

JULY 24, 2025



## **Watertown City Council**

Administration Building  
149 Main Street  
Watertown, MA 02472  
Phone: 617-972-6470

### **SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING TUESDAY, JULY 24, 2025, 5:30 P.M. REMOTE MEETING**

## **MINUTES**

#### **ACCESS INFORMATION:**

- A. This remote meeting will be held on July 24, 2025 at 5:30 PM
- B. The meeting will be televised through WCATV (Watertown Cable Access Television):  
<http://vodwcatv.org/CablecastPublicSite/?channel=3>
- C. The Public may join the virtual meeting online: <https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/92991331344>
- D. Public may join the virtual meeting audio only by phone: (877) 853-5257 or (888) 475-4499 (Toll Free) and enter Webinar ID: 929 9133 1344
- E. Public may comment through email: [vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov](mailto:vpiccirilli@watertown-ma.gov)
- F. Please Visit the City Council Website here: <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/350/City-Council>

### **1. ROLL CALL**

Council President Sideris called to order a special meeting of the City Council at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom. Those present were Councilors John M. Airasian, Caroline Bays, Lisa J. Feltner, John G. Gannon (joined at 5:47 p.m.), Nicole Gardner, Emily Izzo, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., and Council President Mark S. Sideris. Also present were Emily Monea, Deputy City Manager, Mark Reich, City Attorney, Brendan T. McCarthy, Council Clerk, and Doug Newton, Municipal Policy Analyst.

### **2. DISCUSSION**

A. Consideration and action on a proposed letter to Republic Waste Services  
re: Trash collection dispute

President Sideris read the letter to Republic that is attached to the agenda. His further remarks stated that Watertown is not involved in the bargaining of labor contracts, but that this action is to encourage Republic to sit down and bargain in good faith with the union to get the deal done for the good of Watertown's residents.

City Manager Proakis recalled that a 5-year extension was signed with Republic in late 2023 which coincided with a strong working relationship between the DPW and Republic, particularly their contact, a union member, who is now present on the picket lines. The administration was assured by Republic that a new contract with the union would be reached before the expiration of their existing one, which would result in avoiding a strike. That statement proved to be incorrect, and that led to the lack of service. Other Republic employees have been brought in from other states since the initial lull, but that service is slower than typical. There have also been efforts to provide supplemental trash drop offs in town.

Currently, the majority of trash and recycling have been picked up on the correct day. Leftovers should be picked up the following day, and if collection is delayed a third day, residents are instructed to call 311 who will send the trucks to that address. Compost pick-up is not affected. Yard waste is a challenge. Dumpsters have been a problem and have fallen behind, which has set back issues with rodents. Rats have been feasting on trash next to dumpsters. He believes the City has done its best to cobble together service for the community, though it has not been a cheap endeavor. There have been talks with the City Attorney with regards to a potential force majeure, as well as exercising the liquidated damages clause to be enforced in the contract with Republic. Pursuing these options is the reason that Watertown has not been participating in the lawsuits that some other municipalities have taken part in.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to send the attached letter to Republic as written and Councilor Feltner seconded.

Councilor Feltner recognized that teams have been working hard, but that there are some residents that have gone without a pick-up for two weeks. She also wanted to discuss a strategy for yard waste pick up going forward.

President Sideris replied that this motion and meeting only relate to the proposed letter being sent to Republic.

Councilor Gardner asked on behalf of a resident if there will be a letter written to the Teamsters in addition to Republic.

City Attorney Reich replied that the City's relationship is with Republic and not the union, so that is the party they are dealing with. The City doesn't have a role in the specifics of labor negotiations.

Councilor Feltner asked about the phrase "taking the gloves off". She believes it jumps out as saying that Republic is not willing to negotiate, and the City is picking a fight.

President Sideris replied that, in his mind, Republic and the Teamsters are in a boxing ring and no one wants to give up. It's time to drop the fight and get together to work out a deal.

Councilor Gannon stated that he liked the letter, but he wanted to consider an additional approach. The City of Boston is pursuing funds for the health department for creating health code violations.

City Manager Proakis remarked that he just learned of that strategy that day, and will be looking into those possibilities. He added that the administration is keeping tabs on the cost that Watertown is incurring from this labor strike. Typically, health department violations fines go to property owners, which makes that endeavor unique.

Councilor Gannon responded that fines can also be for private parties who cause the problem.

Councilor Bays stated that she was impressed by the letter, that she would have written something stronger, though that might not be prudent. She supports the letter and said that it's time to do something. If this doesn't work, she would look for stronger action.

President Sideris remarked that it's important that the City Council weighs in now. For all the towns affected, Watertown is the only one with this specific form of municipal government

City Attorney Reich noted that he spoke with the attorney from Beverly, and that Beverly went into court this week for public health nuisance. The court has taken that under advisement. He added that this is a somewhat novel position that the contracted entity is creating the nuisance, and that Watertown is approaching contractual funds relief.

Councilor Piccirilli voiced approval of the letter as it strikes the right balance, and if nothing happens, more action will need to occur.

The motion to send the letter carried unanimously in a Roll Call Vote.

### **3. RECESS OF ADJOURNMENT**

Councilor Piccirilli made a motion to adjourn and Councilor Feltner seconded.

The motion was adopted unanimously in a Roll Call Vote.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the City Council for which a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted by a vote of \_\_\_ for, \_\_\_ against, and \_\_\_ present on August 12, 2025.

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Mark S. Sideris, Council President  
s:/BTM

#### **ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Mark S. Sideris,  
Council President

Caroline Bays,  
Councilor At Large  
Nicole Gardner,  
District A Councilor

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.,  
Vice President &  
District C Councilor  
John G. Gannon,  
Councilor At Large  
Lisa J. Feltner  
District B Councilor

John M. Airasian,  
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba,  
Councilor At Large  
Emily Izzo,  
District D Councilor

**ADDENDUM TO THE  
MINUTES OF THE JULY 24,  
2025 SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING**



# City Council Meeting

Thursday, July 24, 2025 at 5:30 PM  
Remote Meeting

## Agenda

### **ACCESS INFORMATION:**

- A. This meeting will be held on July 24, 2025 at 5:30 P.M. Location: Remote Meeting
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- 1. ROLL CALL
- 2. DISCUSSION
  - A. Consideration and action on a proposed letter to Republic Waste Services re: Trash collection dispute.
- 3. RECESS OR ADJOURNMENT

### **ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Mark S. Sideris,  
Council President

Caroline Bays,  
Councilor At Large  
Nicole Gardner,  
District A Councilor

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.,  
Vice President &  
District C Councilor  
John G. Gannon,  
Councilor At Large  
Lisa J. Feltner,  
District B Councilor

John M. Airasian,  
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba,  
Councilor At Large  
Emily Izzo,  
District D Councilor

**CITY COUNCIL ATTENDANCE**  
**MEETING DATE: JULY 24, 2025**  
**REMOTE MEETING – REMOTE ATTENDANCE**

	YES	NO	PRESENT
JOHN M. AIRASIAN	__X__	_____	_____
CAROLINE BAYS	__X__	_____	_____
LISA J. FELTNER	__X__	_____	_____
JOHN G. GANNON	__X (5:47)__	_____	_____
NICOLE GARDNER	__X__	_____	_____
EMILY IZZO	__X__	_____	_____
ANTHONY PALOMBA	__X__	_____	_____
VINCENT J. PICCIRILLI JR.	__X__	_____	_____
MARK S. SIDERIS, COUNCIL PRESIDENT	__X__	_____	_____

**CITY COUNCIL ROLL CALL VOTE  
MEETING DATE: JULY 24, 2025  
REMOTE VOTE**

	YES	NO	PRESENT
JOHN M. AIRASIAN	__X__	_____	_____
CAROLINE BAYS	__X__	_____	_____
LISA J. FELTNER	__X__	_____	_____
JOHN G. GANNON	__X__	_____	_____
NICOLE GARDNER	__X__	_____	_____
EMILY IZZO	__X__	_____	_____
ANTHONY PALOMBA	__X__	_____	_____
VINCENT J. PICCIRILLI JR.	__X__	_____	_____
MARK S. SIDERIS, COUNCIL PRESIDENT	__X__	_____	_____

Motion to send letter to Republic Waste Services



## **Watertown City Council**

Administration Building  
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Phone: 617-972-6470

### **To Republic Waste Services:**

The City Council of the City of Watertown, along with the City Administration, has been closely monitoring the current issues involving Republic Waste Services and the collection of trash from our City streets. The Council's primary obligation is to the City's residents and citizens and the protection of public health and safety. While the City Administration has worked hard to reduce impacts on Watertown residents as much as possible and assure that solid waste collection services remain available to residents even as the labor dispute drags on, the current situation needs to come to an end. It is past time for this situation to be resolved in the greater public interest.

The City Council does not have a role in private labor contract disputes; however, the Council is keenly aware of the impact such disputes have on residents when critical services are disrupted. The City is respectful of private business activities, but cannot ignore the need for all workers to be treated fairly and receive appropriate wages and benefits. Resolution of the current labor dispute would benefit business interests and workers alike, but most importantly would address existing public health concerns. The City Council therefore urges Republic to redouble its efforts to work with its labor force to resolve this matter in the most expeditious manner possible. It is necessary for both sides to come together and meet for as long and as many times as is necessary to resolve this dispute for the good of the public.

I request, on behalf of the Watertown City Council, that you please do your best to protect the residents of our City. I implore you to put down the gloves and come to the table with a mind to getting everyone back to work. This certainly won't be easy, but it is time that public confidence be restored and public health be protected.

The City Council eagerly awaits a positive outcome.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mark Sideris  
City Council President