

At a Special meeting of the Town Council holden in and for the Town of Gloucester on July 23, 2020:

Pursuant to R.I. Executive Orders # 20-05 and # 20-25 executed by Governor Gina Raimondo on March 16<sup>th</sup>, April 15<sup>th</sup>, and June 20, 2020 this meeting is being teleconferenced by Zoom. The information to join this zoom meeting was included in our posting as required by the noted Executive Orders.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M.

II. Roll Call

Members present: George O. (Buster) Steere, Jr., President; Walter M. O. Steere, III, Vice President; William E. Reichert; Patricia Henry; and Julian (Jay) Forgue

Also Present: Matt Floor, IT Director; Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk; Timothy Kane, Town Solicitor; Joseph DelPrete, Chief of Police; Christine Mathieu, Deputy Town Clerk; Ken Johnson, Bldg/Zoning Official; Karen Scott, Town Planner; Gerry Mosca, EMA Director

III. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Councilor G. Steere noted that participants to the meeting may be placed in “waiting room” if Council convenes to Executive Session and you will automatically be allowed back in when open session convenes.

The Public Hearing will not continue prior to 7:30 p.m.

IV. Seek to Convene to Executive Session Pursuant to

A. R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a) (1) Personnel - Discussion and/or action

1. Job Interviews - Town Solicitor

MOTION by Councilor Forgue to Seek to Convene to Executive Session Pursuant to: R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a) (1) Personnel - Discussion and/or action, 1. Job Interviews - Town Solicitor; seconded by Councilor Reichert

Council Discussion: none

Councilor President G. Steere requested the Clerk poll the council:

Councilor Forgue -AYE

Councilor Henry -AYE

Councilor Reichert -AYE

Councilor W. Steere -AYE

Councilor G. Steere -AYE

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Councilor G. Steere stated those in attendance will now be placed in the “waiting room” by the meeting Host.

- V. Reconvene Open Session  
Disclosure of votes taken or # of votes taken in Executive Session - Discussion and/or Action

**OPEN SESSION -**

**MOTION** was made by Councilor Henry to RECONVENE OPEN SESSION, SEAL the minutes of Closed Executive Session and **DISCLOSE** that 0 votes were taken in CLOSED Executive Session; seconded by Councilor Reichert

Council Discussion: none

Councilor President G. Steere requested the Clerk poll the council:

- Councilor Fogue - AYE
- Councilor Henry -AYE
- Councilor Reichert -AYE
- Councilor W. Steere -AYE
- Councilor G. Steere -AYE

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Councilor G. Steere reminded the Council that there may be some people joining this meeting by telephone or without video capability so please identify yourself when speaking. When making or seconding a motion please identify yourself.

Councilor G. Steere then went on to explain the procedure for the meeting via zoom.

Councilor G. Steere stated participants expressing inappropriate behavior or being disruptive may be removed from the meeting by the moderator.

- VI. Unfinished Business
  - A. Public Hearing - Continued from July 16, 2020Councilor G. Steere stated this Public Hearing was opened on July 16, 2020 for the consideration of proposed Charter amendment questions for the 2020 General Election.

- 1. Local Ballot Questions - 2020 Elections
  - a. Recommendations of 2020 Charter Review Commission
    - 1. **Reconsideration of vote taken- Recommendation #14**  
Elected Town Clerk to Appointed Town Clerk

Discussion and/or Action

Motion was made by Councilor Forgue to reconsider the vote taken -recommendation #14 elected town clerk to appointed town clerk; seconded by Councilor Henry.

Discussion: Councilor Reichert questioned how the Council could reconsider a vote previously taken and if that was legal. Atty. Kane stated he believes it is allowable legally and discussed the procedure to follow. Atty. Kane stated technically it should be done at the next subsequent meeting by a person who voted in the majority. Councilor G. Steere stated the public hearing is still open because it was continued. Councilor Reichert and Councilor W. Steere raised concerns about reconsidering this vote because the public addressed it at the last part of the public hearing and if it is being discussed again the public would still have a right to speak. Councilor G. Steere stated that the agenda was posted so people could know and can chose to speak. Councilor W. Steere stated people may not have looked at the agenda because the portion they were interested in was already voted on. Councilor P. Henry asked if the public hearing was only continued for the discussion of town manager. Councilor G. Steere stated originally yes, but it was posted with the reconsideration. Councilor W. Steere stated this is highly irregular, in his opinion.

Councilor G. Steere requested the clerk to poll the Council:

Councilor Forgue-AYE  
Councilor Henry-NAY  
Councilor Reichert-NAY  
Councilor W. Steere-NAY  
Councilor G. Steere- AYE

MOTION FAILS

2. Proposed Town Charter Amendments - Discussion and/or Action
  - a. Proposed amendment to form of government - creation of Town Manager/Administrator position

Councilor G. Steere reminded the Council that the public hearing is still open as it was continued from last week.

Discussion: Councilor G. Steere read the proposed amendment. There was discussion as to the difference between a town manager and a town administrator. Councilor Henry stated she feels, if this is included on the ballot, the Council needs to be very specific as to this position because the town is currently trying to fill the human resources position. Councilor W. Steere stated that town managers in other communities handle human resources. Councilor Forgue stated he did research over the last week and feels a town manager is needed to handle day to day things, to work with the Council and that towns without managers can be bypassed for grants. Councilor Forgue also stated that the public needs to know of the importance of this position. Councilor Henry stated she is opening her mind to the manager but feels that it can include the human resource position and be fiscally responsible. Councilor P. Henry stated that she will do what's best but that she needs all the details. There was discussion as to whether the Council could put the brakes on the human resource position. Councilor G. Steere stated he feels there is a need for the human resource position because

it may be too long before a town manager may be in place. Councilor Forgue suggested a temporary firm to handle the human resource position. Discussion as to the cost and the description for the town manager followed. Councilor W. Steere stated that COVID has shown how complex government is and the need for a day to day person to advocate and handle items. Councilor W. Steere continued that he agrees there is a cost but it will help taxpayers in the long run. Atty. Kane suggested the Council look at the town manager description in Burrillville, as it is a good example.

Steve Sette, resident, stated that the Council could look at ballot language used by the Town of Richmond as an example for the Town manager. S. Sette suggested that not having a residency requirement would give the Council a larger pool of applicants and to look at the Department of Business Regulation to get an idea as to compensation. Mr. Sette continued by describing the position as being more human resource on a day to day basis- managing department heads and employees; acting as a liaison between the Council and the public; and, emphasized that the town needs a strong manager because they do have some decision making authority. Discussion followed that an appointed manager as opposed to elected.

Jason Sirois, resident, stated he feels the position should be elected to take control from the Town Council.

Ted Burlingame, resident, supported the position as described by Steve Sette and disagreed with an elected position. Councilor G. Steere stated that he wants the best qualified individual and does not want it to be a popularity contest.

Councilor G. Steere asked if there was anyone else wishing to speak. Councilor G. Steere thanked everyone for their input, and DECLARED the public hearing closed .

**MOTION** was made by Councilor Henry to ADOPT FOR THE BALLOT RESOLUTION

Shall the Gloucester Town Charter be amended to change the language in C1-2. Form of Government, to change from a Town Council form of government to a Town Council/appointed Manager form of government where the requirements, powers and duties shall be determined by an enactment to the Gloucester Code of Ordinances?

Seconded by Councilor Reichert

Council Discussion: none

Councilor President G. Steere requested the Clerk poll the council:

Councilor Forgue -AYE  
Councilor Henry -AYE  
Councilor Reichert -AYE  
Councilor W. Steere -AYE  
Councilor G. Steere -AYE

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

B. Resolutions

1. Authorization of 2020 General Election Local Questions - Discussion and/or Action  
Councilor G. Steere stated that the Town Council adopted questions #1 through #11 on July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, and Question #12 was adopted on July 23, 2020:

RESOLUTION #2020-02  
SUBMITTING PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENTS TO THE ELECTORS

WHEREAS, the Charter Review Commission of the Town of Glocester has convened in accordance with C14-11 of the Town Charter and Article XIII Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Rhode Island; and

WHEREAS, the Charter Review Committee has forwarded its proposed amendments to the Town Council as charged; and

WHEREAS, The Town Council, after consideration and public hearing adopted the following amendments on July 16<sup>th</sup> & July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 ; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

That the following questions shall be presented to the electors of the Town of Glocester at the next General Election for their consideration:

**1. AMENDMENT TO GLOCESTER HOME RULE CHARTER  
( Resolution of the Town Council adopted July 23, 2020)**

Shall the Glocester Town Charter be amended with the addition of language to Article I, Section C1-8, Contracts with other bodies: to include that all contracts or cooperative agreements must be reviewed by the Town Council and executed by the Town Council President or designee, by vote of Town Council?

**2. AMENDMENT TO GLOCESTER HOME RULE CHARTER  
(Resolution of the Town Council adopted July 23, 2020)**

Shall the Glocester Town Charter be amended with the addition of language to Article III, Section C3-1, Financial Town Referendum, to include: Once the electors of the Town have voted on the expenditure of money at Financial Town Referendum, no additional expenditures or increases to approved expenditures shall be added without the vote of the electors with the exception of emergency expenditures made pursuant to Article VIII Section C8-10?

**3. AMENDMENT TO GLOCESTER HOME RULE CHARTER**

**(Resolution of the Town Council adopted July 23, 2020)**

Shall the Gloucester Town Charter be amended to include the following language to Article VI Section C6-7, Regionalization: “Any proposal for regionalization must be approved by the Town Council and placed on a referendum, by the Town Council, for elector approval”?

**4. AMENDMENT TO GLOCESTER HOME RULE CHARTER**

**(Resolution of the Town Council adopted July 23, 2020)**

Shall the Gloucester Town Charter be amended to include the following language to Article 6, Section C6-10, Over Spending of School Department: After “shall advise the Town Council and the Director of Finance” add “within thirty (30) days of knowing that expenditures, encumbrances and accruals would result in excess of appropriations”?

**5. AMENDMENT TO GLOCESTER HOME RULE CHARTER**

**(Resolution of the Town Council adopted July 23, 2020)**

Shall the Gloucester Town Charter be amended with the repeal of Article VII. Dept. of Finance, Section C7-11. Director of Human Resources, to reflect the position of Director of Human Resources shall be a separate department and not a collateral duty of the Finance Department?

**6. AMENDMENT TO GLOCESTER HOME RULE CHARTER**

**(Resolution of the Town Council adopted July 23, 2020)**

Shall the Gloucester Town Charter be amended to include language in Article VIII Section C8-2 Budget Board: 1. Duties a. add “and non-profit organization serving the Town of Gloucester residents”?

**7. AMENDMENT TO GLOCESTER HOME RULE CHARTER**

**(Resolution of the Town Council adopted July 23, 2020)**

Shall the Gloucester Town Charter be amended to change Article VIII Section C8-3 Budget Board Item 3 and Item 5 to state that sufficient copies of the budget, before and after adoption, shall be made available by the Finance Director and not the Town Clerk?

**8. AMENDMENT TO GLOCESTER HOME RULE CHARTER**

**(Resolution of the Town Council adopted July 23, 2020)**

Shall the Gloucester Town Charter be amended to replace language in Article VIII. Section C8-9, Land Trust, to reduce the appropriated amount to Land Trust from 75% of revenue generated from the payment of Real Estate Conveyance Taxes to 45%?

**9. AMENDMENT TO GLOCESTER HOME RULE CHARTER**

**(Resolution of the Town Council adopted July 23, 2020)**

Shall the Gloucester Town Charter be amended to include language in Article XIV, Section C14- 8, Item 1. Prohibition to include all forms of discrimination and should include Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Marital Status, National Origin and Disability?

**10. AMENDMENT TO GLOCESTER HOME RULE CHARTER**

**(Resolution of the Town Council adopted July 23, 2020)**

Shall the Gloucester Town Charter be amended to include language adding the position of an appointed Town Planner?

**11. AMENDMENT TO GLOCESTER HOME RULE CHARTER**

**(Resolution of the Town Council adopted July 23, 2020)**

Shall the Gloucester Town Charter be amended to include language adding the position of an appointed Recreation Director?

**12. AMENDMENT TO GLOCESTER HOME RULE CHARTER**

**(Resolution of the Town Council adopted July 23, 2020)**

Shall the Gloucester Town Charter be amended to change language in C1-2. Form of Government, to change from a Town Council form of government to a Town Council/appointed Manager form of government where the requirements, powers and duties shall be determined by an enactment to the Gloucester Code of Ordinances?

seconded by Councilor Henry

Council Discussion: none

Councilor President G. Steere requested the Clerk poll the council:

- Councilor Forgue -AYE
- Councilor Henry -AYE
- Councilor Reichert -AYE
- Councilor W. Steere -AYE
- Councilor G. Steere -AYE

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

VII. Personnel

A. Finance Director

1. **Reconsideration of vote taken-**

( July 16, 2020 2.Appointments

d. Finance Director)

To consider Amendment to employment effective date -  
Discussion and/or Action

Councilor G. Steere stated the Town Council appointed a Finance Director and adopted an effective date of August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 but now that date needs to be changed to July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to enable medical coverage for August for that new employee.

**MOTION** was made by Councilor Henry to RECONSIDER the vote of July 16, 2020 regarding, X. New Business, E. Personnel, d. Finance Director; seconded by Councilor Reichert

Council Discussion: none

Councilor President G. Steere requested the Clerk poll the council:

Councilor Forgue -AYE  
Councilor Henry -AYE  
Councilor Reichert -AYE  
Councilor W. Steere -AYE  
Councilor G. Steere -AYE

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

**MOTION** was made by Councilor Henry to AMEND the effective date of hire for Adam Muccino, Finance Director, to July 31, 2020 with a start date of August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020; seconded by Councilor Reichert

Council Discussion: none

Councilor President G. Steere requested the Clerk poll the council:

Councilor Forgue -AYE  
Councilor Henry -AYE  
Councilor Reichert -AYE  
Councilor W. Steere -AYE  
Councilor G. Steere -AYE

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Councilor G. Steere stated that Council needs to discuss the effective date of employment for the Public Works, Full time -Building Maintenance Worker, Gary Gras appointed on July 16, 2020 as it appears it is the same situation as Finance Director, that the employee wouldn't be eligible for health care for the month of August either unless changed. Councilor G. Steere stated the Council could add for discussion only, get a consensus to amend, and put on August 20<sup>th</sup> agenda for ratification.

**MOTION** was made by Councilor Henry to ADD to agenda, for discussion only, VII. B. Public Works. Full time Building/Maintenance Worker amendment to employment effective date; seconded by Councilor Reichert

Council Discussion: none

Councilor President G. Steere requested the Clerk poll the council:

Councilor Forgue -AYE  
Councilor Henry -AYE  
Councilor Reichert -AYE  
Councilor W. Steere -AYE



Councilor G. Steere -AYE

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Council decided by a consensus that they agree Gary Gras's effective date should be July 31, 2020 and to ratify this consensus on the August 20, 2020 meeting.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION** was made by Councilor Henry to Adjourn at 9:45 p.m., seconded by Councilor Reichert

AYES- Unanimous

MOTION PASSED

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY