

**Ordinances & Administration Standing Committee  
Monday, May 4, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.  
REMOTE PARTICIPATION  
Minutes**

**Present: Chair Sean Nolan, Vice Chair Steve LeBlanc, Member Councilor O’Hara**

**Absent: None**

**Also Present: Joanne M. Senos, Donna Leete, Fire Chief Smith, Mayor, Vanessa Krawczyk, Councilor Holmgren**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Consistent with the governor's order suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law banning gatherings of more than twenty five people, this meeting will be conducted by remote participation. Additionally, all votes taken by the Ordinance and Administration during this and future remote meetings will be held by roll call rate.

**1. *Appointments:***

Economic Development & Industrial Corp.      Timothy Wood      TTE 07/01/23

Mr. Wood conveyed to the Committee that he recently retired from Applied Material after 35 years. The last eight to ten years he started working with the community. He was on the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, has been working with the Open Dorr and doing a lot of community work. He definitely wanted to stay involve in doing something with the City and helping out whenever he could. For personal reasons, he had to drop out of the School Committee race last year. The Community Development Director reached out to him and asked him if would be interested in being on the EDIC Board. He is a lifelong resident of the City and a veteran.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council appoint Timothy Wood to the Economic Development & Industrial Corp. TTE 07/01/23.**

Gloucester Cultural Council      Laura Crook Waxdal      TTE 02/14/23

Laura Crook Waxdal conveyed to the Committee that she has spent her entire adult life in show business theater, theater production as a professional actor and she still does. She moved here 20 years ago. Ms. Liz Neumeier reached out to her to see if she would consider being on the Cultural Council. She knows a lot about what it is to produce and be an artist, and felt this would be a huge opportunity for her to give back to the City.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council appoint Laura Crook Waxdal to the Gloucester Cultural Council TTE 02/14/23.**

Historic District Commission      Arley Pett (fulfilling unexpired term)      TTE 02/14/22

Arley Pett conveyed to the Committee that he has been involved with downtown issues since the 1970's and 1980's. He was member of the Downtown Development Commission Architecture and Urban Design Committee, which originally was chaired by Ann Banks. He followed her, and they wrote a signed ordinance creating nubbins on Main Street, which some people still don't like and others do. He assisted in creating the historic district with JJ Bell, and was one of the original members of the Historic District Commission. Paul Shea, who was one of the resident owners which is required by the ordinance, retired from the commission a couple of years ago. He asked to be appointed to this Commission.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc , seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council appoint Arley Pett to the Historic District Commission (fulfilling unexpired term) TTE 02/14/22.**

Human Rights Commission

Nicole Richon-Schoel

TTE 02/14/21

Nicole Richon-Schoel conveyed to the Committee that she has lived in Gloucester for multiple decades and has intergenerational family here. She started her real interests and passion for justice when she worked at Well Spring House for almost 10 years as an advocate for homeless families. She realized while she was there that a large percentage of families who become homeless had become homeless due to domestic violence. After her years at Wellspring, she was approached by the then Director of HAWC to open the first Gloucester office of HAWC to help victims and survivors of domestic violence, who had a really hard time seeking services in Salem. Opening an office right here had a really big impact on the number of people who still use HAWC services in Gloucester. She also has been involved in the theater and arts community through various avenues. She feels strongly about the rights of people who are more marginalized and who may not have a voice in the community.

Councilor Nolan commented that her work in Gloucester has been acknowledged by so many people in what she has done over the years with Wellspring and HAWC and is inspirational. This is a community built for her to look out for other people to make sure that everyone has a fair shake in life. Councilor Nolan commended her for stepping up and doing this. Councilor O'Hara agreed with what Councilor Nolan said, she will be a tremendous asset to the Commission, and thanked her for stepping forward.

Councilor LeBlanc said that they appreciate what she does and what she is going to do. This is a new commission, but once it's up and running and it will be great for the entire community. They are looking forward to having her serve on this.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council appoint Nicole Richon-Schoel to the Human Rights Commission TTE 02/14/21.**

The Mayor thanked the O&A for appointing the new appointees and shared her relationships with the appointees. The Mayor commented that they have four wonderful people who want to join a board or commission. Moving forward together, they're going to give their expertise and knowledge, and she thanked them.

Zoning Board of Appeals

Peter Cannavo (from alternate to full member)

TTE 02/14/23

Councilor LeBlanc conveyed to the Committee that Peter Cannavo was not present this meeting and he had no problem voting him up without him being present. He ran for City Council last year, and is an alternate

member on the ZBA. Without objection from the Committee, Peter Cannavo was appointed from alternate to full member.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council appoint Peter Cannavo (from alternate to full member) to the Zoning Board of Appeals TTE 02/14/23.**

***Reappointment:***

Fire Chief Eric Smith pursuant to GCO Ch. 8, Sec. 8-18(d)

Chief Smith conveyed to the Committee that it has been a great ride for the last eight years. They have made a lot of progress in the city in improving public safety, and they want to see that continue. He loves the community and the people that he works with. The administration has been awesome. We are one of the few communities that can look at the things that have been done in the last at least five years that have moved us into a position where, although this current situation with COVID- 19, it's hurting a lot of people that live in this community. But we're coming together and getting behind those folks that need it. Our government process, and the ability to support those folks, hasn't been decimated because there's been a lot of smart things done by this administration and by this community at large by putting the right people in the right place at the right time. It's been a great team. It's not always easy, not always fun, but it's extremely rewarding, and wants to continue to be part of that team.

Councilor LeBlanc asked Chief Smith how everyone at the station was doing. Chief Smith replied that They are good. The peak stress is starting to edge off a little bit. He put some restrictions in place initially on who could take off time and try to make sure that the troops were available. They ramped staffing up when they were expected to get hammered with this surge. Because of the things that were done from the governor on down and at the federal level to help reinforce it, as you know, they still had a significant number loss of life, and a significant number of people that are ill with this virus. But the impact directly to the fire department has not been as severe as we were concerned about. Everybody stood up to deal with it. It was a lot of stress. They have had their own internal people, get positives because of exposures of the job, and it just is what it is. They all said they didn't really expect this to be a thing that they would face. They stood up to it, dealt with it and no one has complained and backing down. They're facing the challenge of doing the right things, and they are getting it done. A lot of the right things happened, it wasn't as crippling and as severe as it could have been, had the wrong things been done. They are in a fortunate position. There has been a lot of good leadership prior to coming to Gloucester that helped set the stage and that's carry through with a lot of the folks that have come up in the system that are moving into a position of authority to make a difference. They make his job a lot easier, and he is happy to work with them and help lead them along.

Councilor LeBlanc thanked Chief Smith for doing a good job. Councilor O'Hara thanked Chief Smith for his efforts. That the men and women of his department are always ready and always answer the call. He knows it is a tough job, but the citizens of Gloucester depend on him and his department. Council Nolan shared his personal experience with the Gloucester Fire Dept. and Magnolia, which saved his life. One of the concerns that came into play the past few years was the amount of fire station time in Magnolia. He told Chief Smith that through his dedication and the administration, the way he has been able to keep our local fire department open in Magnolia, that alone is enough to support him. Not to mention everything that has come at him budgetary and internally, plus this COVID on top of it, he couldn't image a better fire chief right now.

He is very happy for this department.

Chief Smith replied that he appreciated Councilor Nolan's support but he certainly couldn't take all of the credit. There are a lot of great people in the department, and they have made the job easy. Without the administration's support to get this done and to back a budget that gets it done, it doesn't happen. They are tight with the budget, and you've got to live within your budget. They have made sure that it is appropriate to get the job done, which makes life far easier on him. He couldn't thank them enough, and appreciated the opportunity to keep working.

Councilor Holmgren said she was thrilled with everything he has done and thanked him. He answers her questions with professionalism. She appreciated the fire department's emergency services in general and our emergency response to this pandemic, and his steady hand to lead us through this type of adversity. She enthusiastically supported his appointment. Chief Smith replied that he appreciated Councilor Holmgren's support and said that he is a small piece of the response to this pandemic. He praised Public Health Director, Karin Carroll, for leading the charge on this and her team for doing a great job.

The Mayor commended the Chief for being a team player and thanked him for all his hard work. She commented that everyone in her manager's positions are team players and they work together are like family, especially supporting each other during this difficult time.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council approve the negotiated contract between the City of Gloucester and Fire Chief Eric Smith for the term of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2025 under GCO c. 8, Sec. 8-18(d)**

2. CC2020-001 (LeBlanc): request review of GCO Ch. 2 "Administration," Div. 8 "Human Rights Commission"  
**(Cont'd from 3/2/20)**

Council LeBlanc requested the HR Director to review the ordinance. HR Director, Donna Leete, conveyed to the Committee that as requested they have reviewed the ordinance to see if needs amendments. She discussed this with the Mayor, and they felt that the ordinance as written is very clear that this is an advisory commission. She further stated that it was originally tented to be an advisory commission. The role of this group would be to advise the Mayor on any and all actions that might be recommended to advance human rights within the City of Gloucester. They feel very comfortable that the ordinance as written is clear and nothing beyond that. They have been getting a lot of applicants for the commission.

Councilor LeBlanc thanked Ms. Leete and said he wanted to make sure that it is written in the ordinance that this is an advisory commission. Councilor LeBlanc requested that this council order be withdrawn.

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances & Administration voted by ROLL ALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the withdrawal of CC2020-001 (LeBlanc) regarding the review of GCO Ch. 2 "Administration," Div. 8 "Human Rights Commission."**

3. CC2019-034 (LeBlanc/Nolan): request O&A and Traffic Commission review the parking at all times of motor vehicles and RV's on Western Avenue from the County Way Landing to the Avis R. Murray Tennis Courts **(Cont'd from 3/2/20)**

This matter is continued until June 1, 2020.

4. City Council vote of 1/28/2020 re: Amend GCO Ch. 22 "Traffic and Motor Vehicles," Art. II, Div. 2 "Traffic Commission" re: number of members and membership. Returned by City Council from the 2/11/2020 meeting **(cont'd from 3/2/20)**

Councilor LeBlanc conveyed to the Committee that this matter was voted on at the January 28, 2020 City Council meeting. A motion for reconsideration was filed by Councilor Holmgren and this matter was on the February 11, 2020 City Council agenda for council vote. The council voted on an amendment and voted unanimously to refer this matter back to O&A for further consideration. The discussion of the Committee was for clarification on whether the appointed members of the Fire, Police and DPW departments would be ex-officios and not voting members. The Committee agreed that the members of the Traffic Commission would be full voting members.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: MOTION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances & Administration City Council voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council," to Amend Chapter 22, "Traffic and Motor Vehicles," Art II, Div. 2 "Traffic Commission," Sec. 22-32 "Composition; appointment; terms of members" by STRIKING the phrase, "eight members comprised of a member of the Fire Department, Police Department, Department of Public Works and four" and ADD as follows, "seven members comprised of a member of the Fire Department, Police Department, Department of Public Works and four resident members who shall be at-large members. These members shall be appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the city council. Appointments to the commission shall be for terms of three years. In case of the resignation, death or disqualification of any member of the commission, or for the purpose of filling a vacancy, for any other reason, an appointment for the unexpired term shall immediately be made by the Mayor.**

5. CC2019-043 (LeBlanc/Gilman): Amend the September 25, 2019 City Council Rules of Procedure by ADDING to Rule 1: Meetings" a new subsection (F) re: Councilors prohibited from using cellphones during City Council meetings **(Cont'd from 1/21/20)**

Council LeBlanc said he would reach out to Councilor Gilman and request that his name be withdrawn from this order and asked whether she wanted to move forward with this council order.

6. CC2020-003 (LeBlanc): Request City Charter review pursuant to City Charter Sec. 10-1(b) **(postponed from 3/16/20)**

Councilor LeBlanc asked the City Clerk what the procedure was to establish a City Charter Commission. Ms. Senos replied that it is ad hoc commission. The last time she did a little bit of research on this they advertised in the newspaper for members to be part of this commission to review the charter. The commission can only recommend small amendments and cannot change appointments. There are a couple of recommendations she would like to change regarding the public hearings. In 2010, there was some questions about the merits of the commission, and had a public hearing in April of that year. Due to the current situation, she was unable to continue the research on what the criteria was that they established on the commission members. Councilor Nolan suggested that this matter be postponed to the next meeting so that the City Clerk can report back on how to procedurally move forward with this.

This matter is continued until May 18, 2020.

7. CC2020-007(Holmgren): Request City of Gloucester conduct the September 1, 2020 State Primary Election and the November 3, 2020 General Election via mail-in ballots

Councilor LeBlanc asked Councilor Holmgren to explain her order. Councilor Holmgren replied that she spoke with Attorney Payson on this. He said that depending on what the state legislature ends up doing, if anything, that if we end up filing an ordinance surrounding mail in ballot, that might end up being unconstitutional. His suggestion was to put this forward as a council resolution. Councilor Holmgren said she has been in touch with State Representative Ferrante and Senator Tarr's offices, and there is some movement surrounding this at the legislative level. There was at least one person who has filed a bill, as well as Secretary Bill Galvin, to move forward making this into law for the fall. She requested putting a council resolution forward if the council would support mail in ballots. Considering how little we know about COVID-19 and how insidious it is and how fast it moves, she didn't want to make anyone go vote at a specific polling place and that goes for people who work at the polls as well as the general public. The Committee agreed that this council order be brought up to city council for discussion.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor Nolan, the Ordinances and Administration Committee, voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed to recommend that CC2020-007(Holmgren) be brought up to the city council for discussion.**

A motion was made, and seconded and by ROLL CALL the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Senos  
City Clerk