



INFORMAL MEETING OF APRIL 6, 2020

Informal Meeting of the City Council was held remotely on Monday evening, April 13, 2020, via Zoom teleconference and broadcast live on WGET.

CALL TO ORDER

Council President James Walsh called the meeting to order at 7:00 o'clock p.m.

CALL OF THE ROLL

City Clerk Alan Agnelli called the Roll of Members. Eleven (11) Councillors were present including President James Walsh and Councillors James Boone, Nathan Boudreau, Craig Cormier, Ronald Cormier, Aleksander Dernalowicz, Scott Joseph Graves, Karen Hardern, Judy Mack, Elizabeth Kazinskas, and George Tyros.

President Walsh announced the Informal Meeting was called to review the Special Municipal Elections schedule as a result of the Governor’s State of Emergency Order through May 4, 2020. He said that the Special Preliminary Election is scheduled for Tuesday, April 7 and the Special Election is scheduled for May 5 and that on March 30, the Council voted to postpone the elections.

President Walsh stated that the Council has to vote not later than 20 days before the date of the Preliminary. He presented the following Scheduling options:

2020 SPECIAL CITY PRELIMINARY AND FINAL ELECTION
SCHEDULING OPTIONS FOR POSTPONED ELECTIONS

Council Votes no later than	For Preliminary on	Final Election held on	Election is certified and earliest that Mayor can take office (after 5pm)
April 15	May 5	June 2	June 12
April 22	May 12	June 9	June 19
April 29	May 19	June 16	June 26
May 6	May 26*	June 23	July 3

**May 26 – day following Memorial Day.*

President Walsh cited “dueling considerations” including the length of the pandemic and in-person voting at the polls, although Early Voting by Mail is an option. He commented that May 5 may be too soon for the Preliminary and to schedule the election “not too late” in order to give the newly-elected time for end of year issues and new Fiscal Year issues. He suggested May 12 for the Preliminary.

INFORMAL MEETING OF APRIL 6, 2020

Councillor Ronald Cormier said that it seemed to him that May 12 may be the best of the options, as a later date may make it difficult for the newly-elected Mayor. "We should go with the 12th and hope for the best," he added.

Councillor Kazinskas asked the City Clerk to offer input on the issue.

The City Clerk expressed concern for the health and safety of poll officials and voters, but that his Office is prepared to run an election at any time. He added that the choice of dates is a public policy question, whereas the managing an election is an administrative one.

Councillor Aleksander Dernalowicz questioned whether there are extra cost associated with setting or not setting a new date for the election.

The Clerk remarked that the financial risk [of delaying the election] is minimal, citing the cost for legal advertising for voter registration sessions prior to each election. He added that the April 7, 2020 Preliminary ballots are valid for a postponed Preliminary election.

Councillor Judy Mack stated that the 19th is her preference in order to allow voters more time to return their ballots and for the safety of the election officers.

Councillor George Tyros suggested May 19th as the date for the Preliminary since the City may experience [virus] peak shortly and that no one knows how long the peak will last. He suggested that the Council cautious and consider the health and safety of workers.

Councillor James Boone remarked that either date would be acceptable to him; however, he suggested that he prefers the 12th.

President Walsh said that he hoped to avoid having to reschedule the elections again, which would become confusing.

On straw poll, Councillors Craig Cormier, Judy Mack, and George Tyros favored May 19, while President James Walsh and Councillors James Boone, Nathan Boudreau, Ronald Cormier, Aleksander Dernalowicz, Karen Hardern, and Elizabeth Kazinskas favored May 12.

Councillor Scott Joseph Graves abstained.

The Informal Meeting concluded at 7:18 p.m.

Accepted by the City Council: *May 4, 2020*

PRESIDENT
James M. Walsh, Esq.
COUNCILLORS AT LARGE
James S. Boone
Craig R. Cormier
Ronald F. Cormier
Scott Joseph Graves, Esq.
Judy A. Mack
George C. Tyros

CITY OF GARDNER
MASSACHUSETTS 01440-2630

OFFICE OF THE
CITY COUNCIL



WARD 1 COUNCILLOR
James M. Walsh, Esq.

WARD 2 COUNCILLOR
Elizabeth J. Kazinskas

WARD 3 COUNCILLOR
Nathan R. Boudreau

WARD 4 COUNCILLOR
Karen G. Hardern

WARD 5 COUNCILLOR
Aleksander Dernalowicz, Esq.

April 2, 2020

CITY COUNCIL INFORMAL MEETING

Date: Monday, April 6, 2020
Time: 7:00 P.M.
Location: City Council Chamber, Room 219, City Hall

ANNOUNCEMENT - Any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting, or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the chair as to the number, placement and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. Any person intending to make such recording shall notify the Chair forthwith. All documents referenced or used during the meeting must be submitted in duplicate to the City Clerk, pursuant to the Open Meeting and Public Records Law. All documents shall become part of the official record of the meeting.

The City Council will meet informally to discuss new dates for the Special City Preliminary Election and Special City Election.

CITY COUNCIL OF GARDNER
James M. Walsh Esq.
JAMES M. WALSH, ESQ.
Council President

NOTICE: *The listing of Agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.*