



Town Council Meeting Minutes



Thursday, August 6, 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 Landrigan, Councilor Murphy, Councilor Rothhaus, Councilor Thornton, and Town Manager Paul Micali. Councilor Albert was excused

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Harrington led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements

Upcoming Town Council Meetings:

- Thursday, August 20, 2026, 7:00 PM Regular meeting
- Thursday, September 10, 2026, 7:00 PM Regular meeting
- Thursday, September 24, 2026, 7:00 PM Regular meeting

The 2026 Hazardous Waste schedule is now available. You can access it by going to the Solid Waste page on the Town website and clicking on the “Hazardous Household Waste Schedule” link on the top left in the blue box.

The next collection day will be Saturday, August 8th at 33 Newcomb Pkwy, Pelham from 8:00AM-12:00PM. The cost is \$20 per vehicle which covers up to 10 gallons of liquid waste OR 20 lbs. of solid hazardous waste. Cash or check is accepted. Make checks payable to NRSWMD.

PAVING Turkey Hill Road on August 7th.

EXPECT LONG DELAYS. SEEK ALTERNATE ROUTE!

Last Concert of the Summer – Thursday, August 13th

Pam Felber: Ziggity Zag Music

Comments from the Press and Public

None.

Recognitions, Resignations and Retirements

None.

Appointments

None.

Public Hearing

1. Public Hearing – Operation Granite Shield Grant Funds for the Merrimack Police Department

Submitted by Police Chief Brian Levesque

The Town Council will hold a public hearing to consider the acceptance and expenditure of grant funds in the amount of \$20,398.73, made available through the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office, to the Merrimack Police Department, to be used towards combating the opioid epidemic and illegal drug trafficking within our community, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15.

Deputy Chief Tarleton was present to discuss the Operation Granite Shield grant funds Merrimack receives. He shared that the NH Substance Abuse Enforcement Program (also known as Granite Shield) is a grant funded initiative through the Department of Safety and administered through the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, and focuses on providing support for law enforcement efforts combating the opioid epidemic and disrupting illegal drug trafficking throughout Hillsborough County. Granite Shield's collaborative partnerships involve several law enforcement agencies across the county in which participating officers are deputized, allowing them to work across jurisdictional boundaries and support regional investigations and enforcement operations that advance the goals of the program. For Merrimack Police Department, Granite Shield funding is used to cover overtime costs associated with these operations, ensuring that participation does not impact regular patrol staffing in the town's operating budget. Merrimack Police has been an active participant in Granite Shield for many years and remains committed to working collaboratively with our law enforcement partners to reduce the impact of illegal drugs on our communities. He is requesting that the Council accept grant funds in the amount of \$20,398.73 from the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office. He also provided some statistics on the amounts of grams of illegal drugs confiscated during Granite Shield Operations in Merrimack for this year alone: over 3,400 grams of fentanyl, over 1,600 grams of cocaine, over 1,700 grams of crack cocaine, over 5,000 grams of methamphetamine, 2,800 illicit pills, over 13,000 grams of marijuana, an excess of 4,200 edibles, 520 grams of testosterone, 1,300 grams of mushrooms, with 84 arrests, 7 search warrants, and 10 weapons seized.

The public hearing was opened at 7:12pm and closed at 7:13pm

MOTION made by Councilor Thornton and seconded by Councilor Murphy to accept and expend grant funds in the amount of \$20,398.73, made available through the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, to the Merrimack Police Department, to be used towards combating the opioid epidemic and illegal drug trafficking within our community, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15.

MOTION CARRIES 6-0-0

Legislative Updates from State Representatives

Councilor Murphy shared that returning legislators have the ability to file legislation from September 1-September 11. If anyone has an idea of a piece of legislation they would like to file, she encouraged them to reach out to her or any of the other state reps.

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Micali shared that there is a scam video going around on YouTube regarding an assessment video and forms to fill out which are incorrect and/or do not exist. He is warning Merrimack residents to not sign up for anything as this is not a legitimate source, and these types of scams are becoming more convincing and detailed. He then played a short video on the upcoming revaluation from Nick Lavallee that highlights why the revaluation is being done. Mr. Micali also went over important information via PowerPoint presentation that stated the following:

Why Revaluation

- This revaluation is done in accordance with NH state law every 5 years. Before you panic....your assessment letter is NOT your tax bill.

How is the Amount to Collect Decided

- The town doesn't decide how much money to collect based on your new home value.

- The town figures out how much money it needs to operate during public meetings in December through March. Residents vote on that number in April, and the town then sets a tax rate to collect the approved amount.

Calculating the Tax Rate

- Please don't take your new assessment and multiply it by last year's tax rate. That's the wrong math, and it'll make it look like your taxes are exploding- that's not how property taxes are calculated.
- Your assessment is one piece of the formula. It is not your tax bill. Wait until the new tax rate is set before jumping to conclusions.
- The new tax rate will be coming out this October.
- For questions about your assessment, contact Merrimack's Assessing Office at (603) 424-5136.

The Children of the American Revolution asked if they could place a granite marker for Reuben Cummings at the Matthew Thornton Cemetery. He was a child who fought in the Revolutionary War, and they would like to do this on September 13th, which is the day that he passed away in the war. Mr. Micali has no problem with this and is working on getting the flagpole installed closer to Brown and Brown, between the flagpole and the Matthew Thornton monument, with the dedication in November to coordinate with the signing of the declaration of independence ceremony they have planned.

Consent Agenda

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

1. Acceptance of Dog Park Donations for Parks and Recreation Department

Submitted by Parks and Recreation Director Matthew Casparius

The Town Council to consider the acceptance and expenditure of various donations totaling \$859, to the Parks and Recreation Department, to be used towards the Dog Park located at Wasserman Park, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15.

Mr. Micali shared that every year, the dog park wants to do renovations, so they go out and raise money; this year they brought in about \$1,000 worth of chips and raised \$859 combined with the \$600 they already had, they have enough money to pay for those chips through the donations.

MOTION made by Councilor Thornton and seconded by Vice Chair Jobin to accept and expend various donations totaling \$859, to the Parks and Recreation Department, to be used towards the Dog Park located at Wasserman Park, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15, retroactive June 30th, 2026.

MOTION CARRIES 6-0-0

2. Consideration of Changes to Chapter 178, Taxation (Article II, Elderly Tax Exemptions) [First Reading]

Submitted by Town Manager Paul T. Micali

The Town Council to consider the recommended changes to Chapter 178, Taxation (Article II, Elderly Tax Exemptions), of the Merrimack Town Code, pursuant to Charter Article V.

Mr. Micali shared that the recommended changes relate to the upcoming revaluation, specifically for individuals aged 65-80 years old as their assessments went up almost 54%. He is proposing changing only the exemption amounts, not the dollar or asset limits, to the following, with it retroactive to April 1st:

From 65-75 years old: from \$115,000 to \$176,400; this group went up 53.39%

From 75-80 years old: from \$155,000 to \$239,000; this group went up 54.19%

From 80+ years old: from \$195,000 to \$296,750; this group went up 52.17%

MOTION made by Councilor Thornton and seconded by Councilor Murphy to move the recommended changes to Chapter 178, Taxation (Article II, Elderly Tax Exemptions), of the Merrimack Town Code, pursuant to Charter Article V, effective April 1, 2026, to Public Hearing on August 20, 2026.

MOTION CARRIES 6-0-0

Minutes

Approve the minutes from the following Town Council meeting:

♦ July 16, 2026

MOTION made by Vice Chair Jobin and seconded by Councilor Rothhaus to approve the minutes from July 16, 2026 as written.

MOTION CARRIES 6-0-0

Comments from the Press & Public

None.

Comments from the Council

Vice Chair Jobin wanted to thank the Merrimack Police Department for a successful National Night Out. She shared that she, along with Councilors Murphy and Landrigan, had a great time meeting residents. She also wanted to give a shout out to the Garden Club for taking such great care of the Library and all they do around town.

Mr. Micali also wanted to highlight Matt Casparius and Parks and Rec for working diligently with the Police Department on National Night Out.

Adjourn

MOTION made by Councilor Thornton and seconded by Councilor Landrigan to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION CARRIES 6-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 7:42pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Steagald