

CITY OF WORCESTER

JOURNAL OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Esther Howland (South) Chamber

Convened: 6:30 P.M.

Recessed: 6:43 P.M.

Reconvened: 7:03 P.M.

Adjourned: 7:10 P.M.

MAYOR

Joseph M. Petty

AT-LARGE COUNCILORS

Morris A. Bergman

Donna M. Colorio

Khrystian E. King

Thu Nguyen

Kathleen M. Toomey



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DISTRICT COUNCILORS

Jenny Pacillo - District 1

Candy Mero-Carlson - District 2

George J. Russell - District 3

Luis A. Ojeda - District 4

Etel Haxhijaj - District 5

CITY CLERK

Nikolin Vangjeli

CITY MANAGER

Eric D. Batista

CITY AUDITOR

Robert V. Stearns

City Hall - 455 Main Street Worcester, Massachusetts

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. STAR SPANGLED BANNER

3. ROLL CALL - All present with the Mayor as the Chair.

4. PROCLAMATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGMENTS, MOMENTS OF SILENCE

- 4a. Mayor Petty read a Proclamation declaring the month of October 2024 as Dysautonomia Awareness Month in the city. The Proclamation was presented to Kate McGrath, founder of Diss the Dys, a Dysautonomia Awareness Campaign.

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- 5a. Order - That the City Council of the City of Worcester hereby approves the minutes of the City Council Meeting of October 8, 2024.

Mayor Petty read the item and moved to adopt the item. Order adopted

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

6a. Mayor Petty read the item and recognized the following speakers:

1. Fred Nathan, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of items #9k CC, #9n CC and #9o CC
2. Orla (no last name given), Worcester resident, spoke in favor of an item not listed on the agenda

7. HEARINGS AND ORDERS

7a. Hearing: CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS for a conduit location at: COMMERCIAL ST. at 50 FOSTER ST.

Granting permission to CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS for a conduit location at: COMMERCIAL ST. at 50 FOSTER ST.

Mayor Petty read the item and recognized Councilor Russell, who moved to collectively Table Under Privilege items #7a CC through #7d CC, #8a CC, #9a CC through #9o CC, #10a CC through #10f CC, #11a CC, #13a CC through #13y CC, #14a CC, and #15a CC and #15b CC, as well as to adjourn the meeting.

Motion adopted on a roll call vote of 7 Yeas and 4 Nays (Yeas - Bergman, Colorio, Mero-Carlson, Pacillo, Russell, Toomey, Petty) (Nays - Haxhiaj, King, Nguyen, Ojeda).

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell

7b. Hearing: NATIONAL GRID for a conduit location at: HARLEM ST.

Granting permission to NATIONAL GRID for a conduit location at: HARLEM ST.

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

7c. Hearing: NATIONAL GRID for a conduit location at: MILLBROOK ST. and MILTON ST.

Granting permission to NATIONAL GRID for a conduit location at: MILLBROOK ST. and MILTON ST.

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

7d. Hearing: NATIONAL GRID and VERIZON NEW ENGLAND INC. for a jointly-owned pole location at: BROOKS ST.

Granting permission to NATIONAL GRID and VERIZON NEW ENGLAND INC. for a jointly-owned pole location at: BROOKS ST.

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

8. RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

- 8a. That the City Council convene in Executive Session at the Tuesday, October 22, 2024 meeting for the purpose of discussing the deployment of security personnel or devices, or strategies with respect thereto, as the last item of business of the regular City Council meeting and the City Council will not reconvene in open session. (Tabled Under Privilege - Petty October 15, 2024)

Tabled Under Privilege on a roll call vote of 7 Yeas and 4 Nays (Yeas - Bergman, Colorio, Mero-Carlson, Pacillo, Russell, Toomey, Petty) (Nays - Haxhij, King, Nguyen, Ojeda)

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

9. PETITIONS

- 9a. Mark A. Borenstein request the discontinuance of certain portions of Garland St. and Veterans Ave. as depicted on the attached plans and as follows: 1) Discontinuance of the southerly portion of Veterans Ave.; 2) Discontinuance of the westerly and southerly portion of Garland St. and; 3) The abandonment of the City's property rights in the discontinued portions of Veterans Ave. and Garland St.

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

- 9b. Ayodele Talabi request Armory St. be resurfaced.

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

- 9c. Ayodele Talabi request Grand St. be resurfaced.

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

- 9d. Tony Economou on behalf of Louise Clarke request sidewalk and driveway apron repair in front of 389 May St.

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

- 9e. Councilor Candy Mero-Carlson request installation of a flashing pedestrian crosswalk signal across Plantation St. at Robin Rd. for access to Holmes Field.

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

- 9f. Bruce Brooks request installation of speed humps on Carlisle St.

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

- 9g. Thomas Ayers et al. request installation of speed humps in front of the left side of the property located at 35 Colby Ave.

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

- 9h. Robert Bilotta request installation of permanent speed hump on Channing St. in the vicinity of 53 Channing St.

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

- 9i. Evan C. Corrigan request installation of speed radar on the westbound downhill side of Fales St.

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

- 9j. Jennifer Yenni Desroches request information concerning leaf pickup and drop-off be added to the 311 website and app.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 9k. Tom Marino request City Council request City Manager order his administration to fully comply with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 66, known as the Massachusetts Public Records Law.
Mayor Petty read the item and recognized Councilor Pacillo, who moved to Table the Item Under Privilege.
Tabled Under Privilege - Pacillo
- 9l. David Webb request City Council request City Manager request City Solicitor draft documentation required to amend the City Charter to require a review process to ensure the ongoing competency and efficacy of the Worcester Law Department. Further, request said review process to take into account lawsuits against the city, constituent complaints and constitutional concerns raised by the public.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 9m. David Webb request City Council request City Manager request City Solicitor draft documentation required to amend the City Charter to require employees of the law department have a basic comprehension and familiarity with constitutional law. Further, request said amendment include language requiring any employee who does not have a basic comprehension and familiarity with constitutional law submit papers or other legal documents as proof. Failure to submit such authenticated documents shall make the candidate ineligible for employment in the law department.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 9n. Tony Economou on behalf of Embrace Worcester Business request City Council request City Manager create and hire a Small Business Ombudsperson to work with, guide and help small businesses, new and existing, with permitting or any other city-related business questions and issues.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 9o. Tony Economou request on behalf of Embrace Worcester Business request City Council request City Manager hold meetings with contractors of any road construction project and liaisons from any of the affected businesses to discuss access considerations prior to construction beginning.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

10. CHAIRMAN'S ORDERS

- 10a. FROM THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING - Request City Manager request Commissioner of Transportation and Mobility explore traffic calming measures for Delmont Ave.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

- 10b.** FROM THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING - Request City Manager request Commissioner of Transportation and Mobility review stop signs at the intersection of Delmont Ave. and Bedford Ave.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 10c.** FROM THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING - Request City Manager request Police Chief provide increased traffic enforcement on Delmont Ave.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 10d.** FROM THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING - Request City Manager request Commissioner of Transportation and Mobility discuss the potential for the inclusion of safety improvements at the crosswalk near 1281 Pleasant St. as part of the upcoming MassDOT Pleasant St. project.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 10e.** FROM THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING - Request City Manager request Commissioner of Transportation and Mobility investigate the potential for installation of a sidewalk on North Pkwy. connecting residences to the northwest with the Burncoat Park entrance pathway to the southeast of Davidson Rd.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 10f.** FROM THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING - Request City Manager request Commissioner of Transportation and Mobility review one-way and turn restriction signage on Fruit St. and install any additional signage needed to address safety or traffic pattern concerns.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

11. ORDER

- 11a.** Request City Manager request Commissioner of Transportation and Mobility provide City Council with an update concerning a previously adopted item from June 25, 2024, which read as follows: Request City Manager request Commissioner of Transportation and Mobility provide City Council with a final list of sidewalks approved for resurfacing by City Council, with updated cost projections, to ensure District Councilors are able to make their backlog of selections, including FY23, FY24, FY25 and FY26. (Mero-Carlson)
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

12. RECESS TO FINANCE COMMITTEE - No items pending

13. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING

- 13a.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Justice L. Real request installation of five (5) crosswalks on the driveways of Burncoat High School and Burncoat Middle School: recommend adoption of the accompanying Order.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

- 13b.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Carol Parker et al. request installation of "Not a Thru Street" signage at the Frederickson Ave. street sign: recommend adoption of the accompanying Order.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13c.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Hector Diaz request installation of handicap parking space across from 68 Everard St.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13d.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Michael Simakauskas request removal of a handicap parking space in the vicinity of 29 Shamrock St.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13e.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Charles Divris request the length of the handicap parking space in front of 81-83 Whitmarsh St. be reduced.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13f.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Councilor Morris A. Bergman request installation of speed humps on Trenton St.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13g.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Councilor George J. Russell on behalf of Delia Vega request installation of speed humps on Greenfield St.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13h.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Councilor Jenny Pacillo request installation of speed humps on Brighton Rd.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13i.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Effie Barond et al. request installation of permanent speed humps on Boston Ave.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13j.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Peter Magerowski request installation of speed humps at 92 Lynnwood Ln.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

- 13k.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Councilor George J. Russell on behalf of Eric Brandt request installation of speed bumps on Delmont Ave. between Grafton St. and Bedford Ave.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13l.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Erin Michelotti request installation of pedestrian signage with lights near 1281 Pleasant St. to connect the bus stops.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13m.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Jully Khattar request installation of crosswalk on North Pkwy at the entrance of Burncoat Park (70 North Pkwy): recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13n.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Jully Khattar request installation of flashing crosswalk signage on North Pkwy at the entrance of Burncoat Park (70 North Pkwy): recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13o.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Dickson Mensah request installation of parking zones in front of 428, 430 and 432 Harding St.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13p.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Courtney Ordway et al. request installation of resident permit parking on Nebraska St. in the vicinity of 8 Camassa Ter. and 6 Muskego St.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13q.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Councilor Candy Mero-Carlson request installation of resident permit parking in front of 8 Camassa Terrace: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13r.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Zaida Gomez request installation of resident permit parking on both sides of Edward St. from Laurel St. to Elliott St.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13s.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Maria Castillo request installation of residential parking on Chapin St. from Dorchester St. to South St.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

- 13t.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Naiskys Hechavarria request installation of resident permit parking on Doane St. from Providence St. to end of Doane St.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13u.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Athena Callender request installation of resident permit parking on both sides of the street from 32 Woodbine St. to 10 Woodbine St.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13v.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Robert Prytko request installation of Left Turn signal at the intersection of Salisbury St. and Grove St.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13w.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Maria Santos request installation of One Way signage in front of 42 Fruit St.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13x.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Kristian Albarracin request existing "End of School Zone" signage in front of 165 Belmont St. be relocated to in front of 161 Belmont St.: recommend Petition be placed on file.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)
- 13y.** REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC AND PARKING Upon the Petition of Sherri Way request removal of handicap parking space across 20 Kosta St.: recommend Petition be given Leave to Withdraw.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

14. TO BE ORDAINED

- 14a.** Amending Chapter Two Section Twenty-Seven of the Revised Ordinances of 2008 Concerning Fees to be Charged to the Worcester Housing Authority.
Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

15. TABLED UNDER PRIVILEGE

- 15a.** COMMUNICATION of the City Manager transmitting informational communication relative to an opinion regarding a proposed charter amendment to grant the City Council authority to move, edit, and/or eliminate any line item/funding listed in the annual proposed City Budget. (Tabled Under Privilege - Mero-Carlson October 15, 2024)
Tabled Under Privilege on a roll call vote of 7 Yeas and 4 Nays (Yeas - Bergman, Colorio, Mero-Carlson, Pacillo, Russell, Toomey, Petty) (Nays - Haxhijaj, King, Nguyen, Ojeda).

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

15b. COMMUNICATION of the City Manager transmitting informational communication relative to a process to establish a charter review commission. (Tabled Under Privilege - Mero-Carlson October 15, 2024)

Tabled Under Privilege on a roll call vote of 7 Yeas and 4 Nays (Yeas - Bergman, Colorio, Mero-Carlson, Pacillo, Russell, Toomey, Petty) (Nays - Haxhiaj, King, Nguyen, Ojeda).

Tabled Under Privilege - Russell (See item #7a CC)

16. TABLED ITEMS

16a. ORDER of Councilor Konstantina B. Lukes - Request City Manager request City Solicitor provide City Council with a legal opinion regarding the process of instituting a residential rent control program and the resulting impact of implementing such a program. (Tabled Under Privilege - Lukes September 17, 2019 and September 24, 2019 and Tabled - Lukes October 15, 2019)

No action taken

16b. RESOLUTION of Councilor Khrystian E. King - That the City Council of the City of Worcester does hereby support Representative Rebecca Rauch and Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz's SD 699 HD 1283, An Act effectuating equity in COVID-19 Vaccination Bill. (Tabled Under Privilege - Bergman February 9, 2021 and Tabled - Bergman February 23, 2021)

No action taken

16c. ORDER of Councilor Sarai Rivera - Request City Manager consider prioritizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for REC Worcester's capital project involving the development of the new REC Worcester headquarters and Center for Food Justice and Urban Agriculture (for Worcester and Central Massachusetts), in an effort to support community food security, as well as youth development and employment. (Tabled Under Privilege - Mero-Carlson October 26, 2021 and Tabled Under Privilege - Petty November 9, 2021 and Tabled - Rivera November 16, 2021)

No action taken

16d. CHAIRMAN'S ORDER FROM THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION - Request City Council work to ensure City Council and School Committee districts are parallel, so as to ensure public clarity. (Tabled Under Privilege - Mero-Carlson May 24, 2022 and June 7, 2022 and Tabled - Petty June 14, 2022)

No action taken

16e. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND TRANSPORTATION Upon the Order of Councilor Morris A. Bergman and Councilor Candy Mero-Carlson - Request Standing Committee on Public Service and Transportation Committee hold a public discussion with the WRTA Administrator relative to the removal of a bus route that passes the EcoTarium, 222 Harrington Way: recommend Communication be placed on file. (Tabled Under Privilege - Bergman January 17, 2023 and Tabled Under Privilege - Mero-Carlson January 24, 2023 and Tabled - Mero-Carlson January 31, 2023)

No action taken

16f. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND TRANSPORTATION
Upon the Order of Councilor Sarai Rivera and Councilor Khrystian E. King - Request Standing Committee on Public Service and Transportation meet with the WRTA Administrator to provide City Council with a report concerning the WRTA's winter weather plan, especially including information as to how snow will be removed at each of the bus stops: recommend Order be placed on file. (Tabled Under Privilege - Bergman January 17, 2023 and Tabled Under Privilege - Mero-Carlson January 24, 2023 and Tabled - Mero-Carlson January 31, 2023)

No action taken

16g. ORDER of Councilor Etel Haxhiaj and Councilor Thu Nguyen - Request City Manager work with appropriate departments and stakeholders to establish an Office of Housing Stability in an effort to prevent the involuntary displacement of city residents who are in the process of being evicted or at the risk of losing their housing, as well as to enact policies to combat displacement, homelessness and enhance tenants' rights. (Tabled Under Privilege - Haxhiaj July 18, 2023 and Tabled - Haxhiaj August 22, 2023)

No action taken

16h. PETITION of Gordon Davis request City Council request Standing Committee on Public Safety investigate the issue of systemic racism and public safety with public hearings included. (Tabled - Toomey May 14, 2024)

No action taken

16i. ORDER of Councilor George J. Russell and Councilor Morris A. Bergman - Request City Manager install metal detector safety equipment at City Hall whenever open, similar to the equipment used at Polar Park, the Worcester District Court and other public places, on or before December 31, 2024. (Tabled Under Privilege - Russell September 24, 2024 and October 1, 2024 and Tabled - Russell October 8, 2024)

No action taken

17. BUSINESS UNDER SUSPENSION - Items brought forth under suspension at the October 15, 2024 City Council meeting.

17a. ORDER of Councilor Luis A. Ojeda – Request City Manager provide City Council with information concerning the number of residents that are signed up for Alert Worcester. – Item #15a CC Order adopted

17b. ORDER of Councilor Candy Mero-Carlson – Request City Manager provide City Council with a report detailing the previous discounts for Charter/Spectrum services, as well as what the discount will be moving forward. Further, request City Manager clarify information relative to whether the discount will be eligible for all users or only basic cable users. Further, request City Manager include in said report information concerning how seniors will be notified to speak with Charter/Spectrum about their discount eligibility. – Item #15b CC Order adopted

18. NEW BUSINESS UNDER SUSPENSION - Items brought forth under suspension at the October 22, 2024 City Council meeting.

18a. Motion Nguyen – Suspension of Rules – That the City Council of the City of Worcester does hereby suspend its rules to allow for individuals to speak during Public Participation concerning an item not on the agenda.

Mayor Petty recognized Councilor Nguyen, who introduced the item.

Mayor Petty moved for a roll call vote to adopt the item. Order denied on a roll call vote of 5 Yeas and 6 Nays (Yeas – Haxhiaj, King, Nguyen, Ojeda, Pacillo) (Nays – Bergman, Colorio, Mero-Carlson, Russell, Toomey, Petty).