

At a meeting of the Town Council in and for the Town of Gloucester on June 26, 2025

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Councilor W. Worthy, President

II. Roll Call

Members present: Jonathan E. Burlingame; Stephanie L. Calise; Cheryl A. Greathouse; Walter M. O. Steere, III, Vice- President; William A. Worthy, Jr., President

Also Present: Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk; Christine Mathieu, Deputy Town Clerk; Elizabeth Beltram, Finance Director; Chief Delprete; Gary Treml, DPW director; Don Zimmerman, Human Resources Consultant

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Councilor W. Worthy asked all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Open Forum - For Agenda Items

Councilor W. Worthy stated that if anyone wishes to speak on any issues to please step to the microphone and state your name when called on.

None

V. Consent Items- Discussion and/or Action

A. Approval of Town Council Minutes: Special meeting of June 11, 2025 & Regular meeting of June 5, 2025

B. Tax Assessor's Additions & Abatements – May 2025

C. Finance Director's Report – May 2025

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Calise to APPROVE the Town Council minutes of June 11, 2025, the minutes of June 5, 2025; there are no ADDITIONS or ABATEMENTS to the 2024 Tax Roll for May 2025; and to ACCEPT the Finance Director's Report for May 2025; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy

NAYS-0
MOTION PASSED

VI. Unfinished Business

- A. Boards and Commissions - Discussion and/or Action
 - 1. Appointments - Discussion and/or Action
 - a. Parade Committee
 - 1. Alternate #2, Alternate #3

Councilor W. Worthy stated that there are no recommendations from the Chair.

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to TABLE the appointments, Alt. 2 & Alt. 3 to the Parade Committee to the Town Council meeting of July 17, 2025; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

- b. Gloucester 250th Commission
 - 1. Position #2, #3, #4, #5, #6 & # 7

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council has a talent bank listing with three names.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to APPOINT Jacqueline Muollo to position #2 of the Gloucester 250th Commission; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to APPOINT Mark Rechter to position #3 of the Gloucester 250th Commission; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Calise to APPOINT Matthew Burlingame to position #4 of the Gloucester 250th Commission; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy

NAYS-0

RECUSAL-Burlingame

MOTION PASSED

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to TABLE the appointments of positions #5, #6, & #7 to the Gloucester 250th Commission; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

2. Appointments -Board & Commission Appointments - Terms concurrent with Town Council, to expire 12/31/2026 - Discussion and/or Action

- a. Economic Development Commission

1. One ad-hoc non-voting member #1

2. One ad-hoc non-voting member #2

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to TABLE the appointments of ad-hoc non-voting member #1 and ad-hoc non-voting member #2 to the Economic Development Commission to the Town Council meeting of July 17th, 2025; seconded by Councilor S. Calise

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

VII. New Business

A. Voter Referendum

1. Approval of Ballot question – Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Clerk has received the referendum calendar as set by the RI Board of Elections. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the choices are September 2nd or October 7th.

Discussion:

Councilor W. Worthy stated that if after discussion tonight, Council does not vote on a final question, a special Town Council meeting will have to be held by July 9th to give the Clerk time to hold a special meeting of the Board of Canvassers for final certification.

Councilor J. Burlingame stated that he spoke briefly with the Superintendent yesterday and she is working on the budget. Councilor J. Burlingame stated his opinion that he is not sure if the Superintendent will have a recommendation ready for Council prior to July 9th. Councilor J. Burlingame stated his opinion that he feels Council needs a letter from the school committee letting the Council know what they intend to do and how much they actually need for the Referendum to go on. Councilor J. Burlingame stated his opinion that the Superintendent should also provide Council with a letter as to what the school will be spending the Referendum money on. Councilor W. Steere stated his clarification that it is for the voters to know, not just Council. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that the information is needed to be able to put the question to the voters so they know what the money will be spent on. Councilor W. Steere stated that there is a time period for the school committee and the superintendent to give that information to the Council by July 7th if the referendum is to go forward on September 2nd , but it could be pushed to October if necessary.

R. Palazzo, Glocester School Superintendent, stated that the majority of money would go to restoring personnel; but she does not know what a plan would look like. Councilor W. Steere asked what R. Palazzo meant as to the majority of money. Councilor W. Steere stated that the intention was that people were losing jobs which is why he went with this whole thing. Councilor W. Steere stated that Council and the taxpayers need to know what the money will be spent on.

R. Palazzo stated that she understands completely but wants to make it clear that there are other unknowns as well, like evolving title money, federal money that have already been built into the budget that they might not get. R. Palazzo stated that there are a lot of moving parts. R. Palazzo stated that the majority of it, depending on what we get, would absolutely go towards restoring and retaining as many personnel as possible. R. Palazzo stated that we are also working on looking at what opening the buildings in the fall would look like with the current budget. R. Palazzo stated that she just doesn't know what the plan is or how detailed the plan is or if they will be able to give Council what they want by next week.

Councilor W. Steere stated his opinion of the need to have a plan or wait till October. R. Palazzo stated that she doesn't know the clarification of a plan as she is new to the town budget. R. Palazzo stated her opinion that she feels she has a pretty solid understanding of the current budget that was proposed but that the school did propose \$840,000 more than they got. R. Palazzo stated that right now the work is on restructuring things, looking at what they have and need to open schools and also the unknowns as to transportation placements and federal money.

Councilor W. Steere stated a suggestion to have Council send a letter outlining what we need and then it is on the school committee and the superintendent to come up with that information. Councilor W. Steere stated that if the school committee and superintendent can't come up with that information within the given time frame then can look at a later date.

R. Palazzo stated that she will come up with a plan as quickly as she can but she does not know how detailed the plan will be or that it needs to be.

Councilor J. Burlingame stated that the Town Council needs to be able to explain to the voters what the money will be spent on so the ballot question states the intent of the school department. Councilor J. Burlingame stated as an example that if the school's intent is to bring back all teacher assistants then the question would say the money is to bring back all teacher assistants.

Councilor W. Steere stated that the ballot question would not be worded in this manner but that rather an explanation would be provided with that information. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that the impression was that the referendum was to be for the appointment of those teacher assistants.

R Palazzo asked for clarification as she stated this is the first she is hearing of the need for a plan and she really needs to be sure school is set to open in September.

Councilor W. Steere stated that he is not sure if the bill has been signed yet by the Governor. Councilor W. Steere stated his opinion that Council needs that information to be able to adopt a ballot question that then needs to be approved by the state.

J. Fecteau stated that the final question needs to be sent to the state by July 14th. J. Fecteau stated that she needs to have a Special Meeting of the Town Council so they can adopt the ballot question. J. Fecteau stated that once the Council adopts the ballot question that the Board of Canvassers has to have a meeting to certify the ballot question. J. Fecteau stated that once certified then question then goes to the state. J. Fecteau stated that the timeline is to get the question on the September referendum but if not then it could be October which would give another month.

Councilor W. Steere stated his opinion to get a letter to the school committee and superintendent tomorrow. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that Council needs to figure out what to say in the letter. Councilor W. Steere stated that D. Igliozi has drafted a proposed letter and sent it to Council.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to authorize the Town Council President and/or Town Solicitor to send a letter to the Superintendent of Gloucester Schools and the School Committee for Gloucester Schools as to a plan for what they will be spending the money on if we put this to a ballot and to have a special meeting on July 9th; seconded by Councilor S. Calise

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy
 NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

B. Personnel

1. Safety Services
 - a. Appointments: Discussion and/or Action
 1. Police Officer

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council has received a memo from the Chief which he read as follows:

To: Honorable Town Council
From: Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police

Date: June 20, 2025
Subj: Police Officer Appointment

Dear Council Members:

I would respectfully request to appoint **Aaron L. Steere of Gloucester** to a Patrol Officer II police officer position on the Gloucester Police Department.

Aaron Steere is a highly qualified 21-year veteran of the Warwick Police Department and Brown University Police Department. Aaron Steere's transfer from the Brown University Police Department will be considered a lateral transfer to the Gloucester Police Department. A complete police background investigation was conducted with no adverse or disqualifying findings. Aaron Steere comes highly recommended and will be an asset to the Gloucester Police Department. The Rhode Island Police Officers Standards and Training Committee is set to approve his qualifications and lateral transfer on June 26, 2025.

I would further request this appointment take effect on **Sunday July 6, 2025** at a Patrol Officer II salary of **\$74,902.21** and a full benefit package in accordance with the current IBPO 638 collective bargaining agreement.

Aaron Steere will be on probation until July 6, 2026, and upon satisfactory completion of the probation period, Aaron will advance to the Senior Patrol status position based on the IBPO 638 collective bargaining agreement.

This lateral transfer appointment is needed to fill the recent Senior Patrol Officer resignation/vacancy in May of 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph DelPrete

(end of memo)

Discussion: Councilor W. Steere stated that he would be recusing himself from any discussion or vote.

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to APPOINT Aaron L. Steere to the position of Patrol Officer II on the Gloucester Police Department as a lateral transfer effective on July 6, 2025 at the Patrol Officer II salary of \$74,902.21, said position includes a full benefit package in accordance with the current IBPO 638 collective bargaining agreement; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Worthy
 NAYS-0
 RECUSAL-Steere

MOTION PASSED

2. Police Officer Recruit Appointment

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Chief has submitted a request which he read as follows:

To: Honorable Town Council
From: Joseph DelPrete, Chief of
Police Date: June 15, 2025
Subj: Police Officer Recruit Appointment

Dear Council Members:

I would respectfully request to appoint Paige M. Labossiere, age 21, of Coventry to the Rhode Island Municipal Police Training Academy commencing on August 4, 2024.

Her Rhode Municipal Training Academy salary will be \$750.00 per week until December 19, 2025, and she will be afforded all medical benefits according to the Town of Glocester policy handbook. All recruit candidates are required to have healthcare coverage while in the municipal police academy. The town will provide the opportunity to enroll the candidate as of August 4, 2025, to meet this stipulation if needed.

After successful completion of the Rhode Island Municipal Training Academy on December 19, 2025, Paige Labossiere will be granted a one-year probationary police officer position with the **Glocester Police Department**.

This position further provides a full salary and benefit package in accordance with the current IBPO 638 collective bargaining agreement.

This police officer recruit appointment process was approved by the Town Council in the FY2025/2026 Budget to fill current vacancies and anticipated police officer retirements this upcoming year. Candidate Labossiere has successfully completed all phases of the recruit selection process and background investigation.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joseph DelPrete
(end of memo)

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to AUTHORIZE the appointment of Paige M. Labossiere to the Rhode Island Municipal Police Training Academy

commencing on August 4, 2024. said appointee shall receive a salary of \$750.00 per week until December 19, 2025, and she will be afforded all medical benefits according to the Town of Glocester policy handbook. After successful completion of the Rhode Island Municipal Training Academy on December 19, 2025 Paige Labossiere will be granted a one-year probationary police officer position with the Glocester Police Department; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

2. Recreation Dept.
 - a. Supplemental Appointments, if needed,
Summer 2025 Recreation Positions - Discussion and/or
Action

No Action Taken

2. Public Works

Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council received a request from the DPW Director which he read as follows:

June 20,2025

To: Honorable Town Council
From: Gary Treml, Public Works Director
Re: Vacation Time Carry Over

I am requesting approval to allow DPW Administrative Aide, Beth DeCorte to carry over up to 60 hours of vacation time from 2024/2025 fiscal year to 2025/2026. I would also like to request to carry over up to 100 hours of vacation time from 2024/2025 fiscal year to 2025/2026 for myself.

Respectfully,
Gary S. Treml
Public Works Director
(end of memo)

Discussion: Councilor J. Burlingame asked G. Treml if both employees had been unable to take the vacation time. G. Treml stated yes.

- a. Request to Carry Over Vacation Time: Administrative Aide – Discussion and/or Action

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Calise to AUTHORIZE the carry-over of up to 60 hours of vacation time, for employee Beth Decorte, from FY 2025 to FY 2026; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

- b. Request to Carry Over Vacation Time: DPW Director- Discussion and/or Action

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Calise to AUTHORIZE the carry over of up to 100 hours of vacation time, for employee Gary Treml, from FY 2025 to FY 2026; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

- C. Consideration of expanding the Community Septic System Loan Program – Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Town Planner has asked that this matter be tabled.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to TABLE the request to expand the Community Septic System Loan Program to provide “eligibility for the loan funds to include mixed use structures and commercial buildings”; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

D. Funding: Gloucester 250th Commission – Discussion and/or Action
Discussion: Councilor W. Steere stated that he requested this item on the agenda as it is coming up fast and they will need money to do different things and different events. Councilor W. Steere stated that there is nothing in their budget. Councilor W. Steere stated he is asking if the Council wants to consider taking some of the money from the Council's contingency account for this commission.

Councilor W. Steere stated that there is also a potential donation from a movie company that used municipal property in town tonight. Councilor W. Steere stated a suggestion that the Council authorize the potential donation to the 250th commission.

Councilors Worthy, Burlingame and Calise stated their agreement. Councilor J. Burlingame asked the amount of the donation. Councilor W. Steere stated that it is about \$1000. Councilor W. Worthy stated a suggestion to take \$3000 from Council contingency account.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to fund the Gloucester 250th Commission with \$3000.00 from Council contingency account and \$1000.00 from the donation for the use of town property; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

E. Funding: Gloucester Light Infantry – Discussion and/or Action
Discussion: Councilor J. Burlingame stated that he requested this item on the agenda at the request of members from the Gloucester Light Infantry. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that money was removed from this year's budget and there is still money in Council contingency account. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that he would like Council to consider giving the Gloucester Light Infantry \$1000 from Council contingency account.

E. Beltram, Finance Director, stated that there is \$1000.00 in the FY2025 budget that Gloucester Light Infantry will receive within the week. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that if the Council's donation were included in this year that would give the Gloucester Light Infantry \$2000.00 for their bills.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to fund the Gloucester Light Infantry \$1000 from the Town Council Contingency fund for this current year; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

F. 4th of July Events (Parade & Fire Works) – Discussion and/or Action
Councilor W. Worthy stated that the chair stated she would be present to explain planned events to Council.

Discussion: Councilor W. Worthy asked for an update as to the parade and fireworks.

K. Lamontagne, Parade Chair, stated that everything is going great; that everything has been approved by the Chief as to the parade and fireworks; that food trucks will be at the Pavilion tomorrow afternoon and evening and that the band starts at 6 pm tomorrow night.

K. Lamontagne stated her thanks to G. Trembl and B. DeCorte as to help with the lights, lanterns and other details.

K. Lamontagne stated that the 1 in 100 raffle is finishing up and that the 50/50 raffle tickets will be for sale. K. Lamontagne stated that registrations for the parade have been coming. K. Lamontagne stated that donations have been coming in and currently they have \$10,000.

Councilor S. Calise asked about painting stripes down the road. K. Lamontagne stated that the state would need to be asked.

K. Lamontagne stated that a horse and wagon has been donated to drive Charlie Wilson, the parade honorary marshal.

No Action Taken

G. Special Event Licenses

1. David Wright d/b/a Mulberry Vineyards - Discussion
 - a. Clarification, for applicant, on Special Event license for 2025

Discussion:

David Wright, Mulberry Vineyards, stated that every year he comes before Council in November for a special use license for events and live music. D. Wright is asking the Council for clarification on the language of this year's license because the way it was written down does not allow him to use all of the events that were given.

Mr. Wright stated that he was given 24 special events with 11 being live music events. D. Wright stated that live music events have been usually been on non-consecutive weekends. D. Wright stated that way they could have a special event one weekend and a live music event every other weekend.

Mr. Wright stated that the way it was written this year was that all events are to be held on non-consecutive weekends. D. Wright stated he is seeking clarification so that they can have live music every other weekend from April to October.

J. Fecteau, Town Clerk, stated that she pulled licenses from prior years and the license has been one that has changed over each year. J. Fecteau stated that the 2023 license states live music on non-consecutive weekends. J. Fecteau stated that in 2024 license states events to be held on non-consecutive weekends.

Councilor J. Burlingame stated his opinion that live music events were to be on non-consecutive weekends.

J. Fecteau stated a suggestion that she could listen to the audio of the meeting to confirm the motion that was made before any changes could be made if needed. Councilor J. Burlingame asked if a special event with live music is also considered a special event. J. Fecteau stated yes. Councilor W. Steere asked if there had been any complaints made to the police this past weekend's event. Chief Delprete stated none. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the Clerk would listen to the audio and then address as needed.

No Action Taken

VIII. Legislative Updates - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy asked if any Councilors had updates on legislation.

Councilor W. Steere stated his opinion as to the new zoning laws and the effect on the town will be a loss of autonomy.

Councilor W. Worthy stated his opinion as to the passage of the assault weapon

bill and its effect on common used firearms when it goes into effect in July 2026.

IX. Town Council Correspondence/ Discussion

Councilor W. Worthy asked if any Councilors had any correspondence.

Councilor W. Steere stated his thanks to Bob Shields for the great concert last night. Councilor W. Steere stated the concert went very well.

X. Department Head Reports/Discussion

Councilor W. Worthy asked if any Department Heads had anything to report or if any Councilors had any questions for Department Heads.

None

XI. Bds. and Commissions Reports/ Discussion

Councilor W. Worthy asked if any Boards or Commissions had anything to report or if any Councilors had questions for any Board or Commission.

None

XII. Open Forum

Councilor W. Worthy stated that if anyone wishes to speak on any issues to please step to the microphone and state your name when called on.

1. W. Steere, resident, stated his opinion regarding the proposal of another tax bill. W. Steere stated that the town has passed a tax bill that has increased by about 4% for each of the last several years including this year. W. Steere stated that now the proposal is for a second tax bill of almost the same amount. W. Steere stated his opinion that it is too much on the people of this town. W. Steere stated his opinion that many don't realize what is happening and many won't realize until it is over and they get a second tax bill.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that to be clear, the Council is letting the voters decide by a vote whether those teachers stay with us.

W. Steere stated that Council is not doing their job of taking care of the town. W. Steere stated his opinion that the Council and school committee have both let the town down. W. Steere stated that the school committee has done all their talk about the budget in executive session except for one time when they told people to vote

for the budget. W. Steere stated that now after the budget passed the school wants more money. W. Steere stated the school can't have it both ways.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that if W. Steere does not agree with the proposed referendum then he can vote no. Councilor S. Calise stated her opinion that she feels they agree but that the council was not in a position to make a unilateral decision without bringing it to the taxpayers.

W. Steere stated that the Town Council took over a mess from the school committee so now people will blame the Council when taxes go up. W. Steere stated he has been telling the Council for 3 years that a problem was coming.

W. Steere stated his opinion that things need to be cut back and a lot of people will not be able to live here and that the legislature is also part of the problem.

Councilor W. Worthy stated he agrees with W. Steere in that there are a lot of people who do not know what is going on.

W. Steere stated his opinion that Council still has a chance to cut back on this money. W. Steere also stated his opinion that if the people who have been laid off begin collecting unemployment that the school has to pay a lot of money which will add more to the deficit.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that we now need a Motion to Adjourn to Closed Executive Session.

XIII. Seek to Convene to Closed Executive Session Pursuant to:

A. RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2) Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining, litigation or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation:

1. Discussion by Council, Vote, or Other Action re: Pending IBPO Grievance

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to Seek to Convene to Closed Executive Session Pursuant to:

A. RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2) Sessions pertaining to collective bargaining, litigation or work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining or litigation:

1. Discussion by Council, Vote, or Other Action re: Pending IBPO Grievance

Seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Councilor W. Worthy asked the Clerk to call the roll:

Councilor Burlingame- Aye
Councilor Calise- Aye
Councilor Greathouse- Aye
Councilor Steere- Aye
Councilor Worthy- Aye

Discussion: None

MOTION PASSED

Executive Session

All were invited back into the meeting room after Executive Session

XIV. Reconvene Open Session, Disclosure of votes were taken in Executive Session & Consideration of the Sealing of Minutes – Discussion and/or Action
MOTION was made by Councilor w. Steere to RECONVENE Open Session, Disclose one (1) vote was taken in Executive Session & to SEAL the minutes of Closed Executive Session; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Councilor W. Worthy asked the Clerk to call the roll:

Councilor Burlingame- Aye
Councilor Calise- Aye
Councilor Greathouse- Aye
Councilor Steere- Aye
Councilor Worthy- Aye

Discussion: None

MOTION PASSED

XV. Adjourn

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to ADJOURN at 9:17 p.m.; seconded By Councilor S. Calise

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Calise, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy
 NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED