



Town Council Meeting Minutes



Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 7:00 PM, in the Matthew Thornton Room

Call to Order

Chair Harrington called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Present at the meeting were Chair Harrington, Vice Chair Jobin, Councilor Albert, Councilor Landrigan, Councilor Rothhaus, and Town Manager Paul Micali. Councilor Thornton was excused and Councilor Murphy arrived at 7:30pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Harrington led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements

The Town offices will be closed on Monday, May 25th
for the observance of Memorial Day.
We honor and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice
for our country and our freedom.

Monday, May 4th was International Firefighters' Day
&
Sunday, May 10th – Saturday, May 16th,
is National Police Week 2026

The Town Council would like to recognize and extend our appreciation for your service to the community.

Upcoming Town Council Meetings:

- Thursday, May 28, 2026, 7:00 PM Regular meeting
- Thursday, June 11, 2026, 9:00 AM- 4:00 PM Town Council Retreat / Work Session
Buckley's Great Steaks – The Carriage Shed (438 DW Highway)
- Thursday, June 25, 2026, 7:00 PM Regular meeting

The Invasive Species Committee is holding a talk at the Library on Knotweed and Bittersweet Management this Saturday, May 16th from 10:00-11:30 am.

Public Works, Administration & Engineering, Buildings & Grounds, Highway, Equipment Maintenance, Solid Waste and Wastewater will be closed on Tuesday, May 19th for a day of training.

Beginning on Thursday, June 25th, the Merrimack Parks & Recreation Department's Summer Concert Series will be held every Thursday night at 6:00 PM at Abbie Griffin Park.

Party changes for the upcoming September 8, 2026 State Primary will end on Tuesday, June 2, 2026. You can declare your candidacy for State Representative, State Senator, State Governor, or Republican Convention from June 3 to June 12, 2026.

Comments from the Press and Public

None.

48 **Recognitions, Resignations and Retirements**

49 None.

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51 **Appointments**

52 **1. Annual Review with the Highway Safety Committee**

53 *Submitted by Highway Safety Committee Chair / Police Chief Brian Levesque*

54 Per Town of Merrimack Charter Section 6-6, at least annually, there should be an annual review with
55 the Highway Safety Committee. This agenda item is to highlight the committee's significant actions,
56 current projects, anticipated actions, and to raise any concerns the Council should know or could act
57 on.

58
59 Police Chief Brian Levesque was present to discuss the Highway Safety Committee's annual review, first
60 sharing that they met once last year to discuss a resident's concerns with traffic on Tinker Road, lack of
61 sidewalks, and a proposal for speed humps. Working with Dawn Tuomala, they got the National Regional
62 Planning Commission involved to identify if sidewalks were necessary. He also shared that they have seen
63 an uptick on requests for stop signs, in which they have a manual on traffic control they have to follow to
64 determine if stop signs meet certain criteria, of which none of the requests met the requirements for stop
65 signs.

66
67 **Public Hearing**

68 **1. Public Hearing – Community Development Block Grant Project**
69 **(Jewel Estates Infrastructure Improvements Project)**

70 *Community Development Block Grant Consultant Donna Lane*

71 A public hearing will be held to update the public on, and accept public comment on, the progress of
72 the Jewel Estates Cooperative Infrastructure Improvements Project. Jewel Estates Cooperative is a
73 44 unit manufactured housing park located at 74 Daniel Webster Highway in Merrimack, NH.

74
75 Community Development Block Grant Consultant Donna Lane was present to review the progress of the
76 Jewel Estates Cooperative Infrastructure Improvements Project. She shared that the community development
77 block grant is available to municipalities through the NH Community Development Finance Authority. Up to
78 \$750,000 annually is available on a competitive basis for public facility projects, up to \$750,000 for housing
79 projects, up to \$750,000 for economic development projects, and up to \$350,000 annually for emergency
80 activities. Up to \$25,000 is available per planning study grant. All projects must primarily benefit low- and
81 moderate-income persons (at least 51%). The public hearing will update the public on and accept public
82 comment on the progress of the Jewel Estates Cooperative Infrastructure Improvements Project. Jewel
83 Estates Cooperative is a 44-unit manufactured housing park located at 74 Daniel Webster Highway. The
84 project is the replacement of the water distribution system, the adding of a booster pump to increase pressure
85 throughout the co-op, and adding flushing hydrants at the system's highest points, in addition to a road
86 rebuild. The funding included a \$500,000 CDBG, and \$1.3 million from DES; 70% of that is a grant, and
87 they have a loan of \$400,000+. The work was bid at and awarded to Carrillo Construction, and construction
88 began in December. Work completed to date includes all water main replacement, including disinfection and
89 pressure treating. The new system is constructed and online inclusive of new booster pump system, blow off
90 hydrant assemblies, and individual housing connections. Preparations of the roadway for reclaim and paving
91 has begun and includes saw cutting the driveways, layout staking and scheduling. Reclaim and paving are
92 currently occurring, and landscaping items will follow the paving.

93
94 The public hearing was opened at 7:16pm and closed at 7:17pm. The public hearing reopened at 7:17pm.
95

Kellie Dennehey at 6 Pearl Court, and president of Co-Op at Jewel Estates, asked when they can expect the pressure pumps, in which Ms. Lane stated she will check with the engineer on that.
The public hearing closed at 7:18pm.

2. Public Hearing – Abbie Griffin Memorial Fund

Submitted by Town Council Chair Nancy Harrington and Vice Chair Jennifer Jobin

The Town Council will hold a public hearing to authorize the acceptance and expenditure of funds from the Abbie Griffin Memorial Fund in the amount of up to \$23,684.00 for the purchase of one (1) Case Commander Incident Command Board with supporting apparatus/equipment, three (3) ZOLL X Series Technical Mount Systems, three (3) Technimount Standard Surface Bases and three (3) Laerdal LSU Suction Units with Canisters for the Fire Rescue Department as well as the purchase of equipment related to virtual reality training to include two (2) complete training set-ups consisting of VR manufactured pistols, tasers, headsets, batteries, bags and related tablets for the Police Department, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15.

Chief Levesque was present with Captain Spillane to discuss the police half of the funds from the Abbie Griffin Memorial Fund, \$11,842, to purchase two virtual reality program trainers by Axon. He shared that their tasers are currently under contract with Axon, so they would essentially be bundling this under their current contract with them. This training program is subscription based over a span of three years, and he plans on adding this into his training budget in the future once the funds run out as he expects this will be of interest for many years due to the program customizability. He then shared a brief training video with the Council that showcased how the program works.

The public hearing was opened at 7:30pm and closed at 7:31pm.

MOTION made by Councilor Albert and seconded by Councilor Landry to move not to exceed \$11,842 for the purchase of equipment related to virtual reality training to include two (2) complete training set-ups consisting of VR manufactured pistols, tasers, headsets, batteries, bags and related tablets for the Police Department, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15, and the Town Manager to sign any necessary paperwork.

MOTION CARRIES 6-0-0

Chief Guarnera was present to discuss the fire half of the funds from the Abbie Griffin Memorial Fund, \$11,842, to purchase one Case Commander Incident Command Board with supporting apparatus and equipment, as well as three ZOLL X Series Technical Mount Systems, three Technimount Standard Surface Bases, and three Laerdal LSU Suction Units with Canisters. The Command Board will help the fire department with accountability as it tracks firefighters on scene, locations, and tasks every time. The mounting system will secure the new Zoll monitor/defibrillator they purchased last year, and has the ability to mount the heavy monitor/defibrillator to the ambulance to keep it from falling and breaking or injuring someone. Lastly, the suction units will be used by the medics/EMTs for patients as their current ones have broken pieces and need to be replaced.

The public hearing was opened at 7:35pm and closed at 7:36pm.

MOTION made by Councilor Murphy and seconded by Councilor Albert to move not to exceed \$11,842 for the purchase of Case Command Board with supporting apparatus/equipment, three (3) ZOLL X Series Technical Mount Systems, three (3) Technimount Standard Surface Bases and three (3) Laerdal LSU Suction Units with Canisters for the Fire Department, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15, and the Town Manager to sign any necessary paperwork.

146 **MOTION CARRIES 6-0-0**

147
148 **3. Public Hearing – Donation Acceptance for Merrimack Fire Rescue**

149 *Submitted by Fire Chief Joseph Guarnera*

150 The Town Council will hold a public hearing to authorize the acceptance and expenditure of a
151 donation in the amount of up to \$17,000 from Getinge to Merrimack Fire Rescue to cover overtime
152 and ancillary costs associated with two (2) live training burns conducted on their property, pursuant
153 to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15.

154
155 Chief Guarnera then shared that this donation from Getinge to the Fire department will be used to cover
156 overtime and ancillary costs associated with two live training burn days they conducted. He stated that the
157 burn properties included a large barn/storage type building with truss roof and a 2-story residential type
158 structure, and surrounding communities also participated. He stressed the importance of these live training
159 burn days, highlighting that firefighters must train to keep their skills current, and they would not have been
160 able to do this without Getinge's generosity.

161
162 The public hearing was opened at 7:39pm and closed at 7:40pm.

163
164 **MOTION made by Councilor Rothhaus and seconded by Councilor Albert to authorize the**
165 **acceptance and expenditure of a donation in the amount of up to \$17,000 from Getinge to Merrimack**
166 **Fire Rescue to cover overtime and ancillary costs associated with two (2) live training burns conducted**
167 **on their property, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15.**

168 **MOTION CARRIES 6-0-0**

169
170 **Legislative Updates from State Representatives**

171
172 Legislative Update from Rep. Maureen Mooney:

173 Greetings, Town Councilors:

174 My Legislative Updates have been so lengthy that I regularly give them on the Merrimack TV program
175 "Maureen Mooney Presents". I fill the entire 27-minute TV show with updates from Concord. During my
176 April 2026 shows, I covered:

177 -A bill allowing optometrists to perform certain laser eye surgeries (HB349-FN)

178 -A bill establishing the paint product stewardship program (HB451-FN)

179 -Increased penalties for refusal of test to determine alcohol concentration AND using a hand-held mobile
180 electronic device while driving (SB620-FN and 649-FN)

181 -Open enrollment (SB101-FN) an act authorizing parents to enroll their children in any public school in the
182 state

183 -General John Stark Day in New Hampshire (celebrated every second Monday in April)

184
185 Thank you for all you do.

186 Respectfully submitted,

187 Rep. Maureen Mooney (R-Merrimack)

188
189 Councilor Murphy shared that they reviewed over 30 bills today, and many floor amendments, and that
190 SB557, relative to Kratom, passed today with support from police.

191
192 **Town Manager's Report**

193 The library roof replacement project has begun. Work crews will be replacing the flat roof through the month
194 of May. This work is noisy and can be heard while in the building.

The library will be closed to the public on Wednesday, May 20 for a staff training day with the Merrimack Police and Merrimack Fire and Rescue Departments.

Property tax bills are being printed and will be mailed out on May 29, 2026.

Second notices for dog licensing are in the mail. If you no longer have your pet, please contact the Town Clerk's Office to update.

Consent Agenda

None.

Old Business

1. USA 250th Anniversary Committee Update

Submitted by Parks & Recreation Director Matthew Casparius

The USA 250th Anniversary Committee to provide the Town Council with an update regarding the upcoming planned festivities and events.

Parks & Recreation Director Matthew Casparius was present to discuss the 250th Anniversary Committee and their plans for the upcoming festivities, first sharing that committee responsibilities include planning all the festivities and events to commemorate the USA's 250th Anniversary celebration as well as the 25th Anniversary of 9/11. Working in collaboration with Merrimack Historical Society, Merrimack School District, and Merrimack Public Library, committee members include: Director Matt Casparius, Resident Kim Ortiz, Resident Gianne Cruz-Schloyer, Resident Matthew Brown, former Town Councilor Mackenzie Murphy, Parks & Rec Committee/School Board member Laurie Rothhaus, Deputy Police Chief Matt Tarleton, and Merrimack Fire Department member Chris Wyman. He highlighted some past events held, such as the Jail & Bail fundraiser last weekend, which included 25 individuals from town that were playfully arrested and were given the task of raising \$250 each. The event goal was to raise \$6,250, and as of 5/14 they have raised \$13,589. These funds will be used for increased costs associated with this year's fireworks display at the new location, new free activities being offered at the fireworks display, expenses for additional events such as the movie night coming up as part of the 250th celebration, and additional bands participating in this year's parade. Any unused funds will reduce the amount needed from our annual allocation, helping to lower the use of tax dollars. Another program he discussed was the Hometown Hero's Banner Recognition Program, which is sponsored by families for a cost of \$250 and will be placed on Daniel Webster Highway and Baboosic Lake Road annually for 5 years. This is a way for the community to honor past and present members of the Armed Forces, First Responders, and their family members, and the deadline to submit is June 1st. Next, Mr. Casparius talked about the Merrimack Concert Association's annual spring concert, which is taking place Saturday, May 23rd at 2:00pm at Merrimack High. Tickets are \$14 for adults, \$12 for seniors, and \$8 for students. He also mentioned that there will be a free movie screening of Hamilton on Friday, June 5th at 7:00pm at Merrimack High School at the Little Theater. Mr. Casparius also noted that the July 3rd Concert in the Park will be at Abbie Griffin Park from 6:00pm- 8:00pm, with the speech contest winner by Merrimack High School student, and performance by the Merrimack Concert Association. There will also be a Sparkler 5k Road Race on Saturday, July 4th at 8:00am at Merrimack High School, organized by the Merrimack Road Runners Boosters Club, followed by the Rotary Club Pancake Breakfast from 8:00am- 11:00am in the Merrimack High School cafeteria. While that is going on, the library has the "Liberty & Legacy: Sheryl Faye Presents Historical Women" program at the Merrimack High School Little Theater from 10:00am- 10:45am.

Mr. Casparius then shared that with the 4th of July parade, there is a new route this year that will start at Merrimack High School and end at Tractor Supply because the parade has gotten so large that it will no longer fit the Front St neighborhood. This new route is better for marchers who will now walk downhill. He also discussed the new location of the fireworks, which will be at 220 Daniel Webster Highway, and will allow for a much better view for all. There will be six shuttle buses running that night from Merrimack outlets to and from the fireworks show from 5:00pm – 10:00pm. There are also multiple food trucks and vendors lined up for the event, and the fireworks are expected to begin at 9:15pm. He also reviewed the exit plan for when the fireworks are over, and how this new location will have a streamlined plan that will dictate the exit path for all attendees that will be significantly faster than previous years. Lastly, he shared that he is looking for Grand Marshal suggestions for the parade.

2. Review of April 2026 Election Process

Submitted by Town Moderator Brian McCarthy and Town Clerk/Tax Collector Brenda DuLong

Town Moderator and Town Clerk would like to update the Town Council on the April Election and some changes that will be worked on.

Town Moderator Brian McCarthy and Town Clerk/Tax Collector Brenda DuLong were present to review how the April election went, sharing that overall, the flow of both locations was typical for a local election, with some timing hiccups relating to the Monday morning set up. The school staff at both locations were great and very helpful, and there were a total of 4,064 voters and 64 same day registrations. Mr. McCarthy shared that he did receive a call from the Attorney General's office regarding the walking distance that was required for voting, in which he explained to the AG that he heard that complaint from several voters throughout the day and they have a plan to address it. They also had a complaint about electioneering being too close at the middle school, in which Mr. McCarthy explained their building limits. They also had a tabulator that went down at one point, and received feedback on the flow of voters at the middle school. He shared that for the impaired mobility and handicapped people, they need to address how they enter the building as they were expecting them to enter from the back instead of the front. He stated that they will be meeting with DPW to get signage for this so it is clearer for next time. They are also going to shift the check-in lines to make the flow more obvious so there is less confusion and congestion.

Ms. DuLong then shared that out of the 4,064 voters, 102 were absentee ballots, and all the machines, minus one, worked excellently. The one machine that had issues is scheduled for maintenance so it should not happen again, but they have a plan put in place for next time just in case a machine goes down in the future. She also shared that Hollis is getting rid of their older style voting booths, and she has the opportunity to get some of these for parts or to replace machines that are breaking, so she hopes to have these by September. She also shared that this will be the last September primary starting in 2028 as it will move to June.

New Business

1. Committee Appointments

Submitted by Town Council Chair Nancy Harrington and Vice Chair Jennifer Jobin

The Town Council to consider appointing the following individuals to Town committees, pursuant to Charter Article 4-8:

- **Michael Drouin** – Heritage Commission (*Full member*)
- **Ryan Foley** – Planning Board (*Full member*)

MOTION made by Councilor Murphy and seconded by Vice Chair Jobin to appoint the following individuals to Town committees, pursuant to Charter Article 4-8:

- **Michael Drouin** – Heritage Commission (*Full member*)
- **Ryan Foley** – Planning Board (*Full member*)

MOTION CARRIES 6-0-0

296 **2. Merrimack Time Capsule Initiative**

297 *Submitted by Neil Anketell*

298 To seek Town Council authorization and multi-departmental collaboration for the fabrication and
299 installation of a 250-year commemorative time capsule.
300

301 Neil Anketell and Chuck Morrill, representing the Historical Society, were present to discuss their idea of
302 installing a 250-year commemorative time capsule, sharing that this would celebrate the rich history of our
303 town and unite our community for generations to come. The primary objective of this initiative is to engage
304 residents, inviting everyone to contribute items that will reflect culture, values, and aspirations, capturing the
305 essence of what it means to live in Merrimack today. Mr. Anketell shared that he has met with the Rotary
306 Club and community leaders to ensure this is truly a collaborative effort, and plans to go public with this
307 initiative in June to welcome contributions from community members, with item collection taking place in
308 July and August. In September and October, they will finalize the contents, culminating in an unforgettable
309 public ceremony with speeches and performances to celebrate this momentous occasion together. He plans
310 on collaborating with local experts and the Council to select a site for the time capsule that will ensure it is in
311 harmony with community parks and historical landmarks that will also have a deep meaning to the town. He
312 also reviewed the budgetary aspect, sharing that he has drafted a preliminary budget that includes the durable
313 weatherproof container for the capsule, ceremony expenses such as permit fees, excavation, and landscaping,
314 as well as community engagement efforts to promote participation. Along with the Rotary Club, Mr.
315 Anketell will provide collaborative funding for this project, as well as seek local and town sponsorships to
316 support the initiative. Mr. Morrill then shared a newspaper from 50 years ago, highlighting the importance of
317 these pieces of history. Mr. Anketell then discussed the contents that would go in the capsule, such as how
318 certain paper has to be used for written letters, and he is anticipating the size of the capsule to be 13x12. The
319 Council was unanimously supportive about this, agreeing that it's a great idea for community involvement
320 and preserving Merrimack's history.
321

322 **MOTION made by Councilor Murphy and seconded by Vice Chair Jobin to proceed with the 250-year**
323 **commemorative time capsule, with location TBD and more specifics to work in conjunction with Mr.**
324 **Anketell and a group of individuals.**

325 **MOTION CARRIES 6-0-0**
326

327 **3. Donation Acceptance to Parks & Recreation Department**

328 *Submitted by Parks and Recreation Director Matthew Casparius*

329 The Town Council to consider the acceptance and expenditure of a donation in the amount of \$1,000,
330 from the Merrimack Lions Club to the Parks and Recreation Department to be used towards the
331 Camp Scholarship Fund, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15.
332

333 **MOTION made by Councilor Murphy and seconded by Councilor Albert to accept and expend a**
334 **donation in the amount of \$1,000, from the Merrimack Lions Club to the Parks and Recreation**
335 **Department to be used towards the Camp Scholarship Fund, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter**
336 **Article 8-15.**

337 **MOTION CARRIES 6-0-0**
338

339 **4. 3rd Quarter Financial Review**

340 *Submitted by Finance Director Paul Calabria*

341 Finance Director Paul Calabria will review the key financial information of the quarter ending March
342 31, 2026.
343
344

Finance Director Paul Calabria was present to share the third quarter financial report, beginning by stating that the electrical kilowatt comparison is pretty close to last year and the year before, with no significant uptick. For natural gas therm usage, there is an increase due to it being a long, cold winter. Health insurance is at 68% through the first 9 months, with the savings due to open positions. Similarly, NHRS is at 70% due to open positions. Overtime comparison shows that Highway bumped up due to the winter months, and Police is a little higher than last year, but lower than the years before that. Revenue is all above budget, with interest on pooled cash being up, but also down compared to years prior. Building permits and tipping fees are up as well. Auto registrations continue to also be up.

Minutes

Approve the minutes from the following Town Council meeting:

♦ April 23, 2026

MOTION made by Vice Chair Jobin and seconded by Councilor Rothhaus to approve the minutes from April 23, 2026 as amended.

MOTION CARRIES 5-0-1 with Councilor Landrigan abstaining

Amendments:

Page 4 Lines 24 & 27: change “Elliot Orthodontics” from “Orthodontist”

Comments from the Press & Public

None.

Comments from the Council

Councilor Albert shared that he attended the NH Municipal Association’s local official’s workshop and it was very informative and recommends others attend.

Councilor Rothhaus shared that he had an awesome time at Jail & Bail and encourages others to come and play next time.

Councilor Landrigan shared that she attended the Conservation Commission meeting and learned so much from the commission and found it so valuable all that they do for Merrimack.

Adjourn

MOTION made by Vice Chair Jobin and seconded by Councilor Murphy to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION CARRIES 6-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 9:16pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Steagald