

Ordinances & Administration Committee
 Monday, April 1, 2019 – 6:00 p.m.
1st Fl. Council Conference Room - City Hall
 -Minutes-

Present: Chair, Councilor Steven LeBlanc; Vice Chair, Councilor Jamie O’Hara; Councilor Sean Nolan
Absent: None.

Also Present: Councilor Lundberg; Councilor Memhard; Joanne M. Senos; Jim Destino

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. There was a quorum of the City Council.

1. New Appointments:

Capital Improvement Advisory Board

Howard “Ted” Costa

TTE 02/14/22

Mr. Costa was not present at the meeting. **Councilor LeBlanc** recommended that the appointment of Mr. Costa move forward to Council. He noted that the Committee all knew his capabilities well; recounting that Mr. Costa had already been interviewed when appointed to the Magnolia Pier Advisory Committee. **Councilors O’Hara** and **Nolan** expressed their assent also.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor O’Hara, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council appoint Howard “Ted” Costa to the Capital Improvement Advisory Board, TTE 02/14/22.

Records Management Advisory Board

Carol A. Kelly

TTE 02/14/21

Ms. Kelly recounted that she is a former librarian with archival training; has done digital archival scanning for many years working for the U.S. Forest Services, noting she is also serves as a member of the City-Owned Cemeteries Advisory Committee.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor O’Hara, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council appoint Carol A. Kelly to the Records Management Advisory Board, TTE 02/14/21.

Tourism Commission

Kimberly Voltero

TTE 02/14/22

Ms. Voltero, owner/operator of Plugged In Tours, a sight-seeing company, advised she has lived in the city for seven years, and throughout that time doing vacation rentals. She conveyed she is a member of the Tourism Council for the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce and a member of Discover Gloucester, and previously worked for Microsoft for 10 years. She expressed her interest in further helping the city through the Tourism Commission, saying that the current members are a “vibrant” group, ready to move forward.

Councilor LeBlanc advised he’d support Ms. Voltero’s appointment noting they are both member of the Gloucester Elks, calling her an asset.

Councilor Memhard recounted that Ms. Voltero spearheaded the neighborhood road betterment project for Starknought Heights and expressed his support for her appointment.

Ms. Voltero, conveying she would not be in the city for the Council’s April 9 meeting which was pre-planned, was excused from attendance by Chair, **Councilor LeBlanc**, from attending that meeting.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor O’Hara, seconded by Councilor LeBlanc, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council appoint Kimberly Voltero to the Tourism Commission, TTE 02/14/22.

2. CC2019-008 (Memhard): Amend GCO Ch. 22 “Traffic and Motor Vehicles”, Art. VI “Traffic Schedules” Sec. 22-269 “Stop Intersections” by adding Hillside Rd. at its intersection with Grapevine Rd. (Cont’d from 03/18/19)

Councilor Memhard recounted that this installation of a stop sign at the intersection of Hillside Road and Grapevine Road was a request by neighborhood residents as it is a public safety concern. He conveyed that the Traffic Commission reviewed this safety issue at its last meeting. He suggested streamlining the process for posting stop signs in the city by removing that action from the Code of Ordinances rather than having a three-step process of the Traffic Commission, then O&A and then to a Council public hearing with a 31 day waiting period after the Council's vote. He mentioned this was also a suggestion of the DPW Director.

Councilor LeBlanc advised that that if the Councilor wished to make a change in the Ordinance he can put in a Council Order to do so. He expressed agreement that this was a sensible installation of a stop sign.

Councilor Nolan noted he was at the location the previous evening observing the traffic, and highlighted that both roads are private which spoke to parking enforcement, but that the stop sign was clearly needed. **Councilor LeBlanc** pointed out it was a matter of public safety than parking. **Councilor Nolan** advised that he was in favor of the stop sign installation as it is needed.

Joanne M. Senos, City Clerk, reminded the Councilors that speed limits have been posted on private ways, and there are stop signs that assist in directing traffic. **Councilor Lundberg** suggested that private ways that are open to the public is something the Council, on matters of public safety, can control. **Mr. Destino** expressed agreement that private ways used by the public as through streets in matters of public safety enable the Council to take action.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor O'Hara, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council Amend GCO Ch. 22 "Traffic and Motor Vehicles", Art. VI "Traffic Schedules", Sec. 22-269 "Stop Intersections" by adding: "Hillside Road at its intersection with Grapevine Road".

This matter will be advertised for public hearing.

3. CC2019011 (LeBlanc): Amend GCO Ch. 4 "Animals", Sec. 4-22 "Fees and penalties" re: payment of past due dog licenses

Councilor LeBlanc advised that in consultation with the City Clerk he put in this order with dog licensing season now underway.

Ms. Senos conveyed that what is before the Committee is modeled from the city of Salem's ordinance. She recounted the following: The City Clerk's office has issues with collecting on past due licenses, in this case from 2018. The dog licensing year runs April 30th to April 30th annually. She highlighted that after the summer season Animal Control does a great job giving warnings and citations to dog owners not licensing their dogs on time. There are still a few dog licenses that "fall through the cracks." By the time those dog owners come in to license their dogs, it is January or February. Those owners refuse to pay for a 2018 license when there are only a few scant months before the 2019 licenses are issued. For 2019, a ruling was made to not issue those new licenses before March 1st in an attempt to get those reluctant dog owners to obtain their late 2018 licenses. It was indicated that some dog owners complied, but others complain asking where does this fall within the Code of Ordinances that they have to get a 2018 license before they're issued a 2019 license. It was pointed out that Salem goes back three years before a current license can be issued, learned through a study through the Mass. Municipal Clerks. Some cities and towns charge a monthly late fee for any late licensed dogs. It was also noted that there was some success with dog owners paying the \$50 fine for not licensing their dog, those owners seemed to think that included their 2018 dog license fee, which, in fact, it did not. That \$50 goes to the Police Department account.

She advised she was requesting that the Council amend the Code of Ordinances so that she can refer dog owners to the Code of Ordinances, so that thereafter the City Clerk's office will not be issuing a new dog license until they pay for a dog license for the previous year.

Councilor LeBlanc pointed out this will keep people "honest" saying it is a good idea, saying that responsible dog owners will comply with the Ordinance. **Ms. Senos** noted that her office receives complaints that there are a lot of unlicensed dogs in the city, and this will aid her office in ensuring dogs are consistently licensed in the city.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor O'Hara, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council Amend GCO Ch. 4 "Animals", Sec. 4-22 "Fees and penalties" subsection (b) by adding a second sentence as follows:

“(b) Late penalty, effective April 30, 1993. The owner shall pay a penalty of \$10.00 for any dog whose license fee has not been paid by April 30 of the current licensing renewal year. Any dog not licensed for the previous year will need to pay for a previous year’s license as well as the late fee of \$10.00.”

This matter will be advertised for public hearing.

4. Update on the City of Gloucester Beach Parking and Traffic Ad Hoc Committee Report of January 24, 2017

Mr. Destino submitted to the Committee a document entitled, “City of Gloucester Beach Parking and Traffic Ad Hoc Committee of the City Council’s Ordinances and Administration Committee, Established on 4/05/16, Draft of Recommendations developed from 4/29/16 through 11/26/16” which was placed on file (placed on file). He noted the Administration took all the recommendations seriously, and noted the responses of the Administration are viewed in red print, Items 1 through 38. He advised the city was able to implement a number of the suggestions; some are not feasible due to the costs involved. Most of the issues that make the most impact are around enforcement and having a police presence around certain areas at certain times. He conveyed the Administration has a meeting next week with the new Police Chief on this issue. He suggested that the majority of issues are at the height of the summer season, about 10 days. He highlighted that there is a limit to what they can do especially on Concord Street, and placement of police officers on overtime at locations such as the lights at Eastern Avenue, to assist traffic flow. He advised they’d like to place a patrolman on Concord and Atlantic Streets to get people to turn around, but pointed out that they can’t make vehicle owners turn around on a public street if they want to keep going even after they’ve been told a beach parking lot is full. He conveyed the city sent out over 30 Cease and Desist Orders for people who were parking cars at Long Beach, and up in the Wingaersheek Beach area. They do what they can with the city’s budget they have and put patrolmen where they can when they can, he pointed out. He advised that there was an audit on how they park cars, on how money is collected, noting the suggestion of allowing the use of credit cards for beach parking payment would speed the cars through the lines, but learned it would not. They will take another “hard look” at beach parking fees which were noted has not having been raised since 2016 (\$25 per vehicle weekdays, \$30 per vehicle weekends) suggesting a \$5 increase may be appropriate, and that they will take another look at the Ad Hoc Committee’s recommendations as well as they do every year, he assured.

Councilor LeBlanc mentioned the possibility the pre-purchase of parking passes for beach parking lots. **Mr. Destino** suggested that could cause more issues than it may be worth by creating the impression of a parking pass that entitles beachgoers to a reserved parking spot. As far as utilizing a shuttle, they don’t see it as a viable option. The beaches are full, he pointed out especially during high tides -- when the parking lot is full, the beach is full, he pointed out. They followed up, he added, and will continue to talk about this; but it is about getting patrolmen out on the road and that people need to understand that when the parking lots are full there just isn’t anywhere else to park. He mentioned former Ad Hoc Committee member Jeffrey Stonberg who resides near the bridge on Nautilus Road to Good Harbor Beach, a main entry way, who doesn’t want anyone to park there. He suggested even banning parking in and around that spot or severely limiting it, without stationing a parking enforcement officer there at all times, it wouldn’t happen. People will drop off and pick up in that location. He assured they followed up on these recommendations and would continue to do so.

Councilor O’Hara noted Item #26 regarding the large LED lighted sign asked to move it further south over the guardrail into the former Mt. Ann parking area to enable drivers to see the beach parking advisories sooner. **Mr. Destino** advised they look into it and ask MassDOT. He noted that the city now opens the beach parking lots earlier which help the situation.

Councilor Lundberg advised he asked to review the Beach Parking Ad Hoc Committee recommendations this now, in light of a group of residents who came forward and spoke under Oral Communications last July 10th. He noted the answer the Administration gave was that they had the Ad Hoc Committee’s recommendations and that some of them were implemented. He suggested what was implemented didn’t work based on the number of residents who spoke about traffic. He conveyed he wanted to ensure that the city has done everything they can, so that Ward Councilors with the beaches in their wards can say to the citizens everything that can be done has been done. **Mr. Destino** suggested that there were a number of things implemented that did work. He pointed out that Concord Street is a long, winding roadway to a beach, and that the only thing they can do is to station someone there to tell drivers to turn around when the beach is full, place signage but that the road will not be widened nor made one way. He noted that it is an issue of traffic control. He pointed out that they are trying to shut down illegal beach parking lots, implement a higher level of traffic control in that area.

Councilor O’Hara brought up the matter of the non-resident fee for a seasonal beach parking pass, Item #28. **Mr. Destino** advised they are considering raising that fee.

J.D. McEachern, former member of the Ad Hoc Committee, noted they came to a lot of conclusions, and that some people have to be realistic. He mentioned Cressy Beach at Stage Fort Park is a beach covered in ballast stones and suggested the stones could be removed because they're not indigenous which would make that beach a more popular place to go. **Mr. Destino** highlighted that there would be a lot of permitting, especially with MassDEP, in order to remove those stones.

Councilor LeBlanc highlighted the bulk of the issues are residents who live near the beaches being unable can't reasonably travel to and from their homes during the summer season. He agreed that busing people to the beach is a difficult proposition. **Councilor O'Hara** pointed out that for Crane's Beach there are satellite parking lots in the Town of Ipswich and they shuttle beachgoers to that beach.

Councilor Nolan pointed out that the issue is not Concord Street but Atlantic Street. The turnaround area is difficult, he conveyed. As to the private section of the Wingersheek Beach area utilizing them as a throughway (part of the Ad Hoc recommendations), he advised he had spoken to four of the five associations, and that it will never happen. Referring to the turnaround concrete areas at the base of Concord and Atlantic Streets to remove them would make it more cost effective for traffic flow which in essence creates four traffic islands, he pointed out. **Mr. Destino** conveyed if there was a police officer to direct traffic it would help. They discussed the turnaround situation and how vehicles could be better directed at Concord Street. It was suggested they tell people before reaching Causeway Street that the parking lot is full which will give people more options. **Councilor Nolan** also talked about raising the fees for parking which he conveyed may make a difference.

Councilor Memhard noted that progress has been made highlighting the increased penalties for on-street beach parking violations. Speaking to Mr. Stonberg's concerns, he described the two properties he owns adjacent to Nautilus Road, advised the gentleman witnesses some of the safety issues with drop off and pick up, children approaching ice cream trucks, etc., saying that a "No standing zone," may make a difference for that area. Proper signage, communication, amendments to the Ordinance and enforcement were essential, he pointed out.

Councilor Lundberg agreed that by providing the Councilors the opportunity to submit their suggestions and questions now, the Administration will be able have the opportunity to respond, and to decide if the suggestions can be implemented. **Councilor O'Hara** pointed out that most of what may be suggested or implemented likely wouldn't happen until the following summer season.

Councilor Memhard highlighted that the new Police Chief will perhaps offer a fresh perspective on these issues.

At the request of the Chair, an email would be sent to the City Council with the documentation provided by Mr. Destino soliciting the Council's suggestions and questions to be submitted to Mr. Destino by April 30th so that he may address those matters at the next O&A Committee meeting on Monday, May 6th.

A motion was made, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana C. Jorgensson
Clerk of Committees

DOCUMENTS/ITEMS SUBMITTED AT MEETING:

- **City of Gloucester Beach Parking and Traffic Ad Hoc Committee of the City Council's Ordinances and Administration Committee, Established on 4/05/16, Draft of Recommendations developed from 4/29/16 through 11/26/16**