



City of Fitchburg Massachusetts 01420

CITY COUNCIL

Councillors at Large

Sally H. Cragin
Marcus L. DiNatale
Amy L. Green
Elizabeth R. Walsh
Anthony M. Zarrella

President

Anthony M. Zarrella

Vice President

Andrew J. Van Hazinga

Ward Councillors

Ward 1 – Bernard J. Schultz III
Ward 2 – Paul R. Beauchemin
Ward 3 – Andrew J. Couture
Ward 4 – Andrew J. Van Hazinga
Ward 5 – Marisa R. Fleming
Ward 6 – Derrick J. Cruz

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Fitchburg was held at the Legislative Building at 700 Main Street and over the Zoom meeting platform and live streamed at FATV Studios, Fitchburg, on January 30, 2024.

The meeting was called to order by President Zarrella at 7:01 P.M. The meeting opened with a salute to the Flag led by Councilor Walsh. The City Clerk called the roll 11 Councilors were present. Board consists of 11 members.

I. PUBLIC FORUM

- Alexander Vera, City of Chief, Mayor Squailia, requested suspension of the rules on item 008-24.
- Christopher Batinsey, requested vote to approve 011-24.
- Lisa McMaster speaking in opposition of 008-24.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Schultz: The next meeting of the Widowed Helping Widowed Support Group will take place on Thursday, February 8, 2024 from 4 until 5:30 p.m. in Room 205 at the Fitchburg State University Recreation Center, 130 North Street. Kelley Lynn and Bernie Schultz will co-facilitate the meeting.

Fitchburg Community Meetings: Climate Change Workshops

Zoom meeting: Thursday Feb. 15 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm on Zoom

There are two workshops in Fitchburg, one in-person and one on Zoom. Content for each meeting is slightly different. **Feel free to register for either or for both meetings.**

At the in-person meeting, Thursday, February 8, 5:30 -7:30 PM, at the Senior Center, the concept of Nature-based Solutions will be described, you will have a chance to give input on specific climate and environmental issues, ideas, and places in your community that could be good sites for using Nature-based Solutions to address these issues.

At the Zoom meetings, we'll talk about the sites suggested for Nature-based Solutions from the first meeting and identify specific sites in your community to include in our plan.

Right now we are all benefiting from excellent service from FATV, there funding stream is in danger. They are funded by a fee for cable. We need legislative action on how cable access is funded FATV. Currently there is a bill in the House and Senate which will help protect local cable access.

Please contact State Representative Michael Kushmerek for support House Bill H74

Please contact Senator John Cronin for support on Senate Bill S34

Please help us preserve our local access programing.

Catmobile will be in at the Fitchburg Fire Department, Central Station, North Street, make reservation at info@mrfrs.org. Services provided are spayed/neutered, vaccines, and microchips. Call Animal Control for Vouchers. Upcoming dates, February 20th, March 14th, and March 28th. need reservations.

III. REPORT OF THE APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Appointments Committee

Oral Report

Meeting of January 30, 2024

New Appointment:

Permanent Full-Time Firefighter

For the City of Fitchburg

Ian B. Wilder

Report accepted. Appointments confirmed by unanimous consent 11/0. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

IV. REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RECORDS

The Committee on records reported the minutes of January 4, 2024 City Council meeting were correctly recorded. Report accepted and minutes adopted by unanimous consent 11/0. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

V. COMMUNICATIONS

Her Honor the Mayor

1. New Appointment letter:

Mr. Robert J. Talbot, as a member of the Fitchburg Zoning Board of Appeals, for a term to expire February 6, 2029.

2. New Appointment letter:

Mr. Joseph S. Bowen, as a member of the Fitchburg Cultural Council, for a term to expire February 6, 2027.

3. Re-Appointment letter:

Mr. Basil Tolos, as a member of the Fitchburg Disability Commission, for a term to expire February 1, 2027.

Appointment stand referred to the Appointments Committee by unanimous consent 11/0. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

4. Appointment letter from Her Honor the Mayor:

Lisa Mead of Mead, Talerman & Costa, LLC to the position of City Solicitor for a one year term set to Expire January 25, 2025.

[Mead, Talerman & Costa, LLC Attorneys at Law](#)

Communication read and filed in the City Clerk’s Office.

Promotion Letters

1. Promotion letter:

Captain Patrick G. Haverty to Provisional Deputy Chief

2. Promotion letter:

Lieutenant Jude Lambert to Captain

3. Promotion letter:

Lieutenant Kristopher J. Maillet to Captain

4. Promotion letter:

Firefighter John A. Girouard to Lieutenant

5. Promotion letter:

Firefighter Sean M. Joubert to Lieutenant

6. Promotion letter:

Firefighter Francisco Robles III to Lieutenant

Promotion letters read and filed in the City Clerk’s Office by unanimous consent 11/0. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

VI. REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Finance Committee

Meeting of January 24, 2024

Oral Report

276-23. ORDER THAT: the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of state earmark funds in the approximate amount of \$200,000 (TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS) in support of the production of market-rate apartments. ~~at the Iver Mills housing development project on River Street.~~
(Adopted as Amended)

277-23. ORDER THAT: the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of state earmark funds in the approximate amount of \$150,000 (ONE HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS), to be added to the city’s Main Street Housing Incentive

Program created last year, in support of the production of market-rate housing in ~~upper stories of~~ Main Street buildings.
(Adopted as Amended)

278-23. ORDER THAT: the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of grant funds from the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities in the approximate amount of \$100,000 (ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS) for the purpose of conducting a study of the Water Street gateway corridor, specifically between the Water Street Bridge and the intersection of Bemis Road and Wanoosnoc Road, to analyze and prioritize redevelopment opportunities and infrastructure needs.
(Adopted)

279-23. ORDER THAT: the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of grant funds from the Executive Office of Economic Development Massworks Program in the approximate amount of \$450,000 (FOUR HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS) for the creation of engineering designs, including underground utilities, for the reconfiguration of Moran Square.
(Adopted)

Report read and accepted. Orders 276-23 & 277-23 granted as amended and 278-23 & 279-23 granted by unanimous consent 11/0. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

Orders Signed by the Mayor January 31, 2024

Public Safety Committee
Meeting of January 30, 2024
Oral Report

274-23. Intercar Motors Group Corp., to petition for a Class II Dealer's License located at: 556 River Street - Fitchburg - Ma – 01420

Report read and accepted. Petition granted by unanimous consent 11/0. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

Public Works Committee
Meeting of January 30, 2024
Oral Report

254-23. Councilors Squailia and Van Hazinga to install a berm at 405 Blossom St from the driveway to the existing storm drain to mitigate water intrusion into the landscaped area and sidewalk, approx 50'. Request DPW review height of Driveway Apron as may need to be raised up to direct water flow towards storm drain.
(Approved)

255-23. Marisa Fleming in behalf of Dan Sarasin of 75 Klondike Ave to install a berm in front of his property to mitigate flooding from the higher ground across the street.
(Held)

- 256-23. Andrew Couture on behalf of Brian Rufiange to request a berm to be placed from the intersection of Oak Hill to the storm drain just past 394 Franklin Rd.
(Held)
- 257-23. Councilor Sam Squailia to remove the large stump in front of 264 Elm St. This stump juts into the roadway and is often obscured due to weed overgrowth, causing damage to vehicles trying to park on the street.
(Approved)
- 193-23. City Councilor Andrew Couture, on behalf of Bev Hofer, to replace the **berm driveway/entry way** in front of 466 Franklin Road to combat runoff from Oak Hill Road.
(Approved as amended)

Report read and accepted by unanimous consent 11/0. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

VII. ORDERS – FINANCE

- 008-24. ORDER THAT: the City of Fitchburg hereby appropriates and transfers the sum of \$42,240 (FORTY-TWO THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED FORTY DOLLARS) from LAW DEPARTMENT- PERSONAL SERVICES to LAW DEPARTMENT- EXPENSES for the appointment of the City Solicitor. [Mead, Talerman & Costa, LLC Attorneys at Law](#) President Zarrella, acknowledged Suspension of the Rules requested during public comment.

Motion and second for Suspension of the Rules for purposes to refer to Council as a Whole Meeting. Motion passes seven (7) in favor three (3) opposed (Van Hazinga, Fleming, Cruz). 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

Motion and second to reconsider sending to Council as a Whole by roll call vote of six (6) in favor five (5) opposed (Couture, Cragin, Cruz, Green and Van Hazinga), motion fails. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

Motion and second for Suspension of Rules by roll call vote of four (4) in favor and seven (7) opposed (Beacuhemin, Couture, DiNatale, Fleming, Schultz, Walsh and Zarrella), motion fails. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

Matter stands referred to Finance Committee and Legislative Affairs.

- 013-24. ORDER THAT: the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of funds from the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) federal grant program in the approximate amount of \$74,155.78 (SEVENTY-FOUR THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-FIVE AND 78/100 DOLLARS) for the purpose of retaining the Police Department's Domestic Violence Advocate position, as well as to support training and provide supplies during DV awareness month.
(Refer to Finance Committee)

014-24. ORDER THAT: the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of funds from the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) allocation in the approximate amount of \$45,702.51 (FORTY-FIVE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED TWO AND 51/100 DOLLARS) to address unmet criminal justice and officer safety needs in the form of new radios and accessories.
(Refer to Finance Committee)

Orders 013-24 & 014-24 stand referred to Finance Committee by unanimous consent 11/0. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

Suspension of the rules 015-24 approved by roll call vote of 11 in favor and 0 opposed. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

015-24. ORDER THAT: the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the transfer within of \$150,000 (ONE HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) from POLICE PERSONAL SERVICES – PATROLMEN to POLICE PERSONAL SERVICES - OVERTIME.

Order 015-24 adopted by unanimous consent 11/0. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

Order signed by the Mayor January 31, 2024

VIII. ORDERS-OTHER

012-24. ORDER THAT: Authorizing the City Clerk to notify the voters of the Presidential Primary to be held on March 5, 2024.

Order adopted by unanimous consent 11/0. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

Order signed by the Mayor January 31, 2024

VIII. ORDINANCE

009-24. AN ORDINANCE: AN ORDINANCE: Amending Article VIII entitled “Snow or Ice on Motor Vehicles” as outlined in the enclosed Ordinance. Chapter 157-94 shall be amended as outlined in the enclosed Ordinance. Chapter 169-10 entitled “Violations and penalties” shall be renumbered to be Chapter 169-11. A new Chapter 169-10 entitled “Duty to remove snow or ice from motor vehicles” shall be inserted and read as outlined in the enclosed Ordinance.

Ordinance 009-24 was referred to Legislatiave affairs, by unanimous consent 11/0. 11 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

IX. PETITIONS

The following petition was referred to Public Works Committee:

- 010-24. Counselor Fleming on behalf of Mary Lotze at 349 Pearl Hill Rd. To install a berm that has deteriorated over the years which is now causing flooding onto personal property.
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The following petition was referred to City Property Committee:

- 011-24. Confirming that the City is to proceed with Phase II of the Twin Cities Rail Trail Project and to take all necessary actions to appropriate funds, conduct takings of easements as identified on the 100% Plans and any further DOT approved Plans, and any further actions necessary, convenient, and helpful to facilitate the completion of the Phase II project.
[100% Plans](#)
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The following petition was referred to Legislative Affairs:

- 016-24. Councilor Beauchemin to amend Chapter §169-58 of the City Code with respect to penalties for violations of snow parking bans as enclosed in the attached petition.
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X. OTHER BUSINESS

Next Regular Meeting
Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 7:00 PM

The meeting adjourned at 7:38 P.M.

Joanna Bilotta-Simeone

Joanna Bilotta-Simeone, City Clerk