



Michael Q. Geary
City Clerk

Angela M. Gitschier
Assistant City Clerk

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Date: February 3, 2026

Time: 6:30 PM

Location: City Council Chamber, 375 Merrimack Street, 2nd Floor,
Lowell, MA / Zoom (Hybrid)

1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed 11 present (C. Chau, C. Descoteaux, M. Gitschier, C. Juran, C. Liang, C. McDonough, C. Mercier, C. Nuon, C. Robinson, C. Rourke, C. Scott).

M. Gitschier presiding.

2. MAYOR'S BUSINESS

2.1. Communication Remote / Zoom Participation.

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Robinson, seconded by C. Rourke. So voted.

3. CITY CLERK

3.1. Minutes of City Council Regular meeting January 27th, for acceptance.

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Descoteaux, seconded by C. Juran. So voted. C. Juran made note of a typo on page 4 to be corrected.

4. CITY COUNCIL - MOTIONS

4.1. C. Nuon - Reg. City Mgr. work with the OPM to provide to City Council a finding of the structural engineer review of the 1892 building at Lowell High School.



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In City Council, seconded by C. Robinson, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon commented on current studies being done and that there should be an update. C. Descoteaux noted that it is beyond the time for them to respond.

Motion by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Nuon to take Item #9.2 out of order. So voted.

4.2. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. have the proper department provide a report on the feasibility of implementing a Community Benefit Agreement Ordinance in Lowell. Report to include a process for distributing developer contributions earmarked for community benefits that are generated from large-scale real estate projects. The proposed ordinance should ensure that there is a transparent and inclusive framework for: considering how large-scale developments impact a community; identifying and ranking community's needs and distributing community benefit contributions in a manner that addresses those needs.

In City Council, seconded by C. Juran, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon commented on getting positive returns for City investment. C. Juran noted such agreements make sense and there should be a mechanism to develop those agreements by use of best practices. C. McDonough noted that neighborhood groups can assist with necessary input.

4.3. C. Nuon / C. Liang - Req. City Mgr. have the proper department provide a report that examines how arterial (both minor and major) streets are cleared in winter hopefully easing the difficulty of clearing sidewalks for residents, especially the elderly and people without snowblowers. Focus should be repeated plowing that piles more salt laden snow, and snowbanks at intersections that make it virtually impossible for residents to clear access to crosswalks.

In City Council, no second needed, referred to City Manager. So voted.
Motion by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Juran to take Item #4.9 with this item.



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So voted. Registered speaker, Paul Early (commented - removal of snowbanks on corners), addressed the Council. Registered speaker, Anthony Milisci (commented - difficulty walking), addressed the Council. C. Nuon noted that there could be an improvement in removing snow piles around corners. C. Liang noted the number of phone calls due to storm and the difficulty with trash removal and clearing smaller streets. C. Juran noted learning possibility from event to improve procedures and better communication with residents. C. Robinson noted the difficulty with working in those conditions and that information should be gathered shared to host improvements. C. Chau noted the effort of the DPW with the storm and that it continues. Manager Golden, Jr. noted statistics with the storm and that they could use more people and more contractors.

Motion by C. Descoteaux, seconded by C. Liang to take Item #5.2 (Informational - SRF) out of order. So voted.

4.4. C. Nuon / C. Liang - Req. City Mgr. invite the Citizens Advisory Committee/LPD to appear before the Public Safety SC to provide a presentation.

In City Council, no second needed, referred to City Manager. So voted.

4.5. C. Liang - Req. City Mgr. have the proper departments inspect LHS and other school buildings to ensure Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) are installed in secure, easily accessible locations, and that teachers and other personnel are fully equipped to use these devices during emergencies.

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. McDonough abstain from discussion and vote on this matter. C. Liang noted absence during walkthrough and that they are an important part of the building and that there should be training regarding their use.

4.6. C. Liang - Req. City Mgr., for public safety and precaution, have appropriate departments work on installing additional lighting around City Hall, 375 Merrimack Street, extending beyond 50 feet from the



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building, particularly in the side area near the monuments, where activities and events commonly occur.

In City Council, seconded by C. Robinson, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Liang noted darkness was a safety concern in an area with a lot of people. C. Robinson noted prior discussions regarding this project.

4.7. C. Scott - Req. City Mgr. evaluate and take the necessary steps to install sidewalks along Woburn Street to improve pedestrian safety and access.

In City Council, seconded by C. Juran, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Scott noted it is the only major street without sidewalks.

4.8. C. Scott - Req. City Mgr. have the appropriate department report on the feasibility of using parks with dedicated parking lots as overflow parking during snow emergencies to increase neighborhood access.

In City Council, seconded by C. Chau, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Scott noted prior discussions regarding difficulties in clearing areas and that these sites may help.

4.9. C. Juran - Req. City Mgr. to provide a debrief about the recent snow storm: e.g., what the City and the residents respectively did well or could do better, what best practices and metrics the city applies and what lessons were learned that it will apply in the future, measures of plowing quantity and quality, and how was information communicated regarding residents' vs. city's responsibility for parking, shoveling/plowing, etc.

In City Council, seconded by C. Robinson, referred to City Manager. So voted. See discussion under Item #4.3.



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4.10. C. Robinson - Req. City Mgr. have the proper department provide a list of possible staging locations in Centralville that will minimize the impact to our residents.

In City Council, seconded by C. McDonough, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Robinson noted that any location would be helpful.

4.11. C. Robinson - Req. City Mgr. have the proper department provide a report on the possibility of remote Board of Parks permitting opportunities for the public, especially during winter months.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted.

4.12. M. Gitschier - Req. City Mgr. look into a 24-hour Construction webcam monitoring system that provides continuous, 360-degree high-definition live streaming of the Rourke Bridge Project for the community to be able to access and view the progress in real time.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted.

4.13. M. Gitschier - Req. City Mgr. and Council send a formal letter to the Chair of the Senate Ways and Means Senator Michael Rodrigues expressing Lowell's support Senate Bill #S.2721, reiterating the critical importance of this bill to the public health, environment and residents of Lowell and ask them to vote out the bill favorably.

In City Council, seconded by C. Juran, referred to City Manager. So voted. Registered speakers, Ruth Potvin (commented - noted success with rodent control); Joanne Dawson (Zoom) (commented - great step forward, provided letter to Council); and Anthony Milisci (provided comments for Erin Gendron - outlining importance of litigation), addressed the Council.

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY MANAGER

5.1. Motion Responses:



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A) Motion Response - Folk Festival Funding – C. Robinson noted funding concerns and that request was that City find a way to increase accounts before the event. Manager Golden, Jr. noted different areas in which the City contributes and will continue to contribute to the event. In City Council, **Motion** “To accept and place on file” by C. Scott, seconded by C. Rourke. So voted.

B) Motion Response - Letter LTLC – C. Mercier noted letter was to the point and requested copy of any response to it. In City Council, **Motion** “To accept and place on file” by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Descoteaux. So voted.

5.2. Informational Report

Informational Report - Centralville SRF – Aaron Fox (Director of Water/Wastewater) provided update regarding the sewer separation project in the area outlining funding and time frame. Mr. Fox noted savings to taxpayers and that information is provided on the website. C. Robinson lauded the efforts of the department under Mr. Fox. In City Council, **Motion** “To accept and place on file” by C. Robinson, seconded by C. Juran. So voted.

5.3. Communication - Reappointment of Jeffrey Harris to Historic Board.

In City Council, **Motion** “To Adopt” by C. Chau, seconded by C. Juran. Adopted per Roll Call vote 11 yeas (C. Chau, C. Descoteaux, M. Gitschier, C. Juran, C. Liang, C. McDonough, C. Mercier, C. Nuon, C. Robinson, C. Rourke, C. Scott). So voted.

6. VOTES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

6.1. Vote – Accept MGL c.40 s.71 - School Bus Violation Detection Monitoring.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading. **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on February 17, 2026 @ 7 PM by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Scott. So voted. C. McDonough abstained from vote and discussion.



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6.2. Vote - Establish School Bus Violation Stabilization Fund.

In City Council, **Motion** to refer to February 17, 2026 by C. Liang, seconded by C. Juran. So voted. C. McDonough abstained from vote and discussion.

6.3. Vote - Authorize CM to File Special Legislation.

In City Council, Given 2nd reading. **Motion**, as amended, to refer to March 3, 2026 (4 weeks) by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Robinson. Adopted per Roll Call vote 10 yeas (C. Chau, C. Descoteaux, M. Gitschier, C. Juran, C. Liang, C. Mercier, C. Nuon, C. Robinson, C. Rourke, C. Scott), 1 abstain (C. McDonough). So voted. Registered speaker, Sean McDonough, addressed the body, from the podium, noting he was speaking as a resident and not a City Councilor. Mr. McDonough voiced his opposition to the special legislation noting it would lead to privatization of services and was an affront to the School Committee. C. Descoteaux questioned the appropriateness of the procedure of a Council member going to speak from podium. City Solicitor Williams noted that based on the information and the request just made it would appear to be a violation of Massachusetts Ethics. C. Scott noted she was confused by the action of the Councilor. C. Mercier noted the need to build a consensus with the School Committee. C. Robinson noted the request was for a draft and that there should not be a vote on this tonight though he favors the concept. **Motion** by C. Robinson, seconded by C. to postpone the matter for two weeks and to have joint subcommittee with school facility committee. So voted. **Motion** to amend time frame to 4 weeks (March 3, 2026) by C. Robinson, seconded by C. Scott. So voted. C. Chau noted the need to get all parties involved. C. Nuon noted the need to start with a joint subcommittee further noting the need for more time. C. Descoteaux noted the need for feedback from meetings with the school administration to be discussed in subcommittee. C. Juran commented on past history and that there should be 3 paths moving forward, joint subcommittee, Mayor bringing forward request from Council to School Committee and draft Home Rule Petition. C. Robinson noted extended time would be fine but further commented in would not



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favor privatization of the department. C. Scott favored a joint subcommittee so that information can be developed for the School Committee. M. Gitschier relinquished Chair to Vice Chair Nuon at 7:30 PM. M. Gitschier noted the request was for a draft petition and that an executive discussion may be needed. M. Gitschier noted the home rule petition fosters a negative environment with the schools and that there needs to be a reshaping of the format. The Chair was returned to M. Gitschier at 7:35 PM.

Motion by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Robinson to take Item #4.13 out of order. So voted.

7. ORDINANCES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

7.1. Ordinance - Amend Zoning - Data Center Moratorium.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading. **Motion** to refer to Planning Board for report and recommendation (3/2/26) and Public Hearing on March 10, 2026 @ 7 PM by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Juran. So voted. Registered speaker, Eileen Castle (commented - in favor of ordinance), addressed the Council. C. Juran commented that the language may need some slight changes, **Motion** by C. Juran, seconded by C. Robinson to return Law Department for changes. C. Scott questioned when those changes can be made. City Solicitor Williams indicated that process may have to begin anew but minor changes could be done at the Planning Board level. C. Juran with the assent of C. Robinson withdrew the motion.

Motion by C. Robinson, seconded by C. Mercier to take Item #6.3 out of order. So voted.

7.2. Ordinance - Amend Chap 222.24 - School Bus Violation.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading. **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on February 17, 2026 @ 7 PM by C. Robinson, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted. C. McDonough abstained from discussion and vote.



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8. REPORTS (SUB/COMMITTEE, IF ANY)

In City Council, none.

9. PETITIONS

9.1. Claims - (2) Property Damage.

In City Council, **Motion** to refer to Law Department for report and recommendation by C. Juran, seconded by C. Descoteaux. So voted.

9.2. Misc. - Jennifer Mahoney-Brum request permission to address City Council regarding construction at the Mahoney Softball Field monument.

In City Council, **Motion** to refer to City Manager for report and recommendation by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Robinson. So voted. Ms. Mahoney-Brum commented on the dedication of field and monument to her mother and that it appears that there have been some changes made without consulting the family. C. Mercier noted the ARPA money being used for the parks and questioned if that was still in place. Yovani Baez-Rose (DPD) noted this was the last funded park, so construction is behind and commented on the status of the renovations.

Motion by C. Scott, seconded by C. Rourke to take Item #7.1 out of order. So voted.

9.3. National Grid - Request installation of (1) SO pole at 242 Church Street.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading. **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on February 17, 2026 @ 7 PM by C. Robinson, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

10. CITY COUNCIL - EXECUTIVE SESSION

10.1. Executive Session - To Consider And Discuss The Purchase, Exchange, Lease, Or Value Of Real Property (The Senior Center, 276



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Broadway Street), Public Discussion Of Which May Have A Detrimental Effect On The Negotiating Position Of The City.

In City Council, M. Gitschier stated purpose of the session, **Motion** to enter executive session and adjourn from that session by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Descoteaux. (8:40 PM). Adopted per Roll Call vote 10 yeas (C. Chau, C. Descoteaux, M. Gitschier, C. Juran, C. Liang, C. Mercier, C. Nuon, C. Robinson, C. Rourke, C. Scott)., 1 nay (C. McDonough). So voted.

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

In City Council, none.

12. ADJOURNMENT

In City Council, **Motion** to Adjourn from Executive Session by C. Descoteaux, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted.

Meeting adjourned from Executive Session at 9:36 PM.

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