

City Council Minutes  
Tuesday, October 13, 2015  
City Hall Auditorium  
7:00 p.m.

1. Called to Order @ 7:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilor Sickorez
3. Roll Call – members present were Councilor Sickorez, Councilor Bartley, Councilor Bezanson, Councilor Ferguson, Councilor Lavoie, Councilor McClure, Councilor Moavenzadeh, Councilor Sherwood and Councilor McMilleon
4. Act on minutes – September 8, 2015  
**Councilor Ferguson moved to accept the minutes of September 8, 2015 as submitted.  
Councilor Sickorez seconded and it was voted Unanimous.**

**5. Correspondence**

a. President/Vice President Communications

Councilor McMilleon stated that he wants to appoint an Adhoc committee on schools. The purpose for this committee is to have communications with members of the School Committee and the Superintendent to keep the Council informed and up to date with anything going on particularly in the area of the budget regarding the schools. He feels it is important to have open communication between the schools and the Council. He spoke with Deb LaValley who is in favor of the idea. He appointed Councilors Sherwood, McClure and Bezanson to this committee as per the Council Rules and asked for the endorsement of the Council on this.

Councilor Lavoie agreed that it is a great idea and asked if he knew what the committees charge would be.

Councilor McMilleon stated that he did not have anything in writing but as stated to open communications between the School Committee, Superintendent and the Council.

Councilor Bezanson stated that he thinks this will be an advantage to the Council particularly before the budget season to know what is coming.

Councilor Sherwood asked for clarification of who the committee would meet with and if it is defined.

Councilor McMilleon stated that it is not defined. He stated that there would be times that they would like to meet with administration and other times with the School Committee and maybe sometimes both. He stated that the details can be left to the Chair of the committee.

Councilor McClure stated that she thinks this is a good way to open communications.

**Councilor Ferguson moved to accept the suggestion of Councilor McMilleon to create an Education/Council Adhoc Committee to be formed.**

**Councilor Bartley seconded and it was voted Unanimous.**

b. Communication from Elected Officials, Boards and Commissions

**2015-063** Warrant for 2015 City Election

City Clerk, Bonnijo Kitchin stated that this needs to be called and the warrant needs to be signed. She read the warrant into the record (copy attached).

**Councilor McClure moved to approve 2015-063 as submitted.**

**Councilor Sherwood seconded and it was voted Unanimous.**

c. Council Communications, Announcements and Committee Reports

**6. Mayoral Appointments – None at this time.**

**7. Licenses & Permits – FYI-attached list**

**8 Public Comment**

James Thivierge, 8 School St. spoke in regards to the Presidential debate and proposals from the parties. He talked about the last local election and the state ballot initiatives which affected the tax base. Whether Federal, State or a tax increase as projected here, it is all going to affect the tax base in some way. In income costs and depreciation methodologies it will be increased expense. This is a prelude to classification. There are other things that affect that bottom line. That election which was just called affects that bottom line. The last eighteen years we have had quite a few tax burden increases. It has basically been a commercial subsidy. He is asking the Council to pay attention to that tax base. Listen to what the State Senators and Representatives have to say. This Council has consistently voted for the commercial subsidy, the factor of 1. He is asking for a vote of residential market base type candidates; single family, condo, 2, 3, and 4 family apartments and apartment dwellers. You have to make change and that tax policy can relieve and create consumer spending. It is all about the tax bills.

Claude Gonthier of 112 Kimball Rd. stated that he read something in the paper that upsets him. He is disappointed with a proposal coming before the Planning Board that is being proposed by a major land owner of the Lower Millyard and a major proponent for redevelopment of the Lower Millyard. It is approximately 6 years ago this month that we started in earnest the Lower Millyard and there are members here who have sat for 3 to 4 years through deliberations on various proposals, various hearings, and the one constant thing we hear is we will be getting it back through new growth. What is going to come before us now with this major land owner and proponent of the Lower Millyard is an approximate 200 unit affordable housing development with 300 parking spaces. A total departure from whatever was conceived or mentioned previously. This is going to be a loss for Amesbury. We will never get the tax revenue that we would have with the Luxury Condos and stores underneath that were mentioned at every meeting. He feels that the economy is not a reason to renege on what he feels was a promise. He stated that he knows it is not the Council's duty to make the change but this Council approved the expenditure and the taxpayer has spent for the DPW alone \$8 million. He states that he is to understand that this project will total \$12 million of tax-payers money and asked the Council if any of them would have endorsed this if the proposal was for 200 Affordable Housing units and parking for each. He does not believe that any one of them would have. He asked that they do a non-binding resolution and send a designee from the Council to attend the appropriate meeting of the Planning Board and register the concerns of the Council on this. He believes this will be detrimental to Amesbury and will not draw people here nor do we need more people living in this

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immediate area. What we do need is a more revenue enhancing tax base. This will impact the schools and our police services and we will never recoup from this.

Ian MacGregor, President of the Amesbury Firefighters gave a follow up on the Chili Cook-off. He stated there were 7 teams that participated. Amesbury Talks won the judges first place. Salisbury Police who came to compete against Salisbury Fire who won last year and Salisbury Fire did not show took second place and Amesbury Fire took third place. Without final numbers done he stated that they have approximately \$3500.00 for donation profits. He thanked all who attended and is looking forward to next year.

Councilor Sherwood stated that he appreciates Mr. Gonthier's concerns with the Lower Millyard and stated that proposal was a testing of the waters application. It was not an application for an approved site plan but a test. The article in the paper also states concerns that the Planning Board has as well as the City Staff has had about what commercial will or will not be in there. With the Lower Millyard overlay district there are certain thresholds that have to be met in terms of the amount and type of commercial that needs to be present. Your point is well taken. It is in the preliminary phase and they don't have an official plan proposed on the table but it was a testing of the waters to see how well it would be received.

Councilor McClure stated that she has spoken to some constituents about this and she knows a number of the Council voted with this program as it was presented and it was presented with beautiful overlays and beautiful pictures and \$.5 million in design work was flushed away because of all of the changes based on contamination and things we did not know. She feels that those who voted and put the taxpayers money forward for a project with a promise of \$93 million in new growth with retail on the lower levels and condos above that we owe the public to stay on top of it; to take a look at what was committed. Remember it was not just a park. We moved an entire DPW, bought a new building, built another half of DPW to fill in the necessary pieces from the building that we did purchase and we need to keep an eye on it. Her concern with a resolution is that it has no teeth. A resolution is simply explaining the will of the council and she stated that she would be willing to talk more especially with the folks who did vote for this. She stated that she will follow up.

Mr. Bezanson thanked Mr. Gonthier for his comments and stated that he was not on the Council at the time but does support a resolution. As Councilor McClure stated it doesn't bring a lot of weight but it does show the support I would provide to it as well by signing that. He stated that he has been an advocate of funding the schools and they have a hard time funding the schools; bringing in more apartment complexes into Amesbury when we are already at 48% doesn't make any sense in his eyes. He would be happy to sign the resolution.

## **9. Council Response to Public Comment**

### **10. Public Hearings:**

**2015-048** An Order to Establish a Special Education Stabilization Fund – Councilor Bezanson and Councilor Lavoie sponsor

**Summary:** The Special Education Stabilization Fund would help offset extraordinary costs related to special education. Because special education funding is difficult to project given the changing nature of mandated special educational services, and especially for out-of-district tuition and transportation

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expenses, this new fund will be an important planning tool for the City of Amesbury to proactively manage local budget impacts. Establishment of the fund would require a 2/3 vote of the Municipal Council. This reserve account will be funded as needed with one-time available revenue, which would also require a 2/3 vote of the Municipal Council.

Councilor McMilleon declared the public hearing opened.

James N. Thivierge Stated that he wanted to augment his correspondence of Thursday, September 24, 2015 to the Council. He is disappointed that his correspondence did not get read during correspondence. Every agenda item has a folder and in that folder there was no explanation, no data, no information and no knowledge to support this. Out of the clear blue we got this proposal. The Superintendent came up and said if it is there, I would like to have it. He noted he did not see the Chairman of the School Committee or the Vice Chair or the Mayor or anybody else from the School Committee here to support this. This should originate there. That cost center in the School Department is \$4.8 million. It is an admirable request and the Council can vote whatever they want. Whether it is right or not is the question and whether it is ethical. That designation is going to be capitalized and funded \$600 thousand from an undesignated resource. In conclusion, we are expecting too much from Free Cash. He stated that this is not ethical.

Jane Snow, Fern Ave, stated that she does not see any money established for this. She asked the Council to take the time and take a good look at this.

Joseph M. Greaney, 50 Orchard St, stated that he believed that this was explained a week ago by the Chairman. You have the stabilization fund and free cash with money in there and you have the opportunity if you have anything pop up you can come in and address the Council to see if they can get some help out of the special accounts. He asked how much they are looking to put into this account. He feels that the money should come from Reserve.

Councilor McMilleon closed the public hearing.

Councilor McClure read the Finance Committee recommendation.

Councilor McClure stated that she expected to hear a little bit from Councilor Bezanson. This is actually Part 1 of a Part 2 plan because we really don't have the funding officially set up. She stated as she sees this as opening a bank account but not putting any money in it. It's a good start. This establishes the need for it but it does not have how it is going to be funded. This is the beginning not the final.

Councilor Bezanson stated that this just established the Special Education Stabilization Fund. At this point, we don't have a dollar amount as to what should be funded. This is to create the fund that helps offset unforeseeable costs. Right now the money is just not here. If we continue to do the same things over and over again in this community we are going to get the same results. By doing something that is going to create a stabilization fund then we can go about and look for reserves when unforeseeable events do occur. At the Finance meeting we talked about in 2013 how the budgets were frozen and they did not come to the Council and ask for money, the Schools took all the other reserves that were in the school and put those towards special education which is 20% of the population of the kids. The other 80% of the kids didn't have the extra funds for extra programs. We will see that again this year. This is to create long term planning that is going to help out this community over time. The number 1

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rising cost is special education at this time. It needs to be addressed. Every year the state mandates are failing the whole community. We can't sit back and wait for the state to give us the funds for these mandates. He stated that he reached out to many communities for information on this. He wants to make sure there is money in a reserve that has been funded slowly to help out the cause.

Councilor Lavoie stated that this bill creates a line item of other reserve accounts. This bill is only to adopt a state enabling legislation so that we can have this. Once this is established the Council will be asked to use certain available funds for the certain purposes. The major purpose in passing this is to set it up in availability so that if and when funds do become available the Council can ask the question and prioritize our free cash or one time funds for X, Y and Z. He stated that both himself, and Councilor Bezanson want to make sure, as well as the Finance Committee with a vote of 8-1 In Favor; want to make sure everyone stops and pauses and puts some of that money into the Educational Stabilization Fund as a rainy day precaution for the benefit of the community.

Councilor Bartley stated that she would like to know who is going to have a final say; does the School Committee have to come before the Council with a request and does it need to be spelled out.

Councilor Bezanson stated yes the School Committee would have to come with a request and it is spelled out in this document that it would have to have a 2/3 vote of the Municipal Council. This wording is directly from the state and is the same wording that other communities are using as well.

Councilor Sickorez asked if we have any idea of how much the funding fell short back in 2013.

Councilor Bezanson stated that he was not here in 2013 so he does not have that figure but today if they came in today to ask for additional funds for special education we don't have funds.

Councilor McMilleon asked what the purpose of the question was.

Councilor Sickorez stated that he would like to get a feel for what a real need looks like in a dollar amount.

Councilor McMilleon stated that we would not know that because it will be different in every situation. If it is an out of district placement it would be significantly different from someone coming into the special education program from outside that can be serviced within our district. There is going to be a wide discrepancy. This is simply to create the fund. All money will have to initiate with the Mayor and then they have to be approved by this Council. There is no funding proposed here at all. He stated that he does not have a problem with establishing it but he does not believe they will be able to give an answer to Councilor Sickorez' question.

Councilor Sickorez stated that his second question is if the fund is established and is funded and a need comes up and it exceeds the funding; does it limit the School Committee to using those funds only or do they still have access to the general stabilization fund in the town.

Councilor McMilleon stated that they always have access through the Mayor's Office and he is the Chair of the School Committee. Again, the money will be requested by the Mayor and will be presented to us where it will go to Finance and then back to Council and we will make a decision on whether or not we are going to fund it. That is the procedure. He asked the City Clerk if this was sent to Ordinance Committee as well as Finance Committee.

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Bonnijo Kitchin, City Clerk, stated her notes only reflect that it was referred to the Finance Committee.

Councilor McMilleon asked the sponsors of the bill if this would have to be put into an Ordinance format that spells out exactly, legally what that stabilization fund can be used for.

Councilor Lavoie stated that this adopts a provision of state law that authorizes this, so it is the same as any other stabilization. It is not a private ordinance on our books like dog fines it authorizes the Financial Administrative staff to enter it into the chart of accounts in the software and on paper and then the State Statute tells us how it operates.

Councilor Bezanson stated that this is the best practice used among the Commonwealth. The language in this bill is directly from the state.

Councilor Sherwood asked if there could be scenarios over and above \$100 thousand.

Deirdre Farrell, Assistant Superintendent stated that in the budget book under Special Education Department there is a list of tuition costs for the residential placements and the out of district placements that we have. They range from \$37,000 to \$55,000. Other more sophisticated 365 day residential placements; permanent homes for special education students run in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. So, one student unanticipated, unbudgeted who has moved into the district could cost you \$37,000 and another student could cost you anywhere from \$200 to \$300 thousand plus transportation depending on how those needs are met. The circuit breaker question comes into when you expend the funds. It is a reimbursement program so the funds have to be spent out of the budget first and put toward the following year and then reimbursed based on the expenses of the previous year. So you are in arrears in regards to that reimbursement but the funding from a stabilization account and/or any other account is irrelevant and still eligible for circuit breaker funding.

**Councilor Lavoie moved to adopt 2015-048 as submitted and as recommended by the Finance committee. Councilor Ferguson seconded.  
A Roll Call vote was taken and it was voted In Favor Unanimously.**

(Councilor Lavoie left the meeting.)

**2015-056** An Order to authorize a transfer from Salary Reserve to various Non Union Salaries.  
Summary: Transfer \$21,765 from Salary Reserve to Non Union Salaries to cover FY2016 increases.

James N. Thivierge stated that he did not like being able to ask a question at the budget hearing on these kind of things but he thanked the employees for their service. He spoke about the unfunded pension liability which in 2000 the ratio was .80 and that was the standard. In 2012 the last entry that the Auditor makes is .4983. The names that appear the most with the decline from 2000 to 2012 are Basque, Hildt, Kezer, McMilleon, Lavoie and McClure. We have the highest tax burden ratio in the area, in the Northern Region and also #11 in the State. The information the Deirdre gave should have been in the folder.

Councilor McMilleon closed the public hearing.

Councilor McClure read the Finance Committee recommendation.

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**Councilor Sherwood moved to accept the Finance Committee recommendation and approve 2015-056. Councilor Sickorez seconded. A Roll Call vote was taken and it was voted IN FAVOR Unanimously (8)**

**2015-057** An Order to authorize a transfer from Salary Reserve to DPW salaries.

Summary: Transfer \$5602 from Salary Reserve to DPW Salaries to cover FY2016 DPW Contract increases.

Councilor McMilleon opened the public hearing.

James N. Thivierge stated that he did a search on management risk and got no hits and then did a search on Risk management and the results were unlimited. Reading the principles of risk management; nothing that he said appeared. He stated that he worked in DPW and they are hardworking guys and have too much to do even though they contract a lot out these days. He thanked them for their service.

Councilor McMilleon closed the public hearing.

Councilor McClure read the Finance Committee recommendations.

Councilor Sherwood mentioned for the sake of the public as they quickly move through the next few items that these are just minor transfers to adjust the line items for salaries after the contracts were settled and they were discussed in detail at the Finance Committee meeting.

**Councilor Sickorez moved to accept the Finance Committee recommendation and adopt 2015-057 for approval. Councilor McClure seconded. A Roll Call Vote was taken and it was voted Unanimously IN FAVOR (8)**

**2015-058** An Order to authorize a transfer from Salary Reserve to Fire salaries.

Summary: Transfer \$22,028 from Salary Reserve to Fire Salaries to cover FY2016 IAFF Contract increases.

Councilor McMilleon opened the public hearing.

James N. Thivierge stated that he has lived close to the Fire Department most of his life. He believes they should be enterprised. He thanked them for their service. They do a good job and should be on Cable TV doing Fire prevention.

Councilor McClure read the Finance Committee recommendations.

Councilor McMilleon closed the public hearing.

**Councilor Ferguson moved to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and approve 2015-058. Councilor Bartley seconded. A Roll Call vote was taken and it was voted IN FAVOR Unanimously (8)**

**2015-059** An Order to authorize a transfer from Salary Reserve to Police salaries.

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Summary: Transfer \$20,838 from Salary Reserve to Police Salaries to cover FY2016 IBPO Contract increases.

Councilor McMilleon opened the public hearing.

James N. Thivierge stated that he hoped they would take the prosecutor and put him in City Hall as the inside Counsel and let those policemen defend their own tickets. He doesn't want to see anybody double teamed like he was. Between Fire and Police there is \$603 thousand coming from overtime and \$400 + of it was Police. He does not like being excluded from the budget questioning process as he feels they have something to hide. He proposed to make the police all State Police and save \$4 million dollars. He says we have good police but doesn't like the tickets because he feels it is politically charged. He reminded the Council that we \$126 million in retirement, pensions and post-retirement benefits and at one time it was funded under 50%. On Stabilization the last public transaction that he has seen is 2009.

Councilor McMilleon closed the public hearing.

Councilor McClure read the Finance Committee recommendation.

**Councilor Bartley moved to accept the Finance Committee recommendation and approve 2015-059. Councilor Sickorez seconded. A Roll Call vote was taken and it was voted IN FAVOR Unanimously (8).**

## **11. First Readings**

**2015-062** An Order to renew the Audit agreement for the years ending June 30, 2015, June 30, 2016 and June 30, 2017 with Melanson Heath as outlined in the May 14, 2015 Memorandum of Understanding to Mayor Gray from Melanson Heath

Summary: To renew the Auditor to annually conduct the Audit of the City's financial position for FY2015 through FY2017.

Councilor McClure moved to send this to the Finance committee meeting of October 27, 2015 and on to a public hearing at the next City Council meeting on November 10, 2015. Councilor Sickorez seconded.

Councilor Sherwood asked if it should go also go to the Audit and Oversight Committee.

Councilor McClure amended her motion to include the Audit and Oversight Committee. Councilor Ferguson seconded.

Councilor Ferguson asked who was on that committee and it was determined that Councilor McClure, Councilor Bezanson and Councilor Bartley are the Audit and Oversight Committee.

A vote was taken and it was Unanimous (8)

## **12. Late Files**

Councilor Sickorez read a letter from the Mayor's Office asking for the Council to accept the late files.

**Councilor Sherwood moved to accept the late files. Councilor McClure seconded.**

Councilor Ferguson stated her frustration with late files and feels that it has progressively gotten worse and that they should work harder to get them in on time.

Councilor McMilleon stated that he was informed of this by the Clerk's Office and had a discussion with the Mayor's Office and told them the only way I would allow them is if they are time sensitive. He is assuming that each of these are time sensitive and a couple of them are Resolutions that don't have to be referred.

Councilor Ferguson stated that she knew about a couple of these six weeks ago and they need to be aware of the deadline and not make it a practice that everything is a late file.

Councilor McMilleon agreed.

**It was voted Unanimous to accept the late files.**

**2015-064** An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend a Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$985,922.00 from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development.

Summary: The City of Amesbury and the Town of Salisbury submitted a joint CDBG application to the EOHD's Department of Housing and Community Development in order to obtain this grant award for housing rehabilitation and social services in both communities. The total award will be distributed as follows: Amesbury total \$415,000, Housing Rehabilitation: \$375,000 and Social Services \$40,000. Salisbury total \$325,922, Housing Rehabilitation: \$275,922 and Social Services \$50,000. Shared Administrative costs, \$245,000.

**Councilor Sherwood moved to send to the Finance Committee for a recommendation on October 27, 2015 and hold a public hearing at the November 10, 2015 City Council meeting. Councilor Sickorez seconded and it was voted Unanimous.**

**2015-065** An Order to authorize the Mayor to, on behalf of the City, enter into an Inter-municipal agreement with the Town of Salisbury for the purposes of regional participation in the 2015 Massachusetts Community Development Block Grant program.

Summary: The agreement would provide Amesbury and Salisbury with a vehicle to administer the CDBG programs regionally through a collaborative approach between administration of the Town of Salisbury and the administration of the City of Amesbury.

**Councilor McClure moved to send to the Finance Committee for a recommendation October 27, 2015 and the Ordinance Committee on October 21, 2015 and hold a public hearing at the November 10, 2015 City Council meeting. Councilor Sickorez seconded.**

**Councilor Sherwood and Councilor Ferguson asked if a copy of the agreement can be obtained. Councilor McMilleon stated that he would ask for a copy of the agreement. It was voted Unanimous.**

**2015-066** A Resolution to accept the expenditure of \$106,000 in capital funding for the purposes of procuring technology in the Amesbury Public Schools.

Summary: In the Fiscal Year 2016 Operating Budget, the City Council appropriated \$431,500 for various capital needs. This resolution reiterates the City Council's support of the expenditure of \$106,000 from the Capital Projects fund for the purposes outlined in Assistant Superintendent Deirdre Farrell's memorandum to Mike Basque dated October 1, 2015.

Councilor McClure stated that this was the money that was committed for the books and the technology. So along with the 4 teachers, this is the technology piece that we grew into the schools this year. She questioned if a resolution should go to the Finance Committee.

Councilor McMilleon stated that he feels it should because it is dealing with funds.

Councilor Ferguson questioned that because this bill deals with money it should have come forward as an Order not a Resolution. If we have already given this money to them through the budget why do they need to come before us? A resolution is generally non-binding. According to our Rules it says any measure appropriating money; you are saying we have appropriated it already in the budget so she doesn't understand why it is even in front of them.

Councilor McMilleon stated that the money has been appropriated but they have not specifically ordered the expending of the money for this particular purpose and that is his understanding of why this resolution is here. He stated he thinks it should be referred to Finance and set up for a public hearing on November 10 and in the meantime that give them time to check with the Mayor and check with Mike Basque as to why we are doing it this way.

Bonnijo Kitchin, City Clerk, stated that she questioned it when it came down and was told that it was already appropriated in the budget and asked Mr. Basque and he said that as far as he was concerned if it was already in the budget it really didn't need to come to us but the Mayor had told him at the budget season when he talked about all of these capital expenses that he would bring them back to the council before he appropriated that money so therefore the resolution.

Councilor Sherwood stated that there had been a menu of capital expenses that included the ones that they have this evening that were included in the presentation of that capital line and it was made clear at the time that there wasn't a guarantee that those would be the things that would be funded but as far as what was on the capital improvement plan for FY16, those were the top of the list. We have appropriated the funds for Capital expenses already so we don't need the formal order. He is comfortable of approving it this evening.

Councilor McMilleon stated that this is for the public schools and is something they can really use because they will have access to Chromebooks with this. This will reduce the amount of students that may get referred to special education. If the Council would like to we could pass it tonight.

**Councilor McClure moved to approve 2015-066 as committed at budget time. Councilor Sickorez seconded. It was voted Unanimous.**

**2015-067** A Resolution to accept the expenditure of \$150,000 in capital funding for the purposes of rehabilitating a ladder truck in the Amesbury Fire Department

Summary: In the Fiscal Year 2016 Operating Budget, the City Council appropriated \$431,500 for various capital needs. This resolution reiterates the City Council's support of the expenditure of \$150,000 from the Capital Projects fund for the purposes of rehabilitating a ladder truck in the Amesbury Fire Department

**Councilor Bartley moved to approve 2015-067 as submitted. Councilor McClure seconded and it was voted Unanimous.**

**2015-068** An Order to authorize the Mayor to enter into a five-year lease-purchase agreement for the procurement of a new Fire Attack Pumper.

Summary: the Fire Department seeks to purchase a new Fire Attack Pumper that will become the Front Line Pumper.

**Councilor McClure moved to send to the Finance Committee on October 27, 2015 and hold a public hearing on November 10, 2015. Councilor Ferguson seconded.**

**Councilor Sherwood asked for more information about the cost of the lease agreement for the Finance Committee.**

**It was voted Unanimous.**

**2015-069** An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend a grant in the amount of \$7,500.00 from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Summary: Full STEAM Ahead is a \$7,500 federal grant that will be used to create programming and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) related opportunities for children aged 0-6 years old. The grant funding will be available in October 2015 and must be spent by September 2016. Through this grant the Children's Room will be able to offer services that the Amesbury Public Library would otherwise not be able to provide, such as:

Create STEAM themed storytime kits for patrons to take out

Start a monthly sensory storytime for special needs children aged 4 and up.

Purchase a discovery center table and stock it with hands-on items for children to explore in the picture book area.

Create an outdoor StoryWalk in collaboration with Coastal Tails and Amesbury Trails.

Hire presenters and performers, such as Mass Audubon, high touch high-tech, Seacoast Science Center, and others.

Train all the children's staff on sensory storytimes and other STEAM related programs.

**Councilor Sherwood moved to send to the Finance Committee on October 27, 2015 and hold a public hearing on November 10, 2015. Councilor McClure seconded and it was voted Unanimous.**

### **13. Adjourn**

**Councilor McClure moved to adjourn at 8:45 pm. Councilor Sickorez seconded and it was Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Dunning  
Assistant City Clerk

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