

CITY OF LACONIA - CITY COUNCIL MEETING
City Hall - Armand A. Bolduc City Council Chamber
7:00 P.M.

1/12/2026 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bordes called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Councilor Soucy led the salute to the flag.

3. RECORDING SECRETARY

Katie Gargano, City Clerk

4. ROLL CALL

Clerk Gargano called the roll of the following City Councilors: Councilor Hildreth, Councilor Soucy, Councilor Hoffman, Councilor Haynes, Councilor Bogert and Councilor Conant.

Mayor Bordes confirmed that all councilors were in attendance and a quorum was established.

5. STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Kirk Beattie, City Manager; Glenn Smith, Finance Director

6. COUNCIL PROCLAMATION

7. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

7.A. City Council regular meeting minutes of December 22, 2025

Minutes of the Laconia City Council meeting of December 22, 2025 were distributed to members of the City Council on December 30, 2025.

With no corrections or changes submitted to the Clerk, Councilor Soucy made a motion to accept the minutes as distributed. Seconded by Councilor Bogert **Discussion:** None.

The motion ***passed with four in favor.*** Abstained Councilor Hildreth & Councilor Conant

7.B. City Council special meeting minutes of January 5, 2026

Minutes of the Laconia City Council special Inauguration meeting of January 5, 2026 were distributed to members of the City Council on January 7, 2026.

With no corrections or changes submitted to the Clerk, the minutes were accepted as distributed.

Councilor Conant made a motion to approve the minutes as distributed, seconded by Councilor Hildreth **Discussion:** None.

8. **CONSENT & ACTION ITEMS**

9. **CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Richard Mason, property owner of a condo on Weirs Blvd, he has a problem with someone building a house 6 feet away from his house. He states it doesn't meet the fire code, and it is going to impact the value of his home. The neighbor is building on the same footprint of the building that was demolished, but they are building a structure significantly higher and it is blocking the whole side of his house. Mr. Mason stated that he has spoken to the planning department and code department. The building inspector advised him to get a lawyer. This property has changed hands several times in the past couple of years. City Manager Beattie stated he has met with Mr. Mason, he has contacted our city attorney and is looking for work to be done on removing the permit. Councilor Conant stated that he was contacted by Mr. Mason as well and he went out to the property and looked at how close it is to his property, and something definitely doesn't look right. Mayor Bordes suggested that he contact his HOA President, Mr. Mason reported that he was the president of the association. Everyone takes care of their own buildings and HOA fees are collected to take care of lawn maintenance and plowing. Councilor Hoffman asked if this went to the ZBA? Mr. Mason thinks it went before the ZBA in 2024. And the buyer is claiming that they are grandfathered in. The council would like to see a timeline of all the events that happened with this property when it came to approval of permits and hearings that were held.

Lisa Morin, Ward 2- Stated she has concerns about ICE, she'd like to know clarification on what is moving forward with the interaction in the City of Laconia. She would like to know if ICE is in the community. She is concerned about giving up her constitutional rights.

Doug Robinson, Ward 5- Gave his congratulations to all the newly elected officials. He hopes to see the group be honest and transparent. He stated that seeing the council all vote in favor of an item is suspect on if the councilors are truly thinking on their own or are they just going with what everyone else is doing. He stated that leadership matters, there are large projects coming forward like the state school, the master plan is important as to how it shapes the city for the next 15 years. He'd like to see an economic plan for the City.

Gregg Hough, Ward 2 echo'd Mr. Robinson's comments about making Laconia as best as we can. He was looking into the debt that the city is carrying in relation to the bonds that the city has. He was looking into the Colonial Theater; he feels the colonial theater has the opportunity to make money and we aren't making any money now. He'd like the Council to investigate it being run like the municipal airport, parking garage, or that it at least makes enough money to pay off it owns debts. He'd like to see different types of events being booked there like regional competitions, graduations, dance recitals. He feels the building should be booked at least 250 nights per year. He thinks there are opportunities for the city to earn more revenue like a ticket surcharge, a merchandise sales cut and money from concessions.

10. **INTERVIEWS**

11. **NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS & ELECTIONS**

12. **COMMUNICATIONS**

13. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

- 13.A. **Public Hearing - Proposed application to the Community Development Finance Authority for up to \$100,000 in Community Development Block Grant Emergency Funds for Belknap House Emergency Repairs/Replacement of the sewer line servicing the building**

Daily Sun and posted at Laconia City Hall, Laconia Community Center, Laconia Public Library and the offices of the SAU.

Mayor Bordes opened the Public Hearing at 7:24 PM.

Donna Lane read into the records about the Community Development Block Grant. Community Development Block Grant funds are available to municipalities through the NH Community Development Finance Authority. Up to \$500,000 annually is available for Economic Development Projects, up to \$500,000 for Housing Projects, up to \$500,000 for Public Facility Projects, up to \$500,000 in Emergency Funds, up to \$25,000 per Planning Study grant. All projects must directly benefit a majority of low- and moderate-income persons.

This is a proposed application to the Community Development Finance Authority for up to \$100,000 in CDBG Emergency Funds. Of the grant funds, up to \$15,000 will be retained by the City for administrative/labor compliance costs associated with the project, up to \$85,000 of the funds will be subgranted to Belknap House, a family shelter located at 200 Court Street in for emergency repairs/replacement to the sewer line servicing the building. The shelter services low and moderate income persons.

This project conforms with Laconia's Housing and Community Development Plan's goals of: Promote activities that protect the health and safety of residents and visitors (Short-term and Long-term goal)

There are informational document available on the table in the Council Chambers.

Mayor Bordes asked if there were any comments from the public.

Doug Robinson ward 5, spoke about transparency he had several questions about the project, he questioned the 15% administrative fee, he thinks it is 10%, he has spoken to people he knows who do excavation work and he thinks that 100k for a project like this is too expensive, he'd like to know if they have gone out to bid and gotten actual prices for the project.

Manager Beattie stated that there are quotes for the project, the administrative fee and the relocation fees are factored into the 100k.

Donna Lane stated that once they are officially awarded the funds, they have to get bids, if the project estimate comes back at less, they only take what the project is going to cost, they don't take extra. And she stated that the Administrative amounts allowed is 15%.

Mayor Bordes closed the Public Hearing at 7:30 PM.

13.B. **Public Hearing - The Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan for the Belknap House Emergency Repairs/Replacement Project for the sewer line servicing the building**

Notice of this Public Hearing was made available in the December 26, 2025 edition of the Laconia Daily Sun and posted at Laconia City Hall, Laconia Community Center, Laconia Public Library and the offices of the SAU.

Mayor Bordes opened the Public Hearing at 7:30 PM.

Donna Lane read the following language into the record about the community Development Block Grant. This plan outlines measures, under the Uniform Relocation Act, required for CDBG projects that involve any displacement or relocation of persons (or businesses), if the City were to undertake a CDBG project which involved displacement or relocation they would follow this plan. The plan outlines the measures they would take to find comparable, suitable housing for persons (or businesses) displaced or relocated. This project does not anticipate displacement or relocation.

Mayor Bordes asked if there were any comments from the public.

- There were none.

Mayor Bordes closed the Public Hearing at 7:32 PM.

14. PRESENTATIONS

15. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Bordes acknowledged that recently we just had Law Enforcement appreciation day. He wanted to say thank you to Laconia Police, State Police and the Belknap County Sheriff's Department.

He also just had a meeting with the developer of state school property; everything seems to be going well and in the right direction for our community.

16. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Soucy noted that as the chairman of the appointments committee, he'd like to hear from other boards that the Council doesn't hear from often to give the council an update. He'd like to set a schedule, possibly every 6 months. Manager Beattie stated he will start with boards and commissions that do not have a city council representative. He also noted about the need to meet about the issues with Laconia Hospital, he'd like to see councilors be a part of these meetings. Mayor Bordes confirmed he has a meeting with the CEO next month.

Councilor Bogert noted the need for the Council to begin working on the social district's aspects, he's like to see this in place by the beginning of the summer.

Councilor Hildreth noted in regard to the Mayor's upcoming meeting. He knows the hospital just made a 2-million-dollar investment in the building next to the hospital. They also did a feasibility study and they determined that Concord Hospital in Concord cannot withstand to take over all the patients that Laconia sees. Mayor Bordes thanked Councilor Hildreth for that information.

Councilor Hoffman wanted to touch on the comments made about the colonial theater, he agrees the utilization is very important. Increasing profitability is definitely something they need to look into, but he does feel that the theater has had a very positive impact on the overall assessment of the downtown area and has helped the downtown businesses.

Councilor Conant noted that he attended his first Planning Board Meeting on 1/6/25, he met with Planning Board Director Mora, he met with Superintendent Crawford at the water department, he has his first meeting next week. And he met this morning with Patrick Wood of the Human Relations Committee.

17. COMMITTEE REPORTS

17.A. FINANCE (Councilors Soucy, Bogert and Hoffman)

17.A.i. WOW Trail Funding

17.A.ii. Downtown TIF Financing

17.B. PUBLIC SAFETY (Councilors Soucy, Haynes and Conant)

17.C. GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ORDINANCES (Councilors Hoffman, Bogert and Conant)

17.C.i. **Regulation of Short Term Residential Rental Businesses**

17.C.ii. **Proposed Historic Overlay District**

17.C.iii. **Performance Zoning**

17.C.iv. **Time frame for demolition permits**

17.D. **LAND & BUILDINGS (Councilors Bogert, Hildreth and Conant)**

17.D.i. **Downtown parking garage**

17.D.ii. **Repair & maintenance of City buildings**

17.D.iii. **Plan for the DPW Compound**

17.E. **PUBLIC WORKS (Haynes, Soucy, Bogert)**

17.E.i. **Retaining Wall Policy**

17.E.ii. **Discussion for converting from a manual to an automated solid waste curbside collection service**

17.F. **APPOINTMENTS (Councilors Soucy, Hildreth and Conant)**

18. **LIAISON REPORTS**

None.

19. **CITIZENS REQUESTS TO COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

20. **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Manager Beattie wanted to let the council know that he appointed Patrick Wood to the Laconia Housing board for a 5-year term.

This afternoon he received a press release that the CAP Concord/ Laconia Route that the program is being suspended at the end of January.

20.A. **Financial and Operational Trends Report**

Manager Beattie presented the Financial and Operational Trends Report to the City Council.

Councilor Bogert asked about the Downtown TIF, he had put out an RFP for lighting along the river bend, City Hall Parking Lot. He was asking if the money will be earmarked for that. Manager Beattie is going to look into the status of the RFP. Director Smith noted the number in the report, is a real time number that has been updated since other expenses have been approved.

21. **NEW BUSINESS**

21.A. **Resolution 2026-01 - Relative to acceptance of an award in the amount of \$26,405.00 from the Department of Safety Homeland Security Grant Program for**

the purchase of SWAT/SOU equipment for the Laconia Police Department

The City has applied to the New Hampshire Department of Safety for grant funding in the amount of \$26,405.00 to purchase SWAT/SOU equipment through the Homeland Security Grant Program.

Fiscal Impact: None - The entire cost of this equipment is covered by the Homeland Security Grant, there is no local match requirement.

Equipment approved: Binoculars: QTY:15 Cost: \$13,500; Flashlights: QTY: 20 Cost: \$4,000; Eye Protection: QTY:20 Cost: \$3,000; Radio Mic Assembly (for gas masks): QTY: 20 Cost: \$5,905

Councilor Haynes made a motion to waive a reading of Resolution 2026-01 in its entirety and to read by title only. Seconded by Councilor Soucy **Discussion:** None.

The motion ***passed with all in favor.*** 6-0

Councilor Bogert made a motion to move a first reading of Resolution 2026-01 relative to acceptance of an award in the amount of \$26,405.00 from the Department of Homeland Security Grant Program for the purchase of SWAT/SOU equipment for the Laconia Police Department. Seconded by Councilor Hildreth **Discussion:** None.

The motion ***passed with all in favor.*** 6-0

Councilor Hoffman made a motion to schedule a Public Hearing on January 26, 2026 during the regular City Council meeting to gather public input prior to any action being taken. Seconded by Councilor Hildreth **Discussion:** None.

The motion ***passed with all in favor.*** 6-0

21.B. Termination of the Inter-Municipal Agreement between the City of Laconia and the Town of Gilford governing the development of the Lakes Business Park

In May of 2001, an Inter-Municipal Agreement was signed governing the joint economic activities between the City of Laconia and the Town of Gilford related to Lakes Business Park in the area better known as Hounsell Av.

The Town of Gilford voters have authorized their Board of Selectman to negotiate and execute a successor agreement with the City of Laconia.

A draft successor agreement and the original intermunicipal agreement are attached to the agenda.

Discussion: Councilor Soucy asked Manager Beattie if all the lots have been sold, manager Beattie confirmed that they have all been sold and that is what triggered this conversation. Councilor Soucy asked about the real estate taxes that are collected by the town of Gilford, what is the percentage that will come to Laconia for taxes in the future? Manager Beattie stated that in the successor agreement it has 25% property taxes will come to Laconia, that is part of the negotiation but as of right now it is at 25%. There is a formula in the agreement where some of the 25% goes into a capital improvement account, but that has a cap of a million dollars, so once we meet that, then our full 25% will come to Laconia. Councilor Soucy would like to know where we stand at meeting the cap, Manager Beattie will look into that and get back to him. The million dollars referenced is for maintenance, Councilor Soucy asked if it was for like plowing or what else is it for? Manager Beattie stated no, it is for capital improvement type projects. He knows they want to put a trail system in, or if there is an infrastructure problem like water, paving, other something else major that may be needed. Councilor Soucy asked if now that all the lots are sold, if a property owner wishes to sell the property, do they have to come back before the City Council? Manager Beattie stated no.

Councilor Hoffman asked what happens if the property needs a capital improvement cost in excess of the 1 million dollars in the fund? Manager Beattie thinks it would be on the Town of Gilford, the Council likes the idea of that. Manager Beattie will speak to legal about adding language to the agreement.

Councilor Soucy made a motion to authorize the City Manager to negotiate a successor agreement with the Town of Gilford pertaining to the Lakes Business Park Intermunicipal Agreement agreed upon in 2001. A negotiated agreement shall be reviewed by City of Laconia legal counsel prior to being presented to the City Council. Seconded by Councilor Bogert. **Discussion:** None.

The motion ***passed with all in favor.*** 6-0

Councilor Hoffman made a motion to schedule a Public Hearing on February 9, 2026, during the regular City Council meeting to gather public input prior to any action being taken. Seconded by Councilor Hildreth **Discussion:** None.

The motion ***passed with all in favor.*** 6-0

22. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

22.A. **Proposed application to the Community Development Finance Authority for up to \$100,000 in Community Development Block Grant Emergency Funds for Belknap House emergency repairs/replacement of the sewer line servicing the building**

Community Development Block Grant funds are available to municipalities through the NH Community Development Finance Authority. Up to \$500,000 annually is available for Economic Development Projects, up to \$500,000 for Housing Projects, up to \$500,000 for Public Facility Projects, up to \$500,000 in Emergency Funds, up to \$25,000 per Planning Study grant. All projects must directly benefit a majority of low- and moderate-income persons.

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This project conforms with Laconia's Housing and Community Development Plan's goals of: Promote activities that protect the health and safety of residents and visitors (Short-term and Longterm goal).

At the December 22, 2025 meeting the City Council voted to schedule a public hearing; that public hearing was held earlier this evening.

Councilor Hildreth made a motion to approve the submittal of the Belknap House Emergency Sewer Line Repairs/Replacement Project CDBG application and vote to authorize the City Manager to sign and submit the CDBG application, and upon approval of the CDBG application, authorize the City Manager to execute any documents which may be necessary to effectuate the CDBG contract, and any amendments thereto. Seconded by Councilor Haynes **Discussion:** None.

The motion ***passed with all in favor.*** 6-0

22.B. **The Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan for the Belknap House Emergency Repairs/Replacement Project for the sewer line servicing the building**

This plan outlines measures, under the Uniform Relocation Act, required for CDBG projects that involve any displacement or relocation of persons (or businesses), if the City were to undertake a CDBG project which involved displacement or relocation they would follow this plan. The plan outlines the measures they would take to find comparable, suitable housing for persons (or businesses) displaced or relocated. This project does not anticipate displacement or relocation.

At the December 22, 2025 meeting the City Council voted to schedule a public hearing; that public hearing was held earlier this evening.

Discussion: Councilor Haynes asked Manager Beattie if the replacement is coming from Pearl Street, rather than Court St. If

Councilor Conant made a motion to approve the Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan for the Belknap House Emergency Repairs/Replacement Project for the sewer line servicing the building. Seconded by Councilor Bogert **Discussion:** None.

The motion ***passed with all in favor.*** 6-0

23. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

23.A. **Master Plan**

23.B. **Milfoil Treatment funding requests**

23.C. **Sewer & Water Master Plan**

23.D. **Single Stream Recycling/Concord Co-op/Solid Waste disposal cost reductions**

23.E. **Strategic Planning/Goal Setting**

23.F. **WOW Trail**

23.G. **Weirs Beach Restoration Project**

23.H. **Fair St/Court St traffic problems and accidents**

24. **Any other business that may come before the Council**

25. **NON-PUBLIC SESSION (According to RSA 91-A:3, II)**

26. **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Bordes adjourned the meeting at 8:24 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Gargano, City Clerk