FINAL

LEBANON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
Wednesday, July 16, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
Council Chambers
Remote Via Microsoft Teams: LebanonNH.gov/Live

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Mayor Douglas Whittlesey, Assistant Mayor Devin Wilkie, Erling Heistad, Nicole Ford Burley, Timothy McNamara, Laurel Stavis, Christian Simon, George Sykes, and Karen Zook
MEMBERS ABSENT:	
STAFF PRESENT:	Interim City Manager Jack Wozmak, Deputy City Manager David Brooks, Public Works Director Jay Cairelli, City Engineer Brian Vincent, Recreation, Arts, & Parks Director Paul Coats, Deputy Director of Planning & Development Tim Corwin, Lebanon Fire Chief & Emergency Management Director Jim Wheatley

---

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Whittlesey called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mayor Whittlesey led the Council in the Pledge.
   - Interim City Manager Wozmak announced the meeting criteria for attendees.
   - Councilors Nicole Ford Burley arrived at 6:42PM, Karen Zook arrived 6:51PM and George Sykes arrived at 6:53PM.

3. **BOARDS and COMMITTEES REPORTS (2nd Quarter)**

Mayor Whittlesey announced that most Boards/Committee/Commission reports were emailed to the Council ahead of this meeting.

Economic & Development Committee (EDC): Mr. Dan Nash, Chair

Chair Nash updated the Council on the following:
- Work the EDC has done on the Master Plan and Strategic Plan
- Input on the Proposed Zoning Regulations
- EV Charging
- Building Permit Issues

West Lebanon Revitalization Advisory Committee (WLRAC): Mr. Emmett Frank, Chair

Chair Frank is the new chair of the WLRAC and updated the Council on the following:
- Announced they were having difficulties in having a quorum for meetings
- Update of Committee charges
- Main Street Revitalization
- Community Engagement opportunities
- Looking at opportunities to work with Recreation, Arts, & Parks in West Lebanon

The Council went into their Regular Session at 6:08 PM.

4. **PUBLIC FORUM:** Mayor Whittlesey made the Public Forum announcement.

5. OPEN COUNCIL DISCUSSION: NONE

6. OPEN TO PUBLIC: NO ONE CAME FORTH.

7. RECOGNITIONS: NONE

8. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

- July 2, 2025 (Regular Meeting)

Assistant Mayor Wilkie MOVED to approve the July 2, 2025 minutes as written and presented in the July 16, 2025 City Council agenda packet.
Seconded by Councilor Heistad.

****The Vote on the Motion was approved (6-0).*** **Councilors N. Ford Burley, Sykes and Zook were not present at the time this vote was taken.**

9. APPOINTMENTS:

- Heritage Commission, Brian Ware (Alternate Member)

Assistant Mayor Wilkie MOVED to NOMINATE Bryan Ware as an Alternate Member to the Heritage Commission. **Term: 7/2025-7/2028**

****The Vote on the NOMINATION was approved (6-0).*** **Councilors N. Ford Burley, Sykes and Zook were not present at the time this vote was taken.**

10. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:

A. Comcast Franchise Renewal Agreement – Public hearing for the purpose of receiving public input and taking action to accept the Cable Franchise Renewal Agreement with Comcast, and to authorize the City Manager to execute said Agreement.

Included in the agenda packet: **(All supportive documents, including the Renewal agreement in its entirety, can be found on pages 32-78, Council agenda packet)**

1. Draft Renewal Cable Television Franchise for Lebanon, New Hampshire

Deputy City Manager Brooks reviewed the background and briefly explained the proposed Comcast Franchise Renewal Agreement. Ms. Monica Thibault, Comcast's Manager of Government Relations, gave a verbal presentation on the Comcast Franchise Renewal Agreement and answered questions from the Council.

BACKGROUND
In August 2015, the City entered into a Cable Television Franchise Renewal Agreement with Comcast. The Franchise Renewal Agreement included a 10-year term, beginning on August 19, 2015 and expiring on August 18, 2025.

In January 2025, Comcast reached out to the City to begin negotiations for the renewal of the Cable Franchise Agreement. Attorney Steven Whitley of Drummond Woodsum coordinated the review and update of the prior Franchise Agreement on behalf of the City.

As proposed, the Franchise Renewal Agreement will be for another 10-year term, from August 19, 2025 through August 18, 2035. The franchise fee payment is proposed to remain at 3.5% of the franchisee's gross annual revenues from cable system operations within Lebanon.

Ms. Monica Thibault, Comcast's Manager of Government Relations, has indicated that Comcast's gross revenue for Lebanon for 2024 was about $3.9 million dollars, with the 3.5% franchise fee totaling about $136,700. She also noted that while the number of cable subscribers changes monthly, there were 2,233 subscribers in Lebanon as of May 2025. She also provided a brief definition of the Franchise Cable Agreement, which sets out specific requirements and conditions for the Cable Operators authority and delineates many aspects of its relationship with the City. Under the Law, the Franchise is a Government Contract governed by contract law. She noted that the only change Comcast made, with the Council's approval, was to remove the Public Education Government Channels as they were not being utilized.

Pursuant to NH RSA 53-C:3-a, the Council scheduled this public hearing to receive public input and take action on the proposed draft agreement.

Council/Staff Comments:
The Council and Ms. Thibault discussed utility pole fees and who owns the utility poles (Comcast does not own any utility poles); installation, relationship, and differences between Comcast and Consolidated Communications /Fidium Fiber (fiber vs. cable networks); the franchise fee of 3.5% is only for cable and does not include internet subscribers, it's just straight cable; what the average cable cost is for Lebanon residents (Ms. Thibault was uncertain but she can try to track down that information); how the franchise fee is only for the cable TV portion and does not apply to internet and phone.

Councilor McNamara spoke about his reasons why he felt this agreement renewal should be approved, noting this brings in some significant revenue for the City and provides a good service to folks who live here.

Mayor Whittlesey opened the Public Hearing. Hearing no comments from the public, the Public Hearing was closed.

ACTION:
Councilor McNamara MOVED, that the Lebanon City Council, pursuant to NH RSA 53-C:3, hereby adopts the proposed Cable TV Franchise Renewal Agreement with Comcast, as presented in the July 16, 2025 City Council Agenda Packet, with a term of 10 years, and franchise fees at the rate of 3.5% of Comcast's gross annual revenues from the operation of the cable TV system in Lebanon, and hereby authorizes the City Manager to execute said Cable TV Franchise Renewal Agreement between the City of Lebanon and Comcast.
Seconded by Councilor Stavis.

****The Vote on the Motion was approved (6-0).*** **Councilors N. Ford Burley, Sykes and Zook were not present at the time this vote was taken.**

B. Repeal of Certain Zoning Amendments Approved on February 19, 2025 – Public hearing for the purpose of receiving public input and taking action on amendments to the Lebanon Zoning Ordinance as follows:

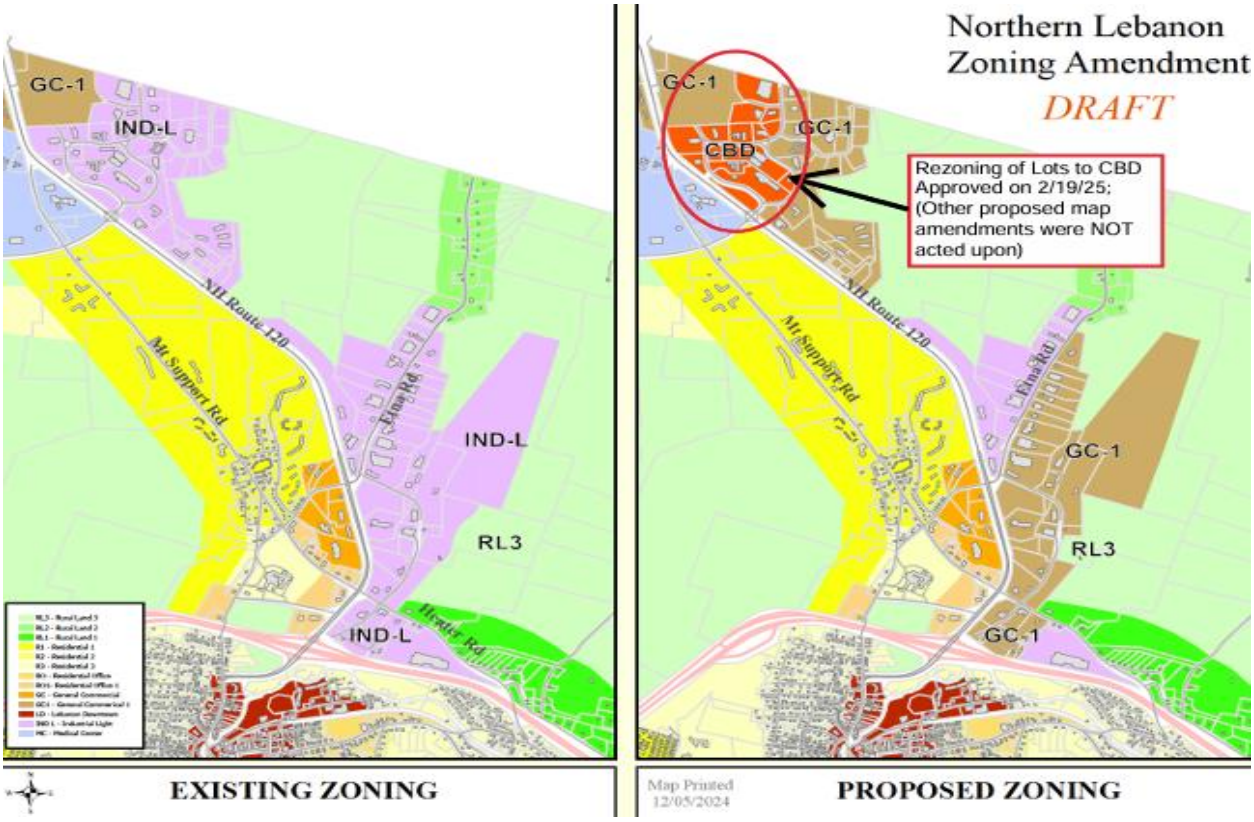
1. To Repeal the Zoning Map Amendment related to certain lots within the Centerra Planned Business Park approved on February 19, 2025, by rezoning all properties

within the Centerra Planned Business Park back to Light Industrial (IND-L);

2. To Repeal the Zoning Amendment related to the Central Business (CB) District Table of Uses approved on February 19, 2025, by removing Planned Business Park as a Use allowed by Conditional Use Permit from the Central Business District Table of Uses (Sections 306 and 508.2); and
3. To Repeal the Zoning Amendment related to allowed uses and the calculation of permitted residential unit density approved on February 19, 2025, by removing language added to the Planned Business Park Regulations in Sections 508.2 and 508.4 as depicted in the July 2, 2025 City Council Agenda Packet.

Included in the agenda packet: **(All supportive documents and information can be found on pages 79-91, Council agenda packet)**

1. Excerpt of February 19, 2025 City Council meeting minutes
2. Map Showing North Lebanon Community Plan/Route 120 Study Map Amendments Approved on February 19, 2025
3. Amended Central Business District Table of Uses (Section 306) Approved on February 19, 2025
4. Amended Planned Business Park Regulations (Section 508) Approved on February 19, 2025



The Deputy City Manager reviewed the background and chronology of the amendments as listed below.

BACKGROUND

On February 19, 2025, the City Council held a public hearing to consider a number of zoning amendments that had been kicked-off for review in October 2024. Following the February 19th public hearing, the City Council took action to adopt a subset of the proposed zoning amendments, including action to rezone certain lots within the Centerra Business Park from Light Industrial (IND-L) to Central Business (CB)

District, based on recommendations from the Northern Lebanon Community Plan, which had been completed in the Fall of 2024. At the same meeting, the Council voted to amend the Table of Uses for the CB District to include Planned Business Parks as uses allowed by Conditional Use Permit (Sections 306 and 508.2), and to amend the Planned Business Park regulations relative to allowed uses and the calculation of permitted residential unit density (Section 508.2 and 508.4).

The remaining zoning amendments that were not addressed on February 19th, including other amendments derived from the Northern Lebanon Community Plan, were continued to March 19th. However, prior to the March 19th meeting, questions were raised as to whether the City properly complied with statutory notice requirements. Out of an abundance of caution, the Planning & Development Department requested that the City Council continue the remaining zoning amendments related to the Northern Lebanon Community Plan for several months. The additional time was used to re-notify all owners in the Route 120 corridor whose properties might be impacted by the proposed amendments and to schedule additional public outreach sessions to discuss and explain the purpose, origin, and the potential impacts of the amendments.

The pause in considering the zoning amendments also provided time for the Planning Department to engage the Conservation Commission and Planning Board to work on a Northern Lebanon Environmental Overlay District, which was another recommendation of the Northern Lebanon Community Plan. It was anticipated that the Environmental Overlay District would be ready for review alongside the remaining zoning amendments by mid-Summer. However, the preparation and review of the Environmental Overlay District has generated extensive public comment and has taken much more time than was initially expected. At this point, the Environmental Overlay District is not expected to be ready for review until at least late August or September, when the Planning Department should be preparing for the next round of annual zoning amendments.

The City Manager's Office has directed the Planning & Development Department to take the additional time needed to adequately prepare and vet all proposed amendments derived from the Northern Lebanon Community Plan. The Planning Department will continue to work with property owners, boards and committees, and other stakeholders to prepare and evaluate the potential zoning amendments. The resulting proposals will be incorporated into the next set of annual zoning amendments, which will be brought forward to the City Council in October for review during the Fall of 2025 and final consideration in January 2026.

When consideration of the remaining zoning amendments was originally delayed from March to June, the Planning Department also paused the implementation and administration of the zoning changes that had been approved on February 19th with respect to certain lots within the Centerra Business Park. Now that aspects of the overall Northern Lebanon Community Plan are being revisited and a much longer review period is anticipated, the City administration recommended that the City Council schedule this public hearing to repeal the zoning amendments approved on February 19th related to portions of the Centerra Business Park, the Central Business (CB) District, and the Planned Business Park regulations. Because the amendments derived from the Northern Lebanon Community Plan are intended to be considered as a package, it is felt that restoring the zoning regulations to their pre-amendment status will allow for a clearer and more orderly process for the Planning Department and stakeholders to review the Plan recommendations and determine which, if any, zoning amendments should move forward.

Mayor Whittlesey opened the Public Hearing. Hearing no comments from the public, the Public Hearing was closed.

Council/Staff Comments:
Councilor McNamara spoke about his reasons for approving the appeal of the amendments, noting that resetting things back to where they were, at least for interim, made a lot of sense and will hopefully give us time to interact even more with the landowners to give them as much flexibility as possible to develop their properties in a way that makes sense to them. We certainly have a lot of discussions to undertake before we are ready to do this again. He strongly supported the appeal.

Mayor Whittlesey concurred with Councilor McNamara, noting it makes sense to evaluate these properties wholistically rather than trying to do this piecemeal.

ACTION:
Councilor McNamara MOVED*, *that the Lebanon City Council hereby approves amendments to the Lebanon Zoning Ordinance* as *follows:

1. **To** ***Repeal the Zoning Map Amendment related to certain lots within the Centerra Planned Business Park approved on February 19, 2025, by rezoning all properties within the Centerra Planned Business Park back to Light Industrial (IND-L);***
2. **To** ***Repeal the Zoning Amendment related to the Central Business (CB) District Table* of *Uses approved on February 19, 2025, by removing Planned Business Park* as a *Use allowed by Conditional Use Permit from the Central Business District Table* of *Uses (Sections* 306 *and 508.2); and***
3. **To** ***Repeal the Zoning Amendment related to allowed uses and the calculation* of *permitted residential unit density approved on February 19, 2025, by removing language added to the Planned Business Park Regulations in Sections 508.2 and 508.4 as depicted in the July 16, 2025 City Council Agenda Packet***

Seconded by Councilor Simon.

****The Vote on the Motion was approved by members present (6-0).*** **Councilors N. Ford Burley, Sykes and Zook were not present at the time this vote was taken.**

11. OLD BUSINESS

A. Public Input Discussion Concerning South Main Street Dry Bridge Project Status and Bidding Requirements

Included in the agenda packet: **(All supportive documents and information can be found on pages 92-93, Council agenda packet).**

Mayor Whittlesey noted the purpose behind this item is to evaluate two options: 1) Do we keep the bridge open, or 2) Do we keep the bridge closed? There are costs and time consequences of that decision. Unlike the emergency closure of the Dry Bridge a couple of months ago, this closure would be a significantly longer closure that would have an impact on West Lebanon residents and the entire community.

In response to the Council's request at their meeting on July 2, 2025, Brian Vincent (City Engineer) and Jay Cairelli (Public Works Director) gave a presentation that reviewed the status of the South Main Street Dry Bridge Project, including the project's overview and timeline; existing conditions/current status/challenges; and the bid and construction processes.

BACKGROUND

The final plans, specifications, and estimates for the South Main Street Dry Bridge project are being finalized for bidding and construction. Permitting for the bridge reconstruction project is also in the final steps, and the project is expected to go out to bid in September 2025.

One of the challenges of this project is railroad coordination with respect to train operations during construction. The New England Central Railroad (NECR) previously expressed some willingness to accommodate the project during construction, including potential full-track closure during construction. However, in recent months, the railroad has made it clear that they will not compromise railroad operations for this project. As such, in order to work within the railroad right-of-way, the City's contractor will be required to accommodate all train operations and agree not to interfere with any train movements for the duration of construction, on either of the two tracks. This requirement obviously creates a substantial hardship for any prospective bidder, particularly in combination with the City's desire to have an open roadway/bridge during construction. Given these hardships, Public Works is concerned about the attractiveness of this project to prospective bidders. In short, Public Works is concerned about receiving either high bids or perhaps no bids at all.

To enhance the attractiveness of this project to prospective bidders, Public Works recommends that the project be bid with a base bid and an alternative bid option. The base bid option would consist of bridge closure for approximately 12 months. The alterative bid option would consist of phased bridge construction allowing the bridge to remain open for the duration of construction. Many of the constructability challenges and hardships for bidders/contractors are removed or softened with the closed bridge option. In addition, the construction schedule is expected to be shorter with the closed bridge option – the phased construction schedule is estimated to be +/- 28 months, but with bridge closure, this timeline may be reduced by 4 to 6 months. The bridge closure option is also expected to save up to 25 percent of construction costs. The current engineer's estimate with an open bridge for the duration of construction is $16,050,000, including Construction Engineering services.

Using this base bid and alternative bid concept, the City would establish a "value" for having an open bridge during construction. If the difference between the lowest base bid (closed bridge) and the lowest alternative bid (open bridge) is less than the established value, then the City would proceed with the alternative bid (open bridge) option. If the difference between the bids is equal to or greater than the established value, then the City would proceed with the base bid (closed bridge) option. However, in order to proceed with the base bid and alternative bid concept, NHDOT and FHWA are requiring the City to establish the scoring criteria and decision- making parameters *prior* to advertising the project for bidding.

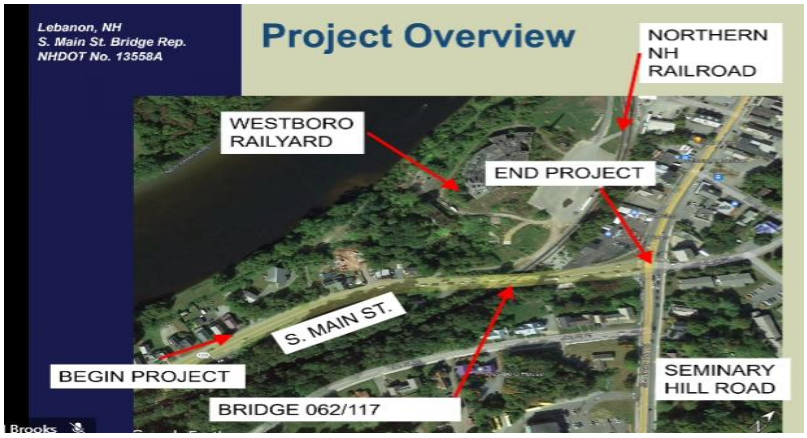
Public Works is requesting that the City Council, in coordination with the City Manager's Office, establish the value of having an open bridge during construction. Public Works recommends an amount on the order of $3 million dollars. In other words, if the difference between the base and alternative bids is less than $3 million dollars, then the project would be awarded to the lowest alternative (open bridge) bidder. If the difference between the base and alternative bids is equal to or greater than $3 million dollars, then the project would be awarded to the lowest base (closed bridge) bidder.

Following a presentation and discussion on July 2nd, the City Council requested a public input session for the purpose of receiving public input on the South Main Street Dry Bridge Replacement Project concerning the potential closure of the bridge for approximately 12 months of the +/-28-month construction period for cost savings reasons.

At the City Council's request, the Police and Fire Departments were asked to comment on the potential impact of closing the Dry Bridge. The Police Chief noted that there was a slight increase in accidents

in the general vicinity of West Lebanon during the emergency closure of the Dry Bridge earlier this year as compared to the previous year, but overall police responses were not significantly impacted while the bridge was closed. Similarly, the Fire Chief noted that response times to the area south of the Dry Bridge were increased by approximately one minute when the bridge was closed as compared to when the bridge was open, but still within response time recommendations. Both public safety agencies received permission to cross through the Twin State Sand & Gravel property during the closure period and, if such permission can be obtained during the construction period, impacts on police and fire responses should be minimal.

Highlights of the DPW presentation are as follows:



Lebanon, NH
S. Main St. Bridge Rep.
NHDOT No. 13558A

Existing Roadway

S. Main Street

- Functional Class: Minor Arterial
- Design Speed: 30 mph
- Project Length – approx. 1200 feet
- Traffic: 9400 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) – Est.
- Existing Conditions Issues
  - Roadway lacks proper banking at horizontal curve
  - Due to bridge grade rising, roadway needs to shift away from buildings and residences along the east side

Lebanon, NH
S. Main St. Bridge Rep.
NHDOT No. 13558A

Railroad

- Two tracks
- Train frequency varies throughout the year
- 17.22' vertical clearance to low chord of bridge
- 8'-6.75" horizontal clearance to nearest pier

Lebanon, NH
S. Main St. Bridge Rep.
NHDOT No. 13558A

Existing Bridge

S. Main Street

- NHDOT Bridge No. 062/117
- Constructed in 1949
- Does not meet current standards
- Total structure length 145'-0 ½"
- Vertical clearance over railroad: 17.22'
- Structurally Deficient (Red Listed) Bridge

Lebanon, NH
S. Main St. Bridge Rep.
NHDOT No. 13558A

Budget

Total Approved Budget (Design, permitting and construction): $21M

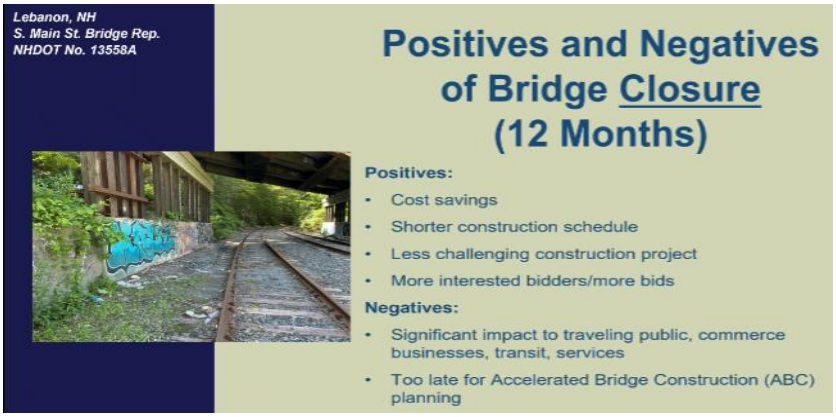
Project Funding Participation
NHDOT/FHWA: 70% City: 30%

Remaining budget (July 2025): $18M

Construction Budget: $16.5 M (open bridge)

Estimated Savings with closed bridge: up to 25 percent

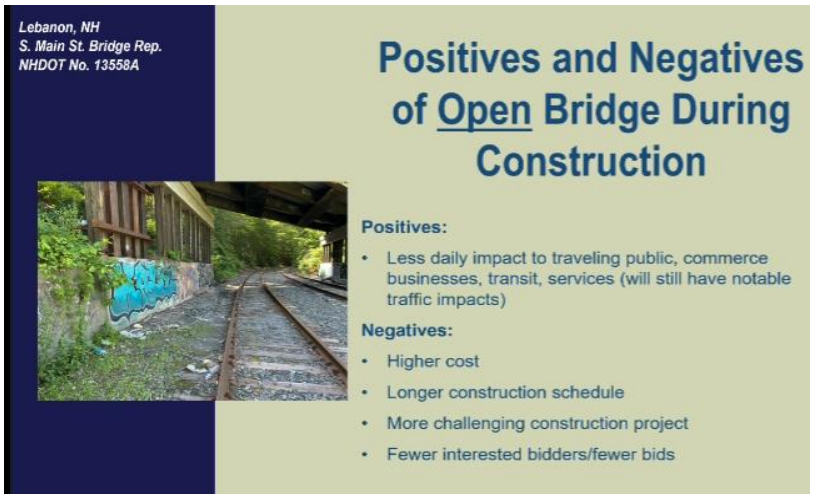
For clarification, Councilor McNamara noted the proposed 25% savings is from the $16.5M as listed in the slide above. From the City side of things, we are looking at approximately $1M extra to keep the bridge open**.**



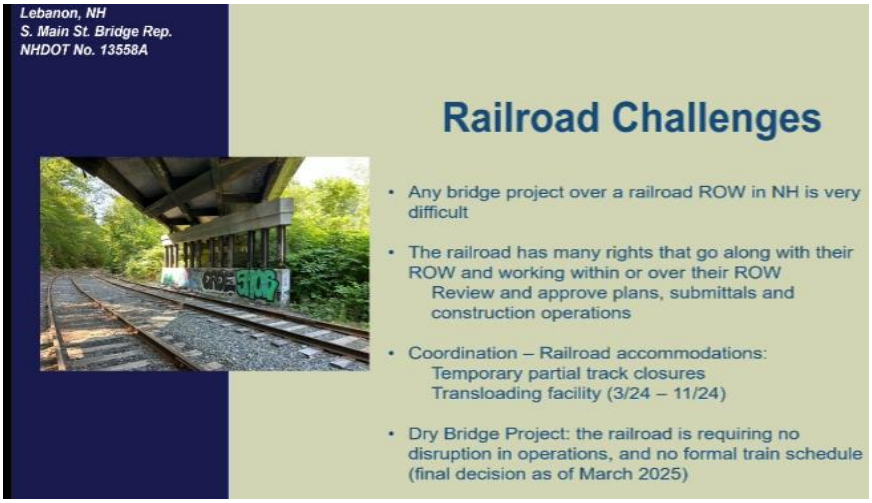
It should be noted that the whole project schedule is +/- 28 months.

Mr. Vincent spoke about the railroad's right-of-way, noting this was the State of New Hampshire's right-of-way that was leased to the railroad. By virtue of that lease the railroad has a lot of rights that are attributed to them, and they then get a chance to decide all operations that occur within their railroad corridor and within 25 feet of it.

Mayor Whittlesey emphasized that the City's operating assumption for years up until March of 2025, was that we would be allowed to close one or more tracks thus allowing us to keep the bridge open during the reconstruction, but because we relied on that, we are now in a fix because of pressure from the State to start moving on this construction, noting that the Accelerated Bridge Construction (ABC) planning could take many months, if not years, to complete.

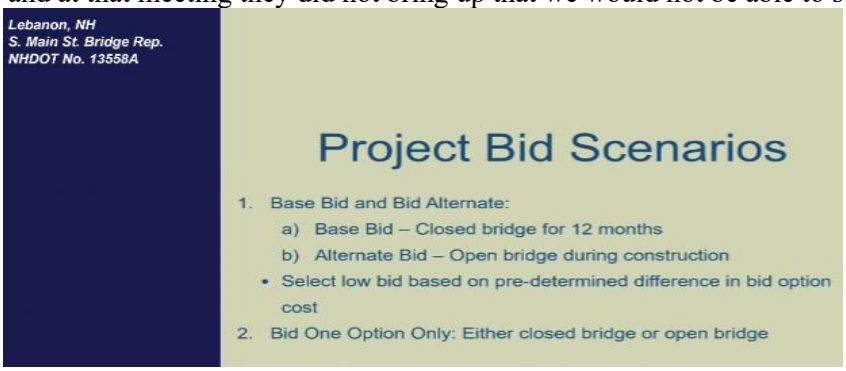


Mr. Vincent spoke about the phases of construction – noting that in Phase I the current bridge will remain in place while we build another bridge immediately adjacent to the old bridge and further went into detail about how the construction would proceed. Once Phase I is complete, we will move traffic over to the new bridge, demo the old bridge and rebuild it where it sits now.

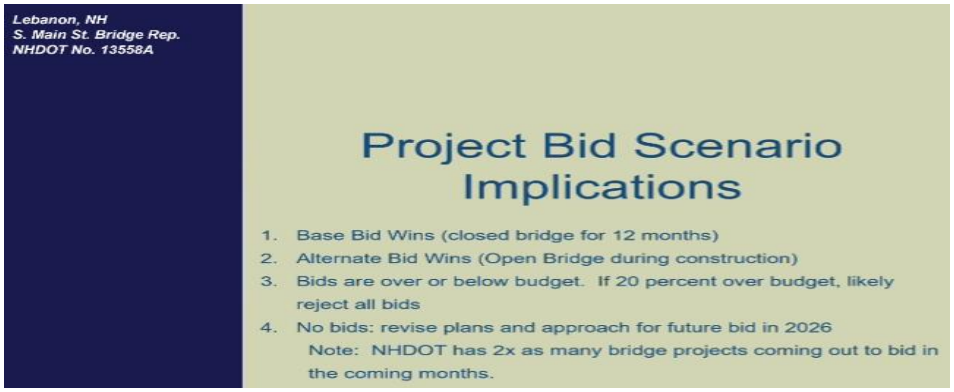


Councilor McNamara and Mr. Vincent spoke about the small transloading facility identifying that this area is used by Carroll Concrete for storage.

DPW Director Cairelli noted that at the meeting in November, we were told that the transloading facility was off the table, and at that meeting they did not bring up that we would not be able to switch tracks.



The Council and Mr. Vincent discussed the pros/cons between the $3M differential; the metrics on the economic impact(s) for both the open or closed bridge; detours while the bridge is under construction; and detour for pedestrians (will have a temporary pedestrian bridge constructed).



In response to Councilor Stavis' question, Mr. Vincent noted that the railroad could change their mind at any point, but his assumption is that there would be some working on ground relationship between the Railroad/City/Contractor/Engineers.

The Council held some discussions on the pros/cons of re-establishing negotiations between the NH DOT, Railroad and the City before bids go out in September 2025 and concerns about the biddability for construction of this project.

At the invitation of Mayor Whittlesey, the following came forth to give testimony about their thoughts on the Dry Bridge closure options:

Ms. Amy Allen, Lebanon School District Superintendent: She noted that at the time of the emergency closure, there were no major disruption in school days. There were about 8 families that had to move their bus stop to Romano Circle, which was less than ½ mile from the original stop. Last week, she met with their transportation department, business department and building principles and they indicated they would be fine to continue with the prior plan if that bridge was closed.

Mr. Adams Carroll (Ward-2, Executive Director of Advance Transit): Advance Transit (AT) has been discussing this situation for some time and have scenarios in place for both options. The biggest issue with the most recent closure was really the unexpected nature of it. Our position now is that with enough advance notice we would be able to update our schedules, maps, etc. so there would be less disruption than the last time around. There are four (4) stops that would not have service for the duration of the closure (Glen Road Plaza, Romano Circle stops, and the corresponding stops across the streets from them). In a 12 month period, those stops account for +/- 5K boardings/year. For individuals who are unable to make the walk, AT has a para-transit service available. He reiterated that if there is going to be a bridge closure, please keep in mind the work on I-89 noting that if for some reason there is a backup or a significant delay on I-89 then their detour plan would be a lot less workable.

Mayor Whittlesey opened the floor to the public and following came forth to give the testimony:

Ms. Vanessa Perron (South Main St., West Lebanon): She spoke about her reasons why she was dissatisfied with the Council for allowing the Dry Bridge repairs/construction to be put off for so long. She encouraged the Council to move forward with this project one way or the other because the bridge has a huge impact on residents living in the area.

Mr. Dan Nash (Ward 1): He spoke about his reasons why he was strongly in favor of closing the bridge (i.e., cost savings in the long run).

Mr. Emett Frank (Ward-1): He spoke about his reasons why he was in favor of closing the bridge.

Mr. Jerry Vanasse (No Ward, born & raised on South Main Street, West Lebanon): Questioned why, if the NH DOT owns the land, does the railroad have the right to tell you (the City) what to do? Mayor Whittlesey explained the right-of-way legalities.

Mr. Paul Calandrella (Ward-2): He spoke about his reasons why he was in favor of closing the bridge.

Mr. Fran Casale (Ward-2): He spoke about his reasons why he was in favor of closing the bridge.

Mr. Donald M. Hemenway (Lebanon, NH): He spoke about his reasons why he was in favor of closing the bridge. He also noted he has not heard about any data from the merchants who would be impacted if the bridge is closed.

Mr. Jay Simms (Ward-2): He spoke about his reasons why he was in favor of closing the bridge and spoke about the cost of steel.

Mr. Doug Wentworth (6 Jones Ave., West Lebanon, NH): He spoke about his reasons why he was in favor of closing the bridge and suggested having the bridge built off site to save time.

Mr. Trent Meckenstock (Ward-1): He spoke about his reasons why he was in favor of closing the bridge. He also suggested that the four businesses using the railroad access should allow the City to use Elm Street as a connector road to the bottom of Glen Road therefore bypassing the one-lane train tunnel.

Ms. Stacey Wood (West Lebanon, NH): She spoke about her reasons why she was in favor of closing the bridge and suggested having a temporary stop light installed on Route 4 and Glen Road.

Mayor Whittlesey closed the public input session.

Assistant Mayor Wilkie and Councilors McNamara, Heistad, Stavis, Sykes, and Zook spoke their reasons why they were in favor of closing the bridge.

Mayor Whittlesey read the Lebanon Fire Chief Wheatley's fire response and safety findings as presented in the Council's agenda packet.

ACTION:
Assistant Mayor Wilkie MOVED that the Lebanon City Council directs the City Manager to work with staff to proceed under a bid option that assumes the bridge will be closed for 12 months of construction.
Seconded by Councilor McNamara.
****The Vote on the Motion was approved (9-0).***

B. Discussion and Vote on Amendment to Council Rules, §A191-8 **NOT DISCUSSED. Will be placed on the August 20, 2025, Council agenda packet.**

Included in the agenda packet: **(All supportive documents and detailed information can be found on pages 94-104, Council agenda packet)**
1. Proposed amendment to City Council Rules, §A191-8, Order of Business
2. City Council Rules, as adopted on April 16, 2025

12. NEW BUSINESS

A. Release of Collected Public School Impact Fees (2nd Quarter 2025)

Included in the agenda packet: **(All supportive documents and information can be found on pages 105-109, Council agenda packet)**
1. Impact Fee Report as of 06/30/2025
2. November 22, 2021, Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Lebanon and The Lebanon School District, SAU#88

Deputy City Manager Brooks briefly reviewed the background of the 2nd Quarter of 2025 Release of Collected Public School Impact Fees.

BACKGROUND
A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed in 2010 between the City and the School District for the quarterly transfer of collected Public School Impact Fees to the Lebanon School District for application toward the payment of debt on the (then) new Lebanon Middle School.

On October 12, 2021, the Planning Board authorized a broader use of Public School Impact Fees to include construction, renovation, improvement, or expansion of K-12 school buildings and related building systems, equipment, and furnishings. A revised MOU was developed and signed on November 22, 2021.

To date $1,066,139.19 in impact fees have been disbursed to the Lebanon School District.

7/17/2013	$83,690.78	11/6/2013	$14,651.99	5/21/2014	$19,407.00
8/6/2014	$2,122.75	2/18/2015	$723.00	5/20/2015	$2,819.00
7/15/2015	$1,627.50	11/4/2015	$936.00	3/2/2016	$3,156.00
5/18/2016	$864.00	5/17/2017	$5,230.00	12/6/2017	$6,140.75
2/7/2018	$41,262.70	9/5/2018	$12,564.45	2/6/2019	$1,833.10
8/7/2019	$8,822.20	4/15/2020	$40,432.02	7/15/2020	$123,709.65
12/2/2020	$57,567.42	1/21/2021	$102,409.40	8/4/2021	$12,695.86
1/19/2022	$9,035.45	4/20/2022	$3,216.15	10/19/2022	$261,738.35
2/1/2023	$2,185.00	4/19/2023	$3,824.44	9/6/2023	$3,142.57
11/15/2023	$9,740.60	2/27/2024	$6,341.26	5/15/2024	$11,899.60
9/4/2024	$140,359.34	1/22/2025	$46,642.06	4/16/2025	$25,345.80

This request is for the City Council to authorize the disbursement of $13,994.41 in collected Public School Impact Fees (through 06/30/2025) to the Lebanon School District.

ACTION:
Councilor McNamara MOVED, that in accordance with Section 213.10 (Administration of Impact Fees) of the Lebanon Zoning Ordinance, and the November 22, 2021 Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Lebanon and the Lebanon School District, SAU 88, the City Council hereby authorizes the disbursement of $13,994.41 in collected Public School Impact Fees to the Lebanon School District to be applied toward the construction, renovation, improvement or expansion of K-12 school buildings and related building systems, equipment, and furnishings.
Seconded by Councilor N. Ford Burley.

****The Vote on the Motion was approved by members present (8-0).*** **Council Sykes had temporarily left the room and was not present at the time this vote was taken.**

B. Discussion and Set Public Hearing for August 20, 2025: Request for Supplemental Appropriation in the Amount of $550,000 for Storrs Hill Ski Lodge Improvements; and to Authorize Disbursement of $250,000 in Recreation Impact Fees

Included in the agenda packet: **(All supportive documents and information can be found on pages 110-113, Council agenda packet)**

1. Draft Ski Lodge Expansion Plans
2. Construction Cost Estimate based on LWCF grant application Not Included, But Available:
3. 2025 Storrs Hill Ski Area Facility Planning Advisory Committee Final Report

Mr. Paul Coats (Director of Recreation, Arts, and Parks) reviewed the background and reasons for the Draft Ski Lodge Expansion Plans.

BACKGROUND

Storrs Hill Ski Area is located near downtown Lebanon at 60 Spring Street. The hill has a 300' vertical drop, 7 official trails, one ski lift, Heistad Hill Ski Jump, 3 snowmaking guns, 2 groomers, 61 lights, a ski lodge and various supporting out buildings. The ski area is owned by the City of Lebanon and is operated by the Lebanon Outing Club (LOC) under a Lease and Operating Agreement. The LOC has been operating for over 100 years, making it one of the oldest continuously operating ski hills in the country.

The current ski lodge was constructed in 1997 with 1,854 SF of enclosed heated space and a 340 SF deck. In 2020, an attached 875 SF pavilion was constructed to provide an exterior space partially protected from the weather allowing continued use of the ski area during the COVID 19 pandemic. In 2022, the City applied for and was awarded a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant. The scope of the grant was to enclose the pavilion and expand the existing conditioned footprint of the ski lodge to meet current demand on indoor gathering space; reconstruct the 25m jump; and add plastic covering to both jumps landing areas for year-round ski jumping. Complications with match funding and the feasibility of adding the plastic mats to the jump landing areas necessitated putting a hold on the grant and all associated projects.

In 2023, the City formed the Storrs Hill Ski Area Facilities Improvements Advisory Committee to help the City and Lebanon Outing Club prioritize facility improvements. Their final report was presented to the City in April 2025, and it includes ski lodge improvements as one of the top priorities. LWCF grant administrators suggested that the City continue to work within the scope of the grant, focus exclusively on the lodge expansion, and include the new requirement to add a fire suppression sprinkler system.

The total project cost for the lodge improvements and expansion are estimated to be $550,000, including $150,000 for the new sprinkler system. The LWCF grant will provide up to $275,000, subject to a 50/50 match. The City proposes to fund $250,000 from Recreation Impact Fees, and the Lebanon Outing Club will provide the remaining $25,000 of the required local match. The Recreation Impact Fees fund has a current balance of $458,067 (of which $200,000 is proposed to be dedicated to the Mascoma River Greenway expansion project).

Since funds for the appropriation are to be transferred from Recreation Impact Fees to the Capital Improvements fund and will be supplemented with the LWCF grant and contributions from the Lebanon Outing Club, there will be no impact on the tax rate.

Council/Staff Comments:

The Council and Mr. Coats discussed concerns related to whether or not other components of the ski area might fail in the next few years and render the area in-operable; if the ski area might need to replace the Palma Ski Lift and the potential cost of a lift if it needs to be replaced in future; and, the replacement of the sprinkler system in the future.

ACTION:
Councilor Sykes MOVED, that the Lebanon City Council hereby schedules a public hearing for Wednesday, August 20, 2025, beginning at 7:00pm in Council Chambers, City Hall, and Remote via the City's Virtual Platform, for the purpose of receiving public input and taking action to appropriate $550,000 for a new Storrs Hill Ski Lodge Improvements capital project; and to authorize disbursement of $250,000 in Recreation Impact Fees as the means to partially pay for the work, with the remaining project costs to be funded by a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant, and contributions from the Lebanon Outing Club.
Seconded by Councilor N. Ford Burley.

****The Vote on the Motion was approved (9-0)***

13. City Manager Report:
Interim City Manager Wozmak updated the Council on the following:

- The legal status of Health Trust Legislation.

14. NON-PUBLIC SESSION:

A. RSA 91-A:3, II(b) - The hiring of any person as a public employee

Assistant Mayor Wilkie MOVED to go into Non-Public Session for the purpose of discussing RSA 91-A:3, II(b) - The hiring of any person as a public employee.
Seconded by Councilor McNamara.

Roll Call Vote:
VOTING YEA: Assistant Mayor Wilkie and Councilors Heistad, N. Ford Burley, McNamara, Stavis, Simon, Sykes, Zook and Mayor Whittlesey
VOTING NAY.

****The Vote on the Motion was approved (9-0).***

The Council went into Non-Public session at 8:16 PM

Councilor Wilkie MOVED to come out of Non-Public Session.
Seconded by Councilor McNamara.

Roll Call Vote:
VOTING YEA: Assistant Mayor Wilkie and Councilors Heistad, N. Ford Burley, McNamara, Stavis, Simon, Sykes, Zook and Mayor Whittlesey
VOTING NAY.

****The Vote on the Motion was approved (9-0)***

The Council came out of Non-Public session at 8:40 PM

COUNCIL WAS BACK IN REGULAR SESSION TO DISCUSS OTHER BUSINESS.

Assistant Mayor Wilkie MOVED that the Lebanon City Council hereby authorizes the Mayor and City Staff to execute the negotiated employment contract for Andrew Hosmer with a starting salary of $170,000.00 as the City Manager of the City of Lebanon, NH.
Seconded by Councilor McNamara.

****The Vote on the MOTION was unanimously approved (9-0).***

Mayor Whittlesey and the Council were very pleased to announce that they will be moving forward with hiring Andrew Hosmer as the City Manager and they will be releasing a press release tomorrow, July 17, 2025.

15. ADJOURNMENT:
Councilor McNamara MOVED for adjournment.
Seconded by Councilor Simon.
****The Vote on the MOTION was unanimously approved (9-0)***

The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Dona E. Gibson
Recording Secretary