



## **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: February 1, 2018

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 7:55 p.m., Councilor Murphy called the meeting to order.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were committee members David Murphy, Maureen Carney, Marianne LaBarge & Gina-Louise Sciarra. Also present from the City Council were Bill Dwight, Jim Nash, Ryan O'Donnell, Dennis Bidwell, & Alisa Klein.
3. **Approve Minutes of January 18, 2018 Meeting:** Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the minutes; Councilor Sciarra seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.
4. **Financial Orders:**
  - A. **18.018 Order To Appropriate \$20,000 In Whiting Street Trust Funds**

Councilor Murphy read the text of the order.

Councilor LaBarge moved to return the order to the full City Council with a positive recommendation; Councilor Carney seconded.

Following elimination of the Board of Almoners, a Whiting Street Trust Fund Committee was created to administer funds bequeathed under the will of Mr. Whiting Street, Mayor Narkewicz explained. Instead of reviewing individual applications, the committee has shifted to using an RFP process to solicit applications from non-profit organizations that serve low-income people. This is the first distribution under this new format. The committee will be meeting with grant recipients later in the year to get a progress report and then coming up with a focus for next year. He hopes the City Council will support the committee's recommendations as he does, he concluded.

Councilor Sciarra said she was happy in reading the Finance Director's memo to see that Manna was given more than the \$5,000 they asked for toward the purchase of a used van since, in her experience, Manna representatives are very conservative in their funding requests and "never ask for enough."

Manna only requested \$5,000 toward the purchase of the van and committee members felt strongly that more money was needed, Mayor Narkewicz confirmed.

Councilor Klein asked if the award of Whiting Street funds would have any effect on the allocation of CDBG funds to the agencies in question. She expressed her hope that those receiving Whiting Street funds would not be penalized in any way in the CDBG application process. That would not be his intention, Mayor Narkewicz assured.

Councilor Murphy called the motion to return the order with a positive recommendation to a vote, and it passed on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

**B. 18.019 Order To Rescind Borrowing Authority - 4 Votes**

Councilor Murphy read the text of the order.

Councilor Carney moved to return the order to the full City Council with a positive recommendation; Councilor Sciarra seconded.

The four borrowing authorizations are no longer needed because, in two cases, the city received LAND self-help grants to finance property acquisition, and, in another case, the city did not receive a grant for which a local match was requested. The final \$50,000 borrowing authorization was never acted on because money became available through the Stormwater utility to finance the project.

Members asked questions and offered comments.

Councilor Murphy called the motion to a vote, and it passed on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

**C. 18.020 Order To Reprogram Money For Academy Of Music (AOM) Stage Doors To AOM Foundation Repairs**

Councilor Murphy read the text of the order.

Councilor Carney moved to return the order to the full City Council with a positive recommendation; Councilor Sciarra seconded.

Administrators are proposing to use funds already appropriated for an ongoing project to address some foundation work, Mayor Narkewicz explained. As part of the Pulaski Park Phase II project, contractors did some grading around the back of the property in the loading dock area. This work exposed some of the building's foundation, so the money will be used to seal and protect this portion of the building.

Councilor Murphy called the motion to a vote, and it passed on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

D. 18.032 Order To Appropriate \$20,000 Free Cash And \$5,000 From Disability Commission Fund For Design Costs Of ADA Grant

Councilor Murphy read the text of the order.

Councilor LaBarge moved to return the order to the full City Council with a positive recommendation; Councilor Sciarra seconded.

Councilors heard eloquently during public comment from Chris Palames, chair of the Disability Commission, Mayor Narkewicz reminded. Mr. Palames identified this grant opportunity and got it in under the wire. One million is available for the whole state, and effectively one quarter of it (\$250,000) was awarded to Northampton. The money is construction only, so the \$25,000 is needed as a local match for design costs. There is a tight timeline because the money must be expended by the end of the fiscal year. He requested two readings so that the city can go out to bid for design services as soon as possible.

Councilor Murphy called the motion to a vote, and it passed on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

5. **New Business**

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

6.

7. **Adjourn:** At 8:18 p.m. Councilor LaBarge moved to adjourn; Councilor Carney seconded. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

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