



Committee on City Services and the Northampton City Council

Committee Members:

Councilor Dennis P. Bidwell

Councilor Maureen T. Carney, Chair

Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge, Vice Chair

Councilor Ryan R. O'Donnell

MEETING MINUTES

Date: February 6, 2017

Time: 4:00 pm

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

1. **Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call:** At 4:00 pm Councilor Carney called the meeting to order. Present were Councilors Carney, Bidwell, LaBarge and O'Donnell. No other city Councilors were present.
2. **Public Comment:** None
3. **Approve minutes of January 9, 2017 meeting:** Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the minutes; Councilor Bidwell seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.
4. **Departmental Presentation - Parks and Recreation**

Director Ann-Marie Moggio was present to give the committee an update about the department. She explained that there is currently a staff of 7 employees. Recently there has been staff turnover due to retirements (Chris Kostek) and other reasons. The Parks and Recreation Department has relocated to the grounds of JFK Middle School on Bridge Road and are completely moved in. Director Moggio notes that there are several advantages with the new location: they are now closer to the Family Aquatic Center which is at JFK School; they are closer to Look Park where summer programs are held; they have prime access to the fields at the Middle School.

There is a Parks and Recreation Commission consisting of 9 volunteer members who advise the department on development and implementation of recreational programming for parks, playgrounds, playfields, indoor recreation centers and other recreation areas and facilities owned or controlled by the City. The members include Tom Dunphy, Glenn Connly, Mike Laga, Carol Bertrand, Dave Cronin, Dan Smith, Julia Chevan, and Kristen Dardano.

Parks and Recreation department does not own their own buildings so they rely on the use of City schools and other community spaces to run programs, camps, special events and sports

activities. The department has had a partnership with Look Park for over 25 years; during summer months the Department runs camps, special events, and sports programs on the grounds of Look Park.

The department works collaboratively with several city departments, including the DPW which is responsible for all park maintenance that the P&R oversees. Director Moggio also works closely with the Office of Planning & Sustainability to secure and execute grants for park projects, one of which is the newly established Florence Fields. This summer the P&R will begin phase 6 of this project to bring several more improvements to the grounds, including dugouts, score boards and seating. This park offers a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile walk around the perimeter and there are plans to add more to the facility's playground area as well.

The department has coordinated with the Office of Planning and Sustainability for the CT River Greenway Riverboat Park, including the boathouse project on Damon Road. More marketing is planned for the spring to promote the programs and amenities of this park. Councilor Bidwell asked who will be doing what once the facility is up and running; Director Moggio notes that the P&R does not have plans to do programming, but they are teaming up with Community Rowing. They have the knowledge, facilities, and staff to handle this. P&R will assist with marketing and promotion. She believes that there will be a kayak storage facility that will be added and this will be managed by Community Rowing.

Councilor LaBarge asked if the Director was aware whether children with disabilities could be brought down to the boathouse. Director Moggio notes that there are no specific programs run by P&R at the boathouse; however, she is aware that there will be docks installed during the next phase of the project to allow handicap accessibility.

Director Moggio is responsible for oversight of the Musante Beach, which is the only lifeguarded freshwater beach in Northampton. Last year the DPW did renovations at the Beach to spruce it up; more renovations are planned for this spring.

The department also has collaborations with other city-based public and private organizations to advance the recreational opportunities for all ages. Scholarships are available for all people to take part in the programs. The prices for most activities are low compared to other recreational activities. The Department has different fund raising scholarship activities to ensure that money is available for those in need. There is also a newly formed Friends of Recreation Committee which is a non-profit organization with a mission to engage in fundraising and support for current and future recreational activities and facilities in Northampton.

Director Moggio clarified that they are not in charge of the renovation of Pulaski Park; this is being handled by the DPW. The Department will be in charge of the programming and park usage. They are meeting with Brian Foote from the Arts Council as he will be launching programs and events that the public is interested in. An outline of the plan may be available in the near future.

Councilor LaBarge asked about programming plans for the Senior Center. Director Moggio will be meeting with the Center's Director Linda Desmond to discuss opportunities. There is no date yet, but both acknowledge that joint planning would be beneficial to the community.

Councilor Bidwell asked about sign-ups for summer camps. Director Moggio reports that the number of kids who attends summer camps is steady, but that there are many programs in the Northampton area that vie for campers. Parents seem to be looking for theme-based camps and the P&R has revised its programming to keep up with community wants. The program fees are adequate to cover staff and supplies.

5. Items Referred to Committee:

A. 17.241 Appointments to Various Committees - Referred to committee on January 19, 2017

Human Rights Commission: Booker Bush, 119 Pine Street, Florence, 01062- term January 2017 - June 2020 (Replacing the expired term of Douglass Ross)

Councilor Bidwell interviewed Booker Bush. He is a physician who works in Springfield. He has been focused on community based care, civil rights, and human rights throughout his medical and teaching career. He has already sat in on a few committee meetings.

Arts Council: Kathy Murri, 50 Laurel Park, Northampton, 01060- term January 2017- June 2020 (Replacing the expired term of Jean- Paul Maitinsky)

Councilor O'Donnell spoke with Ms. Murri and reports that she is currently employed at the Montessori School. She has been in the area for a long time and she looks forward to bringing more people into the arts programs that are available in the City.

Planning Board: Samuel Taylor, 245 North Street, Northampton, 01060- term January 2017- June 2020 (Replacing the expired term of Al Neal)

Councilor Carney spoke with Mr. Taylor. He has been a City resident for about seven years. He is very interested in becoming a Planning Board member. Mr. Taylor is involved in property management and will bring his experience in this area to the Board. He also runs a small business (Laundromat) and feels that his experience in this area will benefit the Board as well.

Zoning Board: Maureen Scanlon, 197 Nonotuck Street, Florence, 01062- term January 2017- June 2020 (Replacing the expired term of Sanford Weil)

Councilor LaBarge reports that Ms. Scanlon was involved with the committee that worked on determining the fate of the former Florence Grammar School. She found the process to be rewarding, challenging and productive. She also feels that her ability to listen to all parties before making a decision will benefit the Board. Ms. Scanlon is highly experienced with ZBA laws. She has been a Northampton resident since 1981 having re-located from Vermont. She is a strong supporter of local government. Her father was a City Councilor in another state and Ms. Scanlon learned a lot from him about zoning.

Councilor Bidwell moved to send all the appointments forward to the City Council with a positive recommendation; Councilor LaBarge seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 yes, 0 No.

B. 17.246 Appointments to Various Committees - Referred to Committee on 2/2/2017

Council on Aging:

- Deborah Epstein, 168 Maple Ridge Road, Florence, 01062- term January 2017- June 2020 (Replacing the unexpired term of Margaret Laselle)

Historical Commission:

- Pauline Fogel, 16 Forbes Avenue, Northampton, 01060- term September 2016- June 2019 (Reappointment)

These appointments will be taken up at the next meeting which is scheduled for March 6, 2017. Councilor LaBarge will interview Deborah Epstein and Councilor Bidwell will interview Pauline Fogel in advance of the meeting.

6. Discussion about future meetings

Councilor Carney explained that she has a scheduling conflict for the April meeting.

March - Veteran's Services and Veteran's Council

Councilor LaBarge talked with Brad LeVay of the Northampton Veteran's Council. Mr. LeVay will attend the March committee meeting to discuss the Council's Schedule of Events.

Steve Conner of the Northampton Veteran's Services Department will attend the March meeting, according to the Mayor's Office. The committee would like to get a departmental update about the department's budget and how the department is handling veteran requests in other communities. They would like to understand more about the services available to veterans in the Northampton area. The committee also asks what updates are available concerning the homeless veteran initiative (HUD/VASH) that was announced in 2016?; and what programs and services, in addition to housing, are available to homeless veterans?

April - IT Services Department

The committee reviewed that the IT Services Department recently came to a City Council meeting to discuss the department's consolidation with Schools. The department will also be attending a City Council meeting in the near future to discuss broadband. At this time the committee is withdrawing its request for the department to the April meeting.

The Committee will need to change its meeting date to April 10, 2017 at 4 pm or 4:30 pm. The time will be made firmer as the date approaches; it will depend on the number of appointment candidates that are brought forward for the committee to discuss.

May - Opioid Crisis in Northampton

The committee has had updates from the Health Department in past years concerning the opioid crisis in Northampton. They now have an interest in understanding how other departments are involved in the crisis, specifically the Fire Rescue Department and the Police Department. To this end, they would like to invite the Health Department, Fire Rescue and Police to join the committee at the May meeting which is scheduled for May 2nd at 4:00 pm in City Council Chambers.

Each department is requested to provide updates about the status of the crisis from their respective point of view. Event statistics collected by each department would be helpful. In addition, from the Health Department, the committee is interested in understanding the objectives and status of the Hampshire Hope initiative. From the Police Department, the committee is interested in understanding what regional programs the department is involved with and how does the department coordinate with the D.A.'s Office to address regional concerns? From Fire Rescue, the committee would like to understand what methods are used to try to save lives when an overdose occurs. Are there other methods available that the department might consider in the future?

Councilor Carney suggested getting in touch with Laurie Loisel at the D.A.'s Office to see if perhaps she, as the community liaison, might be willing to participate. Councilor O'Donnell suggested that the

committee should actively promote this meeting to see if perhaps members of the public would be willing to attend.

7. New Business: None

8. Adjourn: At 4:35 pm Councilor O'Donnell moved to adjourn the meeting; Councilor LaBarge seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

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