

At a Special meeting of the Town Council in and for the Town of Gloucester on April 27, 2026

I. Call to Order

Councilor W. Worthy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Members present: Jonathan E. Burlingame; Stephanie L. Westgate; Cheryl A. Greathouse; Walter M. O. Steere, III, Vice- President; William A. Worthy, Jr., President

Also Present: Jean Fecteau, Town Clerk; David Igliazzi, Town Solicitor; Christine Mathieu, Deputy Town Clerk; Elizabeth Beltram, Finance Director; Gary Trembl, DPW Director; Gerry Mosca, EMA Director; Dennis Begin, Building/Zoning Official; Melissa Bouvier, Senior Center Director

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Councilor W. Worthy asked all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Town Council Discussion and/or Action

A. Amendments, Additions, Changes to proposed budget - Discussion and/or Action

Councilor W. Worthy stated that tonight, Council needs to go through the items that are potential changes to the proposed budget presented at Public Hearing. Councilor W. Worthy stated that after Council finishes reviewing the items they propose changing and making the necessary motions to change line items in the current budget that we may hear the School Committees suggestions for changes to their budget along with the amounts. Councilor W. Worthy stated that motions will be needed.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026 the 2026/27 Budget and the ballot questions will be adopted by Council for the referendum vote on May 19, 2026.

1.) Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council had discussed making a motion to acknowledge the vote taken at the Foster/Glocester Regional Financial meeting on April 14, 2026. Councilor W. Worthy stated that the motion would be to reduce the appropriation of Foster-Glocester Region- Operations by Gloucester's share as voted, and move that amount up to proration set aside fund.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Westgate to reduce the line item “Foster-Glocester Region, Operations” by \$107,906 representing 69.91% of \$154,351 as voted, April 14<sup>st</sup>, 2026, by residents of Foster and Glocester at the F/G Regional Financial Meeting; said reduction to be added to the line item “Special Appropriations, for future FG proration” seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy  
NAYS-0  
MOTION PASSED

2). Councilor W. Worthy stated that Council had discussed establishing a reserve fund of \$25,000 for future building. Councilor W. Worthy stated that maintenance was for the Town Hall with the hope of building on that account annually. Councilor W. Worthy stated that if agreed upon then that would be a ballot question.

MOTION was made by C. Greathouse to add to the budget a “Special Appropriation” as follows: Establish a Reserve Fund “Town Hall Bldg. Future Maintenance” with \$25,000 from the “Unrestricted Fund Balance”; seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy  
NAYS-0  
MOTION PASSED

3). Councilor W. Worthy stated that Councilor Burlingame also suggested establishing a reserve fund for Paving.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to add to the budget a “Special Appropriation” as follows: Establish a Reserve Fund “Paving” with \$25,000 from the “Unrestricted Fund Balance”; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

4). Councilor W. Worthy stated that there was a discussion about changing all non-union salary raises from 3.5% to 2%; and adjusting FICA-Pension-Work Comp-Fringe Benefits to reflect changes in salaries and changes to health care benefits.

Discussion: Councilor J. Burlingame asked if this would apply to salaried employees and not hourly. E. Beltram stated that this applies to all non union and that includes hourly and salaried. Councilor J. Burlingame stated he would like to take the hourly out and keep their percentage at 3.5%. E. Beltram stated that the hourly employees are part time and non union.

Councilor C. Greathouse stated her opinion to give non union employees a 3% raise instead of 2 %. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that the current budget has an increase of 3.5% so her estimate is that a 3% increase would save about \$5600.00. Councilor J. Burlingame asked if this proposal would include non union hourly employees. Councilor C. Greathouse stated it would. Councilor W. Steere stated he would be fine with this proposal.

MOTION was made by Councilor C. Greathouse to ELIMINATE Longevity for Town Clerk Office, 1 Senior Clerk, due to retirement; CHANGE all other non-union employees 3.5% salary raises to 3.0%; and to ADJUST all health care costs under FICA Pension-Work Comp-Fringe Benefits to reflect salary adjustments and changes to health care benefits and costs; seconded by Councilor J. Burlingame

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

5). Councilor W. Worthy stated there is Discussion regarding raising ACO salary which was recommended by the Chief of Police.

Discussion: Councilor C. Greathouse stated that the Animal Control Officer (ACO) received an increase of \$3600.00 last year and as a non union employee she would also be receiving the 3% cost of living increase. E. Beltram stated that the \$3600.00 was a buyout of comp time and did not increase the salary of the ACO. E. Beltram stated that the ACO received the same percent as all other non union employees.

Councilor C. Greathouse asked about the \$8000.00-line item for an assistant ACO. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that an assistant was just hired. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that this increase would bring the ACO closer to the salary of similar positions in neighboring towns. Councilor W. Steere stated that would be close to neighboring towns and that the ACO does a good job and is always available.

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to add to the budget line item under Animal Control, Salaries/Wages/Fringe Benefits an increase of \$6,000 to the Animal Control Officer Salary; seconded by Councilor S. Westgate

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

E. Beltram asked for clarification as to whether the increase also included the 3% cost of living increase. Councilor J. Burlingame stated just the \$6000.00.

Councilor W. Steere withdrew his motion. Councilor S. Westgate withdrew her second.

AMENDED MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to add to the budget line item under Animal Control, Salaries/Wages/Fringe Benefits an increase of \$6,000 to the Animal Control Officer Salary without additional cost of living increase; seconded by Councilor S. Westgate

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

Councilors addressed items out of order.

Councilor J. Burlingame stated that before Council goes further that there has been a decrease of \$5600 but an addition of \$6000 so he would like to figure out where more money will come from. J. Fecteau asked how much more is needed and suggested to reduce the reval account by another \$5000. E. Beltram stated that there is a suggestion later in the meeting to reduce this account by \$10,000. E. Beltram stated that she needs time to put in any and all changes Council makes tonight in order to determine the overall effect. J. Fecteau stated that Council could hold off and make changes at the May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Councilor J. Burlingame stated that the medical for the building official needs to be added into the budget calculations. E. Beltram stated that this item is already included in the budget for tonight. Councilor J. Burlingame stated he would like to make any decreases to the budget before any increases are done.

Councilor C. Greathouse asked the basis for the step increases for the 3 clerks. E. Beltram stated that the increases are step increases based on the current union contract as the clerk's union is in the middle of negotiations. E. Beltram stated the reasons for the step increases as being job performance and additional duties.

11). Councilor W. Worthy stated to address item 11 at this point which is a discussion regarding possibly lowering line item in Tax Assessor's budget for Revaluation, reserve Account from \$50,000 to \$40,000 to cover some expenses.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to DECREASE the line item Revaluation – Reserve Account in the Tax Assessor's Budget from \$50,000 to \$40,000; seconded by Councilor S. Westgate

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

13.) J. Fecteau stated that # 13 is the League of Cities and Towns membership that Council may consider removing as the town is not currently

a member.

MOTION was made by Councilor S. Westgate to Eliminate the line item under Other Operational Expenses entitled “R.I. League of Cities and Towns Membership” for \$5,000; seconded by Councilor C. Greathouse

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

Councilor S. Westgate stated she struggled with the meaning of the step increases. E. Beltram stated that the increases are a reward as all three have taken on additional duties, shown a lot of growth, have been here for a long time and there is no longer any longevity available.

Councilor C. Greathouse stated that the step increases total about \$8000 and asked if they included health costs which were increased. E. Beltram stated that the health costs increased for the town at 13.9% and that the clerks pay 14% of that increase as their co share. E. Beltram stated these health costs are included.

Councilor J. Burlingame stated his opinion that both the clerks in the assessor’s department and the collector’s department have stepped up but he does not know about the clerk in the finance department. E. Beltram stated her opinion that clerks in the finance department should be financial clerks.

6). Discussion regarding raising Tax Assessor Clerk salary to reflect a step increase recommended by the Finance Director, a Clerk II to Senior Clerk.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to add to the budget line item under Tax Assessor, Wages/Salaries/Fringe Benefits, Clerk, an increase of \$ \$2,665. to reflect a step increase, Clerk II to Senior Clerk; seconded by Councilor S. Westgate

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

7). Discussion regarding raising Tax Collection Clerk salary to reflect a step increase, Clerk II to Senior Clerk as recommended by the Finance Director.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to add to the budget line item under Tax Collector, Wages/Salaries/Fringe Benefits, Clerk, an increase of \$2,665. to reflect a step increase, Clerk II to Senior Clerk; seconded by Councilor S. Westgate

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

8). Discussion regarding raising Finance Department, Clerk salary to reflect a step increase, Senior Clerk to Financial Clerk as recommended by the Finance Director.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to add to the budget line item under Finance Office, Wages/Salaries/Fringe Benefits, Clerk, an increase of \$2,711 to reflect a step increase, Senior Clerk to Financial Clerk; seconded by Councilor S. Westgate

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

10). Benefits were not carried over to the budget board's budget from the current year for the Building/zoning Official, this motion adds them in for 2026/27.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to correct the budget line item Building/Zoning Official, Salaries/Wages/Fringe Benefits, by adding \$32,973 which reflects the costs for 2026/27 fringe benefits; seconded by Councilor S. Westgate

Discussion: Councilor J. Burlingame stated that this motion adds the health benefits

back into the Building Official's salary. Councilor J. Burlingame stated that the Building official was originally a full time employee with benefits but became a part time employee without benefits and then became a full time employee. Councilor J. Burlingame stated the benefits were not carried over in the budget and this is a correction.

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy  
NAYS-0  
MOTION PASSED

Councilor W. Worthy and J. Burlingame asked about the salary for the Building Official. E. Beltram stated that the salary in the budget includes a 2% raise just as all other non union employees but that amount has just been approved by Council to be a 3% raise. E. Beltram stated that the fringe benefits are included in the budget.

Councilor J. Burlingame stated that the budgeted salary goes back to when the Building Official was first hired. Councilor W. Worthy stated his opinion that the Building official receive a salary of \$85,000 to \$90,000.

Councilor S. Westgate stated that Council is having trouble finding \$6000 for the Senior Center cleaning contract so she does not know how they are going to find \$20,000. Councilor C. Greathouse stated that the reality is that Council is here to support all employees but also to keep taxes down so sometimes cuts have to be made that people don't like.

E. Beltram stated that the salary with 2% included is \$74,156 and that she would have to calculate the salary with the new 3% increase.

Councilor J. Burlingame stated that the funds for the Senior Center cleaning contract need to be found. D. Igliazzi asked Council to hold this item until he reviews the contract. D. Igliazzi stated that, after review, the contract will not be of help as it provides for an extension subject to mutual agreement as opposed to the previous extension which was at the same terms.

Councilor W. Steere stated that if anyone has any questions to come up to the microphone and speak.

D. Steere, resident, asked for clarification as to money from the Region that the town is placing in a reserve account to make sure the operations amount stays the same which it does. E. Beltram stated the operations budget was being reduced by the amount approved by the voters and placed in a reserve proration account. D. Steere stated that his concern about the fund balance which is about 14.6% .

J. Lowell, 2404 Putnam Pike, asked about the sound equipment at the police station and whether it was absolutely necessary. J. Lowell asked about the increase in the solicitor account. J. Lowell asked why the Board of Canvassers increase was so significant. J. Lowell thanked Councilor C. Greathouse for proposing the 3% increase for town employees as they work hard. J. Lowell was bothered by the comments made about the building official's proposed increase being the reason he is at town hall more often. J. Lowell stated her opinion that the building official should get the same as other employees. J. Lowell stated that she does not feel other employees could say to their boss that I'll be here more often if I get more money.

Councilor W. Worthy stated that the increase in the solicitor account is due to pending litigation and is for legal fees and not the solicitor himself. J. Fecteau stated that the Board of Canvassers is up one year and down the next due to election years. Councilor W. Steere stated that the sound equipment at the police station is for inside the building.

9). Discussion regarding raising the Bldg./Zoning Official salary

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to TABLE Item 9- Building Official salary; seconded by Councilor S. Westgate

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy  
NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

12). Discussion regarding adding \$6,000 to Senior Center, Other Purchased Services, for increase in cleaning contract.

MOTION was made by Councilor J. Burlingame to TABLE Item 12; seconded by Councilor W. Steere

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to set a Special meeting on May,4, 2026 at 7:00 pm; seconded by Councilor S. Westgate

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED

V. Adjourn

MOTION was made by Councilor W. Steere to ADJOURN at 8:02 p.m.; seconded by Councilor S. Westgate

Discussion: None

VOTE: AYES- Burlingame, Westgate, Greathouse, Steere, Worthy

NAYS-0

MOTION PASSED