

REPORT OF THE
GORHAM TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
Burleigh Loveitt Council Chambers
November 1, 2022

Chairman Pratt opened the meeting. There were 27 members of the public in attendance.

Roll Call: Chairman Pratt, Councilors Shepard, Wilder Cross, Phillips, Hartwell, Hager and Kuech. Also in attendance were Town Manager Ephrem Paraschak and Town Clerk Laurie Nordfors.

Moved by Councilor Wilder Cross, seconded by Councilor Hager and VOTED to accept the Minutes of the October 4, 2022 Regular Town Council Meeting and the October 18, 2022 Special Town Council meeting. **7 yeas**

Open Public Communications

Linda Huard and John Chamberlain, Belmont Terrace expressed their concerns over the real estate tax increase in their neighborhood. They believe that the recent revaluation of property was incorrect and extreme.

Jim Walker, Concord Court suggested that the data used to calculate the taxes was filled with errors and incorrect information.

Stewart McCallister, Flaggy Meadow Road thanked the outgoing Council members for their time and commitment to the Town. He also shared a story from graduation in 2020 where he had the pleasure of working with a group of teachers who consistently bragged and talked about their experiences with their students and how they overcame many challenges throughout the year and their plans after high school. He pointed out that this is what makes our Staff and teachers so truly dedicated and professional in our school system.

Councilor Communications

Councilor Hager expressed his concern for the many errors with the tax assessments and suggests that the Council schedules another workshop to look at the issues.

Councilor Kuech reported that the Little Rams Committee Report will be presented to the Council at tonight's meeting.

Councilor Wilder Cross reminded citizens to get out and vote to get their voices heard. She reported that there is a new bus shelter in front of TD Bank in the Village. The planning for this year's New Year Gorham Celebration is coming along and she announced if anyone would like to volunteer on the committee they are welcome. She also attended the ribbon cutting of the new Health Markets Insurance Company located in the Goodwill plaza.

Councilor Phillips announced that there will be two craft fairs this Saturday. One at Robie Gym and one at Shaw Gym. She revealed that the Historical Society will be moving by the end of the year to the Cherry Hill Farm building. The public will be invited to tour the new building soon after. She also announced that she was asked to join the Boston Tea Party Association in honoring Captain Ephraim Smith, who is buried in a private cemetery in Gorham. The Boston Tea Party Revolution 250th anniversary celebration will be holding a celebration in Boston on December 16th as well as a documentary which will be broadcast on GoCam.

Councilor Hartwell reported that the Ordinance Committee met on October 25th and discussed the long term pedestrian improvements, curb cuts on arterials and designated collectors and a vernal pool transfer program consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan. All three items were tabled to be discussed at the next meeting.

Chairman Pratt pointed out that due to the high cost of heating this winter, citizens who use wood to heat their home should remember to get their chimneys inspected and cleaned before using. He attended the October 12th Cumberland County Finance Committee meeting where they discussed the County's budget. Chairman Pratt also reminded citizens to get out and vote on November 8th and to donate blood when able.

Town Manager Report

Town Manager Paraschak reported that the Little Falls/So Windham Master Plan Committee will have a virtual public hearing on November 29th via Zoom. More information is available on our website. He also informed the public that 2 buckets of sand per storm is available at public works and the winter overnight parking ban started on November 1st. Town Manager Paraschak reassured citizens that his door is always open and if they have any questions or concerns about the recent revaluation and tax increase, to please contact the assessor's office and file an abatement. He also noted that interest will not accrue on the 1st half of the property taxes until December 30th. He reported that the Gorham Police Department's Citizens Police Academy is accepting applications and the Gorham Rec Department's 25th annual burn off the Turkey Race will be held on November 26th along with the annual light parade on November 27th.

School Committee Chairman Ann Schools reported the following:

Gorham Action Team for Youth" Parent Night

GATY sponsored a parent night for parents of teenagers focused on helping parents navigate these formative years in these complex times. Twenty plus parents attended and enjoyed one another's company while sharing and learning together. Thank you GATY for sponsoring this great event!

Fall Athletics

Fall sports are wrapping up. All our teams have represented us well as a community! Our girls' volleyball team wound up as state runners up after losing a competitive game to Biddeford. Our girls' soccer team will be playing tonight for the regional title against Scarborough! All our teams did a great job and our athletes should be very proud of how they held themselves throughout the season.

We are proud of our Rams here in Gorham and there is good reason why! I will share an example that was on social media. A community member was working at the boys South Portland v. Cheverus soccer game. Most of the Gorham team was there to watch because they would be playing the winner. While the person was taking money from a group of Gorham students, a grandmother of one of the South Portland students came to the window but was short of cash. With no prompting, at least two of the Gorham students gave the woman money. This was a great display of kindness that brought the woman and the two ticket takers to tears.

Thank you to the person that shared that lovely story!

Chorus and Band

Our GHS chorus and band students had their first fall concert last week. Parking was a little fun since our girls soccer team was in a playoff that same night, but the music was excellent! You never would have known that there had only been a little over a month to prepare!

Theater

GHS theater is presenting "Clue" on November 11 & 12th at 7:30pm and November 12 & 13th at 2:00pm. Tickets will be sold at the door and will be \$5 for students K-12 and \$10 per adult.

Substitutes

We are seeking substitutes across grades K-12 once again! There is an upcoming substitute class starting on Thursday for folks that may be interested. We will continue to offer training classes during the winter and spring. Daily rates for substitutes are \$120 per day for certified teachers and \$115 per day for people who have completed the course. The rate for all other individuals is \$105 per day.

A minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent is required. People can apply through our website. Just go to click on Human Resources, Employment Opportunities and go from there!

Our next regular meeting will be on November 9th at 7:00pm in Council Chambers.

Little Rams Committee Report

Superintendent Perry, along with Stewart McCallister, Heidi Whelin, Deb Arcaro, Nicole Poole, Amy Brassard, Deanna Etienne and David Willis gave a presentation of the Little Rams Committee.

Public hearing #1

On Item #2022-11-1

Public hearing to hear comment on a proposal to issue a renewal Liquor License to JBN2, LLC dba Sidecar. (Admin. Spon.)

Chairman Pratt opened public hearing #1. There were no comments from the public and the hearing was closed.

Proposed

Order #22-126

Moved by Councilor Shepard, seconded by Councilor Kuech and Ordered, that the Town Council issue a renewal Liquor License for JBN2, LLC, dba Sidecar, 7 Railroad Avenue.

Order #22-126 VOTED 7 yeas

Public hearing #2

On Item #2022-11-2

Public hearing to hear comment on a proposal to issue a Special Amusement License to JBN2, LLC dba Sidecar. (Admin. Spon.)

Chairman Pratt opened public hearing #2. There were no comments from the public and the hearing was closed.

Proposed

Order #22-127

Moved by Councilor Shepard, seconded by Councilor Wilder Cross and Ordered, that the Town Council issue a Special Amusement License to JBN2, LLC, dba Sidecar, 7 Railroad Avenue.

Order #22-127 VOTED 7 yeas

Public hearing #3

On Item #2022-11-3

Public hearing to hear comment on a proposal to issue a renewal Medical Marijuana License to Kathleen West, Groovy Girls Garden, 15 Washburn Drive. Property owned by Kathleen West. (Admin. Spon.)

Chairman Pratt opened public hearing #3. There were no comments from the public and the hearing was closed.

Proposed

Order #22-128

Moved by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Kuech and Ordered, that the Town Council issue a renewal Medical Marijuana License to Kathleen West, Groovy Girls, 15 Washburn Drive. Property owned by Kathleen West.

Order #22-128 VOTED 7 yeas

Public hearing #4

On Item #2022-11-4

Public hearing to hear comment on a proposal to issue a new Medical Marijuana License to Hunter Sherman, HASAB, LLC, 36 Bartlett Road, #9 & 10. Property owned by Hinks Realty, LLC. (Admin. Spon.)

Chairman Pratt opened public hearing #4. There were no comments from the public and the hearing was closed.

Proposed

Order #22-129

Moved by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Hager and Ordered, that the Town Council issue a new Medical Marijuana License to Hunter Sherman, HASAB, LLC, 36 Bartlett Road, #9 & #10. Property owned by Hinks Realty, LLC.

Order #22-129 VOTED 7 yeas

Public hearing #5

On Item #2022-11-5

Public hearing to hear comment on a proposal to issue a renewal Adult Use Marijuana License to Green Trap LLC, 84 Olde Canal Way. Property owned by Hani LLC. (Admin. Spon.)

Chairman Pratt opened public hearing #5. There were no comments from the public and the hearing was closed.

Proposed

Order #22-130

Moved by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Kuech and Ordered, that the Town Council issue a renewal Adult Use Marijuana License to Green Trap, LLC, 84 Olde Canal Way. Property owned by Hani LLC.

Order #22-130 VOTED 7 yeas

Item #2022-11-6

Action to consider amending the Fire Suppression Systems Ordinance to decrease the frequency of antifreeze loop inspections. (Councilor Hartwell Spon.)

Proposed

Order #22-131

Moved by Councilor Hartwell, seconded by Councilor Phillips and Ordered, that the Town Council instructs the Ordinance Committee to review standards for the frequency of antifreeze loop inspections in the Fire Suppression Systems Ordinance and bring back recommendations to the Town Council.

Order #22-131 VOTED 7 yeas

Item #2022-11-7

Action to consider instructing staff to begin the process of starting a complete update of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. (Councilor Pratt Spon.)

Proposed

Order #22-132

Moved by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Shepard and Ordered, that the Town Council instructs the Town Manager to budget in the FY2024 fiscal year for a new comprehensive plan update process; and

Be It Further Ordered, that the Town Council instructs staff to bring back a formal process for forming a comprehensive plan committee and timeline in calendar year 2023.

Order #22-132 VOTED 6 yeas, 1 nay (Hartwell)

Item #2022-11-8

Action to consider endorsing a Municipal Partnership Initiative (MPI) project for intersection improvements at Hodgdon Road & County Road. (Councilor Pratt Spon.)

Proposed

Order #22-133

Moved by Councilor Shepard, seconded by Councilor Wilder Cross and Ordered, that the Town Council endorses an MPI project for intersection improvements at Hodgdon and County Road.

Order #22-133 VOTED 7 yeas

Item #2022-11-9

Action to consider establishing a Town Council workshop for the month of January. (Councilor Pratt Spon.)

Proposed

Order #22-134

Moved by Councilor Wilder Cross, seconded by Councilor Shepard and Ordered, that the Town Council sets January 17, 2022 as a workshop date to discuss ways to incorporate natural resource protection and identification in future land use codes and future comprehensive plans.

Order #22-134 VOTED 7 yeas

Item #2022-11-10

Action to consider amending the Zoning Map to change the area in the vicinity of Mosher Road to Little River from Rural and Roadside Commercial to Agricultural/Industrial District. (Councilor Pratt Spon.)

Proposed

Order# 22-135

Moved by Councilor Shepard, seconded by Councilor Hager and Ordered, that the Town Council forwards to the Planning Board, for review and public hearing, a proposal to amend the Land Use and Development Code to promote commercial and industrial development consistent with the Comprehensive Plan in the Town of Gorham;

and

Be It Further Ordered, that the Planning Board forward its final recommendations back to the Town Council for review and public hearing.

Order #22-135 VOTED 7 yeas

Item #2022-11-11

Action to consider going into Executive Session, pursuant to Title 36, MRSA Section 841 to discuss application(s) for an abatement of taxes based on poverty.

Proposed

Order #22-136

Moved by Councilor Shepard, seconded by Councilor Hager and Ordered, that the Town Council go into Executive Session, pursuant to Title 36, MRSA Section 841 to discuss an application(s) for an abatement of taxes based on poverty.

Order #22-136 VOTED 7 yeas

Moved by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Shepard and VOTED to come out of Executive Session. 7 yeas

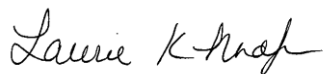
Moved by Councilor Shepard, seconded by Councilor Hager and VOTED to approve an application for an abatement of taxes based on poverty. 7 yeas

Moved by Councilor Hager, seconded by Councilor Hartwell and VOTED to adjourn. 7 yeas

Time of adjournment: 8:07pm

A True Record of Meeting
11-01-2022

ATTEST



Laurie Nordfors, Town Clerk
11-02-2022

