

## CITY COUNCIL E-MAILS

Received: July 7, 2022 (after 9:00 a.m.) – July 11, 2022 (before 5:00 p.m.)

### July 11, 2022 Council Meeting

### ADDENDUM

#### New content:

Submitted on Thu, 07/07/2022 - 21:07

#### Full Name

charlie griffin

#### Email

[charlesgriffinesq@gmail.com](mailto:charlesgriffinesq@gmail.com)

#### Subject

Celebration of Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples Day

#### Address

210 Hillside Drive

#### Message

Mayor McEachern and Members of the Council,

I understand that you will vote Monday night whether to revisit the June 21, 2021 decision of the prior Council to observe the second Monday in October both as Columbus Day and Indigenous Peoples Day and instead to permanently observe this day as Indigenous Peoples Day as requested by We Speak in its letter of May 22nd.

I urge you not to revisit the decision of the prior Council for the following reasons.

1. When the request to rename the second Monday in October Indigenous Peoples Day was before the prior Council, the City Attorney stated that since Columbus Day is a State Holiday as set forth in RSA 288:1, the Council could not change the name of the holiday without enabling legislation which did not exist. As far as I am aware, nothing has changed in that regard.
2. When each of you took your Oath of Office in January, you swore to faithfully discharge all of the duties incumbent upon you agreeably to the laws of the State of New Hampshire. By voting to rename the holiday solely to Indigenous Peoples Day you would be violating that oath.
3. The letter from We Speak essentially raises two points in support of its request.
  - a. The holiday overtly celebrates the colonial oppression that Native People faced with Columbus arrival in the late 1400s. While it is true that Columbus had his faults and the world in which he lived was one where slavery and violence were all too common, as was also the case with Washington and Jefferson, his accomplishments for human civilization are also undeniable. He introduced the concept of reaching the east by going west, made known to Europe the existence of the North and South American continents and laid the groundwork for future explorers. It is those accomplishments as well those of Italian Americans and others which are celebrated on Columbus Day. When Columbus Day was first recognized by President Benjamin Harrison in 1891, he did not do so to celebrate the oppression of Native People, but rather to recognize the dignity and self worth of Italian immigrants, Italian Americans and Catholics in light of the hostility and discrimination many of them faced. In short, that day has taken on symbolism far bigger than Columbus himself.
  - b. Supporting a permanent and unambiguous city wide observance of Indigenous Peoples Day would be in alignment with the Racial Justice Resolution passed by a prior City Council. While citing that portion of the Resolution which addresses employing and regularly reviewing best practices to support racial justice, it overlooks that portion of the Resolution which calls for "Cooperating with other efforts to improve equity and inclusion and the welcoming of diversity of opinion that exists in our community" Eliminating Columbus Day would be an act of exclusion, not inclusion, and would also fail to recognize the diversity of opinion that exists in our community regarding this day. However, retaining Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day creates a win-win situation, does not violate state law, avoids pitting one group against the other and is consistent with the overall intent of the June 15, 2020 Resolution. Such an approach is also consistent with President Biden's issuance of two proclamations last year, one to salute "Christopher Columbus historic voyage" and the other to "extol the invaluable contributions and resilience of Indigenous Peoples." as well as President Obama's statement in 2016 that Christopher Columbus voyage "changed the trajectory of our world." In conclusion as the saying goes "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." The prior Council got it right and you should not reverse that decision. It is possible to celebrate both Columbus Day and Indigenous Peoples Day in the manner of a proud and decent society, one that can recognize its faults while also asserting its values.

As always, I thank you for your consideration.

Charlie Griffin

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes**

**Submitted on Sat, 07/09/2022 - 15:07**

**Full Name**

Charlie Griffin

**Email**

[charlesgriffinesq@gmail.com](mailto:charlesgriffinesq@gmail.com)

**Subject**

Association of Portsmouth Teachers Contract

**Address**

210 Hillside Drive

**Message**

Mayor McEachern and Members of the Council

I am writing you this time to urge you to table the two year contract with the Association of Portsmouth Teachers for two reasons. First, the salary provisions. Article 51, Compensation, provides in 2022-2023 for COLA OF 2.05% plus 4%(for total increase of 6.05%,Social Security increase for 2022 was 5.9%) and in 2023-2024 a COLA with a floor of 3%. It then goes on to state that from July1, 2022 to July 1, 2023 the COLA will be computed with the rolling ten (10 )year average in the CPI-U for the Boston-Cambridge -Newton which shall not be less than 2 % and continues that effective July 1, 2023 ,a COLA adjustment net percentage increase shall be computed which shall not be less than 3% nor more than 5% and that the COLA adjustment percentage shall be determined by the rolling ten (10) year average in the CPI-U for the Boston-Cambridge-Newton-NH all items index as compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for the US Department of Labor for the ten(10) most recent calendar years preceding the July 1 adjustment. Not only is this language difficult to comprehend ,the same complicated Department of Labor formula for calculating salary increases appears in all other City Union contracts.

More importantly, what is agreed to in this contract in terms of salary increase will set the standard for negotiating all future city union contracts

While it is expensive to live in Portsmouth, the cost of living here is nothing compared to that of Boston, Newton and Cambridge so why is Portsmouth lumped together with those cities ? Adding NH to the end doesn't make sense.

I went on line to see if the same or similar language appears in collective bargaining agreements for any other area school districts and, if not, how salaries were computed under those contracts.I looked at teacher contracts for Dover,Durham, Exeter, Hampton and Rye.None of the teacher contracts for those communities use the Department of Labor formula.

Dover provides a step salary increase for each year of service.

Hampton (SAU 21) and Exeter (SAU 16) provide a flat percentage salary increase for each contract year which is spelled out in a separate exhibit to each contract. For Hampton the annual salary increase was 2.75% and for Exeter 1.5%.

Oyster River's contract provides for a 5% COLA effective July 1,2022, and 4% COLAS effective each year on July 1,2023 through July 1,2025.

Rye's contract provides for an annual base salary increase for teachers with over 9 years of service of 2.6% for 2021-2022;2.7% for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 and 2,8% for 2024-2025.

What an examination of these other contracts shows is that Portsmouth is out of touch in terms of the amount/percentage of its salary increases as well as the method used for arriving at those increases.

As previously noted, this same formula appears in all other City Union Contracts .It must be abandoned and the time to begin that process is now by voting to table this contract and return to the negotiating table to establish a fixed percentage of salary increases based on comparable local conditions rather than being subjected to a Department of Labor formula that dictates what Portsmouth taxpayers must pay based on the cost of living in Boston, Newton and Cambridge.

Second, the lack of transparency. Collective bargaining is a give and take process with the emphasis on bargaining which is defined as mutually agreeing or contracting by the parties whereby they settle on what should be given or done by each.

The proposed contract indicates what the City has "given" to the Association in terms of salary increases, but can any one of you tell me what the Association has "given" the City in return ?

If so, I would appreciate hearing from you.

In her comments, the City Manager simply recommends that you approve the two year contract,period. In the interest of transparency, she should have provided either a red lined copy of the proposed contract highlighting the proposed changes as has been done ,for example ,with the proposed changes to the Code of Ethics , or a letter from the Attorney representing the City outlining the changes so that residents and taxpayers can understand what changes have been negotiated and not attempt to decipher these changes on their own.

In conclusion, I would ask you to table this matter to give the City time to negotiate a new standard for determining salary creases that does not involve the Department of Labor and gives the City Manager time to publish a detailed explanation of all the changes in the proposed contract such that the average citizen will be able to understand them.

Once again,I thank you for your consideration.

Charlie Griffin

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes**

**Submitted on Mon, 07/11/2022 - 09:18**

**Full Name**

Joseph Famularo

**Email**

[famularoj@gmail.com](mailto:famularoj@gmail.com)

**Subject**

COLUMBUS DAY

**Address**

141Mill Pond Way Unit 3

**Message**

Hello City Councilors,

As an Italian American and a taxpayer in the City of Portsmouth, I write in opposition to the "Letter from We Speak, Portsmouth High School, requesting the City Council permanently approve Indigenous Peoples' Day (not alongside "Columbus Day") and support public recognitions and acknowledgments in honor of Indigenous Peoples' lands in Portsmouth."

I do not object to others celebrating an Indigenous Peoples Day; however, it need not be to the exclusion of others who wish to celebrate Columbus Day. Especially after that which this city did in years past by destroying the Italian American neighborhood of the North End.

I find it remarkable that those who worship at the alter of 'inclusiveness' work feverishly to exclude others. This is not a lesson we should be teaching the children of Portsmouth.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Joe

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting.** Yes

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**Submitted on Mon, 07/11/2022 - 09:28**

**Full Name**

Allen Nelson

**Email**

[ishoals95@aol.com](mailto:ishoals95@aol.com)

**Subject**

Columbus Day

**Address**

Portsmouth , New Hampshire. 03801

**Message**

I would like to echo Charlie Griffins ' recent comments found in the Portsmouth Herald concerning the observance of Columbus/Indigenous Peoples Day. It is not at all dismissive or disrespectful to say ,that adequate time and energy has been spent on this topic and the status quo should remain.

Considering the times and challenges ahead for this city, I would prefer to see your efforts focused on more pressing issues.

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting.** Yes

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**Submitted on Mon, 07/11/2022 - 16:04**

**Full Name**

Paul and Denise Pouliot

**Email**

[cowasuck@cowasuck.org](mailto:cowasuck@cowasuck.org)

**Subject**

Indigenous Peoples Day

**Address**

840 Suncook Valley Road

Alton, New Hampshire. 03809

**Message**

Cowasuck Band of the Pennacook - Abenaki People

COWASS North America, Inc.

The Abenaki Nation of Vermont, Inc.

840 Suncook Valley Road

P.O. Box 52

Alton, NH 03809-0052

(603) 776-1090

11 July 2022

City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire

Subject: Renaming Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples' Day

The Cowasuck Band of the Pennacook - Abenaki People, descendants of the original Indigenous People of New Hampshire, thank you for your favorable consideration in regard to city efforts to rename Columbus Day to establish Indigenous People's Day.

Legislative changes to remove and replace Columbus Day is part of a national effort to correct history and formally recognize the contributions and sacrifices that Indigenous People have made to the United States. These lands were ours for more than ten thousand years before European exploration and colonization and we are still here.

Before the 1400's there were millions of Indigenous People living in the Americas, a fact that many do not realize. Also overlooked are the numerous contributions that the Indigenous People of the Americas that were made to humanity (see the attached list of Indigenous contributions).

The time has come to stop honoring the false historical narrative of European superiority and to actually honor the original Indigenous People that have given so much to this country and the world.

Now is the time to discuss the facts that this holiday is based on events that no civilized country should be honoring. In Columbus' own words of his historical accounts he describes the atrocities of genocide that he, his men, and those explorers of the "Age of Discovery" committed against the Indigenous people of the "New World."

There are several interesting facts about Columbus and his exploration efforts:

This was in a time when European rulers were attempting to divide and control the world, newly discovered lands, their resources (gold), and peoples (slaves).

Spain was engaged in a formal plan of Jewish genocide to remove and seize the lands and property of the Spanish Jewish community. Little is spoken about the fact that the stolen assets of these Jewish people helped Spain fund Columbus and their global ambitions.

He was acting as an agent for the Spanish royalty, and not working honorably for Italy - he was essentially a mercenary explorer for hire, not an honorable Italian.

He made four trips to the Caribbean, exploring the area around Cuba and Hispaniola, but never set foot on North America and has no historical connection to the United States.

When he first met the Indigenous People of the Caribbean he commented on how gentle, healthy, peaceful, and kind that they were to him and his men. In his own words - "they knew not what iron was, they had no defensive weapons, and will be easily enslaved."

He started and furthered the slavery movement in the Americas when he brought back the first Indigenous slaves to Europe - which in turn promoted the global expansion of slavery into the Americas that did not end until the mid-1800's.

He committed numerous acts of cruelty and genocide during his visits to the Caribbean that included acts of brutal dismembering and beheading, rape, and murder of men, women, and children. These atrocities were committed as acts of entertainment for his men. This type of brutal control and domination was the preferred method that he used against the peaceful Indigenous People that he wanted to enslave.

When we want to honor something or someone with a national or state holiday we should set a very high standard and reason for that honoring effort. Now that you know some of the facts surrounding Columbus, would you consider establishing a day to honor him today?

This is not a matter of "honoring" Italians, this is about the continued honoring of a man that committed genocide, slavery, and many other acts against humanity. This is about correcting the injustice of history in the Americas.

Again, we are deeply humbled by your actions and give a heartfelt Kchi Oliwni "Great Thanks" to you all for your continued efforts to honor the fact that Indigenous People were here since pre-history and the lands known as New Hampshire and North America were actually known as G'dakinna, "our World," by the original and Indigenous People that continue to live here.

Sincerely,

Paul W. Pouliot, Sag8mo, THPO, and President

Denise K. Pouliot, Sag8moskwa, Artist, and Treasurer

COWASS North America is a Indigenous (Native American Indian) national organization incorporated as a non-profit IRS 501(c)3 charitable social and cultural services organization FEIN #22-3229024 of the Cowasuck Band of the Pennacook - Abenaki People

[www.cowasuck.org](http://www.cowasuck.org) / [cowasuck@cowasuck.org](mailto:cowasuck@cowasuck.org)

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes**

**Submitted on Mon, 07/11/2022 - 16:06**

**Full Name**

Jim Splaine

**Email**

[jimsplaineportsmouth@gmail.com](mailto:jimsplaineportsmouth@gmail.com)

**Subject**

Re: McIntyre. Transparency, please.

**Address**

201 Oriental Gardens, Portsmouth, NH 03801

**Message**

To Deaglan McEachern, Mayor; Joanna Kelley, Assistant Mayor; and City Councilors:

I know that there are many technical aspects to your continued work concerning the McIntyre project, especially in your working with Redgate/Kane and federal authorities. Plus you have residue legal complications that remain from past actions of City Councils. But please, focus on the word "transparency," i.e. "openness," in everything you do from this day forward. What I learned through the years of being on the City Council -- and this certainly was taught to me in my work on the Police Commission and School Board -- is that there is always a justification that can be made FOR holding discussions behind closed-doors. You could probably use the N.H. Right-to-Know Law to hide just about everything -- calling it "negotiations" or "personnel," or any of the other loopholes provided by the state statute. So your challenge is to agree as a Council NOT to hold discussions behind closed-doors, even if you can.

I know that takes discipline. And too often it is convenient to retreat and sit within the four walls of Conference Room A, doors closed, and chat over coffee about an issue -- out of the view of cameras or reporters and not having to watch every word.

But on McIntyre, the time to have to discipline not to continuing secrecy is now. Please -- transparency. It's time.

I expect that Bill Downey, who knows more about this issue than just about anyone, including perhaps each of you (certainly more than I, and I got back some years on this issue), is making a similar plea. Please listen.

Thank You - Jim Splaine

**Please indicate if you would like your comment to be part of the public record for the upcoming City Council meeting. Yes**