



Committee on City Services and the Northampton City Council

Committee Members:

Chair: Councilor Maureen T. Carney

Vice-Chair: Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge

Councilor Dennis P. Bidwell

Councilor James Nash

Meeting Minutes

Date: February 5, 2018, 4 p.m.

Location: City Council Chambers

212 Main St., Northampton, Massachusetts

Present:

Councilor Maureen T. Carney, Chair

Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge, Vice-Chair

Councilor Dennis P. Bidwell

Councilor James Nash

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

At 4:01 p.m., Councilor Carney called the meeting to order. On a roll call, Councilors Carney, LaBarge, Bidwell and Nash were present.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR/VICE CHAIR

Councilor Bidwell moved to open the floor to nominations for Chair. Councilor Nash seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0.

Councilor LaBarge nominated Councilor Carney to serve as Chair. Councilor Bidwell seconded.

There being no further nominations, Councilor Bidwell moved to close nominations. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0.

On a roll call, all members endorsed Councilor Carney to serve as Chair.

Councilor Bidwell moved to open the floor to nominations for Vice Chair. Councilor Nash seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0.

Councilor Carney nominated Councilor LaBarge as Vice Chair. Councilor Bidwell seconded.

There being no further nominations, Councilor Bidwell moved to close nominations. Councilor Nash seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0

On a roll call, all members officially endorsed Councilor LaBarge to serve as Vice Chair.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Councilor Carney asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the minutes of December 4, 2017. Councilor Bidwell seconded. The motion carried 4:0.

5. **ITEMS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE**

A. **18.014 Appointments to Various Committees**

Council on Aging

Dennis Helmus, 176 North Street, Northampton, MA; Term: January 2018 - June 2021 (*Filling the expired term of Michael Ahearn, Jr.*)

Conservation Commission

Elizabeth Wroblecka, 406 N. Farms Road, Florence, MA, Term: January 2018 - June 2021 (*Replacing term of Tim Parshall*)

Energy & Sustainability Commission

Benjamin Weil, 123 Audubon Road, Leeds, MA, Term: January 2018 - June 2021 (*Replacing term of Adin Maynard*)

Ashley Muspratt, 4 Fort Hill Terrace, Northampton, MA, Term: January 2018 - June 2021 (*Replacing term of Kristina Hodges*)

Public Shade Tree Commission

Jay Girard, 158 Ryan Road, Florence, MA, Term 7/1/2017 - 6/30/2020 (*reappointment*)

Council on Aging – Application of Dennis Helmus

Regarding the application of Dennis Helmus, Councilor Nash informed members that Mr. Helmus served as the Human Resources Director in Greenfield for many years and has been an active voice in Ward 3. There have been times when they haven't always agreed, but he has been a great deliberator with neighbors. He is quite smart and would be a great addition to the COA board.

Councilor Nash made a motion for a positive recommendation. Councilor Bidwell seconded. The motion carried 4:0.

Conservation Commission – Application of Elizabeth Wroblecka

Councilor Carney said she spoke to Ms. Wroblecka, and she is a perfect fit for the Conservation Commission being a conservation attorney herself. She is well-versed in conservation law and has served on the Zoning Board of Appeals for a number of years. She has said she is very interested in helping city staff decipher pieces of conservation law.

Councilor LaBarge moved a positive recommendation. Councilor Bidwell seconded. The motion carried 4:0.

Energy & Sustainability Commission – Applications of Benjamin Weil and Ashley Muspratt

Councilor Bidwell said he spoke with Mr. Weil last week. He is a UMass professor in Building Science and Building Energy and is very interested in the work of the Energy and Sustainability Commission. He is well-informed about the Community Choice aggregation issue and is aware of the need for future agenda items to address the Columbia Gas natural gas service moratorium in Northampton. He is very on top of the issues and eager to serve.

Councilor Bidwell moved to forward the appointment with a positive recommendation.
Councilor Nash seconded. The motion carried 4:0.

She is very, very thrilled with Ashley, Councilor LaBarge enthused. Ms. Muspratt is thrilled to have the opportunity to interview for the Energy and Sustainability Commission. Having lived abroad in three African countries in the last decade, she is most looking forward to the ability to engage in local issues she is passionate about, Councilor LaBarge related. She has experience in both renewable energy and wastewater treatment.

Councilor LaBarge moved to forward the appointment with a positive recommendation.
Councilor Bidwell seconded. The motion carried 4:0.

Public Shade Tree Commission – Application of Jay Girard

Mr. Girard is very thrilled to get back on the Public Shade Tree Commission and she highly recommends him, Councilor LaBarge confirmed. Mr. Girard would like to remain on the commission for several reasons. He was on the original tree commission ten years ago at which time he thought they were struggling to do a good job because the city had no tree warden and they were not really supported by the DPW. They have made great strides in the last two years under the new tree commission to improve the city's tree landscape, having planted hundreds of trees and completed a tree inventory for the city. He is a certified arborist and has collaborated with Rich Parasiliti, the new Highway Superintendent and Tree Warden. He believes he can use his experience to benefit the city.

Councilor LaBarge moved to forward the appointment with a positive recommendation.
Councilor Bidwell seconded. The motion carried 4:0.

B. 18.025 Appointments to Housing Partnership, License Commission and Trust Fund Committee - referred to City Services on February 1, 2018

Councilor Carney referred to Section 2-10 of the Charter, which requires that a standing committee make a recommendation to the full city council on an appointment not less than 7 nor more than 45 days after the referral. Since the appointments were just referred to City Services on February 1st, the committee is barred from making a recommendation until its next meeting, she explained.

Members agreed that Councilor LaBarge will speak with Julio Alves, Councilor Bidwell will talk to Helen Kahn and Councilor Nash will contact Gerald Budgar. Formal recommendations on the three appointments will be put on the next agenda.

6. New Business

A. Set Meeting Schedule

Members agreed to keep the regularly-scheduled meetings on the first Monday of the month at 4 p.m. March 5th will be the next meeting, it was noted.

Councilor Carney recalled that, during the last term, the committee had a thematic meeting where they brought in a few departments to talk about the opioid situation. They could do something similar in conjunction with retail marijuana sales, she proposed.

Members discussed. The public might be interested in seeing how the Board of Health is involved in the inspection and regulation of marijuana dispensaries, Councilor Nash suggested.

He and Councilor Sciarra are getting together later this week to talk about the community forum in Community Resources, Councilor Bidwell reported. That forum is going to be focused on broader policy issues rather than the nitty-gritty of enforcement and administration, he noted.

The Board of Health has looked at a general ban on public smoking, Councilor Bidwell added. He has never quite understood why it's been talked about and never moved on.

The Committee would typically communicate with the Mayor's office to request the presence of city staff at a regular meeting, Councilor Carney advised. She said she would contact the Mayor's office to see if the Board of Health is available on March 5th.

Councilor Nash suggested also having the police around enforcement issues. His question to the chief would be, "What do you anticipate is going to go on that would be an additional burden in enforcement?" he clarified.

Councilor Bidwell moved to adjourn. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

**LAURA KRUTZLER
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**