



**CITY OF HAVERHILL
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

Tuesday, March 4, 2025 at 7:00 PM

Theodore A. Pelosi, Jr. Council Chambers, 4 Summer st, Room 202

In-Person/Remote Meeting

Present: President Sullivan, Councilors Basiliere, LePage, Ferreira, Jordan, Michitson, Toohey, and Lewandowski

Remote: Councilors McGonagle and Hobbs Everett

Absent: Councilor Rogers

City Clerk: Kaitlin M. Wright

1. OPENING PRAYER

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING

COUNCILOR BASILIERE STATED HE REVIEWED THE MINUTES AND FINDS THEM IN ORDER.

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

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

4. ASSIGNMENT OF THE MINUTES REVIEW FOR THE NEXT MEETING

PRESIDENT SULLIVAN ASSIGNED THE MINUTES TO COUNCILOR FERREIRA

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR:

5.1. Mayor Barrett submits the following Gift Acceptances to go to the Council on Aging Department:

5.1.1. Order authorizing the City Council to accept a gift of \$250.00 for the St. Patrick's Day party at the Citizen Center from The *Lowell Five Savings Bank* 35-E

MOTION BY COUNCILOR MICHITSON TO ACCEPT THE GIFT, SECOND BY COUNCILOR TOOHEY

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

Mayor Barrett thanked the Lowell Five Savings Bank for their donation.

5.1.2. Order authorizing City Council to accept a gift of \$100.00 from Stella & Mikel Papoutsy for the Northern Essex Elderly Transport Program 35-F

MOTION BY VICE PRESIDENT JORDAN TO ACCEPT THE GIFT, SECOND BY COUNCILOR LEWANDOWSKI

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

Mayor Barrett thanked the Papoutsy family for their donation.

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

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION- REQUESTS UNDER COUNCIL RULE 28

8. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS FROM CITY OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES:

8.1. Angel A Perkins, *City Auditor & Chief Financial Officer* submits revenue and expense reports for the City's general and enterprise operating budgets for January 2025 20-C

MOTION BY COUNCILOR MICHITSON, SECOND BY COUNCILOR LEWANDOWSKI

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13. MOTIONS AND ORDERS:

13.1 Order – Transfer \$1,148,941.86 from Fiscal 2024 Certified Free Cash to Various Fiscal 2025 Fund Appropriations and to fund prior fiscal year special revenue and capital project fund deficits as listed:

30-B

| Transfer to: (Budget Deficits) | |
|--|------------------------|
| IT Salaries & Wages | \$ 50,000.00 |
| Auditing Additional Services-Treasury & Purchasing | \$ 65,000.00 |
| Legal Consulting | \$ 150,000.00 |
| Retiree Medical Claims | \$ 45,000.00 |
| 1/3 FEMA Deficit Prior Year Overage | \$ 505,538.00 |
| 2220560: Dutton Industrial Park Prior Year Overage | \$ 72,456.19 |
| 2210170: CDBG Prior Year Overage | \$ 1,116.13 |
| 2220121: MVP Grant Prior Year Overage | \$ 6,512.75 |
| 3417155: Broadway Easements Prior Year Overage | \$ 949.40 |
| 3714423: Route 97 Improvements Prior Year Overage | \$ 86,520.94 |
| 3716410: East Broadway Bridge Prior Year Overage | \$ 55,059.36 |
| 2102901: Home Consortium Prior Year Overage | \$ 8,188.35 |
| 2620901: CDBG-CV Prior Year Overage | \$ 2,600.74 |
| Funding for Haverhill's 250th Celebration | \$ 100,000.00 |
| | \$ 1,148,941.86 |

Angel Perkins, the City Auditor addressed the council. The first four of these pertain to the 2025 operating budget these are additions that the Mayor has authorized that we are putting forth to fund. IT Salaries: A request from the IT Director to add staffing for expanding city IT infrastructure. Auditing and Additional Services: Contracts to review the Treasury and Purchasing Departments for best practices and recommendations. Legal Consultant: Due to increased legal expenses from transitioning to outsourced legal counsel which are trending higher. Retiree Medical Claims: Costs related to medical claims for retired injured police and fire personnel (111F). Additionally, Perkins addressed prior-year fund deficits from 2014 to 2023 that have been consistently reported in the city's free cash. The goal is to clean these up, which will prevent ongoing deductions from the city's free cash.

Vice President Jordan questioned 1/3 FEMA deficit prior year overage. Perkins explained a deficit of \$505,538 due to ineligible expenses charged to FEMA during the CARES Act. FEMA rejected \$1.5 million in expenses, and the city must fund this over three years. The city plans to pay one-third per year to resolve this. Both Vice President Jordan and Councilor Lewandowski questioned generally who would be responsible for handling these types of allocations. Angel Perkins stated she was not here during that time.



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Vice President Jordan inquired about the use of CARES funds, noting that mistakes were made in charging ineligible costs. Perkins clarified that ARPA funds, which followed CARES, were handled more cautiously with external consultants to ensure compliance.

Vice President Jordan asked about the funding for Haverhill's 250th celebration. Mayor Barrett clarified that funds are being set aside for the U.S. 250th anniversary celebration in 2026, specifically for fireworks or drone shows. The city plans to secure the July 3rd date for celebrations, which will cost approximately \$35,000 if it was done today.

Councilor Basiliere expressed concerns about the long-standing deficits, but Perkins assured that cleaning them up is necessary, as the Department of Revenue (DOR) is likely to push for it.

Councilor Michitson asked for a discussion on the city's 10-year plan and performance-based budgeting, asking to provide an update.

Angel Perkins responded, explaining that this is the second year of the collaborative budget team, which includes the Mayor, herself, a department head, two City Council members (Michitson and LePage), and a School Committee member (Granneman). They've had several meetings focused on a budget model with a 10-year financial projection, looking at reserves, benchmarks, and financial policies. She highlighted the team's efforts to improve capital planning by having the goal be only projects on the capital plan are funded. She noted they are looking at both "pay as you go" funding and borrowing for long-term capital projects, along with a better understanding of debt capacity, borrowing limits, and tax levy impacts. She noted the team tried to use a ranking system with criteria like public safety, legal obligations, and benefits to rank projects, making decisions more structured and transparent. They reviewed revenue sources. The process also included an exercise of testing what happens to the budget with a 1% increase year over year, helping them understand the long-term impact on funding and capital projects. The next steps include meetings with department heads to review budget requests, followed by team discussions to finalize decisions.

Councilor Michitson emphasized the importance of discussing the budget, which is rarely addressed during City Council meetings.

Councilor LePage expressed satisfaction with the new collaborative budget process, noting it's easier to access information than in past reviews.

Vice President Jordan thanked everyone, acknowledging that the more collaborative approach is a benefit to the process.

Vice President Jordan last May asked about the budget discrepancies between the Police and Fire departments. Specifically, the Police Chief was allocated \$53,000 more than the Fire Chief, and the Police Chief's second-in-command was budgeted \$5,000 more than the Fire Chief, despite the Fire Chief not having a second-in-command, as recommended in an independent report



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commissioned by Mayor Fiorentini. Vice President Jordan has been seeking answers for 10 months but has not received a response, despite multiple follow-up emails and a phone call.

Angel Perkins suggested that the issue might need to be addressed by HR, as it may fall under their jurisdiction.

Mayor Barrett stated she did not recall the specifics of the request but acknowledged that the Fire Chief had been busy over the summer, hiring 16 new recruits. She mentioned that negotiations on the matter had only recently started. The Mayor also addressed concerns about compensation. She stated that Denise had conducted a survey comparing local compensation and confirmed that most communities have a disparity in these roles, with the exception of Methuen. The Mayor stated that they are working on the discrepancies.

Vice President Jordan requested the data from the survey conducted by Denise for comparison with other cities and towns. He expressed concern about the disparity in compensation, particularly noting that the Police Chief's second-in-command is making more than the Fire Chief, which seemed unusual to him.

MOTION BY COUNCILOR MICHITSON TO APPROVE THE ORDER, SECOND BY COUNCILOR LEPAGE
PASSED YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (ROGERS)

13.2 Order -Reallocate \$500,000.00 from Unexpected Bond Proceeds

- \$150,000.00 be appropriated to pay the costs of repairs to the City's Social Security office building, including all costs incidental or related thereto; that \$175,000.00 is appropriated to pay costs of underground oil tank removal projects, including all costs incidental or related thereto; that \$100,000.00 is appropriated to pay costs of repairs to the Nettle School Elevator, including all costs incidental or related thereto; and \$75,000 is appropriated to pay costs of Americans with Disabilities Act Upgrades at Haverhill High, including all costs incidental or related thereto. These appropriations shall be transferred from the unexpended proceeds of the City's General Obligation Municipal Purpose Loan of 2024. 41

Vice President Jordan inquired about the \$150,000 repairs needed for the Social Security Building, asking if the plan was to move back into the building since it had been vacated previously.

Mayor Barrett clarified that the Social Security Office had relocated to Brown Street, and the School Department had been gifted the property. The building was toured with several inspectors, including Tom Bridgewater, Richard MacDonald, Superintendent, and Steve Dorrence. The building is in decent shape, though it requires new flooring, paint, furniture, and



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computers. The Mayor stated that Steve Dorrence assessed that the cost for outfitting the building would be \$150,000.

In response to the question about its purpose, Mayor Barrett explained that the building would be used as an assessment center for pre-K and for special education services, including one-on-one work.

MOTION BY COUNCILOR LEPAGE TO APPROVE THE ORDER, SECOND BY COUNCILOR TOOHEY
PASSED YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (ROGERS)

13.3 Order – Reallocate \$55,867.95 from Unexpected Bond Proceeds -

\$34,712.96 be appropriated to pay the remaining costs of the completed roof replacement feasibility project at Moody School, including all costs incidental or related thereto; and \$21,154.99 be appropriated to pay costs of the repair of light fixtures in the Hunking Middle School, including all costs incidental or related thereto. These appropriations shall be transferred from the unexpended proceeds of the City's General Obligation Municipal Loan of 2021.

41-B

Councilor McGonagle asked does that School Department not have room in their budget. Why is this falling on us. He asked is this not normal maintenance.

Mayor Barrett clarified that all school property we have to appropriate the funds. We are in charge of the property.

Steve Dorrence addressed the council. He stated my sense that repairs over \$50,000 are deferred to the city.

MOTION BY COUNCILOR MICHITSON TO APPROVE THE ORDER, SECOND BY VICE PRESIDENT JORDAN
PASSED YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (ROGERS)

13.4 Order – Rescission of Bond Authorizations - that the borrowing authorization amounts identified below under the column entitled "Amount Rescinded" which are the unissued portions of the amounts authorize to be borrowed under the loan orders of the City Council, approved by the Mayor on the dates and authorizing the issuance of bonds or notes for capital improvement projects in the amounts identified below, are no longer needed for the capital improvement projects for which they were authorized and are hereby rescinded:

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| <u>Loan Order No.</u> | <u>Date Approved</u> | <u>Authorized Amount</u> | <u>Amount Borrowed</u> | <u>Amount Rescinded</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | 7/29/1998 | \$550,000 | \$500,000 | \$50,000 |
| | 2/3/1999 | \$3,030,000 | \$350,000 | \$2,680,000 |
| | 12/2/1999 | \$2,130,000 | \$610,000 | \$1,520,000 |
| 79-F | 1/17/2002 | \$200,000 | \$19,500 | \$180,500 |
| 48 | 3/13/2003 | \$27,520,000 | \$27,292,512 | \$227,488 |
| 48-C | 5/2/2003 | \$731,000 | \$726,005 | \$4,995 |
| 48-D | 6/16/2003 | \$17,700,000 | \$16,730,937 | \$969,063 |
| 46-B | 8/26/2004 | \$270,000 | \$155,000 | \$115,000 |
| 46-C | 12/23/2004 | \$402,301 | \$402,000 | \$301 |
| 31-D | 5/25/2005 | \$1,600,000 | \$1,278,574 | \$321,426 |
| 126-C | 12/20/2006 | \$53,000 | \$0 | \$53,000 |
| 126-E | 1/16/2007 | \$453,000 | \$327,675 | \$125,325 |
| 24-B | 9/21/2010 | \$14,365,000 | \$4,707,788 | \$9,657,212 |
| 36 | 4/19/2011 | \$349,112 | \$349,111 | \$1 |
| 32-C | 9/18/2012 | \$800,000 | \$799,980 | \$20 |
| 32-D | 11/27/2012 | \$6,061,000 | \$5,547,132 | \$513,868 |
| 38-C | 6/3/2014; 6/10/2014 | \$61,500,000 | \$61,379,378 | \$120,622 |
| 38-D | 7/8/2014 | \$508,970 | \$508,900 | \$70 |
| 77-B | 10/13/2015 | \$2,500,000 | \$0 | \$2,500,000 |
| 15-I | 9/21/2016 | \$3,088,000 | \$2,636,000 | \$452,000 |
| 15-KK | 10/18/2016 | \$343,444 | \$343,000 | \$444 |
| 44-B | 4/4/2017 | \$3,651,699 | \$3,610,762 | \$40,937 |
| 44-C | 6/22/2017 | \$8,340,000 | \$7,551,731 | \$788,269 |
| 26-G | 10/2/2020 | \$250,000 | \$0 | \$250,000 |
| 26-D | 8/10/2021 | \$1,343,283 | \$1,015,149 | \$643,283 |

Angel Perkins addressed the council. She stated we just rescinded 28 years of worth of authorized debt unissued debt. She stated normally that is done annually, biannually. This is important because all that is available credit to us. It has already been authorized. It improves our credit rating.

Councilor Ferreira stated just to clarify this was never borrowed in the first place. Angel Perkins stated correct.

MOTION BY COUNCILOR LEPAGE TO APPROVE THE ORDER, SECOND BY COUNCILOR TOOHEY
PASSED

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8.2 City Clerk, Kaitlin M Wright, requests to address the City Council to announce the winners of the 4th Annual Haverhill Top Dog

Contest

20-H

City Clerk Wright stated we just wrapped up our 4th annual top dog contest. She stated we had 73 total entries. 1st place – Ollie, 2nd place – Silas, 3rd place -Pearl

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

10 HEARINGS AND RELATED ORDERS:

11 APPOINTMENTS:

11.2 Confirming Appointments

11.2.1 Community Affairs Advisory Board, Andrew Tarasuk, 88

Race st, expires 2/28/2026

7-K

MOTION BY VICE PRESIDENT JORDAN TO APPROVE, SECOND BY COUNCILOR TOOHEY

PASSED

YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (ROGERS)

11.3 Non-Confirming Appointments

11.4 Constables

11.4.1 Kevin Dorr, 116 Lake st, expires 12/31/2025

40

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

PASSED

YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (ROGERS)

11.5 Resignations:

12 PETITIONS:

12.2 Applications Handicap Parking Sign: with Police approval

12.3 Amusement/Event Application: with Police approval

12.4 Auctioneer License:

12.5 Tag Days: with Police approval

12.5.1 Haverhill Lions Club, September 27

8-F

MOTION BY COUNCILOR MICHITSON, SECOND BY COUNCILOR TOOHEY

PASSED

YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (ROGERS)

12.5.2 Knights of Columbus, May 17

8-G

MOTION BY VICE PRESIDENT JORDAN, SECOND BY COUNCILOR TOOHEY

PASSED

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12.6 One Day Liquor License – with License Commission & HPD approval



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12.7 ANNUAL LICENSE RENEWALS:

12.7.1 Hawker Peddlers License- Fixed location – w/Police approval

12.7.2 Coin-Op License Renewals – with Police approval

**12.7.2.1 Crescent Yacht Club, 30 Ferry st,
2 Machines**

9-B

MOTION BY COUNCILOR MICHITSON, SECOND BY COUNCILOR TOOHEY

PASSED

YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (ROGERS)

12.7.3 Christmas Tree Vendor – with Police approval

12.7.4 Taxi Driver Licenses for 2024: with Police approval

12.7.5 Taxi/Limousine License with Police approval

12.7.6 Junk Dealer /Collector License with Police approval

12.7.7 Pool/Billiard

12.7.8 Bowling

12.7.9 Sunday Bowling

12.7.10 Buy & Sell Second Hand Articles with Police approval

12.7.11 Buy & Sell Second Hand Clothing

12.7.12 Pawnbroker license - with police approval

12.7.13 Fortune Teller with - Police approval

12.7.14 Buy & Sell Old Gold – with Police approval

12.7.15 Roller Skating Rink

12.7.16 Sunday Skating

**12.7.17 Exterior Vending Machines/Redbox Automated
Retail, LLC**

**12.7.18 Limousine/Livery License/Chair Cars with
Police approval**

13 Motions and Orders --- Moved to beginning of meeting

14 ORDINANCES (FILE 10 DAYS)

**14.1 Ordinance: add handicap parking at 17 Hillside and 459 Washington
streets**

File 10 days

11-D

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

PASSED

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15. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCILLORS:

16. UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF PRECEEDING MEETING:

17. RESOLUTIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS:

18. COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice President Jordan wanted to remind everyone that Team Haverhill Possible Dream Event is being held on Monday at the Northern Essex Tech Center from 7-9. You can still go online TeamHaverhill.org and register

19. DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE STUDY

20. LONG TERM MATTERS STUDY LIST

21. ADJOURN:

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

PASSED

YEAS 10, NAYS 0, ABSENT 1 (ROGERS) **ADJOURNED: 20:02**