

These are "Action Only" minutes. Video of comments may be found on recorded discs at City Hall or at www.cityofbelfast.org.

**City of Belfast
Council Chambers-Belfast City Hall
Tuesday, February 2, 2021
7:00 p.m.**

All City Council Meetings will be conducted online using Zoom and can be streamed on the City website at www.cityofbelfast.org. They will air live on BEL TV as well as on Belfast Community Radio WBFY 100.9.

Regular Council Meeting No. 15

1) Call to order

- 2) Present:** Mayor Eric Sanders, Councilors Mary Mortier, Neal Harkness, Brenda Bonneville, Michael Hurley and Paul Dean; City Manager Erin Herbig and Admin. Assistant to the City Manager Manda Cushman.

3) Pledge of Allegiance

4) Adoption of the agenda

Mayor Sanders requested to add item **10) H #1** Discussion and possible action on a City of Belfast Core Value Statement.

Councilor Hurley, seconded by Councilor Dean, made a motion to adopt the agenda. This motion was approved, 5-0.

5) Acceptance of the minutes

Regular Council Meeting of January 19, 2021 and Special Council Meeting of January 26, 2021.

Councilor Harkness, seconded by Councilor Dean, made a motion to accept the minutes from Regular Council Meeting of January 19, 2021 and Special Council Meeting of January 26, 2021. This was approved, 5-0.

6) A. Open to the public

City Manager Erin Herbig noted that Council received 18 emails, prior to the start of the Council meeting to be included as part of the Open to the Public. Following the meeting an additional 10 more were received and

accepted as part of Open to the Public, as there were technical difficulties during the meeting that prevented some from speaking. The following are all who submitted written comments via email:

Peter S. Millard of Belfast discussed free speech on Sundays, Andrée Bella of Belfast discussed the anti-mask protest, Bernie Baker of Belfast discussed the anti-mask protests, Dan Waldron of Belfast inquired about the anti-mask protests, Diane Oltarzewski of Belfast discussed concerns with the anti-mask protest, Valerie Tate of Belfast discussed the anti-mask protest, Meredith Bruskin of Swanville discussed anti-mask protest, Cher Jones of Belfast discussed downtown protest, Linda Garson Smith of Belfast discussed concerns with anti-mask protests downtown, Rachel Herbener of Belfast discussed free speech and civility, Frances Pan of Belfast discussed free speech and civility, Louisa Carl of Belfast discussed recent anti-mask protests, Kelli Bucklin of Belfast made a statement regarding asking Councilor Hurley to resign, Conny Hatch of Belfast provided comments on downtown protests, Scot Cannon of Belfast discussed anti-mask protests, Michèle Ratté and Eric Shenholm of Belfast discussed downtown protests, Felicia Curtis of Belfast discussed consideration of a social media policy for public officials, Tom & Debbie Murphy of Belfast discussed concerns with anti-mask protest and support of Councilor Hurley, Lori LeBlanc of Belfast discussed concerns with recent downtown protests, Shawn J. White of Belfast discussed concerns of Councilor Hurley's use of social media, Shelby DeGraff of Swanville discussed concerns of Councilor Hurley's Facebook Group, John Lisa of Belfast discussed concerns with anti-mask protests on public safety, Angelina Goodreau sent a complaint regarding Councilor Hurley's posts on Facebook, Ronda Snyder inquired about Councilor Hurley making comments on Facebook during the meeting, Robert Crawford discussed Councilor Hurley making comments on Facebook during the Council Meeting, Brenden Seekins discussed Councilor Hurley's recent actions on social media and during the meetings, Lyn Grotke of Unity discussed concerns with anti-mask protests in Belfast, Trudy Miller of Belfast discussed concerns with technical difficulties during the zoom meeting.

1. Peter Daily of Belfast discussed concerns of how anti-mask protests are impacting downtown businesses.
2. Don Hoeing of Belfast discussed concerns with obscene signage at anti-mask protest.
3. Al Aurthor of Belfast discussed hope for everyone to get along.
4. Zafra Whitcomb of Belfast discussed confusion regarding where to find the Zoom information for tonight's meeting and inquired about permit structure for protesting.
5. Frances Pan of Belfast discussed concerns with anti-mask protesters not following mandates.
6. Andrée Bella of Belfast inquired about mega phones and location of protesters in downtown.
7. Berry Crawford of Monroe requested an apology from Councilor Hurley to the City of Belfast for summons and that he leave Facebook group.
8. Chris Knight of Belfast discussed concerns with the Facebook group "You think you love Belfast if..." by an elected official and concerns that it is dividing the community.
9. Dennis Howard of Belfast discussed the right for everyone to have free speech and to protest.
10. Edward Moffitt of Belfast expressed concerns with rejecting anti-maskers as everyone has the right to express themselves.
11. Gef Flimlin of Belfast thanked Public Works for clearing the roads and discussed concerns with Councilors trying to restrict freedom of speech.
12. Jan Geller discussed concerns with protest that are defying the mask mandate.

13. Kaleigh Stanley of Northport as one of the organizers of the anti-mask protest discussed group's intention to keep protesting and acknowledge some of the suggestions as to better work with the community.
14. Karen Waldman of Belfast thanked Council for discussion and urged everyone to be respectful despite differences.
15. Kelli Bucklin of Belfast discussed her concerns with Councilor Hurley's illegal use of fireworks and inappropriate behavior on behalf of the City.
16. Ja Moffitt of Stockton Springs discussed importance of keeping freedom of speech.
17. Rachel Herbener of Belfast discussed support of freedom of speech, concerns with health risk of protester not wearing masks suggesting that an alternative location away from downtown be designated for their protest, and requested more clarification about the mask mandate.
18. Glenn Montgomery of Belfast discussed concerns with no masks, mega phones and profanities during protests.
19. Spring Andrews of Belfast discussed the anti-mask protest and what is at the heart of their protesting.
20. Meredith Bruskins of Swanville discussed right to protest and government leadership during this health crisis.
21. Valerie Tate of Belfast discussed concerns with anti-mask protest.
22. Christy Cottle of Belfast discussed freedom of speech and allowing all to protest not just some.

B. Organization and Department Reports

City Manager Erin Herbig discussed the following:

- She requested that if anyone was attending tonight's Council meeting to speak at Open to the Public and were unable to due to technical difficulties, please submit your comments via email to public@cityofbelfast.org by 6pm tomorrow and we will include them in the record of the minutes.
- She informed the public that Monday, February 15th City Hall, the Library and the Transfer Station are closed for President's Day, additionally the Transfer Station is closed on Tuesday, February 16th as they are not open on Monday's and will be observing the holiday on Tuesday.
- She reminded the public that they can sign up for notifications from the City website if they would like to be alerted via email or text when we post a closure, Zoom meeting links, ect.
- She requested a Council volunteer to serve on the Deputy Fire Chief hiring committee, Councilor Mortier volunteered.

7) Communications

Councilor Dean discussed the following:

- Informed the public of the upcoming food distribution Friday, February 5th at AthenaHealth.
- Asked the public to take the time to take the Comprehensive Plan Community Survey on the City website.
- Inquired about warming center location and hours.

City Manager Herbig informed the public that the Warming Center is located at the UU Church in Belfast on Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays from 12pm to 3pm.

Councilor Harkness thanked all who participated in the Open to the Public, inquired how we can make accessing the link to the meeting better and discussed why we cannot allow the chat function during meetings.

City Manager Herbig informed the Council and public that all Council Meetings are streamed on the City of Belfast website and are aired live on Belfast Community Radio, additionally if you would like to attend the meeting to participate in Open to the Public the Zoom link is posted the day of the meeting on the City Facebook page and on the City website under New Flash and under the Calendar event for the meeting.

Councilor Hurley inquired about if anyone has applied to the Ward 5 spot on the Comp Plan Committee, thanked the Public Works Department for a great job clearing the roads.

City Manager Erin Herbig noted that no applications have been received for the Comp Plan Committee.

Councilor Mortier discussed Comprehensive Plan Survey.

8) Old Business and Council Committee Reports

- Update from the Climate Crisis Committee.

9) Permits, Petitions and Licenses - Consent Agenda

- A. Request to approve Councilor Mortier to serve as the Council representative on the Poet Laureate Selection Committee.

Councilor Dean, seconded by Councilor Bonneville, made a motion to accept the consent agenda. This motion was approved, 5-0.

10) Business

- A) Discussion on free speech and civility.

City Manager Erin Herbig and Police Chief Gerry Lincoln discussed the importance of free speech and civility in our community regarding recent activity in our downtown and answered questions from the Mayor and Council regarding concerns brought forward by the public.

Mayor Sanders read a letter from the Mayor and Council on free speech and civility.

B) Request from the Police Chief for permission to use the Belfast Police Department in a proposed book.

Police Chief Gerry Lincoln discussed the proposal to use the Belfast Police Department in a children's book regarding a recent incident in Belfast in which the Department respond and helped rescue a runaway goat.

Councilor Harkness, seconded by Councilor Dean, made a motion to accept the request for permission to use the Belfast Police Department in a proposed book. This motion was approved, 5-0.

C) Adoption of a Proclamation proclaiming February 2021 as "Belfast Reads Together Month".

Nancy Perkins explained the request that was created as a way to bring people together during the pandemic and shared more information on upcoming events that will be part of the month long celebration.

Councilors shared their support for this opportunity to bring community members together through reading.

Councilor Hurley, seconded by Councilor Bonneville, made a motion to adopt a Proclamation proclaiming February 2021 as "Belfast Reads Together Month". This motion was approved, 5-0.

D) Request from the Director of Code and Planning to accept and award bids for demolition of structures located at 101 and 107 Patterson Hill Road, Map 17 Lots 12 and 13.

Director of Code & Planning Bub Fournier reviewed the submitted bids and recommended that Council accept the bids and award the bid to the lowest bidder Dirt Digger Inc. for \$7,375.00 and to enter into an agreement with the property owner that they will repay the cost of demolition following the sale of the property.

City Manager Erin Herbig recommended that funding for the demolition come from the Undesignated Fund Balance.

Councilor Mortier, seconded by Councilor Bonneville, made a motion to accept the bids for demolition of structures located at 101 and 107 Patterson Hill Road, Map 17 Lots 12 and 13, to award the bid to the lowest bidder Dirt Digger Inc. for \$7,375.00 with funding to come from the Undesignated Fund Balance and to authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the property owner to repay the City for demolition within one year. This motion was approved, 5-0.

E) Request from the Climate Crisis Committee to authorize payment of \$600.00 to Local Governments for Sustainability for the renewal of the City’s membership.

Climate Crisis Committee Chair Jon Beal explained the request to authorize payment of \$600.00 to Local Governments for Sustainability for the renewal of the City’s membership with funding to come from the Climate Crisis Committee Account 730-887.

Councilor Bonneville, seconded by Councilor Harkness, made a motion to authorize payment of \$600.00 to Local Governments for Sustainability for the renewal of the City’s membership with funding to come from the Climate Crisis Committee Account 730-887. This motion was approved, 5-0.

F) Request from the City Treasurer to update Old Capital Project accounts.

City Manager Erin Herbig reviewed the request to narrow down the list of Old Capital Project Accounts to represent only active projects.

Councilor Mortier, seconded by Councilor Hurley, made a motion to accept the request to update Old Capital Project Accounts as presented. This motion was approved, 5-0.

G) Request from the Economic Development Director to approve a proposed approach for funding a Level 2 Electric Vehicle Charging Station.

Economic Development Director Thomas Kittredge explained the request and answered Council questions regarding the two grants and requested the following actions:

- 1) authorize the City Manager to decline the previously-awarded Efficiency Maine Trust Level 2 Public Charger Grant and accept a Make-Ready Program Grant from Central Maine Power;
- 2) authorize the City Manager to sign the Site Host Agreement, the License Agreement, and any additional required paperwork related to this new grant award and acceptance (to be prepared by the Economic Development Director);
- 3) identify and commit City funds in the amount of \$30,879.00 from the City’s energy savings account in order to cover all of the projects current estimated costs; and
- 4) authorize the City Manager enter into a contract with ReVision Energy to perform project services.

Councilor Harkness, seconded by Councilor Mortier, made a motion to accept the request to authorize the City Manager to decline the previously-awarded Efficiency Maine Trust Level 2 Public Charger Grant and accept a Make-Ready Program Grant from Central Maine Power; authorize the City Manager to sign the Site Host Agreement, the License Agreement, and any additional required paperwork related to this new grant award and acceptance (to be prepared by the Economic Development Director); identify and commit City funds in the amount of \$30,879.00 from the City's energy savings account in order to cover all of the projects current estimated costs; and authorize the City Manager enter into a contract with ReVision Energy to perform project services. This motion was approved, 5-0.

H) Request from Councilor Hurley for the Council to approve a letter to the Maine Department of Transportation regarding Kelly Bridge.

Councilor Hurley explained the request.

Councilor Mortier, seconded by Councilor Harkness, made a motion to approve a letter to the Maine Department of Transportation regarding Kelly Bridge, as presented. This motion was approved, 5-0.

H) #1 Discussion and possible action on a City of Belfast Core Value Statement.

Mayor Eric Sanders discussed his request to consider a Core Value Statement and read the draft statement.

Councilors discussed the draft.

Councilor Hurley recommended tabling any action to allow for time to make any edits.

Councilor Hurley, seconded by Councilor Harkness, made a motion to table possible action on a City of Belfast Core Value Statement. This motion was approved, 5-0.

I) Request to go into an Executive Session on a Personnel matter pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405 (6) A.

Councilor Hurley, seconded by Councilor Bonneville, made a motion to go into Executive Session on a Personnel matter pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405 (6) A at 10:42 p.m. This motion was approved, 5-0.

Councilor Harkness, seconded by Councilor Mortier, made a motion to adjourn the Executive Session on a Personnel matter pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405 (6) A at 11:26 p.m. This motion was approved, 5-0.

J) Signing of Council Orders and housekeeping items.

Council Order # 45 Signed by Councilor Bonneville Ordered That:

The City Manager and the City Treasurer are authorized to expend up to \$7,375.00 for demolition of structures located at 101 and 107 Patterson Hill Road, Map 17 Lots 12 and 13, to Dirt Digger Inc. Funding to come from the Undesignated Fund Balance with the property owner to repay the City for demolition within one year. (Approved February 2, 2021)

Council Order #46 Signed by Councilor Bonneville Ordered That:

The City Manager and the City Treasurer are authorized to expend up to \$600.00 to Local Governments for Sustainability for the renewal of the City’s membership. Funding to come from the Climate Crisis Committee Account 730-887. (Approved February 2, 2021)

Council Order #47 Signed by Councilor Bonneville Ordered That:

The City Manager and City Treasurer are authorized to make the attached recommend accounting changes to improve and update the old capital project accounts. (Approved February 2, 2021)

Council Order #48 Signed by Councilor Bonneville Ordered That:

The City Manager and the City Treasurer are authorized to expend up to \$30,879.00 in order to cover all of the Level 2 Electric Vehicle Charging Station projects estimated costs with ReVision Energy. Funding is to come from the Energy Savings Capital Reserve Account. (Approved February 2, 2021)


11) Communications

Councilor Hurley informed the Council of the passing of Sally Duff, sending condolences to the family.

12) Adjourn

Councilor Bonneville, seconded by Councilor Mortier, made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:26 p.m. This motion was approved, 5-0.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE
IS A TRUE COPY OF INFORMATION
ON THE RECORD WHICH IS IN MY
OFFICIAL CUSTODY

ATTEST 

AMANDA CUSHMAN, BELFAST MAINE