



**Roll Call**

*CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
CONDUCTED AS AN ON-LINE ZOOM MEETING  
Northampton, MA*

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A special meeting of the City Council was called to order by City Council President Gina-Louise Sciarra at 7:13 p.m. On a roll call, the following City Councilors were present:

At-Large Councilor Gina-Louise Sciarra	At-Large Councilor William H. Dwight
Ward 1 Councilor Michael J. Quinlan, Jr.	Ward 5 Councilor Alex Jarrett
Ward 2 Councilor Karen Foster	Ward 6 Councilor Marianne LaBarge
Ward 3 Councilor James B. Nash	Ward 7 Councilor Rachel Maiore
Ward 4 Councilor John Thorpe	

**Announcement of Audio/Video Recording**

Councilor Sciarra announced that the meeting was being held by remote participation and audio/video recorded.

**Withdrawal of 20.053 Order to Approve FY2021 General Fund Budget and Substitution of 20.065 Order to Approve FY2021 General Fund Budget**

**Withdrawal of 20.053 An Order to Approve FY2021 General Fund Budget and Substitution of 20.065 An Order to Approve FY2021 General Fund Budget**

Councilor Sciarra informed those present there is only one item on the agenda. In response to questions raised during public comment, she said recordings of the meetings are always posted on Northampton Open Media's (NOM's) government video archive channel. The City Council's rules and the city charter are available on [www.northamptonma.gov](http://www.northamptonma.gov).

At the regular meeting June 4, 2020, sometime after 2 a.m., the City Council moved to continue its discussion of the order then on the floor, **20.053 An Order to Approve FY2021 General Fund Budget**, Councilor Sciarra reminded. Since that time, the Mayor has withdrawn that order and replaced it with a new order, **20.065 An Order to Approve FY2021 General Fund Budget**. What that essentially does is wipe the slate clean so that the City Council will now start its consideration of the new order over from the beginning.

Councilor Jarrett explained that he has a conflict of interest because of a pre-existing contract with the city. He will stop his video which is the equivalent of stepping away.

Councilor Maiore requested a five-minute recess.

The council recessed at 7:18 p.m. and reconvened at 7:30 p.m.

Councilor Sciarra called for a motion to put adoption of the FY2021 General Fund budget on the floor for discussion (not order 20.065 but the GF budget itself). Councilor LaBarge so moved. Councilor Dwight seconded.

Councilor Dwight moved to divide the question to separately consider the \$38,000 line item in the Central Services Parking Maintenance budget for the Pedal People contract. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion passed 8:0 with Councilor Jarrett recused.

Councilor Jarrett returned.

Councilor Sciarra invited Mayor Narkewicz to introduce the revised budget.

Obviously, he has attended and followed very closely the two nights of public hearings on the budget, including listening to comments and following the council's debate, Mayor Narkewicz confirmed. The original budget submitted contained a \$193,579 level services increase to the police department spread across the three main budget areas: Personnel Services (PS), Ordinary Maintenance (OM) and Other than Ordinary Maintenance (OOM).

When deliberation on the budget left off at 2 or 3 a.m. June 4<sup>th</sup>, there was a motion and a second on the floor to eliminate the \$193,579 increase.

It felt to him like there was consensus on the council to reduce the budget but discussion as to whether the proposed approach [eliminating the increase to each of the three budget areas] was the clearest way or whether there were alternatives. His attempt was, first of all, to acknowledge the concern in the community as well as councilors' almost unanimous concern about an increase to the police budget at this time. For this reason, he withdrew the previous order under the council rules and submitted a revised order essentially eliminating any kind of increase.

The revised budget retains the PS increase of \$140,042, reflecting contractually-obligated salary increases consistent with other departments and school budgets, and eliminates the OM increase of \$8,072. Instead of just eliminating the \$45,465 increase to OOM to cover the increased cost of changing the annual replacement of five cruisers to five hybrid cruisers, the revised budget proposes reducing that line item significantly from \$358,925 to \$146,262, effectively meaning the city would only replace two cruisers.

That is the substance of what he has proposed. Obviously, he was trying to respond to what he was hearing from the council and the public about being opposed to any increase at this time. He understands that, since he submitted the budget on May 18, 2020, they are in a different place, and he shares the concern and outrage the public has expressed about the tragic killing and murder of George Floyd. He wants to work with the City Council to address these issues, including discussing how they do policing going forward, not only as a community but as a nation. His purpose in this order was trying to achieve what he thinks the council was working toward last Friday – i.e., trying to eliminate any kind of increase to the FY2021 police budget.

He has reached out to the council president and indicated that he wants to sit down with her and come up with a process for how they will start to take the information and concerns they have heard from the public and work toward forming a committee to study these issues. Those who have worked with him know that he takes a very serious approach when faced with a problem in the community, including bringing in groups of people to advise him. He would want to work with the City Council to come up with a process for how they could work together as a unified city government to address these serious issues.

Northampton has a declining crime rate and a force larger than most towns of its size, Councilor Jarrett noted. About 50 officers would be average for a town this size. He asked if the mayor could explain why they have a force larger than that.

City officials have done a lot of analysis of the police department over time including when planning for building the new police station several years ago, Mayor Narkewicz responded. One thing that makes Northampton different from similarly-sized communities is the incredible amount of visitors they have to the community. Northampton's downtown is a major draw, and the city has concerts, art galleries and restaurants that bring lots of people into the community. On a weekend in Northampton, they present as a much bigger city in terms of visitors and activity. In looking at data such as motor vehicle accidents, a high number responded to by Northampton police occur among people who do not live in the city. He would say that has not changed dramatically. A study was done when looking at the police station as they tried to understand what size force they should be building the station for. He said he doesn't know what communities Councilor Jarrett is comparing them with. Amherst has the benefit of a separate state agency, the UMass police force, which is basically policing a population of 30,000 as well.

Councilor Jarrett said he was looking at national averages. Regarding the declining crime rate, he asked the mayor to explain how that factors in to the size of the force.

Major crimes have been going down nationwide, Mayor Narkewicz acknowledged. This doesn't account for the fact that they still receive many, many calls for service. Police may not be responding to major crimes but they now see them responding to other issues. He mentioned how the opioid crisis has affected the city and communities across the nation and other calls that don't count as major crimes, such as mental health calls. This is part of the conversation they have heard in public comment, questions as to whether police are the most appropriate people to be responding to such calls. He mentioned the panhandling study group and its recommendation of forming a crisis intervention team.

He and Chief Kasper are definitely open to the concept of moving away from having police respond to those type of calls, he confirmed. For him, it's important to have a plan for making that

transition and for who is going to provide those services and respond to those calls. There are models around the country and those are what they will need to look at. It may be possible to reduce the size of the force, but they'd have to be able to assure the community that when they call 911 some kind of service will respond.

Councilor Jarrett thanked him for putting forth those ideas and his willingness to begin that process. He asked if he had any thoughts about the military-style response seen on Saturday. Just the presence of that equipment can escalate the situation and put more people at risk, he suggested. He also heard from some people who were afraid to come and exercise their freedom of speech, not because of the protestors but because of the police. It was disturbing to him and others, he shared.

It was going to be a large event so they planned for the support of state police and other mutual aid partners, Mayor Narkewicz confirmed. One of the challenges was where to properly stage them. The fact that they were staged near downtown obviously raised concerns, and he appreciates that. Police presence at the actual event itself was minimized. There were no officers in the crowd and no officers were dispatched as part of the march. The city shut down Main Street and tried to put safety measures in place so no one could try to harm the protesters. It was the same approach used at other rallies up and down the valley, including Holyoke and Greenfield. State police were also present in those communities and parked offsite.

He hears the concerns and it's something they could certainly look at going forward. When Chief Kasper briefed him on the plan, the concern was that outside people might try to incite violence. They're always looking at these events after the fact; after last Monday's event, they looked at and tried to reexamine their approach to prevent people from climbing on the parking garage or building. "We certainly can learn from the concern," he observed.

Councilor Jarrett asked about people being pepper-sprayed. He asked if that had been reviewed and whether it was deemed as something that was necessary and would be used going forward.

They were now straying from the topic of the budget hearing, Mayor Narkewicz said. He would rather try to address that with Chief Kasper present in a different venue.

Councilor Jarrett agreed that was appropriate.

Councilor Nash said he heard throughout public testimony of disturbing interactions between people and their police department. One thing that became apparent is that they do not now have a good and trusted way for people to bring concerns forward. He thanked everyone who had brought them forward. He wants to go on record as saying he thinks that is one of the things they really need to explore in the very near future. He appreciates Mayor Narkewicz wanting to have a conversation with them. "I am so ready to have that conversation," he enthused.

They need to do it with speed. They need to do it in a way that is thoughtful and attentive to all of the details, but he doesn't envision something that is going to stretch out over a year or two. "We're talking about something that is going to move quickly," he proposed.

Whatever process is put in place would have to look at those issues – the current complaint system and whether it works and, if it doesn't, how could they make it work better, Mayor Narkewicz agreed. Over the last week they have heard some best practices for improving policing. President Obama came out last week and did a town hall on policing and presented a pledge for mayors throughout the country. He took that pledge and is committed to looking at their use of force policy. Their policies almost exactly align with current recommendations. "We need to be ready and willing to scrutinize this carefully and hear the suggestions and hear the concerns," he submitted.

Councilor LaBarge said she feels that as a city council they have an opportunity for change and for reimagining and making a shift in how their police department is run. With what they heard from so many people, it's telling them as councilors they need to make a change. "I feel we need to think out of the box." This has really opened her eyes, she shared. She described her personal reaction to the protest Saturday and hearing about the state police being there with an armored truck. "I'm not too happy about that," she acknowledged.

As soon as possible, they need to create a community oversight board with legal power, she asserted. Some serious changes in policy, culture and practices are indicated. She agrees city money can be used to develop an exploratory body or hire consultants tasked with researching and developing a set of alternatives to policing. Further, as suggested by Chief Kasper, she really feels they should hire social workers. When police officers retire, they could fill the positions with trained social workers to respond to calls such as disturbances because of certain disabilities.

She has received over 2,631 emails plus many calls and thinks the voices in this city are extremely valuable for telling them what is needed. She wants to be part of it 100%. She reiterated the need to create a community oversight board with legal power.

Mayor Narkewicz thanked her for putting those ideas forward. He agreed they are hearing from a lot of the community. He wants to be responsive and to work with the City Council and is open to the idea of enlisting help, he confirmed.

Councilor Quinlan said he appreciates the discussion tonight and thinks it is what the community was hoping to hear last week. With some late nights, they didn't get to it. In terms of it being a budget discussion, they have heard from a lot of residents that the budget should reflect the values of the city, so discussing values is entirely appropriate, he suggested. He asked the mayor to describe the role of Elliot Homeless Services (EHS) in working with the NPD.

The mayor explained that EHS is a valley-wide agency that works closely with both police and homeless people on the street.

One of several recommendations that came out of the panhandling study report was having a crisis-response team made up of police with social workers involved, he reminded. Administrators have been working on the study's recommendations, including the first and foremost proposal of creating a community resource center, which has been further exposed as being a critical need during the pandemic.

In response to a question about EHS's funding, the mayor said typically social service agencies have contracts with the state.

Councilor Quinlan said he believes providing mental health services as part of the city's emergency response is vital and he is glad to hear the mayor talking about coming up with a process to study police reform. He cited the steering committee formed in 2005 by Mayor Higgins to create a sustainability plan to address climate change and the panhandling work group formed by Mayor Narkewicz as models for such a process. He thinks it's time they do something similar to address racism.

Councilor Thorpe said he noticed the mayor cut training from the police budget and wondered how this would impact anti-bias or de-escalation training.

He was trying to mimic what was proposed at the last meeting by level-funding this line item, Mayor Narkewicz said. They will continue to prioritize those and related trainings for current and new officers. It will not affect the city's commitment to those trainings, he assured.

Councilor Thorpe echoed what other councilors said earlier about policing needing a major revamp and the importance of creation of a civilian oversight board. They need to make changes and to look as a council as a whole at some of the ideas that have been coming their way. He stressed the need for meaningful representation from both the council and people of color in any proposed process and for community buy-in.

Mayor Narkewicz said he agreed with everything said. At the end of the day, if there is not community buy-in, it is bound to fail.

There is indeed a national movement and a national reckoning, Councilor Dwight observed. As someone commented earlier, there is significant urgency in the appeal for holistic, demonstrable and real change. It is not just a request for a decrease at this time but for a progressive decrease for all time of the current policing systems and how they are subsidized. There is no doubt in his mind that there is not just a request but a demand for a structural redesign and new approach to what public safety is and what it means and for whom.

At the first budget presentation, he commented that there had been a profound and structural change in what used to be the fire department and is now fire rescue. It was a significant cultural shift and did not come without controversy. In some cases, that transition was easier to make because the public had become very good at reducing fires and increasing fire safety so there was less and less for firefighters to do. When they switched to ambulance and EMS response, it imbued the department with a new sense of value and not only changed its name but changed members' attitudes and sense of mission.

Councilor Dwight sought reassurance that a decision on the budget would just be an initial step in responding to the more urgent appeal that's been heard. Before going further on the budget, "I need to get a sense that we are basically allied in trying to achieve what has been asked of us," he stressed. It's not just a defunding of the police but a discussion of what it means to be policed and for whom and for what. He doesn't have a direct question but wants to impress upon him that he is indeed shaken to his core, not only from the testimonies but from their volume. "Our portion of the reckoning is here tonight and it doesn't stop here; it is merely an initial step," he emphasized.

Mayor Narkewicz said he hears what Councilor Dwight is saying and agrees they're at a turning point. In terms of what comes next, as elected officials, they'll be judged on what comes next. They are elected to represent their constituents and they will be the judge of what they do and whether it meets the demand he's described. He is committed to working with them to make the real change people are asking for.

Councilor Maiore said she has been really moved at the level of concern in the community and by the tragic stories and is impressed with the level of knowledge. She was prepared last Thursday to cut the budget and, upon reflection, is prepared to do so again this week. What she's heard in the past 24 hours is that proposed cuts before them are not enough, and she agrees. To make fundamental changes to their public safety system, so much more is needed. She thinks the change does need to be thoughtful but it does not need to be gradual. To everyone who has reached out, she wants them to know she is committed to this fundamental change and to exploring further cuts to the police department. As everyone recognizes, budget cuts are just one piece of the picture and what they really need is transformative change.

Past efforts to involve the community may not have had enough authority, independence or fair representation, and that may be why people did not show up to meet the chief, she suggested. For the council, she believes they need a select committee to look at policing and establishment of a truly independent civilian review board. The greatest deterrent to the use of excessive force has been shown to be oversight, not training, she contended. They also need to look at where to reallocate money. She would love to work with the mayor, but she thinks the legislative branch also needs to work independently to identify legislative options.

"I don't want to lose this energy; I don't want to lose this opportunity," she stressed. What's resonating across their country and in their beautiful little city is that it's past time to put public back in public safety in a meaningful way, and that's what she's looking for, she concluded.

Mayor Narkewicz acknowledged her point. Part of it is figuring out the best process, whether it be a council select committee or a mayoral committee. He is hoping for a combination of the two, and that's what he has been discussing with the council president. Formation of new agencies is not something that is done by ordinance so it require executive involvement. Obviously the city council is an independent branch of government and can work any way it chooses. His intention is to affirm that he shares the commitment to having this community conversation and to trying to make the changes people want them to make.

Councilor Maiore said 'yes please' and that she thinks they need all of that. She would love to work with him. The community also needs a sense of balance and accountability between the different branches of government, she added.

Mayor Narkewicz said he didn't disagree. As elected officials, all of them are accountable to the residents and taxpayers, he acknowledged.

Councilor Foster said she has emailed and spoken with so many constituents in the last week

and it's been incredibly powerful. People of color, transgender people and domestic violence survivors have reached out to her to share their stories and she recognizes and wants to center and honor the courage that takes. Constituents have also reached out to her to say 'you are my councilor and I want you to represent my view too.' They're getting to a point where they recognize the role of police is outsized in their community and across the country. They are calling on police for issues where they should not be calling on armed law enforcement. She talked to a constituent with an adult son with an intellectual disability who has had to call the police for support with him because she has nowhere else to turn. Social service agencies are chronically underfunded and often experience high staff turnover; they do not have the capacity right now to respond. Police are ramping up and responding to these moments, and "that's not what we as a community are saying we want to see as a response."

They are seeking people trained to respond to the issues people are currently calling police about such as addiction, homelessness, mental health and issues related to poverty. So many of these calls in theory can be handled by people trained to deal with them but they have to shore up those resources. Northampton is a city that is progressive and not afraid to step forward. She cited charter review committee recommendations of extending the right to vote to 16-year olds and noncitizens – amazing progressive steps – as examples. She sees that they do have a commitment to change and hundreds and hundreds of people in support and a community right here with an awful lot of expertise as well as other police departments across the country. She thinks it's imperative to look at examples of what other departments are incorporating as well as to the expertise in their own community. It's important for the legislative and executive branches to work together so it's a unified solution. She also sees that they need to center the voices of people of color, domestic violence survivors and LGBTQ groups as well as other marginalized communities so that any solution formed has the buy-in of the community.

She concluded by echoing calls for a community oversight committee. She also said she recognizes that the legislative branch is not able to appropriate funds and so called for city resources – dedicated staff time and resources – to go toward solving this issue.

Councilor LaBarge repeated the call for creation of a community oversight board with legal power. She emphasized that she has heard this request from 'thousands' of people.

Councilor Sciarra said she is certainly glad they all seem to agree the time is past due for them to examine not only policing but broader public safety in general, including how issues of people's lives and of life and death are handled and have ended up under policing even though they don't necessarily fit there. She's spoken to Chief Kasper about this and knows she's very thoughtful and open about social services that have come under the purview of police because of the systemic federal and state defunding of services for decades. She shared her confidence that Chief Kasper is someone who is willing to have the needed conversations. "I believe we can have them here and that we will be able to put action behind the words," she stated.

She knows there is hurt and distrust, and the strength and heartbreak of the testimony evidences why, but she does think there is a way forward. She thanked Councilor Dwight for demanding greater specificity on it. As Mayor Narkewicz said, he did reach out to her. She appreciates that the mayor understands that change is needed and that they must work together. She will be holding him to the commitment to not only include the council and council president but to partner with them. The council could certainly form a select committee, but it doesn't have jurisdiction over departments or staff. She doesn't just want to issue a report or put forward recommendations. She doesn't want the city council to just have a seat at the table or some form of representation, she wants the council and the mayor to work together toward reform. She thinks it needs both forms of government. She thanked the mayor for being willing to partner with them and said she hopes they can get started on this work very quickly.

Councilor Dwight said he didn't want to overlook the fact that, as a city, they are also part of a larger structure and a continuum. They are one small community within a state and federal government. He hopes the energy they are responding to is shared toward Boston. The city is literally not allowed to do a number of the solutions mentioned, such as development of housing. The energy needs to be amplified beyond this zoom meeting; it's got to go to their state senators and representatives, who he knows will be receptive.

The appeal is for them to defund or to reduce the police budget significantly, he acknowledged.

But if they defund, they create essentially a vacuum for the very real, valuable work that needs to be done. They have a dysfunctional system with armed police officers responding to crises that in many cases makes matters worse. However, he cannot bring himself to propose such a large cut at this time given that he does not know how they would provide the services that actually have a benefit for people. He declared himself to be at a loss.

Councilor Jarrett said he shares Councilor Dwight's concern. He made the following observations:

- ❖ Northampton is not immune to systemic racism. He has been listening to people of color, mostly black people, describe what it's like to be black in Northampton. Most of the white people he talks to think that their police department is doing just fine but it's very clear to him that it's not.
- ❖ Systemic bias is reflected in the types of crimes likely to be investigated. As an example, wage theft primarily affects those who are low-income and people of color. It is a much bigger crime than property theft but is less likely to be prosecuted.
- ❖ He believes in the innate goodness of individuals and thinks most members of the police department care about people and want the best for their community. He acknowledges the valuable work done by police every day. He doesn't agree with demonizing individuals but thinks holding individuals responsible for their actions is crucial.
- ❖ Systemic change is what will really bring about [reform] as opposed to just prosecuting individuals.

He is a strong supporter of alternatives to policing both to do emergency response work in a way that leads to better outcomes and to support people being policed instead of just policing them. Meeting basic human needs will reduce the need for policing.

He doesn't think they will have the best outcomes if they rush the process. He wants to reduce the police budget further but wants to know what they are replacing it with and to have a plan in place. As mentioned, the people who are doing the emergency response work now are the police along with fire rescue, and they are doing public health work, mental health work and traffic details as well as working with addiction and the unhoused. This needs to shift as fast as possible but with a plan. He expressed the opinion that a separate department that is independently dispatched if appropriate is needed in order to create the necessary separation with police.

Councilor Jarrett appealed to those advocating for change to help by making sure the voices most affected by the decision-making are heard and making sure the process keeps moving forward. He acknowledged the need to create a body to explore alternatives to policing but said he thinks the council should have its own committee to explore legislative actions. He cited the Select Committee on Pesticide Reduction (SCPR) as an example of city councilors making policy for implementation by the executive, a model consistent with the city's charter.

They need to insure that police union contracts don't imperil public safety, and he would love to see them implement participatory budgeting, he continued. They don't have to make a rush decision tonight. They have another meeting in eight days.

Councilor Jarrett raised a legal question. They are at a moment where they have this power and they don't have it for another year. If they reduce the budget and essentially ask the mayor to come back with an additional appropriation later as a way to hold him accountable, does it give them the power to make sure the things they want to see are implemented? He asked.

The council is voting tonight on a General Fund budget, and its vote will stand alone, Attorney Seewald clarified. Councilors can send a message to the mayor that he's welcome to come back with a supplemental appropriation, but there's no legal effect to their request. The mayor has discretion within each section of the budget to determine how money is spent.

If they move forward in this process and identify things that require funding, he will put forward that funding, Mayor Narkewicz asserted. He referred to his track record of putting forward money to pay for other initiatives following a study process, such as the resilience hub. It would be his commitment that; if they were to come up with solutions, he would come up with the funding with the usual caveats around fiscal constraints.

Councilor Jarrett asked specifically about the mayor's ability to transfer money to create a new department and/or lay off police if their services were provided by another department. Mayor

Narkewicz stressed that the budget is a living document that can change throughout the fiscal year.

Councilor Maiore said she deeply appreciated the mayor voicing his commitment. Since they have a second reading next Thursday, there is time to get some of that commitment down [in writing] before they vote again and finalize the budget, she pointed out.

Mayor Narkewicz said he is happy to have a more extended conversation with the council president. They could put together a picture of what that structure or process could look like before next Thursday, he offered.

Including some amount of funding to get some backbone to changes they would like to make would be putting their money where their mouth is, Councilor Maiore suggested.

Councilor Sciarra said she's happy to work with the mayor this week.

Councilor Foster thanked Councilor Jarrett and Councilor Maiore for sharing their thoughts. She sees the value of working with the mayor on this and knows he is committed to this process. To echo Councilor Maiore, she has been struggling with the actual task at hand, the FY2021 budget. Having more of a structure and more teeth before taking another vote would mean a lot to her commitment to this budget, she volunteered.

Mayor Narkewicz reiterated that this is his commitment.

Based on the discussion they've had thus far and the emerging commitments, he is comfortable voting for the mayor's budget as proposed tonight, Councilor Nash advised. He stressed that he's doing so with the idea that there's a lot of work ahead. They've gotten a lot of feedback that they need to move. He's comfortable voting yes tonight with the commitment they'll have more to bring to the table next week.

Councilor Sciarra reminded members that the motion on the floor is to adopt the FY2021 General Fund budget minus the \$38,000 line item that has been removed. She outlined remaining steps for approval of the order itself.

Councilor Foster reminded those listening that the council will take a second vote at its next meeting. Councilor Jarrett clarified that if the budget fails in first reading, the budget passes as is. Although he has concerns, he intends to vote yes because he doesn't want to see it fail and not have the opportunity for further discussion, he explained. He doesn't mean any disrespect to the mayor, but he is concerned about accountability, he added.

Members asked questions about other departmental budgets, including the Auditor and City Clerk's office. The mayor and finance director offered explanations for increased personnel costs.

The city solicitor confirmed that the mayor's budget automatically takes effect 45 days after it is submitted unless it is amended by the City Council.

**Councilor Sciarra called adoption of the FY2021 General Fund budget to a vote and it was unanimously approved 9:0 by roll call vote.**

**Approval of \$38,000 Pedal People Contract**

Councilor Jarrett disclosed that he has a financial interest in this item and recused himself.

**Councilor Dwight moved to approve the \$38,000 line item in the Central Services Parking Maintenance budget for the Pedal People contract. Councilor Thorpe seconded.**

Councilor Dwight asked if there is a way Councilor Jarrett can avoid this process in next year's budget. As long as he has a financial interest in any financial matter being deliberated by the council, he has to recuse himself, the solicitor advised.

**The motion passed 8:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Jarrett recused.**

Discussion of **20.065 An Order to Approve the FY 2021 General Fund Budget.**

Councilor Sciarra reminded members that she read the order in its entirety at the last meeting. Councilor Dwight asked if Councilor Sciarra would just read the items that have changed, and she complied.

**Councilor Nash moved to approve the order in first reading. Councilor Thorpe seconded.** Councilor Maiore said she honestly had been torn about what to do, but with a second reading next Thursday and the commitment from the mayor to present a plan for addressing residents' concerns, she is willing to vote in favor.

Councilor Quinlan and Councilor Foster also expressed intentions to vote favorably.

Councilor LaBarge questioned whether the council could somehow amend the budget at its next meeting to formally incorporate the Mayor's commitment.

Mayor Narkewicz clarified that the commitment he has made is to sit down with council leadership to discuss a framework for conducting this critical community conversation. If and when they complete that work and develop a set of recommendations, he's committed to working with the council to advance those. For tonight, the commitment is to come back to the council next week with a proposed structure for a community process to be worked out with the council president.

Councilor Sciarra said she looks forward to sitting down with him and working on this and coming back next week with a report.

Councilor Dwight pointed out that there's no amendment councilors could make that would require the mayor to say or do anything. The council does have the authority to vote down the budget or amend it, he clarified.

Councilor Nash thanked the mayor and council president for their willingness to engage in a conversation to produce a plan. Councilors LaBarge and Maiore thanked Councilor Sciarra.

Councilor Maiore said she wanted to make clear that she was prepared to vote against the budget tonight and is prepared to do so next week. It will really depend on what she hears.

**Councilor Sciarra called the motion to a vote, and it passed 8:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Jarrett recused.**

Motion to Adjourn

Upon motion made by Councilor Dwight and seconded by Councilor LaBarge, the meeting was adjourned at 9:49 p.m. The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ Administrative Assistant to the City Council

# NORTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

## PUBLIC COMMENT RECORD SHEET

June 10, 2020

General public comment preceding the convening of the regular meeting

NAME	ADDRESS	SUBJECT
Sascha Bratton	Easthampton	In favor of not just cutting budget but cutting # of police
M (Smith student)	Colchester, VT	claims assaulted by NPD last year when she returned to CDH to pick up her wallet; declined to give name
Daniel Cannity	Northampton	urged councilors to advocate for needed changes to police; related discrimination experienced at hands of police
Robert Eastham	Easthampton	demanding council pass ordinance for creation of community oversight board w/legal power to recommend disciplinary actions
Nicole LaRue	Easthampton	spoke to risk/benefit calculation councilors make in decision on budget; Black Lives Matter, not white regret after the fact
Jose Adastra	Northampton	moved to Northampton because thought better chance of passing as white; mother warned him about police
Orianna Riley	Ward 3	drew attention to letter signed by 9 small business owners supporting 35% reduction in police budget
Mimi Odgers	Ward 6	Disputed fact that police protect citizens; per Supreme Court, police only required to protect citizens when in police custody
Brie Deschesnes	Ward 4	said disproportionate # of people w/ disabilities harmed by police
Lois Ahrens	Ward 1	police not wearing masks
Lucy Smith	Northampton	thinks a community without police is possible; presented statistics to show # of cruisers in N'hamp is excessive
Dana Goldblatt	Northampton	disputed contention that N'hamp police different; claims Officer Powers trained npd to distinguish cars popular w/minorities
Lucien Baskin	Northampton	supports divesting from policing and investing in community
Saraphina Foreman	Northampton	shared statement from Sunrise Northampton. Advocated cutting police budget at least 35%
Sakiya Bichenee	Ward 3	She was assaulted by two officers. Supports defunding police
John Cohen	Ward 3A	seconded everything said, especially Saraphina and Daniel Cannity
Danielle Amodeo	Northampton	dittoed numerous previous speaker; told Mayor and Councilor Nash disappointed in them
Catherine Kay	Florence	wants N'hamp to be a place where racial justice and inclusion are bedrock qualities; defunding police not the answer
Jina Kim	Ward 2	SC professor; anti-racist educator; supports defunding police
Jesse Hassinger	Belly of the Beast	Supports defunding police; criticized NPD for not wearing; Militarized presence at protest Saturday
Jake Meginsky	Ward 3	police role is to contain and control those who threaten status quo of white supremacy; related incidents of police brutality

# NORTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

## PUBLIC COMMENT RECORD SHEET

June 10, 2020

General public comment preceding the convening of the regular meeting

NAME	ADDRESS	SUBJECT
Gillian Cannon	Northampton	Mayor's proposal offensive; minimal reduction intended solely to appease protestors
Kathleen Rose		Agreed with other speakers except Catherine Kay; as domestic violence survivor, hasn't found police helpful; supports defunding
Georgia Parker	Ward 4	supports defunding police
Abigail Parker	Comment rec'd via chat	was raped in 2019; police have been unable to interview white assailant; police do not protect and serve; supports defunding
Zac Lounsbury	Northampton	Denounced "charade of white supremacy"
Emily Hunerwadel	Northampton	sister, victim of domestic violence, reported police interaction second worst experience; she is rape victim, police blamed her
Annie Wood	Northampton	Addressed councilor reluctance to cut police budget based on support for organized labor
Sammy Cunningham	Ward 3	former shelter worker; homeless need crisis services, housing
Amy Stan	Ward 7	4,500 people demonstrated, 15% of pop.; 508 attended budget hearing; Mayor's proposal cuts by only .19%
Erica Roper	Northampton	victim of NPD brutality because of her mental health and abuse by partner
Jon Liebman	Northampton	demanding reduction in the # of officers not deferral of buying police cruisers; no mayoral justification for level-funding
Jan Alice Ahn	SC student	situations addressed by police are often criminalized because of their position in society
Amy Goldstein Bookbinder	Ward 3	invoked names of Eric Matlock and Jonas Correia; where is concern about racist policing and use of force in N'hamp?
Jane Doe, rape victim	Northampton	had positive experience with NPD. Shocked at disrespect directed at them; NPD responded sensitively to murder/suicide
Celina Della Croce	Ward 5	acknowledged people have different experiences w/police but 400 people on call have testified to traumatic experiences
Julie Arenò		No one she knows with experience of sexual assault or domestic violence has had positive experience with police
Bobbio		Asked series of questions re: access to information about police policies, disciplinary actions & collective bargaining agreements
Susan McGuire & Maureen Morocco, N'hamp		spoke in support of police, urged Mayor and council not to cut NPD budget
Nicole Chakis	Ward 4	22 officers earn over \$100,000, 11 between \$90,000 and \$100,000; seems disproportionate
Mark Guglielmo	Florence	City is in historic moment; councilors are only ones who can "check this white male mayor"
Jeffrey Hume	Greenfield	Police established to protect private property of ruling class; Urged council to abolish police