

AGENDA FOR THE CITY COUNCIL
OCTOBER 7, 2025

PUBLIC HEARING

PUBLIC COMMENT

LAIID ON THE TABLE

1. From City Clerk Brenna Murphy Leary and Admin. Assistant Jeffery Anderson-Burgos, minutes of February 18, 2025 meeting.
2. The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order that the following Charter Change be adopted:
Charter Sec. 39. - City solicitor.
AMEND
FROM:
The city solicitor shall perform those all legal services in which the city is interested and attend to all proceedings at law or in equity to which the city is a party, and to all claims made to the city council. For these purposes he shall have sole charge of all such matters and proceedings. He shall give in writing his legal opinion upon any of the municipal affairs of the city, upon the request of the mayor or city council, and in addition shall give his opinion upon the law relating to municipal affairs in any department, upon request made by the head of such department.
TO:
The city solicitor shall perform those legal services in the city as the city council shall establish by ordinance. He or she shall give in writing their legal opinion upon any of the municipal affairs of the city, upon the request of the mayor or city council, and in addition shall give his or her opinion upon the law relating to municipal affairs in any department, upon request made by the head of such department.
Recommended that the order be adopted.
3. The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order That Charter Sections 19 and 34 be amended and elsewhere as appropriate to allow for all appointments to the Fire Commission and DPW Commission to be appointed by the Mayor subject to confirmation by the City Council.
Recommended that the order be adopted.
4. -- The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order that section 13 of the Holyoke Charter - Rules of city council; president pro tempore; method of sitting; journal; roll-call votes; quorum; general powers; no compensation. - be amended using the attached language.
Recommended that the order be adopted.
5. -- The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order that section 14 of the Holyoke Charter - Transactions by council or members in behalf of city prohibited, except in case of veterans' aid - be amended using the attached language.
Recommended that the order be referred to the full Council without recommendation.

6. -- The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order that section 22 of the Holyoke Charter - Power as to laying out, etc., of streets; damages; ordinances, etc., involving expenditures in excess of two hundred dollars.- be amended using the attached language
Recommended that the order be adopted.
7. -- The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order that section 24 of the Holyoke Charter -Presentation of ordinances, orders, etc., to mayor; approval; veto; passage over veto - be amended using the attached language
Recommended that the order be adopted.
8. -- The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order That section 41 of the Holyoke Charter be deleted.
Recommended that the order be adopted.
9. -- The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order that section 49 of the Holyoke Charter - Transfers of appropriations; authorization of expenditures without appropriation; approval of bills, pay rolls and vouchers; fiscal year. - be amended using the attached language.
Recommended that the order be adopted.
10. -- The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order that section 53 of the Holyoke Charter -Loans, bonds and notes. - be amended using the attached language.
Recommended that the order be adopted.
11. The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order that the City of Holyoke shall create an Administrative and Finance Department. Said acceptance shall be subject to implementation by city ordinance and any necessary amendments to the City Charter. This order shall be referred concurrently to Charter and Rules and Ordinance to be considered jointly, with recommendations regarding implementation to be reported back to the City Council jointly. See attached: Municipal Modernization Act of 2025.
Recommended that the order be adopted.
12. The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order that City Council adopt the attached Substitute Municipal Modernization Ordinance
Recommended that the order be received.
13. The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order With community support, order that the following section of our Codes of Ordinances and charter be updated to reflect use of email as sufficient for special meeting notice:
Sec. 12. – Special meetings of city council.
The mayor may at any time call a special meeting of the city council by public posting through the city website along with written notifications thereof, together with a statement of the subjects to be considered thereat, to be deposited in the post office, postpaid and addressed to the persons to be notified, at least forty-eight hours before the time appointed for such meeting, or to be left at the usual place of residence of each member of the council, by email at least forty-eight hours before the time appointed for such meeting.

(Acts 1965, c. 187; Acts 1992, c. 189)

Recommended that the order be adopted.

14. -- The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order Charter changes related to Municipal Modernization Package be adopted.
Recommended that the order has been complied with.
15. The Committee on Charter and Rules to whom was referred an order that Rule 8M please be amended as follows:
Current:
M. Any ordinance, order, resolution, or vote involving the appropriation or expenditure of money to an amount which may exceed two hundred dollars, shall require for its passage the affirmative votes of a majority of all members of the City Council.
Every such ordinance, order, resolution, or vote shall be read twice, with an interval of at least three days between the two readings, before being finally passed; and the vote at its final passage shall be taken by roll call; provided, however, that upon and after the written recommendation of the Mayor, the City Council may pass such ordinance, order, resolution, or vote on the same day by a two-thirds yea and nay vote. {See City Charter s. 22}
New:
M. Any ordinance, order, resolution, or vote involving the appropriation or expenditure of money to an amount which may exceed two hundred dollars shall be considered as adopted by final action of the City Council only after passing the following two votes: (1) Motion to pass the first reading by a majority of all the members of the City Council, and (2) Motion to pass the second reading by a majority of all the members of the City Council on a roll call vote. Notwithstanding the preceding, if the Motion to pass the first reading and the Motion to pass the second reading occur within three days of each other then the Motion to pass the second reading shall require a two thirds majority of all the members of the City Council to be adopted. [Reference: City Charter Section 22, and MG.L. c. 44 § 1]
Recommended that the order be adopted.

REGULAR AND PENDING EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

16. -- June 11, 2024, September 4, 2024, and April 15, 2025 Executive Session Minutes - Reviewed and ready for partial release as of September 17, 2025
17. -- December 9, 2024 Finance Committee Executive Session Minutes - Reviewed and withheld in entirety as of September 17, 2025
18. From City Clerk Brenna Murphy Leary and Admin. Assistant Jeffery Anderson-Burgos- September 17, 2025 meeting minutes

COMMUNICATIONS

19. From Mayor Joshua Garcia-communication regarding letters from DLS
20. From Mayor Joshua Garcia-letter from Division of Local Services

21. From Mayor Joshua Garcia- letter from Division of Local Services City of Holyoke - Notice of Actions Necessary for Conformity
22. From Deb Brunelle, Chief Assessor, request to appoint Grant Schlosstein to Board of Assessors
23. Resolution supporting local control of municipal utilities and local efforts to achieve Massachusetts low carbon emissions goals.
24. From City of Holyoke Health Benefit Meeting Minutes of September 8, 2025
25. From HEDIC-Meeting Minutes from Feb 27, April 24, June 26, and July 31, 2025
26. From Board of Fire Commissioner-Meeting Minutes from August 20, 2025
27. Notice of Community Outreach Meeting-Cannabis Courier and Manufacturer

PETITIONS

28. Petition from Residents of Ward 1- concerns regarding crosswalk at Chestnut and Lyman Streets

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

29. The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that City Council adopt the attached Substitute Municipal Modernization Ordinance
Recommended that the order be adopted.
30. The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that the Council approve the changes to Holyoke Code of Ordinances Chapter 86 Schedule IV: Stop Streets associated implementation of stop control on local side streets intersection Homestead Ave between Westfield Rd and Cherry St as detailed in the memorandum prepared by the Assistant City Engineer, dated July 29, 2025.
Recommended that the order be adopted.
31. The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that the Council approve the changes to Holyoke Code of Ordinances Chapter 86 Schedule IV: Stop Streets associated with implementation of all-way stop control at the following locations as detailed in the memorandum of changes associated with the MassDOT All-Way Stop Control (ASWC) Program prepared by the Assistant City Engineer, dated July 29, 2025:
 - Appleton Street at Elm Street
 - Cabot Street at Nick Cosmos Way
 - Dwight Street at Pine Street
 - Sargeant Street at Commercial Street
 - Sargeant Street at Elm Street
 - Sargeant Street at Sycamore Street
 - West Franklin Street at Linden Street

Recommended that the order be adopted.

32. The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that the various traffic schedules contained in Holyoke Code of Ordinances Chapter 86 Article IX be updated as detailed in the memorandum of changes required by the upcoming City Center Connector Project prepared by the Assistant City Engineer, dated July 29, 2025.
Recommended that the order be adopted.
33. The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that the position of Chief Administrative and Financial Officer be created and added to Schedule A
Recommended that the order has been complied with.
34. -- The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that the City Council adopt the attached draft ordinance establishing the role of Parliamentarian of the City Council.
Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.
35. The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that the position of combined Treasurer/Tax Collector is created by ordinance and added to Schedule A Grade 14
Recommended that the order be given a leave to withdraw.
36. The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that a Handicap sign be placed 50 North Bridge St. for Nelson Vega
Recommended that the order be adopted.
37. The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order The DPW install a handicap sign for Yolanda Gonzalez at 50 Arthur St.
Recommended that the order be adopted.
38. The Committee on Ordinance to whom was referred an order that the DPW remove the handicap sign at 71 Waldo St. The sign is no longer needed.
Recommended that the order be adopted.
39. The Committee on Finance to whom was referred a Petition from Rev Randell Bessette of 1810 Northampton St. for a Second Hand License.
Recommended that the petition be granted for the hours of Saturday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
40. The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "MASS DOT LOCAL BOTTLENECK REDUCTION PROGRAM, \$390,149.30, NO MATCH" grant and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said grant.
Sec 2-509 - Grant Reporting
Any city department, of which has received grant funding by approval of the city council pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, or any other authorizing criteria, shall within a reasonable period of time, but no later than 60 days from the conclusion of said grant, generate a detailed report which outlines the planned outcomes with the documented actual results. Said report shall be submitted to the city clerk for addition to the city

council's next agenda.

Recommended that the order be adopted.

41. The Committee on Finance to whom was referred an order that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2026, ONE HUNDRED THIRTY SEVEN THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND 00/100 Dollars (\$137,500) as follows:

FROM

11211-51104 CAFO	\$137,500
TOTAL	\$137,500
TO:	
11212-53009 MAYOR'S CONTRACTED SERVICES	\$137,500
TOTAL	\$137,500

Recommended that the order be adopted.

42. The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred a Petition from Francisco Grabiell Velez Vega of 214 Elm St. for a Street Vendor License Awaiting disposition
43. The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred a Special permit application for home occupation of Kristin Fontaine for a cottage kitchen to bake bread at 1 Meadow Street (081-00-012) per sec 4.8.2.
Conditions previously added:
1. That the hours of operation would be Saturday 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.
2. That the applicant will provide their business certificate and their permit from the Board of health.
Awaiting disposition
44. The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred an order to declare 569 South Bridge Street, Holyoke, MA (Holyoke Assessors Map 029, Block 08, Parcel 006) as surplus property. The City has been approached by an interested buyer looking to purchase the property. The property is vacant land and currently assessed at \$38,700.00.
Awaiting disposition
45. The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred an order to declare Holyoke Assessors Map 029, Block 08, Parcel 007, South Bridge Street, Holyoke, MA as surplus property. The City has been approached by an interested buyer looking to purchase the property. The property is vacant land and currently assessed at \$22,800.00.
Awaiting disposition
46. The Committee on Development and Governmental Relations to whom was referred an that the following Resolution of the City Council be adopted and a copy be transmitted to the Department of Homeland Security and our federal delegation and the White House. It shall also be used by all departments of the city with their applications for federal funds and grants when necessary:1. Holyoke is not a sanctuary city.
2. Mayor Joshua Garcia has publicly declared that Holyoke is not a sanctuary city.
3. The City Council hereby declares Holyoke is not a sanctuary city.

4. Holyoke adopted Ordinance 2-68 "No elected official, department head or other city employee shall issue any order that shall knowingly violate any law or regulation of the federal, state or local government or the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the Charter of the City of Holyoke, or any lawful order of a court of competent jurisdiction. No such order given shall be valid or shall be enforced by the City of Holyoke or its departments."

5. To the extent, Holyoke has been deemed a sanctuary city by the federal government for failing to comply with any federal law or regulation, the Department of Homeland Security should notify the Holyoke City Council and Mayor of its specific violation and what steps are needed to remedy.

6. The City of Holyoke and all of its employees and agents hereby agree to fully comply with all federal laws and regulations. To the extent the city, its employees or agents have or are violating any federal law or regulation, they shall immediately cease and fully comply.

7. The City of Holyoke requests removal from any identification of our city as a sanctuary city by any federal department or agency.

Awaiting disposition

MOTIONS, ORDERS AND RESOLUTIONS

47. Murphy-Romboletti- Ordered that the City of Holyoke opt in to in-person early voting, per request from the City Clerk. If passed by the City Council, in-person early voting will take place October 27-31, 2025 during the hours of 8:30am-4:30pm in the City Clerk's Office.
48. MURPHY-ROMBOLETTI - Ordered that the City approve of a sidewalk easement for Holyoke Gas & Electric adjacent to parcel 030-06-014 (150 Race Street) for the purposes of installation of electrical conduit.
49. Rivera, I-Order: That the Special Education Department within the School Department be invited to a joint meeting of the School Committee and City Council to provide an update on measures taken to mitigate turnover of specialized special education staff. Families have raised concerns regarding the constant turnover and its impact on children receiving special education services
50. Rivera, I-Order: That the Department of Public Works (DPW) place a sign at the intersection of Center Street and East Dwight Street informing drivers that autistic children reside in the neighborhood. Request submitted on behalf of a constituent.
51. Rivera, I-Order: That the Parks and Recreation Director appear before the Public Safety Committee to discuss the potential upgrade of Pina Park located in Ward 1.
52. Rivera, J-Ordered that a handicap sign be placed outside of 167 Elm St. for Zoila Diaz, handicap placard number PL000058.
53. Rivera, J.- ORDERED: That the City Clerk be invited to appear before the City Council to provide a detailed overview of campaign rules and regulations, including requirements and procedures related to election days, so that councilors and the public have clear, up-to-date information.

54. Rivera, J.- ORDERED: That the Department of Public Works, in coordination with the Department of Public Safety and the Traffic Commission, take the following actions to improve pedestrian safety:
1. Crosswalk Installation – Paint and maintain a clearly marked crosswalk in front of 598 Dwight Street to provide a safe crossing for elderly residents and other pedestrians accessing the nearby park.
 2. “No Turn on Red” Signage – Install appropriate “No Turn on Red” signage at the corner of Dwight Street and Maple Street, where drivers frequently fail to stop, creating a hazard for pedestrians.
 3. Pedestrian Signal Timing – Evaluate and adjust the pedestrian crossing signal at the Dwight and Maple Street intersection to include a sufficient countdown timer, ensuring that elderly pedestrians and others have adequate time to cross safely.
55. Vacon- ORDER: Place a permanent speed feedback sign on a pole on Southampton Road (near Fir Lane).
56. Vacon- ORDER: Please add "No engine brake sign st the bottom of the hill on Southampton Rd approaching Fir. Trucks are using engine brakes at the bottom of the hill to the stop sign.
57. Vacon- ORDER: Request our state delegation submit a bill similar to Senate Bill To Protect Floridians from Geoengineering and Weather Modification SB 56 by Senator Ileana Garcia prohibits chemical releases into the air, promotes public health.
58. Vacon- ORDER: Review & amend the sign ordinance as needed to reduce the increased posting of a variety of signs on public property and other changes that may be offered. Send to Ordinance Committee.
59. Bartley-The city remove tree stump in city owener tree belt proximate to 75 Elmwood Ave.
60. Bartley, Greaney, Ocasio- The city of Holyoke adopts M.G.L. chapter 40, §22A ¾ which grants authority to municipalities to designate a parking space at City Hall for Veterans. Refer to Chater & Rules and/or Ordinance. Copy to Law Dept. Copy to Parking Advisory Committee.
61. Bartley-If the local option is adopted, the City of Holyoke create by ordinance a designated parking place for Veterans at City Hall to be used in compliance with chapter 40, §22A ¾. Refer to Ordinance. Copy to Parking Advisory Committee.
62. Bartley- The city of Holyoke apply to the legislature for a Home Rule petition that allows the city to expand the use of M.G.L. chapter 40, §22A ¾ which grants authority to municipalities to designate a parking space at City Hall for Veterans. If the petition is granted, the city could create a local ordinance that would designate parking for veterans at municipal buildings other than City Hall. Refer to Charter & Rules. Copy to Parking Advisory Committee.

63. Bartley-The crosswalk and pedestrian signal on Homestead Ave at HCC's main gate remains in limbo. It's now going on 8 years since original orders were filed. Some progress was made under the tenure of Mike McManus but very little since. Order the City Engineer, HFD Alarm Division and DPW provide an update to City Council on when this dangerous situation will be corrected. Please respond with a communication in 30 days. Refer to Ordinance.
64. Bartley, Jourdain, Vacon, Greaney-- The city council go on record to support HG&E's resolution to the Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs. Receive and Adopt. Refer to state delegation, Gov. Healy, Secy. Tepper. See resolution attached as Communication.
65. Bartley -HPD enforce compliance with Stop sign at intersection of Lawler and Martin Streets. Several complaints were recently received.

66. DEVINE - Ordered, that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2026, TWELVE THOUSAND NINETY EIGHT AND 10/100 Dollars (\$12,098.10) as follows:

FROM

12201-51103 FIRE CAPTAIN	\$ 3,663.90
12201-51104 FIRE LIEUTENANT	3,142.74
12201-51105 FIREFIGHTER	5,291.46
TOTAL	\$12,098.10

TO:

12201-51180 INJURED ON DUTY	\$12,098.10
PP #6 TOTAL	\$12,098.10

67. DEVINE - Ordered, that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2026, NINE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED THIRTY AND 34/100 Dollars (\$9,830.34) as follows:

FROM

12201-51103 FIRE CAPTAIN	\$ 3,663.90
12201-51104 FIRE LIEUTENANT	3,142.74
12201-51105 FIREFIGHTER	3,023.69
TOTAL	\$9,830.34

TO:

12201-51180 INJURED ON DUTY	\$9,830.34
PP#7 TOTAL	\$9,830.34

68. Devine-Ordered, that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "MASS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DONATION OF \$73,615 (SEVENTY THREE THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED FIFTEEN AND 00/100 DOLLARS)" and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources

associated with the administration of said donation. This revenue will be used towards funding to support the All-Way Stop initiative for the seven intersections listed below:

- Dwight St at Pine St
- Sargeant St at Commercial St
- Sargeant St at Elm St
- W Franklin St at Linden St
- Sargeant St at Sycamore St
- Appleton St at Elm St
- Cabot Street at Nick Cosmos Way/Commercial St

69. DEVINE - Ordered, that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2026, NINE HUNDRED AND 00/100 Dollars (\$900.00) as follows:

FROM

14212-52504 PROPERTY- R&M PELLISSIER BLDG	\$900.00
TOTAL	\$900.00
TO:	
14212-53009 DPW ADMIN CONTRACTED SERVICES	\$900.00
TOTAL	\$900.00

70. Devine-Ordered, that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "Holyoke Economic Development Industrial Corporation \$30,000 (THIRTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) donation" and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said donation. This revenue will be used towards funding to support a contracted Brownfield Consultant. The City intends to provide matching funding through general fund contracted services appropriations for a total of \$60,000 together for this service.

71. Jourdain, Vacon - Request that City Council adopt the following Resolution.

Resolution on Civility

Holyoke is a diverse community of caring and thoughtful people. We are also a community that is passionate about its politics. Politics and democracy can be challenging for everyone involved and that is healthy. However, the public is served best when we as a city have a civil and thoughtful discourse on the different policies and candidates we as a city need to choose from. There is no place for hate speech and extremist language and rhetoric. We can and should challenge different views without demonizing anyone we disagree with. It is critical to the city's future unity that after each election we are able to come together as neighbors and citizens to focus on what we have in common over what is different about us. While there are different visions for Holyoke's future that are decided in each election, we are still all Holyokers who all want what is best for our city. Let's all commit to these principles and together we as a City Council encourage everyone in city leadership, candidates and the public generally to commit to them too and speak up for these principles whenever needed.

LATE FILED ORDERS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Addendum:

Per City Council rule 2B, meeting shall end by 10 PM unless an extension is approved by a two-thirds majority of those present. If any items remain, those items will be added to the beginning of the next regular meeting.

The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the chair which may be discussed at the meeting.

Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law

City Clerk