

2019 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CITY COUNCIL



2019 CITY GOVERNMENT

Seated: Alan L. Agnelli, City Clerk; Scott Joseph Graves, Esq., Councillor at Large, Council President; Mark P. Hawke, Mayor; John M. Flick, Esq., City Solicitor; Ronald F. Cormier, Councillor at Large, Dean of the City Council

Standing: Craig R. Cormier, Councillor at Large; Christine A. Johnson, Councillor at Large; Elizabeth J. Kazinskas, Ward 2 Councillor; Edward A. Gravel, Councillor at Large; James D. Johnson, Ward 5 Councillor; Nathan R. Boudreau, Ward 3 Councillor; James M. Walsh, Esq., Ward 1 Councillor; James S. Boone, Councillor at Large; Karen G. Hardern, Ward 4 Councillor

The City Council is pleased to present this report to the Citizens of Gardner.

The City Council, the legislative branch, derives its authority from the City Charter, City Code, and the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Comprised of eleven members elected every two years in odd-numbered years, six are elected at-large by the voters of all five wards, while the remaining five are elected by voters of the individual wards.

In 2019, the City Council was served by Councillors at-Large James S. Boone, Craig R. Cormier, Ronald F. Cormier, Edward A. Gravel, Scott Joseph Graves, Esq., and Christine A. Johnson. Ward Councillors were James M. Walsh, Esq., Ward 1; Elizabeth J. Kazinskas, Ward 2; Nathan R. Boudreau, Ward 3; Karen G. Hardern, Ward 4; and, James D. Johnson, Ward 5.

In 2019, Atty. Scott Joseph Graves was elected Council President and appointed Councillors to the four Standing Committees – Finance, Service, Safety and Welfare. In addition, he named Councillor James M. Walsh to the Board of Trustees of the Williams-Rockwell Educational Gift Fund; Councillor Ronald F. Cormier to the Cable Advisory Committee; President Graves and Councillor Ronald F. Cormier to the Capital Improvement Planning Committee; Councillor James D. Johnson to the Traffic Commission; and, Councillor Edward A. Gravel to the Youth Commission.

Finally, of local historic note, Councillor Ronald F. Cormier, unofficially the “Dean of the City Council,” is not only the longest continuously serving member of the present City Council, but has the distinction of being the longest serving City Councillor in the City’s history, having completed 32 years on the Council at the close of 2019.

STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Scott Joseph Graves, Esq., Chair
Ronald F. Cormier
James M. Walsh, Esq.

The COMMITTEE ON FINANCE is charged with evaluating and reporting to the Council on matters referred to them by the full Council or on their own initiative concerning municipal functions defined generally as administrative and financial. The Committee serves as liaison to the Assessor, Auditor, Tax Collector & Treasurer, Information Technology, City Clerk, Registrars of Voters, Civil Code Enforcement, Purchasing, Contributory Retirement Board, Law Department, Human Resources, and Community Development & Planning. In addition, budgetary matters, salaries and compensation, appointments, position vacancies, Council Rules, and City Hall building fall within the Committee's purview.

The COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE is charged with evaluating and reporting on matters referred to them by the full Council or on their own initiative concerning municipal functions relating to the Public Works Department and its divisions (Highway, Sewer, Water, Parks, Cemeteries, and Forestry), the Conservation Commission, Municipal Grounds Commission, Engineering and Survey Department, and the Flood Plain.

Nathan R. Boudreau, Chair
Craig R. Cormier
James S. Boone

Christine A. Johnson, Chair
Elizabeth J. Kazinskas
Scott Joseph Graves, Esq.

The COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WELFARE is charged with evaluating and reporting to the Council on matters referred to them by the full Council or on their own initiative concerning municipal functions relating to the Gardner Municipal Airport, Council on Aging, Cultural Council, the Commission on Disability, Golf Course, the Greenwood Memorial Pool, Historical Commission, the Levi Heywood Memorial Library, Recreation, the Veterans Agent, Weights & Measures, the Youth Commission, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, the Gardner School Department, and the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School District.

The COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY is charged with evaluating and reporting on matters referred to them by the full Council or on their own initiative concerning municipal functions relating to the Police and Fire Departments, Building and Health Departments, Animal Control and the licensing of automobile dealers, automobile junkyards, bowling alleys and pool halls, and dealers in second hand articles.

James D. Johnson, Chair
Karen G. Hardern
Edward A. Gravel

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

The City Council meets regularly on the first and third Mondays of each month, except for July and August, when it meets only on the first Monday. Other meetings and hearings are scheduled as necessary. Meetings are open to the public and recorded live for broadcast on GETV. The Agenda and Minutes of every meeting are posted on the City's website.

DATE	TYPE	Time	Meeting Description/Purpose
1/7/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular & New Elementary School Presentation.
1/22/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
2/4/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
2/19/2019	Informal	7:00 p.m.	#10051, Ch. 600-18, Parking Meters
2/19/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
3/4/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
3/18/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
4/1/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
4/16/2019	Informal	6:30 p.m.	New Elementary School Site Plans
4/16/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
5/1/2019	Hearing	6:00 p.m.	New Elementary School Presentation
5/6/2019	Informal	6:30 p.m.	FY2020 School Budget Presentation
5/6/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
5/20/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
6/3/2019	Hearing	7:00 p.m.	Zoning (Marijuana)
6/3/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
6/10/2019	Informal	6:00 p.m.	#10113, Water Main Loan; #10121, Water Rates Ordinance.
6/10/2019	Special	6:45 p.m.	#10113, Water Main Loan; #10121, Water Rates Ordinance.
6/17/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
6/24/2019	Informal	6:00 p.m.	FY2020 Budget Review.
6/24/2019	Special	7:00 p.m.	FY2020 Budget & Water Rates Ordinance.
7/1/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
8/5/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
8/12/2019	Special	6:00 p.m.	Election of Treasurer and Collector of Taxes
9/3/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
9/16/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
9/30/2019	Informal	6:30 p.m.	#10167, Borrowing \$89,558,570.00 for New Elementary School.
10/7/2019	Hearing	6:45 p.m.	#10148, James Street Extension Layout.
10/7/2019	Hearing	7:00 p.m.	#10164, Zoning Reclass. Downtown Urban Renewal Area
10/7/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
10/21/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
11/4/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
11/18/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
12/2/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular
12/16/2019	Regular	7:30 p.m.	Regular

THE COUNCIL'S DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Summary

The City Council appoints four department heads, the City Clerk, City Treasurer, City Auditor and City Collector of Taxes. While the Mayor appoints all other department heads and members of municipal boards (except School Committee), the City Council is required to confirm the Mayor's appointments. The positions of City Solicitor and Constable are also appointed by the Mayor; however, City Council confirmation is not required.

The City Council authorizes public improvements and expenditures through the Annual Budget and through short and long-term borrowings; determines the proportion of the annual tax levy borne by the four classes of property (residential, commercial, industrial, personal); adopts regulations, ordinances, and local acceptance provisions of Massachusetts General Law for the administration of the city government; adopts orders for the location of utility poles and the layout of public ways. The City Council also adopts resolutions for the pursuit of State and Federal Grants, the scheduling of elections and issuing election orders.

By State Law and City Code, the Council is empowered to issue Licenses for Bowling Alleys and Billiard Tables; First and Second Class Motor Vehicle Dealers; Class 3 Motor Vehicle Junkyard Dealers; Dealers in Second Hand Articles; and, storage of flammable and explosive products.

Finally, City Councillors interact with many State and local authorities, agencies, businesses, and individuals, in their pursuit of fair and effective representation of the people that they serve.