

**MINUTES – ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
 Monday, January 5, 2026  
6:00 P.M.

Pursuant to Section 4 of the Portsmouth City Charter, Portsmouth City Council members and members-elect met in an organizational meeting on Monday, January 5, 2026 at 6:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

The meeting was called to order by City Solicitor John Haas. A prayer was given by Councilwoman Lyvette Mosley and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

Solicitor Haas called for nominations for the selection of a temporary Chairperson. Councilwoman Gordon nominated Solicitor John Haas. Mr. Haas called for other nominations and there were none, nominations were closed. The motioned carried viva voce: **VOTE: ayes 6 – nays 0, John Haas was appointed as temporary Chairman.**

Chairman Haas called for nominations for an acting City Clerk. Councilwoman Mosley nominated Diana Ratliff and Charlotte Gordon seconded the motion. Chairman Haas called for other nominations and there were none, Chairman Haas closed the nominations. The motioned carried viva voce: **VOTE: ayes 6 – nays 0, Diana Ratliff was appointed as acting City Clerk.**

Solicitor Haas administered the Oath of Office for 1st Ward Councilman David Malone; 3rd Ward Councilman Andy Cole, and 5th Ward Councilman Chris Neff.

Chairman Haas stated that Council had seen and reviewed the letter on performance bonds from the City Auditor and has accepted the bond.

Roll Call showed the following member to be present:

David Malone	1 <sup>st</sup> Ward
Charlotte Gordon	2 <sup>nd</sup> Ward
Andy Cole	3 <sup>rd</sup> Ward
Lyvette Mosley	4 <sup>th</sup> Ward
Chris Neff	5 <sup>th</sup> Ward
Dennis Packard	6 <sup>th</sup> Ward

Also, present were City Solicitor John Haas, Auditor M. Trent Williams, Acting City Clerk Diana Ratliff, and City Manager Sam Sutherland.

Chairman Haas opened the floor for nominations for the position of President of Council with the Title of Mayor. Councilman Cole nominated Charlotte Gordon. Chairman Haas called for other nominations and there were no other nominations, Chairman Haas closed the nominations. The roll was called for Councilwoman Gordon: **VOTE: ayes 6 – nays, Charlotte Gordon was named as President of Council with the title of Mayor.**

Chairman Haas opened nominations for Vice President of Council. Councilwoman Gordon nominated Councilwoman Mosley for Vice President of Council and Chairman Haas called for other nominations, there were no other nominations, Chairman Haas closed the nominations. The roll was called for Lyvette Mosely: **VOTE: ayes 6 – nays 0, Councilwoman Lyvette Mosley was appointed Vice President of Council.**

Chairman Haas opened nominations for City Clerk. Councilwoman Mosley motioned that Diana Ratliff be appointed as City Clerk and Councilman Packard seconded the motion. Chairman Haas called for other nominations, there were none, Chairman Haas closed the nominations. The roll was called: **VOTE: ayes 6 -nays 0, Diana Ratliff was re-appointed City Clerk.**

Solicitor Haas administered the Oath of Office to Mayor Gordon, Vice President Mosley, and City Clerk Ratliff.

Chairman Haas asked Council if they had reviewed the rules of Council and explained that the rules have been rewritten because over the past number of years the council rules were renewed every two-years with very little change, but he drafted new council rules for this term which hopefully brings the rules up to date. He had given these to the City Clerk who had given them to Councilmembers at the last regular session on December 15, 2025 and gave copies to the two new councilmembers in their packets. There were some questions and requests that Council had and the majority wanted more time to review the rules and asked questions. Solicitor Haas stated that he will not be at the next meeting on January 12, 2026, but would be at the January 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. It was suggested to approval the times and dates from the council rules and table the rest until January 26<sup>th</sup>.

The majority of council requested more time to review the differences in the old rules compared to the new drafted rules. Solicitor Haas stated that they were much clearer and Mayor Gordon explained that the new drafted rules addressed technology and other updates. Clerk Ratliff stated that some of the rules came from the

Oath of Office 1<sup>st</sup> Ward David Malone, 3rd Ward Andy Cole, 5<sup>th</sup> Ward Chris Neff

Elected Charlotte Gordon as President of Council with title of Mayor

Elected Lyvette Mosley as Vice President of Council

Re-appointed Diana Ratliff as City Clerk

Oath of Office President of Council Gordon, VP Mosley, City Clerk Diana Ratliff

city charter. Solicitor Haas urged Council to read the new draft and he asked that any thoughts, questions, or concerns be sent via email to the City Clerk who will make sure that those issues are forwarded to the Solicitor for review. He would like each councilmember to exchange their thoughts in these emails. Councilman Cole asked if any of these rules pertain to the ORC (Special Meetings) and Solicitor Haas replied that these rules follow the charter and not the ORC, but if this is tabled until the 26<sup>th</sup>, council will need to abide by the current rules.

Councilwoman Mosley motioned to accept the dates and times from the council rules as the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 6:00 p.m. There were no further questions or comments, the roll was called: **VOTE: ayes 6 – nays 0, the times and dates were accepted and adopted.**

Council  
dates and  
times  
adopted

Solicitor Haas asked for a motion to table the council rules until January 26, 2026. Councilman Packard motioned to table the council rules until January 26, 2026. There were no further questions or comments, the roll was called: **VOTE: ayes 6 – nays 0, the council rules were tabled until January 26, 2026.**

Council  
rules  
tabled  
until  
1-26-26

**REMARKS FROM CITIZENS TO COUNCIL:**

There was no one present who wanted to address members of City Council.

**REMARKS TO THE CITIZENS BY CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

**1st Ward** – Councilman Malone was grateful for the opportunity to again serve the City of Portsmouth and 1<sup>st</sup> Ward residents. He gave his word that he would listen and do his very best to bring about positive energy to the ward and city government. He will listen to both sides of the coin and hopefully make decisions that would be satisfactory to all parties. He looked forward to working with the Mayor, Vice Mayor, and all of city council. He stated that whatever was needed he would be available.

**2nd Ward** – Councilwoman Gordon thanked council for the honor of leading again as President of Council which wasn't a task she took lightly and she hoped to create an environment in which everyone felt comfortable stating their ideas and perspectives and that council listens to each other respectfully. She looked forward to a wonderful couple of years with this good team.

**3rd Ward** – Councilman Cole reminded fellow councilmembers to grab their microphones and drag them close so that each an everyone could be heard. He addressed and thanked his constituents and even though he was unopposed, he appreciated the outflow of support. He appreciated everyone who agreed and disagreed with him, but took their time to reach out to him to let him know about certain matters and issues in the city. He promised to be the wards voice and to let their thoughts be heard and will represent their needs and even though some of the issues won't be the outcome that some people like, their voice will be heard. He grew up in and loves Portsmouth and he sees issues in Portsmouth and where we as a city could do better. He thanked everyone for allowing him to represent for another term and looked forward to working with his fellow councilmembers.

**4th Ward** – Councilwoman Mosley reviewed the past few years. The community had come together to achieve some wonderful milestones with completing several key projects, improving local parks as well as ongoing projects still developing. They've strengthened the community, especially with the Drop-In Center which was something that the city needed. She looks forward to the progress of the upcoming year and was honored to serve as Vice Mayor again and said that it had been a blessing to work with her fellow councilmembers.

**5th Ward** – Councilman Neff said that he was honored and thanked his constituents for their hard work and he hoped it was evident that he brought a spirit of cooperation, hope, and hard work. He stated that there was a lot of work ahead, but he intended to roll up his sleeves, get with the program and find solutions that work within the city's budget and timeframe and to be more informative to the people asking questions. He agreed with everything that had been said thus far and looked for great things to happen in our city.

**6th Ward** – Councilman Packard welcomed Councilman Neff and Councilman Malone and invited them to Sciotoville for a personal tour. He said the 6<sup>th</sup> Ward was a large ward (land wise) with rural areas. He said that he was available 24/7 and if there's anything they need, to call.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m. on a motion by Vice President Mosley.

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City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor