around the 2% range were deserved raises for cost of living adjustments (COLA). He then stated that the city was in no position to give out salary increases in the 10% range. He then stated that he supported the pay raise for the City Auditor but was concerned about the \$5,000 for the extra professional account. He then made a motion to cut \$5,000 from the Auditor's budget line addition professional accountant services, 51103. Councilor Puello seconded the motion.

Councilor McGiverin stated that while he understood the motion, he believed the adjustment reflected bringing the salary for this position into the area of what other communities were paying. He emphasized that the city had seen many professionals had taken similar positions, get hired and trained, and then grabbed by another nearby community for a higher salary.

Councilor Jourdain emphasized that in FY22, this line was funded at \$40,000, went up to \$61,000, then \$70,400, and now was proposed to go up to \$75,400. He then stated that while he would not argument with Councilor McGiverin's points, the city could not spend money that it didn't have or send the levy through the ceiling. He suggested reevaluating with the next budget.

Councilor Givner reiterated that the city keeps losing people to other communities, noting that the City Engineer recently left. She then emphasized that the city had been underpaying employees compared to other community for many years and those cities did not care if Holyoke could afford. She then stated that while she did not see another solution besides financial, she would be open to hearing about another type of package to offer people that would keep them without a pay raise.

Councilor Vacon noted that if all raises went through, the average homeowner's taxes would go up over \$300 a year. She added that the taxpayers were already telling councilors that high taxes were one of their top concerns. She asked that everyone keep in mind who had to pay for the budget and what was being done to them.

Councilor Murphy-Romboletti agreed that the Council should be considering what was being done to those who would be paying for the increases, but the city was losing money every time it loses an employee and has to train someone new. She suggested it was not financially sound to keep losing people. She added that many services and projects get slowed down when the city loses employees, things such as traffic studies or improvements to things such as sidewalks.

Councilor Rivera\_I stated that while he understood the argument about costs continuing to go up, it costs more to keep retraining people. He noted that the Treasurer's Department had seen so much turnover that a consultant had to be hired to put things back in order, costing the city more than if there were more consistency.

Councilor Givner stated that all of this did not even account for open positions that were not being filled because the city was not paying enough. She then stated that this was about keeping the people the city currently had.

Councilor Anderson-Burgos stated that in his role as the state rep's legislative aide, he saw a lot of movement happening in Holyoke and new businesses coming on line that would help level out the concern that the city could not afford these raises.

Mayor Garcia stated that there needed to be clarification of the impacts of Ezekiel's Plan, emphasizing that he may have failed in fully explaining it. He then stated that revenue sources identified to fund it were ARPA replacement revenue as well as interest on revenue collected. He then stated that the only contributions from the budget was the additional support for the Board of Health, as well as a Crime Analyst position. He added that more points and explanations would come during a coming Finance Committee meeting. He also stated that additional alternative revenue sources would become available soon beyond year 1 to cover the plan outside of regular taxation. He then explained that the only big concern was the cost of 13 additional officers after year 1.

Councilor McGiverin emphasized the importance of another look at Ezekiel's Plan to ensure everyone was on the same page. He recalled that Springfield went bankrupt in the past after using an alternative revenue source to hire 80-100 officers. He then stated that he believed the proposal was solid, but the future impacts should be looked at if new positions were hired for. He also emphasized that while the expenses faced by the city's taxpayers needed to be considered, he noted that each of the city's employees were also facing the same increases in the cost of living. He then commended that Personnel Department, the Mayor, and the Law Department to make sense of who was working the hardest, performing, and whose salaries were out of whack in order to help employees. He then suggested that while nobody wanted to pay more in taxes, people understood the need to keep people in jobs that we needed them to do.

Councilor Rivera\_J echoed previous sentiments, emphasizing that people needed raises and the city needed to keep its employees. She noted that some employees had gone 15 years without a raise.

---> Motion to cut 51103 by \$5,000 was denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 4 (Bartley, Jourdain, Puello, Vacon)--Nays 9--Absent 0.

Councilor Jourdain made a motion to cut \$8,500 of the \$10,000 proposed raise from the Chief Assessor's salary line, 51105. Councilor Puello seconded the motion. He then stated that the tax recap showed that the tax levy would be \$64.5 million, adding that the current levy was \$60 million. He then asked that if there was another source of funding to reduce it, it should be in the recap sheet, noting that removing Ezekiel's Plan was reducing the levy by the entire \$1 million but had a total cost of \$2 million. He also emphasized that the Holyoke Mall's assessment had been going down for years, shifting the burden to residential taxpayers. He also pointed out that the recap only showed \$500,000 to \$750,000 in estimated new growth. He then reiterated that while people should be given a 2-3% salary increase annually, raises of around 13% to some employees was not sustainable, especially on the backs of the poorest people in the state.

Councilor McGiverin stated that the same position in Springfield was paid \$125,000, and that Chelsea, with the same population as Holyoke, paid \$111,000. He also stated that Westfield paid \$97,865 and West Springfield paid \$86,288. He then emphasized that the person had been in the position for around 20 years and had incredible knowledge in a very important position. He added that her predecessor went 15 years without a raise and eventually left. He also stated that the job required a certification and professional classification not required of many other positions.

Councilor Anderson-Burgos asked Mayor Garcia to clarify the point about removing Ezekiel's Plan from the budget.

Mayor Garcia stated that the plan was not \$2 million, clarifying that \$2 million ARPA revenue replacement was for a funding gap in the budget. He then stated that this would have to be figured out when the

budget for FY25 was put together. He then explained that the largest contributor of an increase in this budget was to cover \$1.5 million in the sewer deficit as well as \$700,00 for the firefighters union.

Councilor Givner stated that the people of Holyoke were not the poorest people in the state. She then stated that people needed quality of life issues addressed and city employees needed to be paid to address them.

Councilor Jourdain stated that dollars for the Ezekiel's Plan proposal were coming to the city in grant funding, including grant funding or opioid settlement funds. He then suggested that if they weren't some on these things, they could be used for some of the city's existing costs instead of new costs. He then emphasized that Chicopee took \$10 million of the \$34 million they received from ARA and put it into savings, while Holyoke used \$8 million of its \$39 million just to balance the budget. He added that there was no plan to address that.

Councilor Rivera\_I suggested that some departments did not need to continue to be funded at their current levels, adding that some were funded more than others and did not put out the same level of effectiveness and efficiency. He also suggested that some had not received raises for years while others had stronger unions helping them get raises on a regular basis. He then expressed support for this raise, adding that he believed this was a department that was producing effectively and efficiently. He suggested there were other departments that were not functioning at the same level. He further suggested a deeper look to see where cuts should really come from.

Councilor Murphy-Romboletti stated that if Holyoke was going to be compared to Chicopee, it should be noted that they had a stormwater fee that Holyoke did not have, making the deficits different.

---> Motion to cut 51105 by \$8,500 was denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 3 (Jourdain, Puello, Vacon)--Nays 10--Absent 0.

Councilor Jourdain stated that relative to land court expenses in the Treasurer's budget, \$120,000 was originally requested in the budget and was funded for \$40,000 by the Mayor. He then questioned why the new request was for \$20,000 more than the original request. He then made a motion to reduce the request by \$20,000. Councilor Puello seconded the motion.

---> Motion to cut 53050 by \$20,000 was denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 6 (Bartley, Jourdain, McGee, McGiverin, Puello, Vacon)--Nays 7--Absent 0.

Councilor Jourdain stated that in the Treasurer's budget, postage was originally requested at \$35,000, was approved for \$30,000, and was now going up an additional \$30,000. He then made a motion to reduce the request by \$25,000 to give it the original request of \$35,000. Councilor Puello seconded the motion.

Councilor McGiverin stated that the Treasurer explained that the request was a reflection of the postage being brought together all inclusive to that department.

Councilor Jourdain questioned why only \$35,000 was requested in June if that were true. He also noted there was no corresponding reduction in any other department. He suggested that if this was being consolidated, the other departments should have reductions.

Councilor Murphy-Romboletti stated that she saw some cuts in postage.

Mayor Garcia stated that the original budget proposal did have cuts.

Councilor Jourdain asked if the original \$35,000 should have been higher in the first place

Mayor Garcia stated that a lot of items in the budget were cut short to get a balanced budget passed into the fiscal year with the plan to revisit at this time. He suggested that the Treasurer could explain it better.

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to allow department heads to address the Council.

Councilor Jourdain withdrew his motion until City Treasurer, Rory Casey, was able to join.

Councilor Jourdain made a motion to reduce the Tax Collector's salary from its \$15,000 increase to \$1,400, a reduction of \$13,600 to make it a 2% pay raise. Councilor Puello seconded the motion. He then stated that pay raises needed to be sustainable and not giving people a 20% raise.

Councilor McGiverin stated that the position was part of a process of looking at all roles in the finance team, including the creation of a CAFO (Chief Administrative Financial Officer) position. He then expressed his understanding that a performance evaluation was recently done with this employee, and that an offer was made to her to go somewhere else. He then added that she brought a lot of talent to the team. He then emphasized that the largest increases would be in the Fire Department, which added up to \$770,000.

Councilor Bartley stated that he could not support a \$15,000, adding that they should not get more than the Assessor who had been with the city for over 20 years. He then made a motion to reduce the raise by \$5,000 to be in line with the Assessor. Councilor Puello seconded the motion.

President McGee recalled that when the Tax Collector came into the position, the salary was capped and it was understood they would come back to adjust it to be more in line with other communities. He added that this employee had made changes in the office that had brought revenue into the city that it had not seen in some time.

---> Motion to cut 51101 by \$5,000 was denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 4 (Bartley, Jourdain, Puello, Vacon)--Nays 9--Absent 0.

---> Motion to cut 51101 by \$25,000 was denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 2 (Jourdain, Puello)--Nays 11--Absent 0.

President McGee stated that Mr. Casey was now available.

Councilor Jourdain asked what happened with the postage costs.

R. Casey stated that the postage request had two reasons. He then explained that more offices were using their machine, noting that it allowed for certified mail, large parcel pieces, and other types of postage they had not original expected. He also explained that some of the uses with other departments may not have been coming from their postage lines but may have been going to the post office, paying on their own, and then getting reimbursed from other lines. He added that this practice was being discontinued. He also explained that postage rates had gone up for several types of mail in addition to the expected increase in first class mail. He also stated that another anticipated increase was coming in 2024. He then stated that they would be making changes to creating a traditional mail room where departments would log in.

Councilor Jourdain noted that the original request was for \$35,000. He then asked if something changed since that time in June, and why wasn't all this information considered in the original budget request. He then asked for a breakdown as to where the corresponding reductions were in the other departments.

R. Casey stated that the \$5,000 was because they knew there was going to be a first class mail rate increase. He then explained that at the time the budget requests were being submitted, they did not have the full picture. He further explained that since that time, many other departments had begun using their postage machine, leading to the going through postage at a rapid pace. He also stated that the U.S.P.S. recently offered guidance that they would be increasing a number of types of postage in January or February, but the cost was not yet known. He then stated that he did not know where the other cuts were but suggested that many departments should have several small cuts. He also stated that there were cuts in his budget due to a position that was unfilled but now filled and another one that was currently being interviewed for.

Councilor Jourdain questioned how \$30,000 was arrived at if this was budget neutral.

R. Casey stated that it was a moving target, but he was open to some cuts but it may require coming back later to ensure that mail was able to go out.

Councilor Jourdain stated that his job was to make sure that if expenses were going from one budget to another, there needed to be evidence of that.

R. Casey stated that another unknown was due to the company that sent out tax bills would no longer be subsidizing the city's postage at the same rate they had in the past. He suggested that he may have to come back for another request, noting that new laws were going to require additional information to be mailed out in advance of the presidential election and it was unclear if the state would reimburse any of that.

Councilor Jourdain asked if he would be comfortable if half was approved and then had to come back later with a report.

R. Casey asked for clarification.

Councilor Jourdain stated that with the request of \$30,000, it could be cut by \$15,000 and then a request could come back later.

R. Casey stated that he would prefer it to be no cut.

President McGee stated that the Mayor had to leave but would be zooming in later.

Councilor Jourdain made a motion to reduce the Treasurer's postage request by \$15,000. Councilor Puello seconded the motion.

---> Motion to cut 53420 by \$15,000 was denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 6 (Bartley, Jourdain, McGee, McGiverin, Puello, Vacon)--Nays 7--Absent 0.

Councilor Jourdain made a motion to reduce the City Solicitor salary line by \$6,100. Councilor Puello seconded the motion. He then emphasized that the salary for this position kept continuing to increase, proposed to bring it to \$102,000 with a 9% increase. He reiterated that this was unsustainable, adding that these positions should be getting annual COLA's.

Councilor McGiverin stated that annual COLA's made sense when everyone was brought up to comparable pay that reflected the positions and in line with comparable communities in Western Mass. He noted that this position was paid \$176,000 in Springfield, \$136,000 in Chelsea with the same population, \$107,000 in Westfield, and \$112,000 in West Springfield. He added that the work of the current City Solicitor should speak for itself.

Councilor Jourdain stated that this was a matter of supply and demand, adding that the city never had difficulty filling this position. He further stated that if the position was posted, with its salary of \$94,000 and its benefits, there would be no problem finding someone. He also emphasized that Holyoke was not in the same financial position as Springfield and could not be compared to some of those other cities mentioned. He also suggested that anyone in these roles knew what they were signing up for.

Councilor Rivera\_I stated that his concern about consistency. He then suggested that while other people may line up for the position, this would not keep pace with consistency. He then explained that if he wanted to reach out to the department for information going back 15 years, he may struggle because of a lack of consistency in the department. He also suggested that if these raises had been handled throughout the time, it would not be a drastic increase in one shot.

Councilor Murphy-Romboletti expressed a hope that the same conversation did not need to get repeated for every single department. She then expressed frustration with accusing city employees, who work hard for the city, of reaching for gold and needing to know what they signed for. She then emphasized that she worked at City Hall for 5 years and found that a majority of the stress in those jobs came from working with the City Council. She then expressed her intent to continue advocating for city employees.

Councilor McGiverin stated that looking at this department required looking at the big picture, emphasizing that earning a law degree and keeping up with municipal law required special skills. He also stated that during previous years without a consistent City Solicitor, the city spent a lot on outside counsel costs. He then suggested that the salary needed to be adequate to keep that level of work serving the city. He then suggested that there would be no problem filling the position at \$94,000-\$96,000.

Councilor Jourdain stated that it may be easy to say an employee is a great person but it also needed to be pointed out for the average citizen the types of increasing that were happening. He then reiterated that Holyoke was one of the poorest communities in the state per capita, always within the bottom five.

Councilor Anderson-Burgos emphasized that the cost of living was continuing to go up. He then explained that while nobody wanted to pay more taxes, this was the reality. He then suggested that some councilors need to spend more time with the department heads and people who worked for the city, providing the services the people deserve. He also suggested that when people don't see services they need, they should reflect on which councilors keep cutting and kicking the can down the road. He also stated that when councilors say they are going to make cuts, those cuts come with consequences.

Councilor Vacon stated that in respect to this department, she found there to be a collaborative approach between the City Council and the Law Department that resulted in reorganization and restricting of the department, adding that it was unique among communities. She then suggested that this was a separate matter from that. She then stated that while city services needed to be kept, it could not be done on the backs of the taxpayers on fixed incomes. She then emphasized that she was supporting the cuts not because she did not support the positions but because of a need to look at the sustainability of the city. She added that she did believe the Council needed to look out for departments but balance it with the needs of the people who support the budget.

President McGee emphasized that what the Council was doing was not meant to be against department heads of employees, adding that he believed that rhetoric needed to stop. He also stated that the Council had worked hard to change the morale of the city employees. He then explained that a budget was passed 5 months earlier and this step was adding to the budget as part of the check and balance that was the City Council's job.

----> Motion to cut 51101 by \$6,100 was denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 4 (Bartley, Jourdain, Puello, Vacon)--Nays 9--Absent 0.

Councilor Jourdain made a motion to reduce the Assistant Solicitor salary line by \$8,800 of the proposed \$12,000. Councilor Puello seconded the motion. He then stated that this would result in a 2% pay increase. He then suggested that DPW workers could question where their 10% pay raises were, emphasizing that there was a need for parity. He also noted that these were positions already making \$80,000.

Councilor McGiverin stated that these positions did not have the advantage of a collective bargaining unit to speak up for them and that they had not had regular 2%-4% COLA increases as most collective bargaining units have been able to get for their employees.

---> Motion to cut 51102 by \$8,800 was denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 4 (Bartley, Jourdain, Puello, Vacon)--Nays 9--Absent 0.

Councilor Jourdain made a motion to cut the raises for the Personnel Administrator salary from \$6,000 to \$1,700. Councilor Puello seconded the motion. He then explained that the position had already been recently re-evaluated and increased by \$17,000.

---> Motion to cut 51101 by \$4,300 was denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 3 (Jourdain, Puello, Vacon)--Nays 10--Absent 0.

Councilor Jourdain made a motion to reduce the raise for the Director of Conservation and Sustainability from \$10,000 to \$1,300. Councilor Puello seconded the motion. He then reiterated his standing point that the increases were too much.

Councilor Rivera\_I stated that this individual had put in a ton of work, getting the city a couple million dollars in grants that would help improve the green spaces in the community. He added that they come to City Council meetings prepared and should be the standard other departments were held to.

Councilor Givner stated that this person in this position recently secured a \$1 million grant for the city.

---> Motion to cut 51101 by \$8,700 was denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 3 (Jourdain, Puello, Vacon)--Nays 10--Absent 0.

Councilor Rivera\_I made a motion to cut the Crime Analyst position from an increase of \$40,000 to \$5,000. He added that the intention was to hold it there so that when the details of Ezekiel's Plan were hashed out, they could add the money back in. He noted that it was not yet an actual position.

Councilor Bartley stated that the position was not yet created in the ordinance, emphasized that positions should be created before being funded. He then made a motion to cut the entire \$40,000. Councilor Anderson-Burgos seconded the motion.

President McGee agreed that this would be funding a position that did not exist.

Councilor Jourdain expressed his support for having this position but agreed that it could not be funded and filled until it was created.

Councilor McGiverin noted that unions could create positions through collective bargaining, adding that mayors could also propose to begin the creations of positions by putting them in the budget but they could not be filled until there was the support of the ordinance. He then suggested that there may not be funding to pay the position until the next fiscal year. He also suggested that this was like having a grant writer, something that had been done well by officers who should be fighting crime.

Councilor Rivera\_I suggested that the grants position was separate from the crime analyst position, which was zeroed out. He then expressed a hope that the position would help the Police Department better prepare when they attend meetings to present data with research background. He then noted he didn't even know about the ordinance piece of the issue but had been thinking that it shouldn't be funded until it was ready to be spent.

Councilor Bartley clarified that unions could not create positions on their own but could propose positions in a contract that would still be subject to ordinance.

Councilor Givner noted that in Ezekiel's Plan, the position was planned to be funded through the supplemental budget while many other positions in the plan would be funded through other revenue sources such as ARPA. She then suggested that the funding should remain.

Councilor McGiverin clarified that his intent with a previous statement was to say that unions could propose new positions through collective bargaining agreements.

---> Motion to cut the new position of Crime Analyst was adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 8--Nays 5 (Givner, McGiverin, Murphy-Romboletti, Rivera\_J, Tallman)--Absent 0.

Councilor McGiverin noted that a cut made by the mayor in the budget of \$72,720 in the Lieutenants position for the Police Department was not eliminating the position but eliminating the funding due to vacancy, taking it off of the recap sheet and making it unavailable for transfer. He also noted that with respect to the budget for the Fire Department, increases under the personnel lines were supporting the contract, each amounting to 2-3% increases.

Councilor Jourdain suggested that the \$1 million for Ezekiel's Plan be cut, noting that another order was before the Council to fund it separately. He expressed concern that passing it would be in bad form. Councilor McGiverin seconded the motion.

Councilor McGiverin stated that there was a transfer going to committee, and cutting this was the correct thing to do just to be safe.

---> Motion to cut \$1 million from 57806 in the Office of Public Safety budget was adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 9--Nays 3 (Givner, Maldonado Velez, Rivera\_J)--Absent 1 (Rivera\_I).

Councilor Jourdain stated that with regard to the School Department budget, he would not be proposing cuts but had asked for backup information from that department. He then expressed a hope that the changes would be picked up by state aid and non-tax levy dollars.

Councilor McGiverin expressed his understanding that they were led to believe that numbers out of a conference committee were being reflected in the School Department budget. He added that net school spending would have to be made one way or another. He also noted that the state's supplemental budget had not yet been finalized. .

Councilor Jourdain made a motion to cut the Health Director's raise from \$7,000 to \$1,560, a reduction of \$5,440. Councilor Puello seconded the motion. He then suggested everyone knew his reasons.

---> Motion to cut \$5,440 from 51101 from the Board of Health budget was denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 3 (Jourdain, Puello, Vacon)--Nays 10--Absent 0.

Councilor Jourdain made a motion cut \$4,000 from the Council on Aging Overtime line. He then noted that the request was allegedly because they wanted to get away from comp time. He also stated that comp time was factored into the current budget and that this would be an added cost. Councilor Puello seconded the motion.

Councilor Givner suggested that if they paid overtime, they might go overtime a lot less often.

Councilor McGiverin stated that the issue of comp time was that when someone earned it, they were being paid to stay home and less work gets done.

Councilor Bartley asked if there was a personnel policy on comp time.

President McGee stated that he did not have one before him.

Councilor Bartley stated that he despised comp time while working in the public sector. He then questioned if departments were making up their own comp time policies without something on the books.

Councilor Jourdain suggested that this practice of comp time had been used for some time and the practice should remain in place. He then reiterated that this overtime request was just adding another \$4,000 to the budget.

---> Motion to cut \$4,000 from 51300 was denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 4 (Jourdain, McGee, Puello, Vacon)--Nays 9--Absent 0.

Councilor Jourdain made a motion to cut \$5,700 from the \$7,000 increase in the salary line for the Director of Museums and Monuments. Councilor Puello seconded the motion.

Councilor Jourdain stated that in FY22, the position paid \$57,500 and was increased to \$63,000, and was now proposed to be increased to \$70,000.

Councilor Vacon stated on behalf of the taxpayers, raises of this size for some of the highest paid department heads was unfair to the taxpayers.

---> Motion to cut \$5,700 from 51101 was denied on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 4 (Bartley, Jourdain, Puello, Vacon)--Nays 9--Absent 0.

Councilor Jourdain made a motion to cut \$135,000 from the Repair and Maintenance - Sewer line in the Wastewater Treatment Plant budget. Councilor Puello seconded the motion. He then emphasized that there remained an open question on how much of this budget's \$7.3 million was related to general fund spending. He suggested that some of those funds could be transferred in. He added that street service and repairs as well as street sweeping costs should be paid out of the general fund. He also noted that there many other one-time expenses were in this budget. He added that collection rates also needed to be examined.

Councilor McGiverin expressed a hope that this issue of where expenses were paid out of would be addressed soon so that the sewer rate accurately reflected the operations. He then stated that one problem with the sewer budget was that it was running a deficit that would be placed on the property taxpayers as opposed to ratepayers.

Councilor Jourdain stated that reducing the \$135,000 would reduce the deficit on paper because it would be increasing the budget for the department. He added that as it was only 5 months into the fiscal year, the revenue for the entire year was not yet known.

Councilor Vacon noted that the \$235,000 figure that this line would be increased to came from a 1-year lookback averaging in the single-most extraordinary structural expense due to a large pipe breaking. She also emphasized that the sewer enter[rise fund has been in deficit 5 out of the last 10 years, and had not affected the tax levy in the past but had affected the certification of the free cash. She also questioned the argument that the deficit in the sewer enterprise was what was breaking the budget when the city had written hundreds of thousands of dollars for improperly accounted for grants as well as penalties and fines for things that had not been properly completed in offices. She then suggested that the matter of



From Tanya Wdowiak, City Auditor, 2024 Updated Budget Book Summary, Page 27, 33, 35 per 11-15-2023 Finance Committee Mtg  
---> Received.

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order That the police department please provide a list, with events and dollar amounts that have received police details/paid overtime during the last 6 months. Private businesses popular with leadership, making profit should not have their OT details paid for by tax dollars when public community events have had to budget their own funds in the past.

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

Committee Members:

Joseph McGiverin  
Kevin A Jourdain  
Will Puello  
Juan Anderson-Burgos  
Peter Tallman

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor McGiverin stated that the mayor and the police chief providing information on the work details paid, making a distinction between for-profit and non-for-profit entities.

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

The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order The city's law department provide the mandated quarterly report for YTD legal expenses incurred by the City of Holyoke for outside legal counsel caused as a result of a Planning Board vote opposing a project near the Log Cabin. Please refer to the 10/4/22 order adopted by city council and approved by the mayor. Receive and Refer to Law Dept for an update as soon as possible.

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

Committee Members:

Joseph McGiverin  
Kevin A Jourdain  
Will Puello  
Juan Anderson-Burgos  
Peter Tallman

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor McGiverin stated that the information provided showed that the expenses added up to \$4,740.52. He also emphasized that some of the details could not yet be discussed to be pending litigation.

Councilor Bartley stated that he filed an order a year earlier asking for quarterly reports from the Law Department detailing expenses for outside counsel relative to the lawsuit caused by a vote of the Planning Board, pertaining to a property at the Log Cabin on Easthampton Road. He then explained that

the Law Department did not want to handle the case and hired outside counsel. He noted that the number was slightly deceptive as it did not show the year-to-date figure. He then explained that the cost was well over \$100,000. He then questioned the frustration from the Law Department when the order gets filed, noting that it was just a matter of asking the Auditor for the information.

President McGee stated that an executive session would be planned for December 5th at 6pm to get updates on some other legal matters.

Councilor Bartley clarified that the outside counsel costs had added up to over \$200,000.  
---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

(3:10:10)

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to take up items 19A and 19H as a package.

The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred an order From Holyoke Redevelopment Authority Summary of Activities from November 1, 2021 to October 31, 2022.

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

Committee Members:

Tessa Murphy-Romboletti  
David K. Bartley  
Joseph McGiverin  
Jenny Rivera\_J  
Linda L. Vacon

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

The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred an order That OPED and the Holyoke Redevelopment Authority attend an upcoming D&GR meeting to update the council on the Urban Renewal Plan and ongoing projects related to the plan.

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

Committee Members:

Tessa Murphy-Romboletti  
David K. Bartley  
Joseph McGiverin  
Jenny Rivera\_J  
Linda L. Vacon

**UNDER DISCUSSION:**

Councilor Murphy-Romboletti stated that the Tom Creed and Daphne Board from the Redevelopment Authority attended, as well as Stephanie from OPED. She then explained that they talked about the South Holyoke Homes project, noting that phase 1 had been completed and that phase 2 was in progress for funding and would be getting started soon. She also stated that the Winn Development project at 216 Appleton Street would have its groundbreaking soon, with phase 1 offering 88 units for seniors 55 and up. She also explained that they discussed the Development Transformative Development Initiative, which was focusing on High Street. She noted that the Urban Renewal Plan has passed over 12 years ago. ---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted.

The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred an order Petition of Laura Delmolino for a new special permit for a driveway in front yard (6.1.8.1) at 176 Lincoln St.

have considered the same and Recommended that the special permit be granted.

**Committee Members:**

Tessa Murphy-Romboletti  
David K. Bartley  
Joseph McGiverin  
Jenny Rivera\_J  
Linda L. Vacon

**UNDER DISCUSSION:**

Councilor Murphy-Romboletti stated that the special permit was to widen the driveway with a turnaround in the front. She added that the homeowner purchased the home in 2021, had already done the work, and had not been aware that they needed a permit first. She then stated that they determined it did comply with the front yard landscape open space requirement as well as with the surrounding neighborhood. She added that it also complied with requirements on distance from the intersection. She also stated that the homeowner did not intend to use it as parking but to turn around.

Councilor Jourdain asked if there was any neighborhood opposition.

Councilor Murphy-Romboletti stated there was not.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 11--Nays 0--Absent 2 (Givner, Rivera\_I).

The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred an order Special Permit Application of CAMRAC, LLC dba Enterprise Rent-A-Car per 7.2.13 for rental of motor vehicles at 7 Cray Ave

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

1. That there will be no more than 15 cars on the lot.
2. That the hours of operation will be Monday-Friday: 7am-6pm, Saturday: 9am-12pm, Sunday: closed
3. That there will be no auto repairs on site.
4. That there will be no auto sales on site.

5. Petitioner will be allowed to use a bay for the purposes of cleaning the interior and exterior of rental vehicles.

Committee Members:

Tessa Murphy-Romboletti  
David K. Bartley  
Joseph McGiverin  
Jenny Rivera\_J  
Linda L. Vacon

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Murphy-Romboletti stated that Kevin Kolsted from Enterprise, adding that Ira Elfman was the owner of the property who also ran an abutting auto sales business. She then explained that the Planning Department had suggested he apply for this use under section 7.2.13 of the zoning ordinance. She also stated that it would be a car rental site with an office environment and a one car bay area for staff to clean the vehicles before each rental. She then noted that nobody attended to speak for or against the permit.

Councilor Bartley noted that the petitioner was well prepared and professional. He then thanked Mr. Elfman for marketing the city and helping to bring this business into Holyoke. He then noted that he sought feedback from the Law Department on this type of business, noting that the ordinance does not contemplate rental car businesses. He also noted that the petitioner planned to create a couple new jobs.

Councilor McGiverin noted that in reviewing the application, a map of the plan was provided. He then explained that they were proposing room for a maximum of 15 cars, which would include employees. He added that it would be mostly a lot of pickup and drop-off.

Councilor Tallman recalled speaking with Mr. Elfman a few months earlier and learned that he wanted to do this with the property. He then stated that this would be a great addition for this area.

Councilor Bartley noted that the petitioner agreed with all of the conditions placed on the permit.  
---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 11--Nays 0--Absent 2 (Maldonado Velez, Rivera\_I).

The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred an order Special Permit Application of Delfina Saillant per 7.2.9 to convert basement into a livable studio space at 20 Pearl Street

have considered the same and Recommended that the special permit be granted, with the condition that a signed letter from a licensed architect be provided.

Committee Members:

Tessa Murphy-Romboletti  
David K. Bartley  
Joseph McGiverin  
Jenny Rivera\_J  
Linda L. Vacon

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Murphy-Romboletti stated that the homeowner had owned for a while and had her son speak on her behalf. She then stated that the plan was to create a studio apartment in the basement. She then explained that the main concern was about parking. She then stated that the Zoning Officer from the Building Department provided feedback that there needed to be a stamped architect plan and it had not yet been provided. She then explained that they did not expect to be able to get it by this meeting. She also noted that two members of the public spoke and were in favor of the permit. She then suggested that the item be tabled for the next meeting in order to get the letter for the architect.

Councilor Bartley agreed that it would need to be tabled to be in compliance with the ordinance. He then stated that the applicant did a great job presenting. He then noted that it was a unique ordinance. He then commended himself as the attorney who represented the seller of the property. He added that the petitioner loved the neighborhood and showed some great pictures of the planned apartment. He then explained that they had drawings by a reputable architect but they were not stamped.

---> Report of Committee received and laid on the table.

The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred an order Special Permit Application of Zachary Bruneau per 4.7.3 non-conforming to rebuild old garage on the same footprint at 15 Brookline Avenue

have considered the same and Recommended that the special permit be granted.

Committee Members:

Tessa Murphy-Romboletti  
David K. Bartley  
Joseph McGiverin  
Jenny Rivera\_J  
Linda L. Vacon

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Murphy-Romboletti stated that the Matlocks, as well as their contractor, Mr. Bruneau, attended to explain that they were rebuilding their old garage on the same footprint using the same dimensions. She added that they would have a new reinforced pad. She then noted that one abutter submitted comments stating that they appreciated the investment.

Councilor Jourdain noted that the Matlocks had owned the property a long time. He then suggested that this was the kind of basic home improvement the city should be encouraging, adding that it would be a complement to the neighborhood.

Councilor Bartley noted that their contractor did a great job presenting, who hit all the points and satisfied the criteria. He noted that neighbors were supportive and believed it would increase the value of the house as well as the neighborhood.

Councilor McGiverin stated that this was the right thing to do. He then stated that while he understood the non-conforming part of this, it did cost extra expense to the petitioner when it would have been simpler to request a hardship variance through the Board of Appeals. He then emphasized that the garage was built before zoning ordinances and wouldn't meet the setback requirements.

---> Report of Committee received and recommendation Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays-- Yeas 11--Nays 0--Absent 2 (Maldonado Velez, Rivera\_I).

The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred an order that TJ O'Connor be invited in to a subcommittee meeting to discuss how they serve the animal population of Holyoke, including the struggles they face and what Holyoke can do to help.

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

Committee Members:

Tessa Murphy-Romboletti  
David K. Bartley  
Joseph McGiverin  
Jenny Rivera\_J  
Linda L. Vacon

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor Murphy-Romboletti stated that their Executive Director, Lori Swanson, attended on behalf of T.J. O'Connor. She then explained that they work with the city very closely. She then deferred Councilor Anderson-Burgos as the maker of the order.

Councilor Anderson-Burgos stated that he and his husband, Jeffery, visited the location to adopt a kitten and talked about some of the services they offered. He added that he thought it would be good to bring them in and make more people aware of those details.

Councilor Bartley emphasized that this kind of order was the purpose of the committee, in order to allow people to present to the Council and hear about entities that impact Holyoke. He then expressed a hope that more orders like this come in.

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

**ORDERS AND TRANSFERS**

(3:22:20)

President McGee implored councilors to not debate orders if they will be referred to committee.

MURPHY-ROMBOLETTI, MALDONADO-VELEZ, RIVERA\_I, RIVERA\_J — Ordered that the City Council sign and support the attached Resolution to create a state-authorized cultural district for at least (5) years to be named the Puerto Rican Cultural District.

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

MURPHY-ROMBOLETTI — Ordered that the DPW look into traffic calming and increased safety measures for the intersection of Sargeant Street & St. Jerome Ave. Residents have complained that cars regularly ignore the 4-way stop signs and would like the City to explore installing flashing lights or raised crosswalks.

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

MURPHY-ROMBOLETTI — That the Honorable City Council, in accordance with M.G.L. ch. 30B and the Holyoke Procurement Ordinance, vote that the City of Holyoke accept the proposal submitted by Jeffrey Dias and Tiago Martins and sell 736 Dwight Street (Parcel #006-09-002) and Dwight Street Parcel #006-09-001 for \$17,500. These surplus properties are contiguous parcels of vacant land on Dwight Street at the corner of Walnut Street totaling approximately 10,109 square feet in size. The properties are zoned Limited Business (BL) and have a combined assessed value of \$46,800.

Councilor McGiverin suggested that some details needed to be ironed out, noting there was a distinction between not-for-profits and for-profit entities or semi-for-profit. He then stated that there appeared to be changes in language that could cause the Boys and Girls Club to owe \$80,000 a year. He suggested that those who negotiated this be brought in to discuss this.

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

MURPHY-ROMBOLETTI — That the Honorable City Council, in accordance with M.G.L. ch. 30B and the Holyoke Procurement Ordinance, vote that the City of Holyoke accept the proposal submitted by The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Holyoke and sell 118 Newton Street (Parcel #011-03-008), Newton Street Parcel #011-03-009 and 94 Newton Street (Parcel #011-03-010) for \$15,000. These surplus properties are contiguous parcels of vacant land on Newton Street totaling approximately 19,230 square feet in size. The properties are zoned Downtown Residential (118 Newton St.) and Downtown Business (Parcel 009 & 94 Newton St.) and have a combined assessed value of \$83,100.

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

PUELLO — That the DPW please consider adding a portable toilet at Springdale Park next to the Main and Papineau parking lot or adjacent baseball fields, requested for upcoming spring season.

---> Received and Adopted. Copy to Park and Rec.

PUELLO — That the DPW please explore adding a sidewalk/walking area along the hill of Lower Westfield road beginning at Ingleside. Concerns have been raised about the lack of space on the hill incline for residents to walk safely.

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

PUELLO, BARTLEY, Tallman — That the Mayor please appropriate the funds needed for a construction feasibility land survey required for the property at the top of the hill on St. Vincent. This property was transferred to the city by the school department over 2 years ago with the hopeful intent to create more housing. Alternatively, please consider making the property available for development with the survey requirement as a condition of an agreement.

Councilor Bartley recalled that the property had been transferred from the School Department 3 years earlier, but nothing had been done with it since then. He also recalled that former City Engineer, Robert Peirent, estimated that it could provide 2-3 buildable lots in a residential only area. He then suggested that the city declare it as surplus to put out an RFP so the winning bidder conduct a survey. He noted that developers had told him they wanted to create housing on it.

Councilor Tallman recalled this property being discussed a few years earlier. He then asked to be added to the order, adding that he would be willing to help advocate for this lot being put out for development.

Councilor Bartley stated that OPED Director, Aaron Vega, as well as Mayor Garcia should work on this.  
---> Received and referred to OPED and Mayor Garcia.

PUELLO — That we consider crafting an ordinance stipulating requirements for expenditure of funds of the police special events line and requirements. Example: committee organized event, private businesses participating, alcohol served, who is profiting etc.  
---> Received and referred to the Ordinance Committee.

PUELLO — That we consider a ballot question to determine if the term of office for mayor should be reduced to 2 years, amid historically low voter turnout and pending administrative changes under consideration.  
---> Received and referred to the Charter and Rules Committee

PUELLO — That all individual private businesses that benefited from the tax payers police department special events line within the last year please be billed for said amount like any another private account holder requesting overtime.  
---> Received and Adopted. Copy to the Mayor.

RIVERA\_J — That a handicap sign be placed in front of 34 No. Summer St. for Jeysha L. Detres Hernandez, Placard # PL5620318, Exp: 10/14/2027.  
---> Received and referred to the Ordinance Committee. Copy to the Disabilities Commission.

TALLMAN, VACON — Ordered, that a review of the ordinance on the Soldiers Memorial Commission be done to update the language.  
---> Received and referred to the Ordinance Committee. Copy to the Law Dept.

VACON, Bartley — that PD conducts a speed study on lower Homestead Ave.

Councilor Bartley asked to be added to the order. He also made a motion to amend to also include upper Homestead Rd. He also observed that there had been a recent influx of state police coming through the city enforcing various vehicle violations and trucks flying through streets they shouldn't be driving on.  
---> Received and Adopted. Copy to HPD with a report back in 3 months.

VACON — Remove the dead tree at 137 Whiting Farms Rd near the sidewalk.  
---> Received and Adopted. Copy to City Forester.

VACON — the PD provide an update summary of enforcement activities by Holyoke and/or State Police re: truck traffic at night and drivers exceeding speed limits on Homestead Ave.  
---> Received and Adopted. Copy to HPD

VACON — At the I-91 dedicated exit lane to the mall, install flexible lane delineators to prevent people from illegally crossing across the solid line across the bike lane.

Councilor Vacon made a motion to amend to add delineators to Route 202 heading toward Apremont Highway, noting that people were passing on the right through a closed lane.  
---> Received and Adopted. Copy to DPW, Public Safety Committee.

ANDERSON-BURGOS — Ordered, that the DPW/Engineer review better placement and/or address the tree obstructing the stop sign at the intersection of St Jerome as it meets West Franklin. Residents traveling on West Franklin have expressed concern about drivers going through the stop sign and believe it may be due to not seeing it until the last second.

---> Received and Adopted. Copy to DPW, Public Safety Committee, City Engineer.

ANDERSON-BURGOS — Order for a review to consider a blinking yellow left for northbound traffic on Northampton Street at Hampden. Residents have expressed concern about near accidents due to vehicles making a left while southbound traffic still has a green light.

---> Received and referred to the Alarm Division, City Engineer.

BARTLEY, PUELLO — The DPW repair the guardrail at Jones Ferry Rd. as it is now detached and on the ground. While on site, the DPW install a street sign where the road merges with Route 5.

---> Received and Adopted. Copy to DPW

MCGEE — Ordered, to present proclamations for this year's awardees of the Patriotic Events Committee at the Veterans Day ceremony.

Citizen of the Year: Damaris Aponte

Local Business of the Year: Holyoke Gas & Electric

Public Safety Member of the Year: Detective Liam Glasheen

Veteran of the Year: Christopher Simms

---> Received and Adopted.

MCGEE — Order that the city or school dept install a fence at the back entrance of EN White school field (connecting to fence by the woods)

---> Received and Adopted. Copy to DPW, School Department.

MCGEE — That a youth task force be established with a stipend program to incentivize teens through stipend payments to participate in community wide civic engagements and volunteerism around anti violence / anti gun activities as well as character and leadership skill development.

Refer to public safety but invite in boys and girls club, Girls inc to discuss.

Councilor Murphy-Romboletti made a motion to amend to also invite Enlace.

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

MCGEE — Ordered, that Personnel post to fill City Council At-Large appointment(s) to the Community Preservation Committee that will be opening soon.

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

Motion was made and seconded to suspend the necessary rules to take up items 45, 47 through 51, 55 and 56 as a package.

MCGIVERIN — in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 s.53A, the City Council hereby accepts the donation of a new vehicle for the Council on Aging, valued at approximately \$45,000, from The Friends of the Holyoke Council on Aging, and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of said donation and further authorizes the use of said proceeds in accordance with the wishes of the donor.

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

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

MCGIVERIN — that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "FY2024 MUNICIPAL ROAD SAFETY PROGRAM, \$39,880, 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.

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

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

MCGIVERIN — that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "PARTNERS FOR A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY DBA PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE OF WESTERN MA (PHC/PHIWM), \$10,000, 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.

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

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

MCGIVERIN — that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, FIFTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 Dollars (\$50,000) as follows:

FROM:

12101-51117 E911 DISPATCHERS \$50,000

TOTAL: \$50,000

TO:

12102-54221 SUPPLIES – AMMUNITION \$50,000

TOTAL: \$50,000

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

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

MCGIVERIN — that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, ONE HUNDRED SIXTY FOUR THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED NINETY FIVE AND 27/100 Dollars (\$164,695.27) as follows:

FROM:

8811-10400 CAPITAL STABILIZATION \$164,695.27

TOTAL: \$164,695.27

TO:

16503-58000 PARKS-CAPITAL OUTLAY EQUIPMENT \$164,695.27

TOTAL: \$164,695.27

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

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

MCGIVERIN — that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, SIXTY THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND 00/100 Dollars (\$60,500) as follows:

FROM:

8811-10400 CAPITAL STABILIZATION \$60,500

TOTAL: \$60,500

TO:

14803-58004 PARKING CAPITAL OUTLAY-VEHICLES \$60,500

TOTAL: \$60,500

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

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

MCGIVERIN — to use \$3,180,000 (3 million one hundred eighty thousand and 00/100 dollars) of the ARPA revenue loss as a funding source to the FY2024 budget.

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

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

MCGIVERIN — that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "2023 COMMUNITY PLANNING GRANT, \$200,000, 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.

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor McGiverin noted that Finance would be meeting on December 4th, emphasizing that a lot needed to get done before the tax rate could be set. He added there was also an open question on voting for the CPA ballot question. He then asked to clarify that there would be an executive session on December 5th, noting that the Assessor also needed to hold the tax classification hearing.

President McGee stated that the hearing would be on November 28th.

Councilor McGiverin suggested that the vote would be on the 5th. He suggested that would make for a long evening to also hold the executive session.

President McGee stated that a couple things had come up from the Law Department that needed to be discussed.

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

MCGIVERIN — in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 s.53A, the City Council hereby accepts the donation of City Council proclamations, valued at \$41, from Hitchcock Press, and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of said donation and further authorizes the use of said proceeds in accordance with the wishes of the donor.

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor McGiverin explained that the administrative assistant sought to have new proclamations printed through Hitchcock Press and they sent them as a donation. He then explained that M.G.L. required that the City Council accept it.

--->Passed two readings and Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 10--Nays 0-- Absent 3 (Givner, Maldonado Velez, Rivera\_I)

Councilor McGiverin stated that he would ask the administrative assistant to write up a thank you letter on behalf of the City Council.

MCGIVERIN — that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, TWENTY NINE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED SIX AND 50/100 Dollars (\$29,206.50) as follows:

FROM:

12101-51105 SERGEANTS \$13,990.88

12101-51107 PATROLMEN 15,215.62

TOTAL: \$29,206.50

TO:

12101-51180 INJURED ON DUTY (PAYROLL 10/14/2023) \$29,206.50

TOTAL: \$29,206.50

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

--->Passed two readings and Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 10--Nays 0-- Absent 3 (Givner, Maldonado Velez, Rivera\_I)

MCGIVERIN — that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, TWENTY SEVEN THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED EIGHTY EIGHT AND 78/100 Dollars (\$27,688.78) as follows:

FROM:

12101-51105 SERGEANTS \$13,990.88

12101-51107 PATROLMEN 13,697.90

TOTAL: \$27,688.78

TO:

12101-51180 INJURED ON DUTY (PAYROLL 10/28/2023) \$27,688.78

TOTAL: \$27,688.78

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

--->Passed two readings and Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 10--Nays 0-- Absent 3 (Givner, Maldonado Velez, Rivera\_I)

MCGIVERIN — that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, TWENTY SIX THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED FORTY EIGHT AND 30/100 Dollars (\$26,948.30) as follows:

FROM:

12101-51105 SERGEANTS \$13,990.88

12101-51107 PATROLMEN 12,957.42

TOTAL: \$26,948.30

TO:

12101-51180 INJURED ON DUTY (PAYROLL 11/11/2023) \$26,948.30

TOTAL: \$26,948.30

To the City Council:

I hereby recommend the passage of the above order at the meeting of your Council to be held Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

UNDER DISCUSSION:

Councilor McGiverin stated that this was done for every pay period where funds were transferred from salary line items to injured on duty to reflect when public safety officers were out due to being injured on duty.

President McGee stated that the first order was for 9 officers, the second one was for 10, and the third one was for 9.

--->Passed two readings and Adopted on a call of the roll of the yeas and nays--Yeas 10--Nays 0-- Absent 3 (Givner, Maldonado Velez, Rivera\_I)

### LATE FILED ORDERS AND COMMUNICATIONS

(3:56:25)

BARTLEY, PUELLO -- Ordered, (Forgotten by Clerks Office) The DGR committee meet with city officials responsible for managing our parking enforcement staff. The staff has been repeatedly threatened with physical violence and subject to beratement from the public and have privately paid for body cameras. Send a communication advising the council of policies and procedures to ensure employee safety in advance of the subcommittee meeting.

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

MCGEE -- Ordered, 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.

President McGee stated that this was a suggestion as the city was running out of options in finding a tree and that other communities had done this.

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

VACON -- Ordered, That a light be added to the crosswalk at Homestead & Sterling (like at Kane). Drivers are not stopping when pedestrians are in the crosswalk.

Motion was made and seconded to take final action.  
---> Received and Adopted. Copy to DPW.

GIVNER -- Ordered, Per constituent request, order to install a handicap sign for Natalia Munoz at 247 Walnut St  
---> Received and referred to the Ordinance Committee. Copy to the Disabilities Commission.

MCGEE -- That a stipend be added to Ordinance Salary Schedule C for \$10,000.00 for the duties associated with Assistant Director of Public Works.  
The additional duties for the Asst Director are as outlined in city ordinance Section 2-231 which outlines several responsibilities beyond the engineering tasks assigned.  
---> Received and referred to the Ordinance Committee.

Adjourned at 11:04 PM

*Brenna Murphy Moxley*