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1/22/24

**CITY OF AMESBURY  
IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-FOUR**

**SPONSORED BY:**

*Steven Stanganelli*  
Steven Stanganelli, Councilor-at-Large

**BILL No.** 2024.017

*[Signature]*

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**An Ordinance** to adopt changes to Amesbury City Council – 14<sup>th</sup> Session Rules by revising Rule 11-A Standing Committees.

**Summary:**

This ordinance will adopt changes to the Amesbury City Council – 14<sup>th</sup> Session Rules by revising Rule 11-A: Standing Committees

**Be it Ordered by the City Council of the City of Amesbury assembled and by the authority of the same, as follows:**

That the City of Amesbury shall adopt changes to Rule 11 of the Order of Business of the Rules of Procedure for the Amesbury City Council – 14<sup>th</sup> Session as previously adopted in 2022-036 by revising Rule 11-A – Standing Committees.

**Rule 11-A – Standing Committees** shall be amended as follows:

- 1.) At the end of the second paragraph of this Rule under General Powers, the end of the second sentence shall be changed to add:

“ therefore in a majority and optional minority reports. Committees shall have the power to invite or compel testimony from any source(s) deemed necessary including from City Department staff. Committees may choose to make a positive recommendation, a negative recommendation, a recommendation with changes, or no recommendation at all.”

2. ) Membership shall be changed as follows:

“The City Council shall maintain a standing Committee of the Whole that consists of all nine (9) members of the City Council appointed to serve for the term for which the City Council is elected unless otherwise specified.”

In addition, changing the section by adding: “The City Council may add additional Sub-Committees at its discretion with the membership of each being no less than five (5) members of the City Council appointed to serve for the term for which City Council is elected unless otherwise specified.”

3. The Standing Committees of the City Council under Rule 11-A Standing Committees shall be changed to:

Rule 11A-1: Committee of the Whole:

“There shall be one Standing Committee of the City Council known as the Committee of the Whole that shall be responsible for:

- Budget, Finance, and Audit matters
- Planning, Ordinances, Administration, and Rules.”

Said Committee shall take up any matters referred to it by the City Council by a simple majority vote of the full City Council.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee of the Whole shall be chosen by majority vote from the total membership of the Council at its initial organizational meeting. Neither the Council president nor vice president shall serve as Chair or Vice Chair.”

Rule 11A-2: Joint Education Committee:

A committee comprised of members of the School Committee to facilitate communication between and provide a venue for dialogue between the Amesbury City Council and the Amesbury School Committee.

Representatives from each of these bodies as well as the Superintendent of Schools and other noted staff shall meet at least quarterly to become better informed about topics such as:

- Challenges the district may be facing
- Current and future educational programming
- Budget and financial updates
- Strategic planning process and progress
- Major leadership changes
- Capital/facilities needs of the schools

Membership: The subcommittee should be comprised of three members of the Amesbury School Committee and three members of the Amesbury City Council but in no case fewer than two members from each body. There shall be a lead School Committee member and a lead City Council member who will work with the Superintendent of Schools to determine agendas and meeting times. Ex officio members of this committee shall include the Superintendent of Schools, the Business Manager of the School Department, the Facilities Director of the School Department, and the Mayor and Chief Financial Officer of the City or their designees. The Committee shall choose a chair and vice chair from among its voting membership. The lead School Committee member and the lead Council member shall report to the full membership of each respective body.

NOTE for Reference:

- A Committee of the Whole will
  - reduce the redundancy of the existing sub-committee structure;
  - be easier to meet quorum requirements;
  - avoid issues with Open Meeting Law with sub-committees of three;
  - be more efficient for the use of limited City Clerk resources and better time management for those in the Administration in need of attending
  - makes it easier for the public to attend and follow proposals.
- The intention is to allow all Councilors an opportunity to hear presentations from subject matter experts, witnesses, the public, and the Administration at the Committee level so that such information need not be duplicated and take up time at a Council meeting.
  
- This revision does provide for creation of sub-committees for specific areas, if so needed but with a minimum number that avoids the issues related to quorum and Open Meeting law encountered under the current system.