



# **Committee on Finance and the Northampton City Council**

*Councilor Gina-Louise Sciarra, Chair*  
*Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge, Vice Chair*  
*Councilor Michael J. Quinlan, Jr.*  
*Councilor John Thorpe*

## **Online Meeting via Teleconference**

Meeting Date: August 19, 2021

Note: The Finance Committee Meeting will take place during the City Council Meeting as announced. The City Council Meeting is scheduled to begin at 7:05 pm.

### **1. Meeting Called To Order**

### **2. Roll Call**

### **3. Approval Of Minutes From The Previous Meeting**

#### **A. June 4, 2020 And November 12, 2020 Finance Committee Minutes (Never Accepted), June 17, 2021 And July 15, 2021 Finance Committee Minutes**

Documents:

[06-07-2021\\_finance committee minutes.pdf](#)  
[06-04-2020\\_finance committee minutes.pdf](#)  
[11-12-2020\\_finance committee minutes.pdf](#)  
[07-15-2021\\_finance committee minutes.pdf](#)

### **4. Financial Orders**

#### **A. 21.305 An Order To Reprogram CS Surplus Funds To CS 2005 Vehicle Replacement**

Documents:

[21.305 an order to reprogram cs surplus funds to cs 2005 vehicle replacement.pdf](#)

#### **B. 21.306 An Order To Appropriate Transportation Infrastructure Enhancement Funds To Hotel Bridge Improvements**

Documents:

[21.306 an order to appropriate transportation infrastructure enhancement funds to hotel bridge improvements.pdf](#)

**C. 21.307 An Order To Reprogram \$15,000 From Safety Village Surplus To Sheldon Field Dugout Replacement**

Documents:

[21.307 an order to reprogram 15,000 from safety village surplus to sheldon field dugout replacement.pdf](#)

**D. 21.308 An Order To Reprogram Funds For Safety Netting For Florence Recreation Fields**

Documents:

[21.308 an order to reprogram funds for safety netting for florence recreation fields.pdf](#)

**E. 21.309 An Order To Authorize Spending \$2,577.62 From Equipment Firefighting Donation Account On UTV And Trailer**

Documents:

[21.309 an order to authorize spending 2,577.62 from equipment firefighting donation account on utv and trailer.pdf](#)

**F. 21.314 An Order To Reprogram Funds For Florence Fire Station Repaving**

Documents:

[21.314 an order to reprogram funds for florence fire station repaving.pdf](#)

**5. New Business**

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

**6. Adjourn**

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*or 413-570-3133*



## **Committee on Finance and the Northampton City Council**

*Councilor Gina-Louise Sciarra, Chair  
Councilor Marianne LaBarge, Vice Chair  
Councilor Michael J. Quinlan, Jr.  
Councilor John Thorpe*

### **On-line Zoom Meeting**

Meeting Date: June 7, 2021

Note: The Finance Committee Meeting took place during a special City Council Meeting as announced. The City Council Meeting began at 7 p.m.

1. **Meeting Called To Order:** At 8:40 p.m., Councilor Sciarra called the meeting to order.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were committee members Gina-Louise Sciarra (Chair), Marianne LaBarge (Vice-Chair), Michael J. Quinlan, Jr. and John Thorpe. Also present from the City Council were William H. Dwight, Alex Jarrett, Karen Foster, Rachel Maiore and Jim Nash. Also present were Mayor David Narkewicz, Finance Director Susan Wright and Administrative Assistant Laura Krutzler.
3. **Approval of Minutes of April 15, 2021 and May 6, 2021**  
Councilor Thorpe moved to approve the minutes of April 15, 2021 and May 6, 2021. Councilor Quinlan seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.
4. **FINANCIAL ORDERS**
  - A. **21.286 An Order Authorizing Acquisition of a Parcel on the Easterly Side of the Mill River**  
Councilor Sciarra read the order.

Councilor Quinlan moved to forward the order to the full City Council with a positive recommendation. Councilor Thorpe seconded.

This is one of the city's owner unknown parcels, Ms. Misch explained. The last owner of record has been deceased for many years probably going back to the early 1900's. In 1976, both the City Council and Conservation Commission voted to support acquiring the property and took steps to do so but never quite sealed the deal by recording the instrument at the registry of deeds. This time they'll actually take that final step, she assured.

That's all to say that the city has looked at this property for many years and intended to require it, she said. It fits in well with the ongoing work to look at alternatives along the Mill River for open space and water access. The city has arranged with the Leeds Civic Association to take on maintenance responsibilities as part of this. It is supported by a number of groups, and they hope to actually 'tie the bow.'

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They are all very excited about this in Leeds, Councilor Maiore reported. The Leeds Civic Association (LCA) has been working very thoughtfully on this as well as the river inclusion group. The LCA has been working on signs and is working with the river inclusion group on long-term trash pick-up. She thinks this is really vital to solving some of the issues that have arisen as swimming holes have begun being used more and more. Presently, there are no posted guidelines so no one knows if they are on legal property or not. The new arrangement will provide some guidelines and structure and make it easier to regulate and protect the land but also easier for visitors to feel comfortable there.

The dam is privately owned by Chartpak and there is another piece of private property on the other side, so that is still potentially an issue, Ms. Misch clarified. She screen-shared an aerial photo showing the parcel.

It abuts city conservation land, Councilor Maiore said. It's true this will not solve the problem of her cringing watching teenagers jump off the Chartpak dam, she quipped.

There being no further questions, the motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

5. **New Business**

None.

6. **Adjourn:** There being no further business, Councilor Quinlan moved to adjourn. Councilor Thorpe seconded. The motion carried on a roll call vote of 4 Yes, 0 No. The meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

**Contact: G-L Sciarra @glsciarra@northamptonma.gov or 413-570-3133**



## **Committee on Finance and the Northampton City Council**

*Councilor Gina-Louise Sciarra, Chair  
Councilor Marianne LaBarge, Vice Chair  
Councilor Michael J. Quinlan, Jr.  
Councilor John Thorpe*

### **On line Zoom Meeting**

Meeting Date: June 4, 2020

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 10:49 p.m., Councilor Sciarra called the meeting to order.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were committee members Gina-Louise Sciarra (Chair), Marianne LaBarge (Vice-Chair), Michael J. Quinlan, Jr. and John Thorpe. Also present from the City Council were William H. Dwight, Alex Jarrett, Karen Foster, Rachel Maiore and Jim Nash.
3. **Minutes of May 21, 2020**  
Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the minutes of May 21, 2020. Councilor Thorpe seconded. The motion passed 4:0 by roll call vote.
4. **Financial Orders**
  - A. **20.053 An Order To Approve FY2021 General Fund Budget**  
Councilor Sciarra read the order.

Councilor Jarrett disclosed that he has a conflict of interest on one item in the General Fund budget – Pedal People's contract with Central Services. For the discussion in full council they have made arrangements to consider this item separately but that isn't possible in Finance so he can't participate. He said he would turn off his video.

Councilor Sciarra reviewed the amounts in the budget spreadsheet.

Councilor LaBarge moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor Thorpe seconded.

Councilor Dwight clarified that because of Councilor Jarrett's conflict, he is precluded from participating in discussion of the full order, which includes the Pedal People contract. To allow him to participate, it is appropriate to move discussion to the floor of the full council where removals, amendments, etc. to the order can be made. Normally, Finance Committee members would be able to have this discussion in committee with participation by the rest of the council, but because of this circumstance it is not possible.

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The motion to forward the order to the full council with a positive recommendation passed 4:0 by roll call vote.

**B. 20.054 An Order To Approve FY 2021 Sewer Enterprise Fund Budget**

Councilor Sciarra read the order.

Councilor Quinlan moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

**C. 20.055 An Order To Approve FY 2021 Water Enterprise Fund Budget**

Councilor Sciarra read the order.

Councilor Thorpe moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor Quinlan seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

**D. 20.056 An Order To Approve FY 2021 Solid Waste Enterprise Fund Budget**

Councilor Jarrett announced that has a conflict of interest because of his financial interest in the Pedal People's contract and would be recusing himself from the discussion. He will also be recusing himself from discussion in the full council, he said.

Councilor Sciarra read the order.

Councilor Thorpe moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor Quinlan seconded.

Councilor Dwight said he would like to follow up with the mayor and finance director on the issue brought up in public comment, i.e. – paying a police officer to manage traffic within the transfer station. It does seem disproportionate and that it could be managed by somebody in an orange vest, he suggested.

The city began using traffic details following the COVID19 outbreak, Mayor Narkewicz explained. Operators needed to be able to control social distancing because of the 'fabulous ballet' of people and vehicles moving back and forth. They ended up limiting the number of vehicles that could be in line at any one time. They have always had an officer directing traffic on Saturdays when it is busiest, he reminded.

They have had a significant increase in issues related to people's behavior and complaints from gate keepers about residents being noncompliant and even abusive toward them, he continued. A couple of gatekeepers have quit because of residents being abusive toward them. The police detail has been very helpful in not only directing traffic but in reducing conflict with gatekeepers. Last Saturday, the detail officer had to leave and several incidents occurred. Director LaScaleia feels strongly that having some sort of traffic detail each day is necessary. They don't know how long the corona virus will last and how long they will need to maintain it. They've been trying the idea of just having a citizen in an orange vest and it hasn't been very successful, he concluded.

Councilor Dwight asked how this translates to the increased fee.

The solid waste enterprise fund budget has to be supplemented with money from the reserve fund because fees haven't been raised since 2009 and there has been a significant drop in the number of stickers. The

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transfer station is open more than any other transfer station in the area and has lower fees. The police detail does contribute to the increase but the increase would be necessary even without the detail, he asserted.

The city is using \$272,326 of retained earnings this year to supplement the solid waste budget and has been doing so for the past six or seven years, Finance Director Wright confirmed. They are not bringing in enough revenue to fully cover the cost of the service. At some point they will run out of retained earnings. At the same time, many of the fees haven't been raised in years. This seemed like a good time to recalibrate the cost of operating the transfer station.

The decision around having an officer there is more operational and behavior-based [than fiscally-driven]. They would be having this discussion regardless of the status of the solid waste enterprise fund, Mayor Narkewicz said.

Councilor Quinlan pointed out that the gatekeeper budget this fiscal year is the same at \$90,000 but they are cutting the transfer station hours by 25% next year. Given that they are reducing the service, it seems that less hours would be needed.

Minimum wage goes up every year so that's one of the reasons the line item would go up even though hours are decreasing, Mayor Narkewicz responded.

It is hard to get people to do these jobs and not easy to predict the hours because of special events, Director Wright observed. The amount of incidents and hostility the gate keepers are subject to can't be underestimated, she added. They've had people threaten gatekeepers. The director raised a lot of security concerns and that's why she felt this level of security would be appropriate. Also, they have to maintain some kind of order with the traffic flow. Because of the need to have fewer people taking things out of their car at the same time for social distancing, there has to be order. The traffic detail is not just because of COVID, it's because they have an active DPW yard with moving pieces of equipment that is also used as a transfer station with steady traffic. There are multiple reasons the director felt that increasing the traffic detail for this operation was necessary, she stressed.

Councilor Nash expressed his understanding that the need for the officer has to do with added stress from the need for social distancing, etc. If this added stress was removed, he asked if they could return to using a civilian employee.

That would be an operational question for the director to evaluate, Mayor Narkewicz said. The confounding factor is they not only have people in close contact but they're carrying trash. This will be something she'll monitor and if they don't need them, she'll move away from it.

Councilor Maire asked why a person's transfer station privileges aren't suspended if they are being abusive to a person in a vest.

The DPW Director has revoked some transfer station privileges, Mayor Narkewicz confirmed.

The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

**E. 20.057 An Order to Approve FY 2021 Stormwater And Flood Control Enterprise Fund Budget**  
Councilor Sciarra read the order.

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Councilor Quinlan moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor LaBarge seconded.

He has heard from a lot of people that the formula used to calculate the storm water fee isn't fair, Councilor Jarrett said. At some point, he would like to know the process for changing the formula.

Mayor Narkewicz said he could provide that information.

Councilor Jarrett said he noticed they are using \$900,000 from the stabilization fund. He asked if that is sustainable.

All of the costs of the storm water and flood control enterprise are paid for through fees, Director Wright corrected. They will be putting \$919,566 *into* stabilization, she clarified.

The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

**F. 20.058 An Order to Approve FY2021 Revolving Funds**

Councilor Sciarra read the order.

Councilor LaBarge moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor Thorpe seconded.

The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

**G. 20.059 An Order Authorizing Acquisition and Establishment of a Municipal Light Plant**

Councilor Sciarra read the order. She noted a scrivener's error: In the fourth 'whereas' clause, 'municipal light plan' should be 'municipal light plant.'

Councilor Thorpe moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor LaBarge seconded.

For ten to fifteen years, people have talked about the prospect of having municipal broadband for the city of Northampton, Councilor Dwight reminded. One of the things that came out of the conversation with Dr. Provost is trying to establish equity; particularly, social equity in the form of broadband access for all. He cited potential benefits as the city's ability to offer competitive if not better rates, much better access and more capacity. Now, telecoms are sanctioned monopolies that control the amount of service available and charge for any upgrades. Hopefully with municipal broadband they can offer excellent upload and download rates to both citizens and businesses. Just as importantly, municipal broadband will allow access to the cohort that's currently isolated and has to rely on wifi stations set up in subsidized housing projects or by the schools. If they're going to aspire to being a modern city carrying out modern ideals, this is one way to establish that equity, if it's viable. They need to know if it's viable first and so want a very frank and clear assessment. If consultants say 'yea,' then they go ahead with all due speed. In order to proceed, the city council has to approve establishment of a municipal light plant in two fiscal years. He expressed hope that fellow councilors would be inspired to vote affirmatively.

Mayor Narkewicz thanked Councilor Dwight for his service on an advisory committee along with several citizens that has been working on the RFP and will be helping select firms to actually carry out the

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marketing study. It is still in an exploratory phase but, not only do they have to have two votes of the council in two separate years, but it also has to go on a ballot. He wanted to get one vote out of the way so if they receive a positive study they could potentially get another vote in FY2021.

Councilor Thorpe said he has heard from quite a few residents in Ward 4 who are in favor and he will be supporting this.

Councilor LaBarge echoed Councilor Thorpe, saying she's received several emails in support of the project.

The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

H. 20.060 An Order to Approve Gift Fund Expenditures for Street and Transportation Sharing  
Councilor Sciarra read the order.

Councilor Quinlan moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor Thorpe seconded.

The order is fairly self-explanatory, Mayor Narkewicz noted. It is one component of the plan they've been working on with the Downtown Neighborhood Association (DNA) and Florence Civic and Business Association to try to stand up outdoor dining very rapidly. They've had some requests from people who would like to make donations.

They have had this gift account for 10 years and have used it for things like bike path equipment and shared streets, Office of Planning and Sustainability Director Wayne Feiden elaborated. They mentioned the project on their listserv and have received four or five donations already. The donations will allow them to supplement the work being done with the Solomon Foundation donation and work that merchants are doing themselves.

For Main Street itself, planners have hired consultants to help them with the money from the Solomon Foundation. For Florence, they are going to do the downtown side streets, bike path and alleyways on their own with lessons they learn from downtown. The idea is to let restaurants take over some of the public spaces nearby; i.e. - parts of the bike path, sections of sidewalk, portions of parking spaces, etc. The city would buy street furniture for places that are shared eating spaces and merchants would buy outdoor furniture for their businesses.

A combination of sources will be used in creating the outdoor eating areas, Mr. Feiden related. Besides the \$10,000 donation from the Solomon Foundation, as part of the city's restoration of a golf course on Old Wilson Road, DPW workers took out 102 6' x 2' x 2' concrete blocks. On the same listserv that solicited donations people came forward and offered different things to contribute to this process.

It is a grand experiment, but they know it is very needed, Mr. Feiden shared. When the governor reopens restaurants, there will be no indoor dining. FEMA says that, in most disasters, 25% of businesses do not reopen. They hope it is a fun experiment for people, but it is an economic development action above all.

The governor will announce Monday when he is going to allow restaurants to reopen, Mr. Feiden advised. The first phase will be restaurants that own their own land. As an example, Fitzwilly's and Alexander's are looking at taking over the parking lots next door. Businesses that sell alcohol will have to go before the

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License Commission to extend their licensed premises. Taking over red brick pavers downtown is pretty simple, moving into the street is more complex. Every department has been really involved. DPW is very excited and has committed manpower, the mayor's office and planning is doing overall coordination, etc.

Councilor LaBarge said she thinks it is a great idea. "We need to get out there and help our businesses. It's going to take them quite a long time to get back on their feet."

Councilor Dwight said he will have some comments later related to another order authorizing ordinance changes in order to accommodate the co-opting of public space. His concern is that they are now offering private businesses public space. He is a little concerned about how this will impact the public conflicts they've experienced for generations in which some people feel they have primacy over public space and try to deny other citizens who they feel conflict with their businesses. He is very much in favor of giving any of these businesses a leg up since they provide tax revenue and jobs. He is definitely conflicted but wants to express his concerns about potential points of conflict. He would be really reluctant to support any changes that would further diminish people's ability to pass on public property in favor of a private enterprise.

If it helps, one way they've looked at this is that they are actually de-privatizing some private space in the form of parking spaces. In terms of square footage, there will be more public space at the end of the day than there is today. There will be more private space as well. What there'll be less of is parking.

Councilor Dwight asked if there is consideration of reducing the road down to one lane.

In the area between City Hall and King Street where there is an extra lane, consultants are looking at that possibility, Mr. Feiden said.

The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

I. **20.061 An Order to Rescind Borrowing Authority - 2 Votes**

Councilor Sciarra read the order.

Councilor Quinlan moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor Thorpe seconded.

These are essentially borrowing authorizations that came before the council for projects for which the city also applied for grants, Mayor Narkewicz explained. In both cases, the city did receive grant funds so they now want to rescind the borrowing authority. The action is intended to take the debt off the books.

The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

5. **New Business**

None.

6. **Adjourn:** There being no further business, Councilor Quinlan moved to adjourn. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion carried on a roll call vote of 4 Yes, 0 No. The meeting adjourned at 12:16 a.m.

**Contact: G-L Sciarra @glsciarra@northamptonma.gov or 413-570-3133**



## ***Committee on Finance and the Northampton City Council***

*Councilor Gina-Louise Sciarra, Chair  
Councilor Marianne LaBarge, Vice Chair  
Councilor Michael J. Quinlan, Jr.  
Councilor John Thorpe*

### **On-line Zoom Meeting**

Meeting Date: November 12, 2020

Note: The Finance Committee Meeting took place during a special City Council Meeting as announced. The City Council Meeting began at 5:30 p.m.

1. **Meeting Called To Order:** At 5:32 p.m., Councilor Sciarra called the meeting to order.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were committee members Gina-Louise Sciarra (Chair), Marianne LaBarge (Vice-Chair), Michael J. Quinlan, Jr. and John Thorpe. Also present from the City Council were William H. Dwight, Alex Jarrett, Rachel Maiore and Jim Nash. (Karen Foster was absent.) In attendance were Mayor David Narkewicz and Executive Director of Downtown Northampton Association (DNA) Amy Wilson Cahillane.
3. **Financial Orders**
  - A. **20.148 An Order To Suspend Parking Fees On Certain Days**  
Councilor Sciarra read the order.

Councilor LaBarge moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor Thorpe seconded.

He typically brings an order suspending parking fees forward for the end of November and December, Mayor Narkewicz reminded. The city has not traditionally suspended parking fees on Bag Day. This year, given the circumstances and challenges facing downtown businesses, when the decision was made to hold Yule Days, he decided to bring forward a request to suspend parking fees. It was made too late for the regularly-scheduled council meeting, thus necessitating the special meeting.

The four days at the end of the order have been enacted the past five, six or seven years, so the only difference is Yule days (Thursday, November 19, 2020 to Saturday, November 21, 2020). This is a onetime change.

Councilor LaBarge made a motion to recognize Downtown Northampton Association (DNA) Executive Director Amy Cahillane. Councilor Quinlan seconded. The motion passed unanimously 8:0 (Councilor Foster absent).

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She appreciates the mayor bringing the order forward and councilors considering it, Director Cahillane said. Even though parking is available, they would like to give the marketing community another tool to draw people downtown. This gives businesses the opportunity to tell their customers parking is free.

Councilor Dwight noted that emergency orders are still in place to monitor the behavior of customers. If past experience is an indication, he imagines they will see a lot of people jamming into stores and the like. With the documented increase in COVID cases in Massachusetts, even though they're on the low end, he is wondering how they will maintain that level of vigilance amidst pandemic shopping enthusiasm.

Director Cahillane said she could share what some of the stores are doing but would defer to the mayor. All of the stores have social distancing requirements in place and many, because of concerns over holiday congestion, are doing shopping by appointment to avoid big crowds. All of the Bag Day discounts are being extended to on-line shopping as well. All of the businesses recognize necessary health measures and are taking steps to mitigate risk.

The idea of spreading it over four days was to reduce crowding, Mayor Narkewicz advised. There is no bag, Director Cahillane added.

All of the regulations remain in place, Mayor Narkewicz assured. The health department will have its downtown ambassadors out and he assumes the DNA will have its ambassadors out as well. Public health enforcement continues to be active and this doesn't obviate any of the rules in place. They are expecting masks and hand sanitizer to be in use.

In response to a question about whether the discount is uniform, Director Cahillane said it is not because it was too much to ask stores to offer 20% discounts uniformly in this climate.

Councilor Sciarra asked where people could find more information.

It will be on the DNA and Gazette website and Northampton.live.

Director Cahillane referred to the lack of consensus on discounts, Councilor Nash noted. He sat in on some of the DNA meetings and wanted to recognize Cahillane's leadership in bringing downtown businesses into consensus on holding "Yule Days" to replace Bag Days. She was against the idea of bringing back Bag Days and led the downtown businesses to adopt this alternative. He commended her skill in navigating this particularly thorny issue during the pandemic.

There being no further questions, Councilor Sciarra called the motion to a vote, and it passed with 4 Yes, 0 No by roll call vote.

4. **New Business**

None.

5. **Adjourn:** There being no further business, Councilor Quinlan moved to adjourn. Councilor Thorpe seconded. The motion carried on a roll call vote of 4 Yes, 0 No. The meeting adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

**Contact:** G-L Sciarra @glsciarra@northamptonma.gov or 413-570-3133



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Councilor Michael J. Quinlan, Jr.  
Councilor John Thorpe*

### **On-line Zoom Meeting**

Meeting Date: July 15, 2021

Note: The Finance Committee Meeting took place during a City Council Meeting as announced. The City Council Meeting began at 7 p.m.

1. **Meeting Called To Order:** At 10:12 p.m., Councilor Sciarra called the meeting to order.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were committee members Gina-Louise Sciarra (Chair), Marianne LaBarge (Vice-Chair), Michael J. Quinlan, Jr. and John Thorpe. Also present from the City Council were William H. Dwight, Alex Jarrett, Karen Foster, Rachel Maiore and Jim Nash. Also present were Mayor David Narkewicz, Finance Director Charlene Nardi, Office of Planning and Sustainability (OPS) Director Wayne Feiden and Administrative Assistant Laura Krutzler.
3. **Approval of Minutes of June 3, 2021 and June 7, 2021**  
Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the minutes of June 3, 2021 and June 7, 2021. Councilor Thorpe seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.
4. **FINANCIAL ORDERS**
  - A. **21.301 An Order To Appropriate FY2022 Cash Capital Funds To Various Capital Projects**  
Councilor Sciarra read the order.

Councilor LaBarge moved to forward the order to the full City Council with a positive recommendation. Councilor Quinlan seconded.

This is an annual vote, Finance Director Charlene Nardi presented. Councilors approved the cash capital projects as part of the FY2022 budget. The council already voted the \$407,500 and, at this point, is just allocating the money to the individual projects.

Councilor Quinlan asked about the \$15,000 appropriated to the Parks and Recreation Department for city field improvements. He is curious as to why this goes to Parks and Rec since his understanding is that the DPW maintains the fields.

Director Nardi said she is not sure exactly what the money is for, but she understands that it is an annual allocation under the direction of Parks and Rec Department Director Ann-Marie Moggio.

Councilor Jarrett said he is getting questions from his constituents about the upgrades to the senior center.

Finance Director Nardi said she knows Senior Services Director Marie Westburg is working with Central Services Director David Pomerantz on the renovation but doesn't have the specifics on what is being done. When she was speaking with Director Westburg she was talking about making it feel more welcoming and lowering the desks to give it less of a hotel feel. She said she would be happy to get more information, but Councilor Jarrett said he would reach out to Ms. Westburg directly.

Councilor Jarrett said he noticed in the capital plan that the Planning Department request for Multi-Use Trails was actually \$60,000 so he was wondering why the appropriation is for only \$50,000.

Director Feiden said he doesn't know why they are being funded for less than what they asked for. They're greedy and will take all the money they can. The planning office is soliciting proposals for feasibility studies for the next 10 years for bike path extensions, so if they don't get all the money they will do fewer studies. They would like more funding but it is not a crisis for them.

Councilor Jarrett asked if the specific traffic calming projects being funded with the \$25,000 for DPW – Traffic Calming are known, since these aren't listed in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Director Nardi said she doesn't know since she wasn't part of building this budget, but she would be happy to get that information.

There being no further questions, the motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

**B. 21.302 An Order to Approve FY2021 Budget Transfers**

Councilor Sciarra read the order.

Councilor Quinlan moved to forward the order to the full City Council with a positive recommendation. Councilor Thorpe seconded.

The transfer to Legal Services is for land acquisitions for the Roundhouse parking lot and for legal services related to a law suit that was active this past spring, Director Nardi explained. The Health Department slightly exceeded its budget for office supplies, she added.

The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

**C. 21.303 An Order To Surplus City Land For Affordable And Attainable Housing At Chapel Street, Oak Street And Evergreen Road**

Councilor Sciarra read the order.

Councilor Quinlan moved to forward the order to the full City Council with a positive recommendation. Councilor LaBarge seconded.

The City Council has done two things in recent months that made these projects possible, Director Feiden reminded. First, councilors passed a series of zoning changes in the spring that allowed more density when City Council Committee on Finance Meeting Minutes for July 15, 2021

creating affordable housing and creating half-scale units, thus solving some site constraints of the particular properties. Second, the council approved Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding for a revolving fund for pre-development activities related to affordable housing. In the past, planners used block grant money and CPA funds to respond to specific development proposals before them. In speaking to affordable housing developers, one of the things planners heard is that it would be helpful if, besides being a funding agency, the city could actually help find parcels suitable for development.

Most of the affordable housing being created in Northampton for the foreseeable future is rental units as that is what is strongly encouraged by federal and state programs. That makes sense for places like downtown and Florence. Affordable housing home ownership is always going to be a niche market or harder-to-get funding, but some of the smaller sites like Oak Street and Evergreen Road are perfect for it.

As they begin to think about the so-called missing middle - this is where the 800 s.f. units come in - they try to see whether there's a way to do both. Affordable housing zoning only applies if at least 50% of the units are affordable housing. Evergreen can at most be two units so the thought is doing one affordable unit and one market-rate unit but limited in size to 800 s.f.

They are asking for authorization now because they don't want to spend a lot of money on due diligence until they are sure they are going to be able to do something at the end of the day. As an example, when they started planning for the development of Woodland Drive, they thought they were going to be able to do two affordable-rate units and one market rate. After engaging the neighborhood, they ended up with a compromise of one affordable unit. At this point they don't know exactly what they are going to do but having the council's authority allows them to spend the money and engage the community to come up with a proposal.

Councilor Dwight asked for clarification of what is proposed for the Chapel Street property; whether affordable, attainable or market-rate housing.

Director Feiden answered by first reviewing definitions: "affordable housing" is a federal definition referring to housing affordable to people earning 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) which includes Springfield. Most rental programs are intended for applicants earning 60% of the AMI or below. "Attainable" doesn't really have a definition since it means something different depending on the market; i.e. - attainable housing in San Francisco is more expensive than attainable housing in Northampton.

Aspirationally, they like mixed income projects, but the challenge is that federal programs - which are the biggest source of funding - don't really reward doing mixed-income. The North Commons project is big enough to do it. The smallest project for which a tax credit is available is 20 units. All that said, most likely Chapel would just be affordable but it would really depend on the development partner. It takes a big project like North Commons to do mixed income. 155 Live is the only affordable housing project that is mixed income but most of the smaller affordable projects are not. He assumes Chapel would be all affordable. They are aiming for Oak Street and Evergreen to be mixed.

Councilor LaBarge said she is a little leery about mixed development because of the failure of the model on Emerson Way in Ward 6. Although the development received approval from the Planning Board, a new owner could no longer afford to build the affordable units and they were instead transferred to the Burts Bog development. "We really got hurt with that development," she commented.

Director Feiden said she raised some important points he'd like to address. The only way Northampton can deal with the housing crisis in general is an 'all of the above' strategy; there's no silver bullet he asserted. The subdivision regulations have a provision to allow waivers from certain requirements for developers in exchange for providing affordable housing. In his 32 years in Northampton the city has never had a totally private-sector driven affordable housing project that works. In San Francisco, Boston, New York, etc., developers can do what are called cross-subsidies, which are possible in very hot markets. Northampton has not been successful in getting a cross-subsidy program. Doug Kohl thought it could work but he didn't have outside money. It worked in the Ice Pond subdivision, but developers there had deep subsidies. Doug Kohl aspirationally thought he could do it with outside money but proved to be mistaken. The subdivision regulations don't require the affordable housing to be on site. Doug Kohl offered to do it on site, but the numbers didn't work.

They are still working with the developers. At last count, they were doing eight affordable units, two on Emerson Way and six on Burts Pit Road.

In response to a question from Councilor Jarrett, Director Feiden said they will be doing more due diligence for Oak Street, including neighborhood meetings. He did a back of an envelope sketch some years ago which showed 1.3 acres being used for affordable housing and the remaining four acres for some other city purpose. They are doing some due diligence on the entire property, including wetland delineation and hazardous waste investigation.

Councilor Sciarra offered huge appreciation to Director Feiden and the Office of Planning and Sustainability (OPS) for helping to identify these possibilities and the much more active city involvement in development of affordable housing they've seen recently. She really appreciates this shift she's seeing, she enthused.

The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

5. **New Business**

None.

6. **Adjourn:** There being no further business, Councilor Quinlan moved to adjourn. Councilor Thorpe seconded. The motion carried on a roll call vote of 4 Yes, 0 No. The meeting adjourned at 10:43 p.m.

**Contact: G-L Sciarra @glsciarra@northamptonma.gov or 413-570-3133**

MASSACHUSETTS

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*In City Council*

August 19, 2021

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Upon recommendation of the Mayor

21.305 An Order to Reprogram CS Surplus Funds to CS 2005 Vehicle Replacement

*Ordered, that*

\$8,526.25 of the surplus funds remaining in the Central Services HVAC Tech Van account (19303 585902) and \$9,473.75 of the surplus funds remaining in the Central Service Recreation Roof Field project (19303 586230), be reprogrammed and added to the original appropriation of \$45,000 for a total of \$63,000 for the Central Services Replacement of the 2005 City Maintenance Vehicle.

**City of Northampton**  
MASSACHUSETTS

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*In City Council*

August 19, 2021

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Upon recommendation of the Mayor

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**21.306 An Order to Appropriate Transportation Infrastructure Enhancement Funds to Hotel Bridge Improvements**

*Whereas*, the city has received \$2,383.50 from the Commonwealth Transportation Infrastructure Enhancement Trust Fund for trips conducted by Transportation Network Companies in Massachusetts for calendar year 2020; and

*Whereas*, the funds must be appropriated by City Council upon the recommendation and approval of the Mayor; and

*Whereas*, the funds must be used to address the impact of transportation network services on municipal roads, bridges and other transportation infrastructure or any other public purpose substantially related to the operation of transportation network services in the city;

*Ordered, that*

The amount of \$2,383.50 be appropriated from the Commonwealth Transportation Infrastructure Enhancement Fund (Fund 2316) to be used for the costs related to structural and road surface improvements to the Hotel Bridge to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

# City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

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*In City Council*

August 19, 2021

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Upon recommendation of the Mayor

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21.307 An Order to Reprogram \$15,000 from Safety Village Surplus to Sheldon Field Dugout Replacement

**Whereas**, the City is working with the students of Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School to remove and replace the dugouts at Sheldon Field;

**Whereas**, the City will provide the materials and Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School students will provide the labor;

*Ordered, that*

\$15,000 of the remaining balance in CS Rec 7 Safety Village Replacement (19303 586231) be reprogrammed to support the Sheldon Field Dugout Replacement Project.

**City of Northampton**  
MASSACHUSETTS

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*In City Council* August 19, 2021

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Upon recommendation of the Mayor

21.308 An Order to Reprogram Funds for Safety Netting for Florence Recreation Fields

*Ordered, that*

\$9,844 of the remaining balance in CS Rec 7 Safety Village Replacement (19303 586231) be reprogrammed to support the Safety Netting – Florence Recreation Fields Project (19303 586237).

# City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

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*In City Council*

August 19, 2021

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Upon recommendation of the Mayor

21.309 An Order to Authorize Spending \$2,577.62 from Equipment Firefighting Donation Account on  
UTV and Trailer

*Ordered, that*

the Northampton City Council in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 53 A (Grants and gifts; acceptance and expenditure) authorizes the expenditure of \$2,577.62 from the Equipment Firefighting Donation account (2529) to be used together with the original appropriation of \$26,500 to replace the 1998 Quad with a UTV (19303 586508) and purchase a trailer.

MASSACHUSETTS

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*In City Council*

August 19, 2021

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Upon recommendation of the Mayor

21.314 An Order to Reprogram Funds for Florence Fire Station Repaving

*Ordered, that*

\$11,658.52 in the Reserve for Bond Premium (3000 328100) and \$3,061.48 remaining in the CS Forbes Window Project FY20 (19303 586219), be reprogrammed and added to the original appropriation of \$65,000 for a total of \$79,720 for the Florence Fire Station Repaving Project (19303 584192).