

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, March 4, 2025**

6:00 p.m. Request to go into an Executive Session on a Personnel Matter pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405 (6) A.

Councilor Dean, seconded by Councilor Bitely, made a motion to go into Executive Session on a Personnel Matter pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405 (6) A at 5:58 p.m. This motion was approved, 5-0.

Councilor Bitely, seconded by Councilor Dean, made a motion to adjourn the Executive Session on a Personnel Matter pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405 (6) A at 6:41 p.m. This motion was approved, 5-0.

7:00 p.m. Regular Council Meeting

Regular Council Meeting No. 17

1) Call to order

2) Present: Councilors Mary Mortier, Neal Harkness, Brenda Bonneville, Chris Bitely, Paul Dean; City Manager Erin Herbig and Deputy City Manager Manda Cushman.

Absent: Mayor Eric Sanders.

3) Pledge of Allegiance

4) Adoption of the agenda

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

5) Acceptance of the minutes

Regular Council Meeting of February 18, 2025.

Councilor Bitely, seconded by Councilor Bonneville, made a motion to accept the minutes from the Regular Council Meeting of February 18, 2025. This motion was approved, 5-0.

6) A. Open to the public

City Manager Erin Herbig noted that Council received one email from Kim Riposta with attached signatures from business owners and no postal mail, prior to noon today which were shared with Council before the start of the Council meeting to be included as part of the Open to the Public.

1. Jay Davis of Belfast discussed concerns with the tennis court policy and requested that the Council rescind their decision.
2. Davis Cohn of Belfast discussed how the leagues have previously utilized the tennis courts and discussed concerns about how the new policy will impact their use.
3. Rick Cronin of Belfast discussed concerns with the tennis court policy.
4. Marina Percival of Belfast spoke in support of item 10) E, F, and G regarding the proposed transitional housing ordinance amendments.
5. Mark Levett of Belfast discussed concerns with the tennis court policy.

B. Organization and Department Reports

No comments.

7) Communications

Councilor Bonneville discussed MaineHealth meeting that occurred last week.

Councilor Dean and Mortier discussed the recent Ice Festival, thanked all who made it possible, and encouraged everyone to attend next year.

Councilor Harkness addressed citizen concerns brought forward regarding Congress Street Housing tenants smoking in the road.

City Manager Erin Herbig provided additional information regarding the Congress Street Housing being a smoke-free campus and discussed how the City is looking to make pedestrian improvement in the area in the future.

8) Old Business and City Committee Reports

No comments.

9) Permits, Petitions and Licenses - Consent Agenda

- A. Request to approve an application by Bowen's Pizzeria & Deli, LLC d/b/a Bowen's Pizzeria & Deli located at 181 Waterville Rd., Belfast, Maine for a renewal Malt and Vinous Restaurant liquor license.

Councilor Dean, seconded by Councilor Bitely, made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. This motion was approved, 5-0.

10) Business

- A) Request from the Director of Planning and Codes to appoint Jaime Whiting of Belfast as the Administrative Assistant for the Belfast Planning and Codes Department.

Director of Planning and Codes Bub Fournier and City Manager Erin Herbig reviewed the request to appoint Jaime Whiting of Belfast as the Administrative Assistant for the Belfast Planning and Codes Department and introduced Ms. Whiting to the community.

Councilors welcomed Ms. Whiting.

Councilor Bitely, seconded by Councilor Mortier, made a motion to appoint Jaime Whiting of Belfast as the Administrative Assistant for the Belfast Planning and Codes Department. This motion was approved, 5-0.

- B) Presentation on the Belfast Park Project by the Belfast Rotary and request to submit a Land and Water Conservation Grant Application.

Representatives from the Belfast Rotary, Jason Trundy and Dorothy Havey gave an updated presentation on the Belfast Park Project.

Parks and Recreation Director Pam Salokangas and Economic Development Director Joellyn Warren reviewed the request to submit a Land and Water Conservation Grant Application and answered Council questions.

City Manager Erin Herbig thanked staff and Belfast Rotary for their partnership on this project.

Councilors noted some design aspects that they would like to see in the project including security cameras and an inclusive or a non-labeled bathroom.

Councilor Bonneville, seconded by Councilor Dean, made a motion to authorize City staff to submit a grant application to the Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) by the grant deadline of June 27, 2025, for \$500,000, to commit up to \$270,000 as the City match to be combined with \$230,000 Belfast Rotary donation and to authorize the City Manager to sign all required documents. This motion was approved, 5-0.

C) Request by the Parks and Recreation Director to install a memorial at the Belfast Dog Park.

Parks and Recreation Director Pam Salokangas reviewed the request to install a memorial at the Belfast Dog Park.

Councilor Mortier discussed the recent Parks, Trails and Recreation Committee in which Mr. Cooper presented his proposal.

Councilor Bitely, seconded by Councilor Mortier, made a motion to accept the donation of a Dog Memorial for the Belfast Dog Park and to authorize City staff to work with Mr. Cooper for the coordination and installation of this project this spring. This motion was approved, 5-0.

D) Council discussion regarding City Park Tennis Court Reservation Policy.

Parks and Recreation Director Pam Salokangas discussed with the City Council the current City Park Tennis Court Reservation Policy and concerns brought forward by users of the facility.

Councilor Mortier, seconded by Councilor Bonneville, made a motion to create a policy for the tennis courts that grandfather the three organized community groups: Dawn Patrol (Monday and Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., Scrappy Losers (Monday, Wednesday and Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., and Fuzz (Tuesday and Sunday from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., that have been playing multiple years as long as the groups remain open to the public and to move the reservations to computer based and open to all users for free, and that the City has president to change reservations if needed. This motion was approved, 5-0.

E) Presentation on proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, regarding a Transitional Housing Facility at 23 Mill Lane, the United Methodist Church.

Director of Code and Planning Bub Fournier gave a presentation on proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, regarding a Transitional Housing Facility at 23 Mill Lane, the United Methodist Church.

F) Public Hearing on proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, regarding a Transitional Housing Facility at 23 Mill Lane, the United Methodist Church.

Councilor Harkness asked for proponents and opponents.

1. Margret Faulkingham of Belfast read letters from three neighbors, Jean Wakem, Vicky Johnson, and Jackie Lee, who are in support of the proposed amendments.
2. Kathy Muzzy, Chair of the Midcoast Maine Homeless Coalition thanked the City Council and staff for support and guidance through the process and inquired about the timeline of the licensure.
3. Linda O'Connor of Belfast inquired about how or if the reentry center plays into this discussion and if that facility would be a precedent for this proposal.

Councilor Harkness declared the hearing closed.

G) First Reading on proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, regarding a Transitional Housing Facility at 23 Mill Lane, the United Methodist Church.

Director of Code and Planning Bub Fournier answered citizen questions regarding the proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, regarding a Transitional Housing Facility at 23 Mill Lane, the United Methodist Church.

Councilor Mortier, seconded by Councilor Dean, made a motion to approve the First Reading of proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances regarding a proposed Transitional Housing Facility at 23 Mill Lane, the United Methodist Church, and to schedule the Second Reading and Public Hearing for the upcoming Regular City Council Meeting of March 18, 2025. This motion was approved, 5-0.

H) Presentation on proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, Residential 5 and Residential 6 Zoning District Map adjustment to accommodate increased housing opportunities.

Director of Code and Planning Bub Fournier gave a presentation on proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, Residential 5 and Residential 6 Zoning District Map adjustment to accommodate increased housing opportunities.

I) Public Hearing on proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, Residential 5 and Residential 6 Zoning District Map adjustment to accommodate increased housing opportunities.

Councilor Harkness asked for proponents and opponents and hearing none declared the hearing closed.

J) Second Reading on proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, Residential 5 and Residential 6 Zoning District Map adjustment to accommodate increased housing opportunities.

No comments.

Councilor Bitely, seconded by Councilor Mortier, made a motion to adopt the proposed Ordinance Amendment consisting of a map amendment to the Residential 5 and Residential 6 zoning districts in support of housing opportunities as presented. This motion was approved, 5-0.

K) Request by the Economic Development Director to authorize the issuance of a Request for Responses for Architectural and Engineering Services for a proposed Public Safety Building.

Economic Development Director Thomas Kittredge reviewed the request to authorize the issuance of a Request for Responses for Architectural and Engineering Services for a proposed Public Safety Building and answered Council questions.

Fire Chief Patrick Richards thanked the Council for their support for the project and taking the needed steps forward to move it along.

Councilor Mortier, seconded by Councilor Bitely, made a motion to authorize the issuance of a Request for Responses for Architectural and Engineering Services for a City of Belfast Public Safety Building on March 5th, 2025. This motion was approved, 5-0.

L) Council discussion regarding downtown sidewalk snow removal.

City Manager Erin Herbig reviewed the current City Ordinances related to sidewalk snow removal and reviewed the current process and estimates for what would be needed for the City to potentially take on sidewalk snow removal in front of downtown businesses.

Public Works Foreman Steve Warman reviewed what Public Works crew currently maintains for sidewalk snow removal.

Councilors discussed the downtown sidewalk snow removal, unanimously agreeing to discuss this during the upcoming budget meetings.

M) Council discussion on the composition of the Waldo County Budget Committee.

City Manager Erin Herbig reviewed the request submitted by Northport Town Administrator James Kossuth.

Councilors discussed the current composition of the Waldo County Budget Committee, unanimously agreeing to not support the expanded eligibility as proposed.

N) Signing of Council Orders and housekeeping items.

11) Open to the Public

No comments.

12) Communications

Councilor Bitely wished everyone a Happy Mardi Gras!

13) Adjourn

Councilor Bonneville, seconded by Councilor Dean, made a motion to adjourn at 9:55 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