

**City of Beverly
Regular City Council Meeting
Public Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 3, 2022, 12:00pm**

Julie Flowers, City Council President, called the meeting to order at 12:44pm, immediately following the inauguration ceremony. Christine Dixon, Assistant City Clerk, took the attendance by roll call.

Members Present: Hannah Bowen, Steven Crowley, Kathleen Feldman, Scott Houseman, Estelle Rand, Todd Rotondo, Matthew St. Hilaire, Brendan Sweeney, Julie Flowers

Members Absent: None

Presentations, Awards and Memorials

City Council President Julie Flowers

“Happy New Year, and welcome to all those gathered here. To my fellow City Councilors; to our School Committee colleagues; to you, Mr. Mayor, and to members of your administration and team; to our wonderful City Clerk and Assistant Clerk and their team; to BevCam (thank you for always being with us to ensure that people can access what is happening in their community, which has become even more critically important over these past almost-two years, when remote access has been so needed); to our School Department for hosting us here on this day; to Representative Parisella and Senator Lovely – thank you for your excellent partnership to and with our City and for the work we have done and will do together; and to all those in attendance with us this day.

As I begin my remarks, I would like to open with a Land Acknowledgment statement, that we might pause to recognize, consider, and honor the native and indigenous peoples on whose land our City is built and whose stories are integral to the story of this place. It is my hope that in the coming weeks, my fellow Councilors and I will have the opportunity to discuss amending our Rules of Order of Council meetings, that we might make such a statement a part of our regular meetings to follow. For now, however, I will begin my remarks with these words, with great gratitude and appreciation for the wonderful team at Montserrat College of Art, who graciously shared with me the college’s land acknowledgment, that I might be guided by their words, which I have adapted for today’s gathering.

As we gather here in this place, we acknowledge and we honor the Naumkeag and the Pawtucket peoples, on whose ancestral land we stand. The Naumkeag and Pawtucket peoples were part of the Massachusetts Alliance and their descendants are now included in the many tribal nations across the Northeast. We recognize our obligations to this land and to the Indigenous people who care for it. As we work toward diversity, equity, and inclusion, we acknowledge our need to decolonize our systems by including Indigenous people and perspectives in our discourse, in our decision-making, and in our actions.

Understanding our history, lifting it up, looking at it honestly and fully, is the best way, I believe, for us to go about creating the future that we are writing and living, together now.

I am so honored to be standing here, embarking on this new part of our shared journey, together with all of you, this day.

Now, I note that Ward 6 School Committee member Mrs. Visnick is wearing a Lorax mask today, which brings me in mind of the quote with which that story ends: *“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”* What an appropriate sentiment for this day when we all – not only those of us being sworn in this day to serve our City but *all* of us, those gathered here and those watching on BevCam and *all of us* who are part of this community are called, once again, to being those who do, indeed, care a whole awful lot, and come together to do the good and needed work of community-building and care for our people.

Now, the Mayor and I chatted about our shared desire to keep the length of this entire event – the swearing in of elected officials and this first Council meeting – from being too overly long, so that we are not keeping everyone together inside longer than necessary, given that we are still, as we enter 2022 and this new term, finding our way through the COVID-19 pandemic. He seemed a little nervous asking me about the length of our remarks – and I assume that is because he knew he was dealing with an incoming Council President whose day job is being a Baptist preacher. I told him, for Baptists, 25 minutes is a *short* time to preach so...

Don’t worry. I promise these remarks won’t come close to touching that length of time. Maybe...

As I have thought about entering into this term with all of you, and about stepping into the role of being your City Council President – and thank you, truly, to the people of Beverly for the trust you have placed in me to do this job and to serve you and to serve my fellow Councilors in this role – I want to pause to say a word of thanks and appreciation to former Council President Paul Guanci, who served the City for 20 years on the Council, with 16 of those as President.

What an incredible legacy of service to this community. Thank you, Paul, for all you did.

I’ve been thinking, too, about advice that Paul gave me when I was stepping into my first term on the Council; advice that I think bears repeating, as we welcome in 3 Councilors who are stepping into their first term: Councilors At-Large Hannah Bowen and Brendan Sweeney, and Ward 3 Councilor Steve Crowley, not to mention a new Ward 4 School Committee member in Jeffrey Silva – but it also bears repeating for all of us up here, no matter how many terms we have served. Paul told me never to be worried about asking questions; to never be hesitant to ask what I did not know, nor hesitant to use my unique voice, even if what I had to say might be different from what other or veteran Councilors had to say.

This advice has served me well, and I hope it will continue to serve us all well, as I repeat it on this day.

For my part, today and in the days leading up to it, I have been eager and excited to begin this work with you, and excited to continue to build on the work we have done together over my past two terms; I will also confess to being a bit nervous. Maybe some of you feel nervous embarking in your new role or next phase of your existing role, too. I have been acutely aware that the Council – and the City! – have not had a Council President with a learning curve for some time, owing to Paul’s long tenure in that role. I have worried over the things I do not yet know, and the mistakes I will certainly make – because making mistakes is part of being human and part of learning and growing and, yes, part of leading.

But here's what I have come to on this front – and today I share these words not only for myself, but for all of us who put our names on the ballot, and for all of us who were sworn in as elected leaders of the City of Beverly today, and, really, for *all* of us, who are part of this shared effort of community that we call the City of Beverly: we will have many great moment, much to celebrate, many triumphs...*and we will* make mistakes. *We will* come up against things we do not yet know, information a constituent asks for that we do not yet have, things we have not yet encountered.

Those things are certain. That's just the truth about being human together on this shared journey. AND those things are not bad – because in those moments, lies incredible opportunity – opportunity to grow and learn and make those moments triumphs, too.

Because the things we don't yet know...the information we don't have off the top of our heads...the mistakes we will make... those are *not* the things that define us as leaders. What defines a leader is *what happens next*. When we do not know something, can we be honest with ourselves and others, admit we don't yet know, and then seek openly and with curiosity to learn more? To seek out information and learn and grow from it? When we make a mistake, will we honestly and humbly own that mistake, acknowledge it, apologize for it, and then *seek to grow and learn from it*, that we might not make it again...that we might become better and better leaders in and through that learning?

I believe that strong and honest and open leaders are defined by *what we do next in those moments*. By our willingness to dig in, work hard, learn more, do the work, and move forward, together, to do good work for our City and its people. I have been honored to have been able to do this work for the past 4 years, and I look forward to continuing it now, with all of you.

I am mindful that we sit here together this day in one of our excellent Beverly Public Schools; places where our teachers and educators challenge our children and young people to have a growth mindset. To not be stopped by what they cannot do, but to approach learning and setbacks with curiosity and a reframing around what they cannot do...yet. What they do not know...yet.

That is my hope for our City Council, our School Committee, and our City leaders, and our whole community here in Beverly, for this coming term, for these next two years. My hope is that, together, we can embrace that kind of growth mindset. To not be discouraged by our setbacks or challenges, but to turn to them again with renewed energy and fresh eyes, as we consider what has not happened...yet... but what we are committed to learning about, working on, committing to, and moving toward...together.

This exact configuration of Councilors, School Committee members, Mayor, and people of Beverly has not existed...yet. And yet here on this day, we begin. Here on this day, we embark together on this next term, these next two years, this next part of our collective story. May we do it with open hearts, eager minds, an attitude of service, caring, and collaboration, and an ethos of love as our guides.”

Election of Vice President of the City Council

Rand moved to nominate Rotondo as Vice President. Houseman seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (9-0).

Communications from His Honor the Mayor

Order #010-Grant-\$7,500 from Massachusetts Cultural Council for Beverly Arts District.

The motion to vote Order #010 on the floor was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (9-0).

The motion to approve was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (9-0).

Order #011-Reappointment- Cathryn Keefe-O'Hare as Trustee of the Beverly Public Library
Referred to Committee on Public Services.

Order #012-Reappointment-Wayne Miller and Sean Leach to Cable TV Advisory Commission
Referred to Committee on Public Services.

Order #013-Reappointment-Bryant Ayles and Darlene Wynne to Beverly Affordable Housing
Trust

Referred to Committee on Public Services.

Order #014-Reappointment-David Battistelli and Pam Gougian to Zoning Board of Appeals
Referred to Committee on Legal Affairs.

Communications from other City Officers and Boards

The motion to vote Orders #001 through #009 on the floor was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (9-0).

Order #-001-Council President Flowers-Appointments to Standing City Council Committees.

The motion to approve was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (9-0).

Order #-002-Council President Flowers-Appointment - Ward Six Councilor Matthew J. St. Hilaire and Ward Three Councilor Steven M. Crowley to serve on the Beverly Police Department Community Advisory Board

The motion to approve was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (9-0).

Order #003-Council President Flowers-Appointment-Councilor at Large Brendan S. Sweeney as Representative to ECDC

The motion to approve was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (9-0).

Order #004-Council President Flowers-Appointments of Ward One Councilor Todd C. Rotondo and Councilor at Large Julie R. Flowers to serve as the City Council Liaisons to the Beverly School Committee

The motion to approve was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (9-0).

Order #005-Council President Flowers-Appointments of Ward Four Councilor Scott D. Houseman and Ward Five Councilor Kathleen M. Feldman to serve on the Financial Forecast Committee

The motion to approve was made and seconded.

Houseman motioned to amend by starting the new chair's term April 1, 2022. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (8-1, St. Hilaire).

The motion to approve as amended was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (8-1, St. Hilaire).

Order #006-Council President Flowers-Ward Two Councilor Estelle M. Rand and Ward One Todd C. Rotondo to serve as the City Council representatives to the Harbor Management Authority

The motion to approve was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (9-0).

Order #007-Council President Flowers-Standing Designation of a Substitute Chairperson in Joint Meetings with the Committee of the Whole

The motion to approve was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (9-0).

Order #008-Council President Flowers-Reaffirm the Charter Review Committee and reappointed to be comprised of Councilor At Large Hannah L. Bowen, Timothy Flaherty (Chair), Stacy Ames, Julie DaSilva, Richard Dinkin and Michael Pinciaro

The motion to approve was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (9-0).

Order #009-Council President Flowers-Appointment of an Ordinance Review Committee comprised of members of the City Council at a later date

The motion to receive and place on file was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (9-0).

The motion to adjourn was made and seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion carried (9-0).
The meeting adjourned at 1:16pm.