



Committee on City Services and the Northampton City Council

Committee Members:

Councilor Dennis P. Bidwell

Councilor Maureen T. Carney

Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge

Councilor Ryan R. O'Donnell

MEETING MINUTES

Date: August 18, 2016

Time: as Announced during the City Council Meeting which begins at 7:00 p.m.

Location: City Council Chambers
212 Main St., Northampton, Massachusetts

1. **Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call:** at 7:18 p.m. Councilor Carney called the meeting to order. Present were: Councilors Carney, Bidwell, O'Donnell and LaBarge. Also present from the City Council were: Councilors Klein, Murphy, Dwight and Sciarra. Councilor Carney explained that the reason this committee is meeting this evening was that there were appointments referred to the committee that could not be discussed by the committee at the regularly scheduled meeting.

2. **Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Approve minutes of previous meeting (June 28, 2016): Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the minutes: Councilor O'Donnell seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

4. Items Referred to Committee

A. 16.124 Appointment of Linda Desmond as Director of Senior Services:

Councilor LaBarge sat on the selection committee for the position of Director of Senior Services. The Mayor assembled a screening team to assess the candidates who were interested in the position. The Committee reviewed all of the applications that were received. They also conducted initial interviews with the candidates. The team was asked to evaluate the candidates and send those candidates worthy of

consideration to the Mayor's attention. The team consisted of an HR Employment Specialist, a COA director from another community, two COA Board members, and one City Councilor.

The committee advertised the position and received approximately two dozen applicants. They decided to re advertise the position at the initial review meeting in May. Their hope was to target the COA community throughout the state. As a result of re advertising, the committee received another dozen applications. Six candidates were interviewed; the committee felt that three were appropriate to pass on to the Mayor. Out of the three candidates that were sent forward, the Mayor chose Linda Desmond. Councilor Labarge noted that if you look at Ms. Desmond's experience, she is well qualified for this position. She has done so much for the City and in Ireland working with seniors and working with people who are housebound. Ms. Desmond has a vision of reaching out to housebound residents in Northampton. She also believes in bringing in more volunteers at the Senior Center. Councilor Labarge thinks she is an excellent candidate.

Councilor Carney knows Ms. Desmond and has worked with her in the past on the United Way campaign. She agrees with Councilor LaBarge about Miss Desmond's qualifications. Councilor Carney thanks the Mayor for all of the work that's been done to fill the position.

Councilor Labarge motioned to send a positive recommendation back to the full City Council for the appointment of Linda Desmond as the new Director of Senior Services; Councilor Bidwell seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 yes, 0 No.

B. 16.131 Appointments to Committees:

Disability Commission: Gene Page, 46 Evergreen Road #107, Leeds – term July 2016 – June 2019

This candidate was interviewed by Councilor LaBarge. Mr. Page wishes to thank the City Council for consideration as a Disability Commission board member. He believes there are three reasons why he would be useful to the Disability Commission: representation, experience and hope. First, Mr. Page is an experienced representative of parents and caregivers who meet weekly at the Cooley Dickinson Hospital. They are under the guidance of Bruce Bradley Gilbert. As direct caregivers they often house, direct and support young adults. They have little voice in the greater community but would like to be represented wherever possible. Mr. Page has also defined his experience as another reason he would be a great addition to the Commission. He has previously served on the Franklin Hampshire Board of Mental Health. At one point he was the Chair of Massachusetts State Advisory Commission for Special Education. He also served as a member of the Northampton Cable Commission. Mr. Page also notes that sons and daughters and partners who suffer from mental health issues often have problems with Northampton Police, local merchants, educational institutions, and the court systems. Mr. Page hopes that there can be a better outcome with some of these agencies. He hopes to bring to the attention of the Board the continued problem of housing for this population.

Housing Partnership:

Councilor Bidwell had a chance to speak with Peg Keller who is the staff member on the Housing Partnership committee. She is excited about the new ideas and the new energy that would be added with these two appointments. Ms. Keller also wanted to note that she wants to work to add diversity to the Housing Partnership committee and invites all of the Council to think about people who could be added to the committee.

Patrick Boughan, 95 Straw Avenue, Florence – term July 2016 – June 2019

Councilor Bidwell noted that Mr. Boughan is an electrical engineer by trade; he has a great deal of interest in affordable housing issues. He would like to apply his research skills and this would be a welcome asset to the committee.

Mark Goggins, 27 Spruce Lane, Florence – term August 2016 – June 2019

Mr. Goggins has twenty years experience in mortgage banking and five years of experience in real estate. He would like to apply his background to affordable housing issues. He looks forward to serving on the committee.

Human Rights Commission:

Brian Barnes, 269 Main Street #2A, Northampton – term July 2016 – June 2019

Councilor O'Donnell reports that Mr. Barnes is a full time student at UMass and is studying Sociology. He has a particular focus on public policy surrounding refugees. He has a deep commitment to Human Rights issues; Councilor O'Donnell feels that he would serve the Human Rights Commission well.

Tara Ganguly, 55A Chestnut Street, Florence – term July 2016 – June 2019

Councilor O'Donnell notes that Ms. Ganguly is an attorney who lives in Florence. She has ties to the area that extend beyond the number of years that she has lived here. Ms. Ganguly and Councilor O'Donnell spoke about the changes to the Human Rights Commission after the City charter change. He felt that this was important to discuss what the Human Rights Commission does and doesn't do. Perhaps one of the roles could be a liaison to the City Council. The goal would be to be sure that the Commission is a functioning and vibrant Commission that contributes to policy in the City. Councilor O'Donnell would be comfortable having her serve on the Human Rights Commission.

Christine Young, 1443 Westhampton Road, Florence – term July 2016 – June 2019

Councilor LaBarge spoke with Ms. Young who has owned her home in Florence since 1996. All of her three children went to Northampton Public Schools. She is grateful to live in Northampton and is passionate about doing what she can to give back to the community. She has over twenty years experience serving as a Human Rights Officer in an agency that provided residential services to adults with intellectual disabilities. She currently works with children in foster care at the Children's Study Home in Springfield. Sometimes people violate human rights because they don't know what human rights are. Ms. Young will use her experience and skills to educate and advocate for people who may experience a violation of a human right. Councilor LaBarge has known Ms. Young for over 21 years. Councilor LaBarge believes that Ms. Young will fit well on the Human Rights Commission.

License Commission:

William Rosen, 2 Laurel Lane, Northampton – term July 2016 – June 2019 (reappointment)

Councilor Carney spoke with Mr. Rosen. She knows Mr. Rosen to be active in many City activities and noted that he is currently the Chair of the License Commission. Mr. Rosen commented that the Commission has been very busy; there is a whole spectrum of licenses that the Commission oversees. He enjoys working on the Commission and said that he would be honored to be reappointed.

Parks & Recreation Commission:

David Cronin, 103 Pioneer Knolls Ext., Florence – term July 2016 – June 2019 (reappointment)

Councilor LaBarge noted that Mr. Cronin is a reappointment to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Members of the committee felt that they would be willing to move his name forward with a positive recommendation to the full City Council.

Thomas Dunphy, 6 Chesterfield Road, Leeds – term July 2016 – June 2019 (reappointment)

Councilor LaBarge spoke with Thomas Dunphy. He is highly involved in the City of Northampton. He lives in Ward 7 and belongs to the St. Patrick's Association of Northampton. He has been an active member of the Commission over the past several years; he represents the issues of residents to the Parks and Rec Department to address specific concerns about programs and field and park usage. His daughter takes part in various programs offered by the Parks and Rec Department and he has the opportunity to speak to parents about concerns and to listen to their comments and suggestions they might have while attending his child's events. He also feels that he is able to witness first hand the programs that are put on by the department. He is an active volunteer coach and helps with various special events. Most recently he was involved in the Northampton Family Fourth and the Ellerbrook Memorial Golf Tournament. He has also enjoyed being a part of the recent renovations of many Northampton facilities, such as the Florence Recreation fields, Lampron Park and the Veterans Fields. He is a lifelong resident of Northampton and he enjoys being a committed active volunteer. Councilor LaBarge highly recommends Mr. Dunphy to be on the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Zoning Board of Appeals:

Elizabeth Silver, 67 Willow Street, Florence – term July 2016 – June 2019 (moving from associate member to full member)

Councilor O'Donnell did not have a chance to speak with Ms. Silver about her appointment, however, Councilor O'Donnell does know her personally and feels that she is competent to be a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals. He also notes that the appointment is a promotion from associate member to full member.

Councilor O'Donnell moved to send all candidates forward to the full City Council with a positive recommendation; Councilor LaBarge seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

5. New Business: None.

6. Adjourn: Councilor O'Donnell moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.; Councilor LaBarge seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

Prepared By:

*P. Powers, Administrative Assistant to the City Council
413.587.1210; ppowers@northamptonma.gov*