



**WELCOMING LEBANON TASK FORCE
MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2026 - 5:30 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
[LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE](https://lebanonnh.gov/live)**

1. Call to Order

The August 3, 2026, Welcoming Lebanon Task Force Meeting is hereby called to order.

2. Approval of Minutes

A. July 14, 2026

3. Old Business

A. Continue Discussion of Public Input Recommendations

4. New Business: None

5. Other Business

6. Adjournment

Meetings are open for in-person and remote attendance. Members of the public who wish to attend remotely may do so by going to [LebanonNH.gov/Live](https://lebanonnh.gov/live) where you will find instructions on how to enter the meeting. Members of the public will be able to participate and ask questions through the City's virtual platform or by phone. Please note: Should technical difficulties occur during the meeting that disrupt virtual or phone connection(s), the meeting will continue without remote access capabilities.

Any person with a disability who wishes to attend this public meeting and needs additional accommodation, please contact the ADA coordinator at City Hall by calling 603-448-4220 at least 72 hours in advance so that the City can make any necessary arrangements.

DRAFT

**WELCOMING LEBANON TASK FORCE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live
July 14, 2026
5:30 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Assistant Mayor Devin Wilkie, Lindsay Dearborn, Lucas Mendelsohn, Keiselim (Keysi) Montas, Lebanon Police Chief Phillip Roberts, Tia Winter

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Andrew Hosmer, City Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER – Assistant Mayor Wilkie called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

2. PREAMBLE – Read by City Manager Hosmer.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None

4. OLD BUSINESS: None

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Input Opportunity for Welcoming Lebanon

Assistant Mayor Wilkie started by giving a brief background of why the City formed this Task Force and what they are looking for. This information is included in the public handout which is in the Agenda Packet for today.

Highlights are:

In 2018 the City Council adopted a resolution for inclusiveness which affirmed its commitment to preserving public trust and promoting community identity, civic pride, and quality of life for all Lebanon residents. Then in 2020, Lebanon voters passed the Welcoming Lebanon Ordinance by Citizens Binding Initiative, which was subsequently added to the City’s code in January 2021. Among other things, it limited municipal cooperation with federal immigration enforcement.

In May 2025, the State of New Hampshire passed some bills into law, prohibiting municipalities from taking those very actions, carrying fines of up to 25% of annual State funding for violating those laws. Those bills became effective in January 2026, under New Hampshire RSA 106Q and 106R.

The City Council and the DEI Commission examined alternatives but realized that in order to remain compliant with the new laws, they would need to repeal the Welcoming Lebanon Ordinance, which the City Council did, to become effective December 31, 2025.

In January 2026, the City Council formed this Welcoming Lebanon Task Force to explore options. This Task Force has been meeting for the past few months and while it has explored some possibilities (in the packet), it wants to get input from the public. Some options are to include a new resolution, without enforcement provisions but reflecting the values and wishes of the City Council, or passing a new ordinance that is in compliance with State law. Actions could include examining and potentially revising the charge of the DEI Commission or creating a subcommittee that could have any number of charges such as support members of our community, public information, and public education. Also consider whether any of our municipal or City Manager's policies or our Police Department's policies have opportunity for revision; they could make those recommendations for consideration by City staff.

Assistant Mayor Wilkie's hope is to hear from residents about what they believe the City should do. Then this Task Force will continue their discussion over the next few months to decide what they want to recommend to the City Council.

Members from the public spoke next.

Mr. Fran Casale, Ward 2 – Mr. Casale said that he thinks the City passing a new resolution affirming its commitment to inclusiveness and equity is a good idea. He also believes that a revised charge of the DEI is in order.

He is unsure if the roadmap is clear for immigrants coming into our community regarding which agency or agencies would be ideal for them to work with; he suggested that the City partner with the many agencies that it already works with, to help with a flow chart or something that would provide a clear understanding of options available to immigrants and others in need of various services. The focus needs to be on getting the appropriate help to the people in need.

He does not see the need for a City code or ordinance.

Ms. Faye Grearson, Ward 2 – Ms. Grearson said that she agrees and would like to see Lebanon put as much in writing as is practicable and legally permissible. She thinks this is just, and a humane way to build community. She added that we have numerous people here working in healthcare, and their roles are critical to helping to keep things running. If there were to be a large exodus of these people, our community would suffer immensely, including our employers.

Ms. Martha Tecca, Orford, NH, Board Chair for SHARE (Supporting and Helping Asylees and Refugees) – Ms. Tecca said that she is aware of how intertwined everyone's rights are and she has experienced Lebanon to be an important center of access to services for people who are frequently in need of help with applications for a range of services they need, independent of their immigration status. She asked that as Lebanon puts something in writing, that it feel welcoming, not "othersome".

She ended by thanking Lebanon and this Task Force and added that she is grateful for the extraordinary resources available here due to the community, the municipality, and many businesses here; these are important to the entire upper valley. She offered her help to get involved in this initiative.

Ms. Susan Almy, Ward 1 – Ms. Almy said that while she has not looked at the Ordinance recently, she thinks it would be worthwhile to write it in a more humane way and yet still accomplish what is intended. Ms. Almy wondered why some impacted people were not at this meeting but that perhaps it is because this is a public meeting and she also said that Lebanon does not seem to be attracting ICE’s attention anymore.

Ms. Kathy Beckett, Ward 2 (virtual) – Ms. Beckett said she appreciates what this Task Force is doing and asked that the resolution clearly state our values and come from “the bottom up”, by listening and talking with those who are impacted. She continued that there are many federal and state laws that can help people know what their rights are around, for example, discrimination. These rights exists for immigrants, and for people with disabilities, to name two. Those rights are worth fighting for and she appreciates this Task Force as well as the many people in our community working toward a better life for these people.

Ms. Angela Zhang, Ward 2 (virtual)– Ms. Zhang, in response to Ms. Almy said that she has spoken with people who have expressed a lot of fear and concern about speaking publicly, particularly in recorded settings. She also said that ICE has in fact been present in the area recently.

Assistant Mayor Wilkie concluded the Public portion of this meeting. He asked all listening to feel free to reach out to him with any further public comment, directing them to a Boards & Committees contact form which is on the City’s website; also they can email him directly. In response to the question of how to locate the actual Ordinance, City Manager Hosmer referred people to the City’s website.

Assistant Mayor Wilkie said that this Task Force still has much work to do, and will be having their next meeting on Monday, July 20th at 5:30PM. This and future TF meetings will be focused on what recommendations they will make to the City Council and they will strive to provide these to the Council in September. Future Task Force meetings are open to the Public.

He concluded by saying they gained valuable insights today and thanked all for coming.

6. OTHER BUSINESS None

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS None

7. ADJOURNMENT

Assistant Mayor Wilkie adjourned the meeting at 6:04PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Cinda Mersel
Recording Secretary

*****NOTE THAT THIS IS NOT INTENDED TO BE THE FINAL RESOLUTION; ALL LANGUAGE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE PENDING PUBLIC INPUT AND TASK FORCE DISCUSSION, AND THE FOLLOWING CLAUSES ARE PROVIDED ONLY AS EXAMPLE LANGUAGE. WE CONTINUE TO WELCOME INPUT TO ADD TO, CHANGE, OR DELETE THIS LANGUAGE.*****

A RESOLUTION AFFIRMING THE CITY OF LEBANON'S COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVENESS AND COMMUNITY TRUST

WHEREAS, the City of Lebanon recognizes the inherent dignity and equality of all people regardless of race, skin color, national or ethnic origin, cultural group, language, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, age, religious or political opinion or activity, economic status, immigration status, or housing status, including immigrants, BIPOC residents, Indigenous peoples, religious minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, and others who have historically faced exclusion and discrimination; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lebanon is a diverse and welcoming community whose residents include immigrants, refugees, longtime residents, workers, students, families, and business owners who contribute to the social, cultural, and economic life of the city; and

WHEREAS, immigrants have long contributed to the strength and vitality of Lebanon and the State of New Hampshire, supporting the workforce, economy, schools, and civic life; and

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted a Resolution for Inclusiveness in June 2018, expressing its commitment to preserving public trust and promoting community identity, civic pride, and quality of life for all Lebanon residents; and

WHEREAS, Lebanon voters passed the Welcoming Lebanon Ordinance by citizen initiative in 2020, which took effect as City Code Chapter 185 in January 2021; and

WHEREAS, the State of New Hampshire enacted HB 511 and SB 62 in 2025, which took effect January 1, 2026 as RSA 106-Q and 106-R, and which prohibit municipalities from limiting cooperation between law enforcement agencies and federal immigration authorities; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, recognizing its legal obligations under state law, was compelled to repeal City Code Chapter 185, Welcoming Lebanon, effective December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the repeal of the Welcoming Lebanon Ordinance does not diminish the City's commitment to its values of inclusiveness, equity, and community trust; and

34 WHEREAS, fear, uncertainty, and the perception of unchecked or unclear federal
35 enforcement activity can undermine public safety, discourage cooperation with public
36 safety and emergency responders, disrupt student education, deter residents from
37 accessing critical public services, and erode trust in government institutions; and

38 WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes and respects the role of federal authorities in
39 enforcing federal law, but affirms that public safety is best served through transparency,
40 accountability, and trust between residents and those exercising law enforcement
41 authority; and

42 WHEREAS, the City Council has an obligation to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare
43 of all residents and to speak clearly when conditions arise that threaten community
44 stability, even where direct regulatory authority is limited; and

45 WHEREAS, the City of Lebanon affirms its responsibility to express moral leadership and
46 advocate for the humane treatment of all individuals, regardless of immigration status,
47 even in the face of restrictive state policies; and

48 WHEREAS, nothing in this resolution is intended or shall be construed as a directive to any
49 agency, officer, or employee of the City of Lebanon, and the City Council acknowledges
50 that under current New Hampshire law it cannot prohibit or impede any law enforcement
51 agency from cooperating with federal immigration authorities;

52 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Lebanon City Council reaffirms its
53 commitment to the dignity and equal treatment of all people in Lebanon, and expresses, as
54 a matter of civic values and community identity, that it does not affirmatively encourage the
55 use of local law enforcement resources for the purpose of federal civil immigration
56 enforcement; and

57 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council urges federal immigration authorities
58 operating within Lebanon to conduct any enforcement activities in a manner that prioritizes
59 transparency, clear identification, and de-escalation, and that minimizes unnecessary fear
60 or disruption to the public; and

61 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City shall strive to provide residents with public
62 information regarding available community resources related to their rights, and
63 appropriate points of contact for public safety concerns, in coordination with trusted local
64 and state organizations where appropriate; and

65 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council calls upon New Hampshire's
66 congressional delegation and state leadership to seek greater transparency, oversight, and

67 accountability regarding federal immigration enforcement practices impacting New
68 Hampshire communities; and

69 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Lebanon will seek to partner with local,
70 regional, and national organizations to monitor the impacts of state and federal policies on
71 vulnerable community members, and to support legal and legislative efforts to challenge or
72 overturn discriminatory policies where appropriate; and

73 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution is adopted as an expression of the Lebanon
74 City Council's concern for public safety and community well-being, and does not purport to
75 regulate or restrict federal authority, but rather to formally communicate the City's position
76 and concern over potential local impacts; and

77 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that while the City of Lebanon will comply with state law, it
78 affirms its commitment to do so without surrendering its moral and ethical obligation to
79 protect human rights, and without participating in or facilitating any acts of hate, fear, or
80 exclusion; and

81 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Manager's Office is requested to share this
82 resolution with all City departments and to make it publicly available on the City website.

83 *****ALL LANGUAGE PRESENTED HERE IS DRAFT ONLY, SUBJECT TO CHANGE.**

84 **SUBSTANTIVE INPUT IS STILL WELCOMED AT THIS STAGE.*****

Article XIII Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission

[Adopted 7-21-2021 by Ord. No. 2021-07]

§ 31-52 Establishment; membership; qualifications.

A. Pursuant to Chapter C419:23 of the Lebanon City Charter, there is hereby established a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission. The Commission shall be comprised of no more than nine voting members appointed by the City Council, including: two City Councilors, one alternate City Council representative, seven members of the public, and up to four alternate public representatives. The City Manager or his/her designee shall be a permanent non-voting member of the commission.

[Amended 10-20-2021 by Ord. No. 2021-10]

B. The Public Representatives shall be residents of the City of Lebanon and shall be appointed by the City Council and their terms shall be staggered for periods of two years. The City Council representatives shall be appointed by the Mayor annually.

C. In determining each member's qualifications, the appointing authority shall take into consideration the appointee's ability to assist in the purpose of the commission and their willingness to serve. The appointing authority will seek a broad representation of the community at large.

D. Commission members will serve without compensation and subject to applicable City policies. Commission members must comply with the City's ethics policies and shall refrain from promoting or pursuing personal interests while acting as a member or representing the City.

E. The Commission shall have assistance from City staff, as designated by the City Manager. The Commission shall comply with the rules of decorum as established by the City Council.

§ 31-53 Purpose; charge; mission.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission is hereby established for the purposes of:

A. Enhancing the City's support for a welcoming environment encouraging cooperation, tolerance, and respect among and by all persons living, working and visiting the City

B. Serving as a resource for City government and the community by providing information, education, and communication that facilitates a better understanding and celebrates our differences.

C. Advising the City government to ensure the community is united amongst diversity, where everyone is equally respected, valued, needed, and cherished.

§ 31-54 Duties and responsibilities.

The duties and responsibilities of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission will include:

A. Providing recommendations to the City Manager and City Council that would identify opportunities to address diversity and equity issues, promote inclusion/diversity programs, and provide guidance to create a more accessible, safe, welcoming and inclusive government and community.

B. Enhancing communication across and among the community to promote awareness, understanding and the value of cultural, ethnic and religious differences.

C. Promoting equity among all persons relative to gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, gender identity, sexual orientation.

D. Promoting inclusion in the workplace, the community and City government.

E. Coordinating economic development activities amongst City representatives and private organizations at the request and direction of the City Council.

F. Establishing a dialogue with City residents to understand the needs and concerns of the community; with local business owners to understand challenges and hindrances to the enhancement of diversity, equity and inclusion.

G. Reporting quarterly to the City Council in accordance with Council directives.

H. Working in partnership with the City Manager and Staff to achieve the objectives of ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion in the City.