

Committee on Finance and the Northampton City Council

*Councilor David A. Murphy, Chair
Councilor Maureen T. Carney
Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge
Councilor Gina-Louise Sciarra*

**City Council Chambers, 212 Main Street
Wallace J. Puchalski Municipal Building
Northampton, MA**

Meeting Date: November 7, 2019

Note: The Finance Committee Meeting will take place during the City Council Meeting as announced. The City Council Meeting is scheduled to begin at 7:05 pm.

1. Meeting Called To Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approval Of Minutes From The Previous Meeting

A. Minutes Of October 17, 2019

Documents:

[10-17-2019_finance committee minutes.pdf](#)

4. Financial Orders

A. 19.161 An Order To Establish A Tax Classification For FY2020

Documents:

[19.161 an order to establish a tax classification for fy2020.pdf](#)

B. 19.162 An Order To Establish Revolving Fund For 593 Elm Street Building Rental

Documents:

[19.162 an order to establish revolving fund for 593 elm street building rental.pdf](#)

C. 19.163 An Order To Purchase 20 Acres For Saw Mill Hills Greenway

Documents:

[19.163 an order to purchase 20 acres for saw mill hills greenway.pdf](#)

D. 19.166 An Order To Accept Donation Of Steel-Toed Boots

Documents:

[19.166 an order to accept donation of steel-toed boots.pdf](#)

5. New Business

-Reserved for topics that the Chair did not reasonably anticipate would be discussed.

6. Adjourn

*Contact: D. Murphy @ david.murphy8@comcast.net
or 413-586-5461*



Committee on Finance and the Northampton City Council

*Councilor David A. Murphy, Chair
Councilor Maureen T. Carney
Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge
Councilor Gina-Louise Sciarra*

**City Council Chambers, 212 Main Street
Wallace J. Puchalski Municipal Building
Northampton, MA**

Meeting Date: October 17, 2019

Note: The Finance Committee Meeting took place during the City Council Meeting as announced. The City Council Meeting began at 7 p.m.

1. **Meeting Called To Order:** At 7:42 p.m. Councilor Murphy called the meeting to order.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were committee members David Murphy (Chair), Maureen Carney, Marianne LaBarge and Gina-Louise Sciarra. Also present from the City Council were Dennis Bidwell, William H. Dwight, Alisa Klein, Jim Nash and Ryan O'Donnell.
3. **Approval Of Minutes From The Previous Meeting**
 - A. **Minutes of October 3, 2019**

Councilor Carney moved to approve the minutes of October 3, 2019. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion passed 4:0 by voice vote.
4. **First Quarter Financial Report**

Finance Director Susan Wright presented General Fund and Enterprise Fund revenue and expenditure reports for the period July 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019. In General Fund revenue, she drew attention to the fact that collections for hotel/motel taxes and adult use marijuana excise taxes are both ahead of projections. The hotel/motel year-to-date revenue figure does not break out revenue from airbnb's so it is difficult to determine what portion of revenue is from that source, she noted.

With regard to General Fund expenditures, percentages are somewhat of a guide but some departments pay a lot of things up front, so she advised against putting too much stock in these numbers. She does generally look at the percentages of salary accounts expended year-to-date to see if they are in line with expectations. There is nothing to call attention to there, she said.

As far as revenue reports for the four enterprise funds, all year-to-date revenue collections are between 24 and 26%, so that is as expected. Year-to-date expenses for enterprise funds are similarly in line with expectations although some percentages of use may seem a little low because of encumbered funds available for larger projects, she indicated.

City Council Committee on Finance Meeting Minutes for October 3, 2019

Councilor Bidwell asked about the fact that Airbnb revenue is lumped together with revenue from hotel/motels and whether there is any prospect of that being separated out. Mayor Narkewicz said administrators have been talking to DOR about this and have stressed the desirability of breaking out Airbnb revenue separately through the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) as well. [The combined presentation of revenue] has been noted, they have been a little frustrated by it but are working to refine it, he volunteered.

Councilor Bidwell asked if local officials have access to the state registry and Mayor Narkewicz said no. They have had people who've been registering locally as Airbnb operators, he confirmed.

Councilor LaBarge moved to accept the financial report. Councilor Sciarra seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by voice vote.

5. Financial Orders

A. 19.151 An Order To Authorize Payment Of A Prior Year Bill

Councilor Murphy read the order.

Councilor LaBarge moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor Sciarra seconded.

The invoice is for the rolls of tape in the parking kiosk machines, Ms. Wright explained.

The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by voice vote.

B. 19.152 An Order To Transfer/Appropriate Funds For FY2020 Community Preservation Purposes

Councilor Murphy read the order.

Councilor Sciarra moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor Carney seconded.

Councilor LaBarge asked how long each of the bonds are for.

Each of the projects was bonded for a different time period and they were also bonded in different years, Ms. Wright responded. She offered to provide that information so councilors will know where they are in the repayment schedule for each loan.

The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by voice vote.

C. 19.154 An Order To Authorize Surplus 5.25 Acres On Easthampton Road

Councilor Murphy read the text of the order.

Councilor LaBarge moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor Sciarra seconded.

Councilors may remember an acquisition in the Rocky Hill Conservation Area in which a large chunk of property was added to the city's conservation holdings and the city retained a 5.25 acre parcel for future potential municipal or economic development use, Mayor Narkewicz reminded. The land is not currently accessible and has no sewer. It is located along Route 10 on the right before Sunnyside day care in the area of a rather steep hill. There is a private landowner who has been trying to develop the property but has
City Council Committee on Finance Meeting Minutes for October 3, 2019

met with some challenges. City officials have decided at this time there is no potential use for it so they might as well put it back on the tax rolls.

One possibility is the property owner doing some other development may be interested in purchasing it. He would probably have to partner with another developer because bringing a driveway to the site would require serious site work as well as bringing sewer to the land.

Councilor LaBarge expressed the opinion that there probably would be some interest in development there as possibly a storage area, medical offices or such. She thinks this is the right way to go.

The city is just surplussing the property and would have to put it out to bid to see if there is any interest, Mayor Narkewicz advised.

Councilor Klein recalled that when the property was purchased there was discussion of it becoming part of a wildlife corridor that would allow for passage for certain kinds of wildlife. She wondered how this proposal would affect that goal.

The other 50 acres was all wildlife area; this parcel is contiguous with other developable properties, so it's not going to impact that at all, Mayor Narkewicz assured. This parcel is not subject to the conservation restriction and was not part of that habitat corridor, he clarified. It is just five acres of a 55-acre acquisition.

The property was previously zoned as the Route 10 industrial park. It was primarily owned by two or three owners and one of the owners decided that he didn't see a big industrial park happening so he would sell it for conservation land. A large area is being reserved for conservation, he stressed.

Councilor LaBarge noted that the city just purchased 107 acres at the Pine Grove golf course for conservation and wildlife. That 107 acres also abuts and goes through.

Mayor Narkewicz clarified that the city hasn't made the Pine Grove purchase yet although the city has been awarded one of the grants applied for.

The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by voice vote.

6. **New Business**

-Reserved for topics that the Chair did not reasonably anticipate would be discussed.

None.

7. **Adjourn:** There being no further business, Councilor Sciarra moved to adjourn. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion carried on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No. The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Contact: D. Murphy @ david.murphy8@comcast.net
or 413-586-5461

City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council

November 7, 2019

Upon recommendation of Mayor David J. Narkewicz

19.161

An Order

To Establish a Tax Classification for FY2020

Ordered, that

The Northampton City Council approves a Residential Factor of One (1) for Fiscal Year 2020.

City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council

November 7, 2019

Upon recommendation of the Mayor

19.162 An Order to Establish Revolving Fund for 593 Elm Street Building Rental

Ordered, that

- a) the City hereby establishes a revolving fund, under MGL Chapter 40, Section 3, for the deposit of proceeds from the rental of 593 Elm Street starting in Fiscal Year 2020, which begins on July 1, 2019, and
- b) the monies received from such rental or lease shall be kept separate and apart from other city funds in the treasury and may be expended by the Smith Vocational and Agricultural School Trustees without further appropriation for the upkeep of the facility; and
- c) the City accepts the proviso that any such balance remaining in the account at the close of the fiscal year shall remain in the account and may be expended for the upkeep and maintenance of any facility under the control of the Smith Vocational and Agricultural School Trustees.

City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council, November 7, 2019

Upon the recommendation of Mayor David J. Narkewicz, Planning & Sustainability, and the Conservation Commission

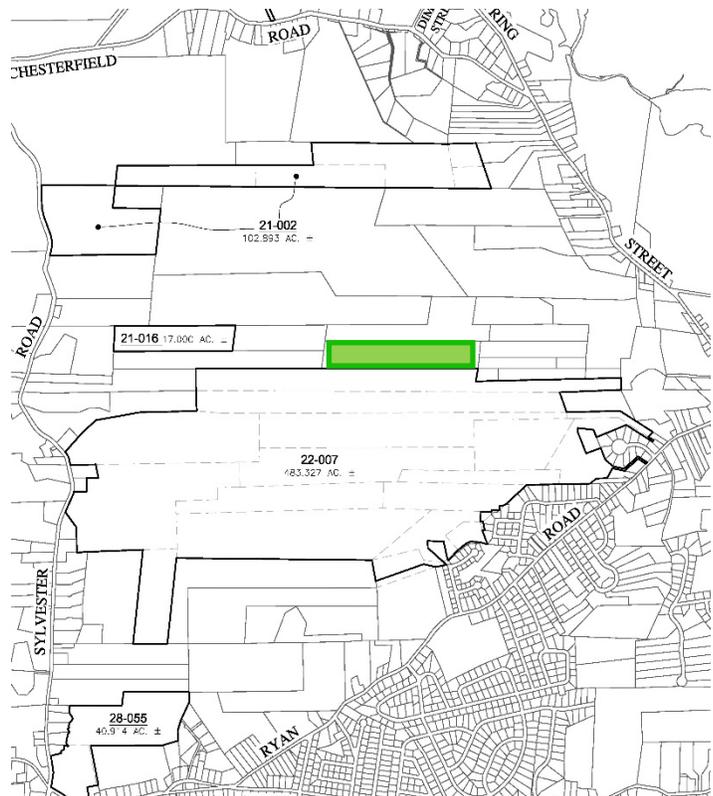
WHEREAS, The *Open Space and Recreation Plan: 2019-2025* recommends filling gaps within the Saw Mill Hills Greenway; and

WHEREAS, The City has an option to purchase 20 acres (Map ID 21-014-001), from Joyce E. Millette Revocable Trust and Charles L. Millette, abutting the Saw Mill Hills Greenway and near other greenway parcels, for \$20,000;

19.163 An Order to Purchase 20 Acres for Saw Mill Hills Greenway

Ordered, that

The Conservation Commission is authorized to purchase or otherwise acquire for conservation and passive recreation purposes, as provided by MGL Chapter 40, §8C, any fee, easement or conservation restriction as defined in MGL Chapter 184, §31 or any other interest in the above land and any immediately adjoining land; that the City Council hereby accepts such conservation restrictions; that the Conservation Commission is authorized to grant conservation restrictions on any land so acquired; and that the Conservation Commission is authorized to contract for and expend any federal, state, or other aid available for this project.



City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council

November 7, 2019

Upon recommendation of the Mayor

19.166 An Order to Accept Donation of Steel-Toed Boots

Ordered, that

The City of Northampton accepts the donation of 100 pairs of surplus waterproof steel toed boots valued at approximately \$ 5000, donated to the Northampton Department of Public Works by Michael Aronson, of Rerun Shoes in Florence, in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 53A.