

Ordinances & Administration Committee
 Tuesday, January 3, 2017 – 6:00 p.m.
1st Fl. Council Committee Room – City Hall
-Minutes-

Present: Chair, Councilor Steve LeBlanc; Vice Chair, Councilor Jamie O’Hara

Absent: Councilor Nolan

Also Present: Councilor Gilman; Joanne Senos; Mayor Sefatia Theken; Jim Destino; Chris Sicuranza; Grace Poirier

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

1. Management Appointment & Appointments:

Chief Administrative Officer

James Destino

TTE 02/14/17

NOTE: The Term to Expire for Mr. Destino came forward as 02/14/17 but should be 02/14/18, and the Committee will proceed based on the corrected expiration of term.

Mayor Theken recounted for the Committee Mr. Destino’s previous accomplishments from his time as Chief Administrative Officer briefly. Mentioning the short break in Mr. Destino’s tenure during which time the Mayor’s office was reorganized she noted that a new position was added for a Director of Communications and Constituent Services to take some of the burden of those duties off of the CAO’s position, thereby creating a stronger administrative team to better serve the city, she noted. She asked that the Council confirm Mr. Destino’s appointment now, saying he is an incalculable asset to the city and her Administration. The Mayor added her thanks to Joanne M. Senos, City Clerk, for her dedication, and that the Mayor’s office supported the new appointment of the Assistant City Clerk, Grace Poirier.

Councilor LeBlanc said that he had no questions for Mr. Destino and welcomed him back, offering support for his return as CAO.

Councilor O’Hara voiced his support for Mr. Destino’s appointment as did **Councilor Gilman**.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor O’Hara, seconded by Councilor LeBlanc, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 2 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Nolan) absent, to recommend that James Destino be appointed Chief Administrative Officer, TTE 02/14/18.

Tourism Commission

Elizabeth Favazza

TTE 02/14/18

Ms. Favazza reviewed she was born and raised in Gloucester, and that she is currently finishing her undergraduate degree in Business Administration. She said she has worked in customer service and marketing, selling the amenities of the city to the tourism hotel/motel sector, currently working at the Castle Manor Inn. She said she very much wants to work to spread the word of everything the city has to offer -- the community’s traditions and to add new traditions as well.

Councilor LeBlanc noted that to market the city correctly is an important aspect of bringing tourists to the city. He said Ms. Favazza was highly recommended by Councilor Orlando as well as that he knew Ms. Favazza personally and also recommended her appointment to the Tourism Commission.

Councilor O’Hara offered his thanks for Ms. Favazza’s stepping forward to assist the city as a volunteer.

Ms. Senos noted that she was related to Ms. Favazza and knew her to be a good person.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor O’Hara, seconded by Councilor LeBlanc, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 2 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Nolan) absent, to recommend that the City Council appoint Elizabeth Favazza to the Tourism Commission, TTE 02/14/18.

Tourism Commission

Doug Silva

TTE 02/14/19

Mr. Silva advised he is the co-owner and General Manager of the Topside Grill, and that he was raised, although not born in Gloucester. He noted that experiencing the tourism sector first hand, he said he sees how

positive tourism is for the city and how important it is for its economy. He said he wants to help that sector of the city's business to flourish.

Councilor LeBlanc said that Mr. Silva was highly recommended by Councilor Orlando but also that he knew him personally. He pointed out that the fishing industry is not gone, and although it won't be what it once was, it will always be an integral part of the city's heritage. **Mr. Silva** expressed his agreement saying that the fishing industry is a draw for tourists as well – not only do they come to the city to see it but to hear its stories.

Councilor O'Hara offered his thanks for Mr. Silva volunteering to participate on the Tourism Commission,

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor O'Hara, seconded by Councilor LeBlanc, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 2 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Nolan) absent, to recommend that the City Council appoint Doug Silva to the Tourism Commission, TTE 02/14/19.

Animal Advisory Committee

Jennifer A. Holmgren

TTE 02/14/20

Ms. Holmgren recounted her recent participation with the Ad Hoc Dog Committee as an advocate for change to the Dog Ordinances, and advised she was active with Dog Friendly Gloucester although not a dog owner. She said she is ready to commit to this next step in working on a permanent committee, newly created to encompass all animals in the city, not just dogs. She noted education about wildlife was something she was interested in.

Councilor LeBlanc reminded Ms. Holmgren that this advisory committee covers all animals, domesticated and wild, within the city's borders. He expressed that Ms. Holmgren is a good fit as someone who has the ability to see both sides of matters which will be important moving forward to lead to compromises.

Councilor O'Hara said that Ms. Holmgren is very dedicated to the city and its animals. She will do a great job in her new role on the Animal Advisory Committee, he added.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor O'Hara, seconded by Councilor LeBlanc, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 2 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Nolan) absent, to recommend that the City Council appoint Jenifer A. Holmgren to the Animal Advisory Committee, TTE 02/14/20.

2. *CC2015-044 (Verga, Cox) Amend GCO Sec. 9-12 re: Prohibition of plastic checkout bags (Cont'd from 07/18/16) (TBC 02/06/17)*

At the request of Councilor Cox this matter is continued to February 6, 2017.

3. *CC2016-015 (Cox) Request O&A review & recommend the matter of prohibiting the use of polystyrene food & beverage containers or serving items for food service establishments if the packaging takes place on the premises of food service establishments & recommend whether an ordinance on polystyrene food & beverage containers be adopted (Cont'd from 07/18/16) (TBC 02/06/17)*

At the request of Councilor Cox this matter is continued to February 6, 2017.

4. *CC2016-048 (Orlando) Amend GCO Sec. 4-16 (d) "Off-leash dog areas" subsection (b)(2) by adding a new subsection "(m) Dog Park "pooch pass" certificate for non-residents & amend Sec. 1-15 "Penalty for violation of certain specified section of code" (Cont'd from 12/05/16)*

Councilor LeBlanc advised that Councilor Orlando had requested prior to the meeting for his Council Order 2016-048 to be withdrawn (on file).

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor LeBlanc, seconded by Councilor O'Hara, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 2 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Nolan) absent, to recommend that the City Council permit the withdrawal of CC2016-048 (Orlando) Amend GCO Sec. 4-16 (d) "Off-leash dog areas" subsection (b)(2) by adding a new subsection "(m) Dog Park "pooch pass" certificate for non-residents & amend Sec. 1-15 "Penalty for violation of certain specified section of code" without prejudice.

5. *CC2016-049 (Gilman) Amend GCO Sec. 22-268 "Same-From May 1 to September 15" and Sec. 22-267 "Restrictions on direction driven-Annually" re: Arlington Street (Cont'd from 12/05/16)*

Councilor Gilman expressed her thanks to Joseph Meckem (3 Arlington Street) who spearheaded the effort to make Arlington Street one way year round, coordinating neighborhood consensus and for his proactive support of her Council Order. She noted some area residents in attendance that was acknowledged by **Councilor LeBlanc**.

Councilor Gilman reviewed that that due to the narrow nature and steep pitch to Arlington St., it makes two-way traffic, in the summer season a difficult traffic situation. She highlighted that the only vehicles that attempt to go the “wrong” way in the off season are garbage trucks when the road is one way. At the Traffic Commission meeting of Dec. 15 the Commission agreed and voted unanimously to approve her Council Order as presented to make Arlington St. one way year round, she recounted. She advised that signage will need to be adjusted, and that she is coordinating the effort with the DPW Director to solve this issue. She said making Arlington St. one way year round is a safe option for the neighborhood and expressed her support for the ordinance amendment.

Councilor LeBlanc reiterated that the Traffic Commission supported the amendment of the ordinance, adding that the Commission does its due diligence, and that a unanimous vote by the Commission very telling.

Councilor O’Hara said he supported the ordinance amendment to make Arlington St. one way year round will create a safer situation for residents.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor O’Hara, seconded by Councilor LeBlanc, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 2 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Nolan) absent, to recommend that the City Council Amend GCO Sec. 22-268 (Same-From May 1- September 15) be Amended by DELETING: “Arlington Street for its entire length in a northeasterly direction.”

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor O’Hara, seconded by Councilor LeBlanc, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 2 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Nolan) absent, to recommend that the City Council Amend GCO Sec. 22-267 (One way streets Generally) by ADDING: “Arlington Street for its entire length in a northeasterly direction.

This matter will be advertised for public hearing.

6. CC2016-052 (O’Hara) Whether the Code of Ordinances Sec. 4-16a “Dogs allowed on public beaches at certain times” should be amended to expand unleashed areas to Cressy Beach from October 1st to April 30th

Councilor O’Hara said this recommendation comes from the report of the Ad Hoc Dog Committee recently disbanded (report filed Dec. 5). He urged support for this change to open Cressy Beach to dog owners for dogs off leash in the off season for consecutive days which is supported by the Stage Fort Park Advisory Committee. This opens up yet another place for dogs to run freely but in a different area of the city, making it convenient for those residents who don’t wish to drive to Wingersheek, Good Harbor Beaches to walk unleashed dogs in their odd/even day configuration or where the distance is too great -- highlighting Plum Cove Beach in Lanessville available on off season consecutive days. He added his thanks to the members of the Ad Hoc Dog Committee for their efforts, mentioning Cindy Dunn, Linda Brayton and Jennifer Holmgren who were present.

Councilor LeBlanc said this time the option of Cressy Beach for dogs off leash in the off season works, creating a wider variety of areas within the city for dog owners, this being closer to home for many dog owning residents. He said he supports the option. **He** and **Ms. Senos** briefly discussed the timing of a Council public hearing on the matter. **Councilor LeBlanc** said this is a positive step forward, but due to legislative timing of the Council, this amendment if passed wouldn’t likely be instituted until late February, early March. He also added his thanks for the Ad Hoc Dog Committee’s dedicated efforts.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor O’Hara, seconded by Councilor LeBlanc, the Ordinances & Administration Committee voted 2 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 (Nolan) absent, to recommend that the City Council Amend GCO Sec. 4-16a “Dogs allowed on public beaches at certain times” by ADDING after “Plum Cove Beach on consecutive days in the off season,” the following phrase, “and Cressy Beach on consecutive days in the off season.”

This matter will be advertised for public hearing.

7. Report of Beach Traffic Ad Hoc Committee (Cont’d from 12/05/16)

Jeff Worthley, Beach Traffic Ad Hoc Committee member, highlighted the following findings of that committee, reviewing a document filed with the Committee prior to the meeting summarizing its work and recommendations (on file). He noted members were: Chair, Councilor O'Hara; Fred Geisel; Jeff Stonberg; Rick Doucette; and J.D. MacEachern. He said this was a good, diverse Ad Hoc Committee who were dedicated and worked hard to produce the recommendations before the O&A Committee.

It was noted that the Ad Hoc Committee was established in April 2016, and that they interviewed integral personnel involved in city beaches, traffic control, infrastructure and Council members.

- All recommendations were reviewed with the Public Works Director, Mike Hale.
- The Ad Hoc Committee is not recommending adding more people to existing public facilities, but to expand ticketing areas to drive more paying customers to the beaches;
- There is a recommendation to purchase the former drive through property off of Route 128 to use as a satellite parking area.

Improve Access to Beach Parking Lots:

- Develop a down-loadable application for smart phones to inform visitors of beach parking options;
- Purchase larger, more visible highway signs to show a complete message positioned further south;
- Allow the use of credit cards to pay for beach parking for consideration to speed up vehicles into the lots and for better tracking of revenues;
- Possible purchase of beach parking tickets in advance;
- Have one-way traffic in the morning (7:00 to 11:00 a.m.) on Thatcher Road from Barn Lane to Witham Street – both lanes being made one way to get more cars off the road sooner, residents wouldn't have to wait in the same line.
- Reconfigure the intersection of Concord St. and Atlantic Street to eliminate multiple islands. Create a simple round island that could house a portable hut for traffic control;
- Hire police on weekend beach days to help with traffic at the lights on Eastern Ave.

Improve Utilization of Beach Parking Lots

- No re-entry: Once you leave a parking lot you can't reenter and lose your space. Exceptions could be made for emergencies, allowing spaces to be re-sold.
- Make sure the spacing lines are maintained.
- Open the parking lots earlier – 7:00 a.m. on weekends and holidays. It is understood that this may be a staffing and funding issue.

Additional and Improved Parking Lots

- Identify an additional parking lot that could serve both Good Harbor and Wingsheek Beaches. Possibly O'Maley or the old drive-in lot which is for sale (potential for parking 8000 or more parking spaces and run a shuttle system to move people from a remote lot to beaches. It would require a negotiation with a private residential area it was noted.
- Restoration of Stage Fort Park and Cressy Beach – if Cressy Beach is restored it could be another destination beach and act as an alternative helping to relieve congestion at main beaches.
- Better coordinate with the owners of two private beach parking lots on Beachland Avenue and Rockport Road near Long Beach (one with 225 spaces and one with 25 spots). In its report the Ad Hoc Committee suggested that the city didn't receive income from those two lots. **Ms. Senos** pointed out that the owners of these two private parking lots pay \$100 annually to be licensed as well as \$10 per space per lot. She added that their permits have to be renewed every five years and reassured that revenue is received from both.
- Coordinate with supermarkets (Eastern Avenue Shaw's or Stop & Shop) to lease or give parking spaces to the city to charge beach visitors for underutilized parking spaces in a collaborative way with the city.

Increase Revenue and Improve Beach Neighborhoods

- Increase seasonal non-resident beach parking pass to reflect the new costs of parking per day;
- Expand beach zone ticket area (based on information by Interim Police Chief) to protect neighborhoods surrounding city beaches.
- Increase parking tickets for cars parked illegally, which was suggested, would require a home rule petition to charge more than \$45 per ticket (current rate for violation in a beach zone).
- A no stopping area on Nautilus Road for 150 feet in both directions from Foot Bridge entrance except for handicap access and improve stop sign and Do Not Enter sign on Beach Road as well as install a weighted cross walk sign in the middle of key roads, including Nautilus Road at Beach Road.

Good Harbor Beach Improvements

Ad Hoc Committee member **Fred Geisel** reviewed as follows:

With sea level rising, 1.5 feet in last 100 years, the city needs to reclaim and raise the Good Harbor beach parking lot in order not to lose any more parking spaces. During recent the king tides the parking lot was completely submerged. The Ad Hoc Committee is recommending that the city reacquire beach space consumed by dunes (ocean side) which were restored after the Blizzard of '78, and restore Good Harbor Beach by replenishing sand on it (beach nourishment) which could increase the beach's size and capacity. With sea level rise the city is losing beach real estate, **Mr. Geisel** pointed out.

Safety and Traffic Improvements

Mr. Worthley highlighted what follows as other areas that were not prioritized as parking or traffic issues but said were deserving of consideration. They were:

- Improve handicap access at the end of the footbridge access to Good Harbor Beach and at the access at Witham Street.
- Create a sidewalk along Thatcher Road from Bass Avenue to Rockport Road. A portion of the walkway would need to be cantilevered over waterway crossings.
- Remove some of the boulders under the footbridge to Good Harbor Beach.

Councilor LeBlanc advised that the O&A Committee will forward this report to the Administration for their consideration. He expressed his appreciation for the Beach Traffic Ad Hoc Committee's efforts.

Councilor O'Hara extended his thanks to the Beach Traffic Ad Hoc Committee for their nine month dedicated effort to assess beach traffic issues and recommend helpful suggestions to the city to give some relief to beach area residents. He pointed out that while dealing with these annual summer traffic woes was problematic, it was actually a healthy sign of people coming to the city and the city gaining revenue from it. He said he hopes the Administration will implement some of these suggestions to address some of these difficult issues.

Mr. Destino acknowledged he had reviewed the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations as found in the O&A Agenda Packet and would take those recommendations under advisement.

A motion was made, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana C. Jorgenson
Clerk of Committees

DOCUMENTS/ITEMS SUBMITTED AT MEETING: None.