



City Council Actions
In City Council
Tuesday, January 20th, 2026

Present: Councilors Albright, Baker, Bixby, Block, Charm, Dahmubed, Farrell, Getz, Golden, Gorden, Greenberg, Grossman, Irish, Kalis, Kelley, Krintzman, Leary, Lucas, Malakie, Micley, Oliver, Roche, Silber, Wright

Clerk's Note: The full Council meeting can be viewed on the following link:

https://youtu.be/IB3S3w2U6TM?si=s_5oyHpcO1GvtV8H

The City Council discussed the following items on Second Call:

Referred to Finance Committee

#24-26 Requesting authorization to transfer \$300,000 to fund new positions in the Mayor's Office

HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer a total of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) from Acct# 0140120-511002 (\$100,000), Acct# 0110952-511001 (\$100,000), Acct# 0110162-513040 (\$50,000), and Acct# 0110162-512001 (\$50,000) to Acct# 0110320-511001 Executive Office, Full Time Salaries for the purpose of funding two new critical management positions, Chief of Community Services and Chief of Staff, as well as temporary funding for a period of overlap for a new Chief Financial Officer.

Action: **Finance Approved 8-0**
 City Council Approved 24-0

Clerk's Note: Councilor Block put this item on Second Call so that the full City Council may participate in this budget matter. He noted that the \$300,000, put towards six months of pay for two full-time salaries, annualizes to \$600,000 a year, which seemed high for these two positions and an overlap period for a new Chief Financial Officer. Councilor Block stated that it seemed worth discussing, and that the City Council should be cognizant of this proposal. The item passed unanimously via voice vote.

The City Council voted without discussion 24 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Absent to Accept the Committee Recommendations on the following:

Referred to Land Use Committee

- #13-26 Request to amend Special Permit #216-88 to extend a nonconforming front setback for an automotive service station canopy and to amend Special Permit #305-82 to replace the existing free-standing sign and other waivers from the sign regulations at 14 Elliot Street**
EDWARD NEGOSHIAN petition for SPECIAL PERMIT/SITE PLAN APPROVAL, to raze the existing canopy and construct a new canopy and updated signage at 14 Elliot Street, Ward 5, Newton, on land known as Section 51 Block 25 Lot 03, containing approximately 8,470 sq. ft. of land in a district zoned Business Use 2. Ref: Sec. 7.3.3, 4.1.3, 7.8.2.C.2, 5.2.13.A, 5.2.13.B, and 5.2.8, of Chapter 30 of the City of Newton Rev Zoning Ord, 2017.
14 Elliot Street - <https://newtonma.viewpointcloud.com/records/861404>
- Action: Land Use Approved 8-0**

Referred to Zoning & Planning Committee

- #23-26 Request for ordinance amendments to change oversight of the Economic Development Commission and for discussion on transition of the City's economic development functions and staff to the Mayor's Office**
HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting to amend City Ordinance Section 22-95 to remove staffing responsibility for the Economic Development Commission from the Planning Department and relocate the Commission ordinance from Chapter 22 to Chapter 7; and further requesting a discussion on the transition of the City's economic development function and staff from the Planning Department to the Mayor's Office
- Action: Zoning & Planning Approved 8-0**

Referred to Programs & Services Committee

- #32-26 Reorganization plan to create a new Arts and Culture Department**
HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting, pursuant to Section 6-2 of the City Charter, a reorganization plan for the establishment of a new Arts and Culture

Department. The proposed reorganization includes ordinance amendments to Chapter 2 to insert a new Article VII, beginning at Section 2-249, to create the department and set forth its functions and structure, as well as amendments throughout the Revised Ordinances to rename the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Action: **Programs & Services Approved 7-0 (Councilor Baker not voting)**

#25-26 Appointment of Meryl Kessler as the Director of Newton's Arts and Culture Department

HIS HONOR THE MAYOR appointing Meryl Kessler as the Director of Newton's Arts and Culture Department pursuant to Section 3-3 of the City Charter. (30 Days: 01/31/2026)

Action: **Programs & Services Approved 8-0**

Referred to Public Safety & Transportation Committee

#18-26 Requesting renewal of public auto license

DONALD LaPLANTE, 395 Lexington Street, Auburndale, MA 02466
requesting renewal of one (1) public auto license for Don's Car Service.

Public Safety & Transportation Approved 8-0

#37-26 Class 2 Auto Dealer License

NEW ENGLAND MOTOR MART, INC.
1211 Washington Street
West Newton, MA 02465

Public Safety & Transportation Approved 8-0

#36-26 Class 2 Auto Dealers License

MOTORCARS OF BOSTON INC.
1191 Washington Street
West Newton, MA 02465

Public Safety & Transportation Approved 8-0

#38-26 Class 2 Auto Dealer License

GRAND AUTO SALES
1235 Washington Street

Newton, MA 02465

Public Safety & Transportation Approved 8-0

#39-26

Class 2 Auto Dealer License

APEX MOTORS GROUP

280 California Street

Newton, MA 02458

Public Safety & Transportation Approved 8-0

#19-26

Class 1 Auto Dealer License

VILLAGE MOTORS GROUP INC D/B/A HONDA VILLAGE

371 Washington Street

Newton, MA 02458

Public Safety & Transportation Approved 8-0

Motion to suspend the Rules to accept late-filed items:

Referred to Zoning & Planning Committee

#59-26

Presentation and Discussion on Report of the Newton Housing Priorities Task Force

COUNCILORS ALBRIGHT, MALAKIE, WRIGHT, AND GETZ requesting a presentation and discussion regarding a report created by the Affordable Housing Trust, The Housing Partnership and the Fair Housing Committee. This report, prepared by the Newton Housing Priorities Task Force (formed in late 2023), analyzes the city's affordable housing landscape to answer three questions: 1) What is the existing supply and what factors led to its development, 2) Whom does the existing affordable housing serve, and 3) How does this supply match the need. (180 days: 07/19/2026)

#57-26

Request for discussion and ordinance amendment(s) to dimensional controls, aligning use and zoning.

COUNCILORS OLIVER, WRIGHT, GETZ, ROCHE, MALAKIE, KALIS requesting discussion to determine alignment of dimensional controls (setbacks, height, FAR, etc) for residential developments within BU lots, with focused consideration for lots in and adjacent to residential neighborhoods. (180 days: 07/19/2026)

Public Hearings were assigned to the following items:

Referred to Land Use Committee

Public Hearing 01-27-26

- #58-26 Request for a Special Permit to waive 38 parking stalls at 1135 Walnut Street**
THE PARISH OF SAINT PAUL petition for SPECIAL PERMIT/SITE PLAN APPROVAL, to waive 38 parking stalls at 1135 Walnut Street, Ward 6, Newton, on land known as Section 52 Block 08 Lot 11, containing approximately 16,695 sq. ft. of land in a district zoned Multi Residence 1. Ref: Sec. 7.3.3, 5.1.4, 6.3.12.B.1, and 5.1.13 of Chapter 30 of the City of Newton Rev Zoning Ord, 2017.