



**CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.  
Conference Room A  
City Hall Complex, 1 Junkins Avenue  
Portsmouth, NH 03801**

- 1. Welcome and Call to Order – 10:00 a.m.**
- 2. Roll Call –** Councilor Kate Cook, Councilor Vincent Lombardi, and Councilor John Tabor all present. Also present was the Deputy City Manager, Suzanne Woodland.
- 3. Review and Approval of Minutes from the March 27, 2023 meeting –** Councilor Lombardi moved to approve the March 27, 2023 minutes. Councilor Tabor seconded and all in favor.
- 4. Old Business**
  - a. Election Disclosures - Administrative Ordinance 1.902 and City Charter Section 3.8**

Councilor Cook reviewed the status and history of consideration. These changes will not go into effect for the current election cycle. Motion to move to City Council for review by Councilor Lombardi. Councilor Tabor seconded and all in favor.
  - b. City Council Draft Ethics Policy**

Committee discussed the Ethics Policy draft. Legal to review current draft language with an emphasis towards transparency particularly as it relates to notice of City Council meetings, including meetings with legal counsel.

Discussion of potential whistleblower policy, specifically around conflict of interest and concerns regarding councilors acting as whistleblowers. The Deputy City Manager will discuss with Legal.
  - c. Sidewalk Policy**

The Committee reviewed the draft sidewalk and driveway aprons policy in regard to the use of bricks vs concrete outside of the HDC. The Deputy City Manager will identify with DPW the streets outside the HDC that currently have brick sidewalks, report her findings and provide an updated draft at the next meeting.

**5. New Business**

**a. Disclosures Policy – Administrative Ordinance 1.901**

The Committee discussed possible ordinance changes to improve disclosure requirements for elected officials. Improvements would include better reporting of financial interests as well as disclosure regarding affiliations / roles of a fiduciary nature with local organizations. The purpose of the additional disclosure requirements is to better identify conflicts of interest. The Deputy City Manager will provide best practice language obtained from other municipalities and will present at the next meeting and obtain draft language from the legal department.

**b. BR Conversions – Outstanding potential blue ribbon committee conversions: African Burying Ground Stewardship Committee, Portsmouth Energy Advisory Committee, Citywide Neighborhood Committee, and Sister Cities Blue Ribbon Committee.**

The African Burying Ground Stewardship Committee does not have a consensus to move forward with the conversation and the Sister Cities Blue Ribbon Committee has not recently met. Councilor Cook has made a request to the Citywide Neighborhood Committee to consider whether they would like an ordinance adopted to reflect their practice and the Portsmouth Energy Advisory Committee findings will be discussed at the next meeting.

**6. Public Comment**

**a. Petra Huda attended in person and commented on the Election Disclosure, Ethics Policy Disclosure and Sidewalk Policy.**

**7. Announcements**

**a. Current Committee Schedule**

- Administrative Ordinance Section 1.901, Draft Ethics Policy, Sidewalk Policy, BR Conversions – October 10, 2023.

**8. Adjournment**

Next meeting is October 10, 2023.

Councilor Tabor moved to adjourn. Councilor Lombardi seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Meeting Minutes prepared by

Suzanne Woodland, Deputy City Manager/Regulatory Counsel

Minutes Approved: October 10, 2023