



*City of Taunton  
Municipal Council Meeting Minutes  
City Hall, 15 Summer Street, Taunton, MA  
In the Chester R. Martin Municipal Council Chambers*

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*Minutes, October 31, 2023 at 7:00 O'clock P.M.*

*Pledge of Allegiance*

*Regular Meeting*

*Mayor Shaunna L. O'Connell presiding*

*Prayer was offered by the Mayor*

*Present at roll call were: Councilors Dooner, Duarte, Borges, McCaul,  
Pottier, Sanders, Quintal and Postell.  
Councilor Coute was absent.*

**Record of October 24, 2023 meeting was read by title and approved. So Voted.**

**Opportunity for input by the general public.**

Jason Roomes, 246 High Street, Taunton, stated that he was pleased on the outcome of the discussion during the meeting of the Committee on Ordinances and Enrolled Bills regarding horse power limits on Lake Sabbatia. He requested that the time that the gate is closed is changed from 8:00pm to 9:00pm at least, as there are often tournaments during the summer on the lake that conclude at 8:00pm. He also discussed that fishing license funds are put towards boat ramps and hopes that the cost of the season pass can be reasonable so that fisherman can continue to utilize Lake Sabbatia.

Brian Ratcliffe, 4 Dale Street, Taunton, stated that he spoke three (3) weeks ago about his termination from his position as the Traffic Control Officer after being employed for only three (3) months after a false accusation involving an Amazon driver made by Officer Kevin Medas in October of 2022. He expressed his disappointment of how this matter was handled by the City. He stated that there is no body camera record of this incident and requested to see Sargent Medas's body camera documenting the alleged incident. He stated that he is disappointed that he has not heard any follow up from the City Council regarding this matter, which is why he is back this evening. He requested a hearing before the Committee on Police and License regarding these allegations in order to clear his name and restore his reputation, in hopes of getting his job back.

**Hearing:**

NONE.

**Communications from the Mayor:**

Mayor O'Connell stated that this past weekend there was an open house at the Airport, as well as a Trunk-or-Treat Event, which were both very successful events.

Mayor O'Connell stated that early voting will continue at City Hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor in the Silver City Conference Room. There will be early voting on Wednesday, November 1, 2023 and Thursday, November 2, 2023 from 8:00am until 4:00p, and on Friday, November 3, 2023 from 8:00am until 12:00pm.

Mayor O'Connell stated that the buttons for the Lights on Festival are currently on sale. The buttons are \$5 per adult and children under 12 years of age are free. Visit [www.lightsonfestival.org](http://www.lightsonfestival.org) to see where the buttons can be purchased.

Mayor O'Connell stated that the Lights on Festival Basket Fundraiser has begun and is located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of City Hall. The baskets have been donated by City of Taunton Departments and local businesses. This is a major fundraiser for the Christmas parade. Tickets can be purchased on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of City Hall in the Clerk of Committees Office.

Mayor O'Connell stated the Miss Taunton Scholarship Competition will take place on Sunday, November 5, 2023 at 4:00pm at the Friedman Middle School. Tickets are on sale at [www.misstaunton.org](http://www.misstaunton.org).

**Appointments:**

Appointment of Melissa Langham, 79 Ridgewood Dr., Taunton to serve on the Elections Commission fulfilling the unexpired term of Daniel Mansour Barbour which expires April 2024. **Motion was made to approve. So Voted.**

**Communications from City Officers:**

Com. from the Budget Director requesting to pay prior year invoices in the amount of \$159.69 to Eversource for natural gas. **Motion was made to refer to the Committee on Finance and Salaries. So Voted.**

Com. from the Chairman, Taunton Planning Board stating that the Taunton Planning Board has received a Site Plan Review modification for property at Galleria Mall Drive (prop I.D. 126-5, 118-41, 118-39, 118-8) for 994,480 sq. ft. of industrial/warehouse space in the Business District, submitted by Portman Holdings. The DIRB will meet to review this petition on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at 8:45AM in the Taunton Planning Board Office, 141 Oak Street and the Taunton Planning Board will meet to review the petition on Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 5:30PM in the Chester R. Martin Municipal Council Chambers, 15 Summer St., Taunton, Ma. **Motion was made to receive and place on file. So Voted.**

Com. from the Chairman, Taunton Planning Board stating that the Taunton Planning Board is in receipt of a proposed Amendment to the City of Taunton Zoning Ordinance- to allow Marijuana Establishments in the Highway Business District by Special Permit from the Municipal Council- (Amend Section 440 Attachment #2 to read: Special Permit from Municipal Council (SP2) in the Industrial District and Highway Business District (prohibited use in all other districts) submitted by East Coast Cali LLC. The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on this on Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 5:30PM at 15 Summer St., in the Chester R. Martin Municipal Council Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Taunton, Ma. **Motion was made to receive and place on file. So Voted.**

Com. from the Fire Chief requesting approval for two prior fiscal year purchase orders to pay for several invoices due for medical expenses and educational reimbursements to TFD members for a total of \$2,500.00. **Motion was made to refer to the Committee on Finance and Salaries. So Voted.**

**Communications from Citizens:**

NONE.

**Petitions:**

**Hours of Operation License – RENEWAL**

1. Red Shift Donuts, Inc. –dba- Dunkin Donuts located at 5 Washington St., Taunton. **Motion was made to refer to the Committee on Police and License and the Police Chief. So Voted.**

**Committee Reports:**

**Motion was made for Committee Reports to be read by title and approved. So Voted. Recommendations adopted to reflect the votes as recorded in Committee Reports. So Voted.**

**Unfinished Business:**

NONE.

**Orders, Ordinances and Resolutions:**

NONE.

**New Business:**

Councilor Pottier requested to refer to the DPW Commissioner and Board of Health the issue of excessive dust being generated by the plant at 120 Berkley Street. Councilor Pottier stated that he received a call from a concerned resident stating that when the plant changed hands in June, some of the processes of the plant may not have been being followed or perhaps changed, resulting in excessive dust being generated. **Motion was made to refer to the DPW Commissioner and Board of Health the issue of excessive dust being generated by the plant at 120 Berkley Street. So Voted.**

Councilor Sanders moved to invite the Parks, Cemeteries and Public Grounds Commissioner to meet with Committee on Public Property to review the details of the recent Commission's decision regarding public use of Taunton Green. **Motion was made to move approval. So Voted.**

Councilor Quintal motioned to meet in an executive session with the Human Resources Director, the City Solicitor and Chief Walsh in order for all of the Councilors to be briefed on the matter regarding Mr. Ratcliffe. On discussion, Attorney Bond stated that there has been communication with an Attorney on behalf of Mr. Ratcliffe, the Mayor's Office and the Human Resources Director, therefore, an executive session may not be appropriate at this time. Councilor Sanders questioned Attorney Bond as to what the appropriate forum would be to inform the Council of the matter. Attorney Bond stated that the letter that was received was on behalf of Mr. Ratcliffe and there have been ongoing communications with Mr. Ratcliffe. Councilor Quintal withdrew his motion.

Motion was made to refer to the Committee on Police and License and the Police Chief. On discussion, Councilor Dooner stated that per the rules of the Council, the appropriate course of action would be to refer this to next week or the following week for a discussion in order to determine if they should move forward. Councilor Borges stated there was a similar situation about eight (8) months ago involving a former employee and they received a letter from Attorney Costa stating the reasons why it would be inappropriate to have a discussion regarding a former employee in executive session, therefore, the best course of action would be to have Attorney Costa discuss why they are unable to have an executive session on a personnel matter and how the Council can be informed on this matter and have a discussion. Councilor Pottier stated that it may be beneficial to refer this matter to the Committee on Police and License and in the meantime also request a letter from Attorney Costa to clarify some of these questions. Councilor Duarte requested that the opinion from Attorney Costa include what the Council's jurisdiction is over these types of personnel matters. **Motion was made to refer to the Committee on Police and License and the Police Chief. On a roll call vote, eight (8) Councilors were present, six (6) Councilors voted in favor (Councilors Postell, Quintal, Sanders, Pottier, McCaul and Borges), two (2) were opposed (Councilors Duarte and Dooner). Councilor Couste was absent. The motion passes.**

**List of Documents and Other Exhibits:**

- Agenda

Meeting adjourned at 7:18 P.M.

A true copy:

Attest:

  
City Clerk

JLL/MAF

City of Taunton  
Municipal Council  
October 31, 2023

RECEIVED  
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

2023 NOV - 1 P 12: 06

**The Committee on Finance and Salaries**

TAUNTON, MA

The meeting was held at Taunton City Hall, 15 Summer Street, Taunton, MA 02780 in the Chester R. Martin Municipal Council Chambers. CITY CLERK

Members Present:     Councilor Phillip Duarte, Chairman  
                              Councilor David Pottier  
                              Councilor John McCaul

The meeting was called to order at 6:17 PM.

1. Approve the minutes from October 24, 2023.

**Motion** by Mr. Pottier and seconded by Mr. McCaul to approve. **So voted.**

2. Meet to review the weekly vouchers and payroll for City departments.

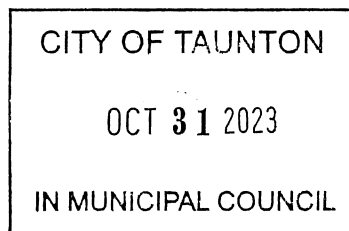
**Motion** by Mr. Pottier and seconded by Mr. McCaul to approve the payroll warrant in the amount of \$4,244,990.60. **So voted.**

**Motion** by Mr. Pottier and seconded by Mr. McCaul to approve the accounts payable warrant in the amount of \$3,879,283.82. **So voted.**

**Motion** by Mr. Pottier and seconded by Mr. McCaul to adjourn at 6:18 P.M. **So voted.**

**List of Documents and Other Exhibits Used:**

The Committee on Finance and Salaries Meeting Minutes from 10/24/23  
Payroll Warrant #69  
Bill Invoice Warrant #68  
List of items over \$100,000



Respectfully submitted,

*Maggie E. Clarke*

Maggie E. Clarke  
Clerk of Council Committees

**REPORTS ACCEPTED. RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED.**

*Jennifer K. Lopez*  
CITY CLERK

City of Taunton  
Municipal Council  
October 31, 2023

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2023 NOV -1 P 12: 07

**The Committee on Ordinances and Enrolled Bills**

TAUNTON, MA

The meeting was held at Taunton City Hall, 15 Summer Street, Taunton, MA 02780 in the  
Chester R. Martin Municipal Council Chambers. CITY CLERK

Members Present: Councilor Barry Sanders, Chairman  
Councilor John McCaul  
Councilor Kelly Dooner

Also Present: Edward Walsh, Police Chief

The meeting was called to order at 6:21 PM.

1. Approve minutes from October 17, 2023.

**Motion** by Mr. McCaul and seconded by Ms. Dooner to approve. **So voted.**

2. Review of administration's proposed ordinances for Lake Sabbatia

Mr. Sanders read two relevant sections from a letter from Chief Walsh. The first recommended a 25mph speed limit on lakes and waterways in the City. He read the proposed amendment to Ordinance Chapter 202 Section 202 - Boats.

Ms. Dooner stated that she saw no issue with instituting a speed limit and was glad that they were not proposing a restriction on horsepower.

Chief Walsh pointed out that the proposal also changes the definition of watercraft.

**Motion** by Mr. McCaul and seconded by Ms. Dooner to approve and refer to the City Clerk for a first reading. **So voted.**

Mr. Sanders referred to the second part that focuses on the tow away zone and the draft of the proposed ordinance change.

**Motion** by Ms. Dooner and seconded by Mr. McCaul to refer the proposed ordinance change for a first reading. **So voted.**

3. Meet to discuss the proposed ordinance change regarding compensation for special police officers.

Chief Walsh explained that they don't have anything to authorize the payment of officers going to court once they are retired and that they are looking to compensate officers based on the rank at which they retired.

Mr. Sanders asked if the Patrolmen's Union had been consulted and Chief Walsh indicated that these officers are not in the unions at this point.

**Motion** by Ms. Dooner and seconded by Mr. McCaul to refer the proposed changes to chapter 19 Section 28 to the City Clerk for a first reading. **So voted.**

4. Meet to discuss ordinance for wayfinding signage.

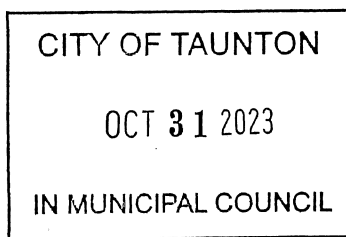
Mr. Sanders read a letter from Attorney Costa regarding wayfinding signage dated 10/25/23. This letter referred to the guidance from Attorney de Abreu from 2018. Mr. Sanders read the letter from 2018 from Attorney de Abreu. Mr. Sanders suggested that an ordinance is not necessary so it would be appropriate to receive and place on file and remove the matter from the Committee.

**Motion** by Ms. Dooner and seconded by Mr. McCaul to remove the matter from the Ordinance Committee. **So voted.**

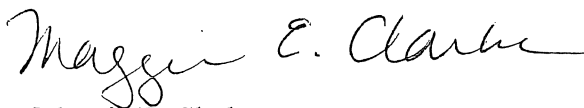
**Motion** by Ms. Dooner and seconded Mr. McCaul to adjourn the meeting at 6:34 PM. **So voted.**

**List of Documents and Other Exhibits Used:**

Committee on Ordinances and Enrolled Bills Meeting Minutes of 10/17/23  
 Committee on Ordinances and Enrolled Bills Meeting Minutes of 10/10/23  
 Letter from Edward Walsh dated 10/11/23  
 Proposed Ordinance change Chapter 202 Section 202 – Boats  
 Proposed Ordinance change Chapter 405 Section 405-64 Tow away zone regulations  
 Letter from Edward Walsh dated October 8, 2023  
 Proposed Ordinance change Chapter 19 – Police Department  
 Committee on Ordinances and Enrolled Bills Meeting Minutes of 9/8/20  
 Letter from Matthew Costa dated 10/25/23  
 Letter from Daniel de Abreu dated 10/4/18



Respectfully submitted,



Maggie E. Clarke  
 Clerk of Council Committees

**REPORTS ACCEPTED.  
 RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED.**



CITY CLERK