



City Council Committee on Legislative Matters and the Northampton City Council

Members

Councilor Alex Jarrett, Chair

Councilor Marissa Elkins, Vice Chair

Councilor Stanley Moulton, III

Councilor Jim Nash

MEETING MINUTES

Date: January 10, 2022 Organizational Meeting

Time: 5 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

1. **Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call:** At 5 p.m., Acting Chair Alex Jarrett called the meeting to order. On a roll call, the following councilors were present: Councilor Alex Jarrett, Councilor Stanley W. Moulton, III and Councilor Jim Nash. Councilor Marissa Elkins was absent on roll call but joined at 5:30 p.m. Also present was Administrative Assistant Laura Krutzler.

Councilor Jarrett announced that the meeting was being audio/video recorded.

2. **Public Comment**

No members of the public were present.

Set Meeting Schedule for 2022 – 2023

Since Councilor Elkins was not present, Councilor Jarrett skipped the first agenda item (Election of Chair/Vice Chair) and moved to agenda item #7 (Set Meeting Schedule for 2022 – 2023).

Councilor Nash moved to accept the dates as presented. Councilor Moulton seconded.

Councilor Moulton raised a question about the time. He said it struck him that 5 to 6:30 p.m. is generally family meal time.

Members discussed. Councilor Nash said he didn't recall there being a lot of pushback around 5 o'clock meetings. Councilor Jarrett noted that they typically hold joint public hearings with the Planning Board at 7 p.m. when those are scheduled.

Councilor Moulton suggested that they consider a different time if they do have a hearing.

Councilor Jarrett said he would like to hear from Councilor Elkins before changing the time.

The motion passed 3:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Elkins absent.

3. Approval of Minutes of November 8, 2021

Councilor Jarrett said the minutes would be accepted at the next meeting.

4. Items Referred to Committee

A. 22.003 An Ordinance Relative to Parking Areas Reserved for Municipal Use, referred by City Council - 1/6/2022

Councilor Jarrett said he thinks they are all familiar with the proposal from the City Council meeting last Thursday. It is for the addition of 10 parking spaces in the Roundhouse parking lot.

Councilor Nash said the question of which departments will be using the spaces came up, and he sent the question to Parking Administrator Nanci Forestall.

Councilor Moulton said he did his own research and discovered that the 10 spaces are all clearly marked. Four are for Central Services, three are for the School Department and one each is for the Board of Health, Assessor and Treasurer. They are assigned to specific departments, he confirmed.

Councilor Nash moved to forward the ordinance with a positive recommendation. Councilor Moulton seconded. The motion passed 3:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Elkins absent.

B. 22.004 An Ordinance Relative to Prohibited U-Turns, referred by City Council - 1/6/2022

Councilor Moulton moved to forward the ordinance with a positive recommendation. Councilor Nash seconded.

A question was raised as to where people can turn around if they can't make a U-turn here, Councilor Nash reminded. Maggie Chan said the answer is not clear but that the main reason they are making this change is that making a U-turn at this crosswalk is terrible. The DPW will be collecting data for future decisions to further improve things there.

Councilor Moulton said he also did some research. Councilor Nash mentioned the likeliest spot for a U-turn would be at the end of the median, but traffic was parked on both sides of the street there and it was clearly a tight spot. He doesn't think they should be encouraging U-turns until some distance west beyond Murphy's real estate office. He wondered if U-turn ordinances are intersection specific. He looked at the ordinance (312-65 U-turns Prohibited) to try to find a template but there are no other prohibited U-turns in the code.

His question is whether they could write an ordinance that specifies that U-turns are prohibited there and x number of feet west.

Councilor Nash suggested they move on this recommendation and continue to do research. They could always come back with an amendment. This would eliminate the greatest danger of making a U-turn into the crosswalk and eliminate the pedestrian conflict. He recommended sending the ordinance forward with either a positive or neutral recommendation but asking for the assistance of the DPW or city solicitor to see if there is additional language needed to make this enforceable. He wouldn't want to hold this up since it has to do with traffic safety at the high school.

Councilor Moulton said he is comfortable with the suggestion that they ask both solicitor Seewald and the DPW for guidance on how they might extend the U-turn prohibition if at all. He said he would accept this suggestions of seeking additional guidance as a friendly amendment.

The motion for a positive recommendation as amended to seek further guidance from Attorney Seewald and the DPW passed 3:0 by roll call vote.

C. 22.005 An Ordinance Relative to Off-Street Service Areas, referred by City Council - 1/6/2022
Councilor Jarrett read the relevant text.

Councilor Nash moved to forward the ordinance to the full city council with a positive recommendation. Councilor Moulton seconded.

Councilor Moulton said he walked the area, which is to the side of where the farmer's market takes place and is satisfied that there won't be any impact on the market. As stated Thursday, it is clearly intended as a loading/unloading zone.

Councilor Nash said he sent the question to the parking administrator of whether the area will be available for use by businesses other than Thornes Market such as the Teapot or the farmer's market or customers loading or unloading purchases from Thornes or other businesses. It was not clear from looking at the ordinance how the city regulates the use of these zones, he shared. He thinks they will get those answers in time for the council meeting.

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

5. Adjourn

Councilor Moulton moved to adjourn. Councilor Nash seconded. The motion passed unanimously 3:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Elkins absent. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Councilor Elkins joined the meeting at 5:30 p.m. Since no one had left the meeting, by mutual consent, councilors decided to reconvene to take up the election of Chair/Vice Chair.

Councilor Moulton moved to reconvene. Councilor Elkins seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote. The Committee reconvened at 5:34 p.m.

6. Election of Chair/Vice Chair

Councilor Jarrett opened the floor to nominations for Chair.

Councilor Nash nominated Councilor Jarrett as chair. He had a whole speech prepared, but in the last half hour as acting chair Councilor Jarrett demonstrated everything he was going to say about him, Councilor Nash said. **Councilor Moulton seconded.**

There being no further nominations, Councilor Jarrett stated that he has a history with facilitation with his business, an eye for detail for crafting language and an understanding of their obligation to consider equity in their ordinances.

Following a roll call vote, and **Councilor Jarrett was elected chair by acclamation.**

Councilor Jarrett opened the floor to nominations for Vice Chair.

Councilor Nash nominated Councilor Elkins. Councilor Moulton seconded.

There being no further nominations, Councilor Jarrett closed nominations.

Councilor Nash stated that Councilor Elkins is one of their At-Large councilors, is an attorney and has served on the Planning Board, and he thinks she brings experience and skills to the table that would make her an excellent vice chair.

Councilor Elkins accepted the nomination. She is really excited to be on this committee and sees its role as making sure that legislation the council chooses to pass passes muster in terms of constitutionality and the breadth of their authority and maximizes what they can do with an eye toward equity and sustainability.

Councilor Jarrett added that he appreciates her commitment to moving them forward on zoning ordinances.

The nomination passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Councilor Moulton moved to adjourn. Councilor Nash seconded.

Councilor Elkins asked if members would consider changing the meeting time to 5:30 p.m. since she has a standing meeting from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Councilor Moulton withdrew his motion to adjourn.

Councilor Moulton moved to reconsider the meeting schedule adopted earlier. Councilor Nash seconded.

The administrative assistant suggested that instead of reconsidering the schedule, members could simply vote to amend the meeting time since the meeting dates would remain the same.

Councilor Moulton withdrew his motion to reconsider and instead moved to consider an amendment to the meeting time. Councilor Nash seconded.

Councilor Nash said he would be fine with meeting at 5:30 p.m. After briefly considering the alternative of meeting later (7 or 7:30 p.m.), members reached a consensus to meet at 5:30 p.m.

Councilor Moulton moved to amend the meeting schedule with the dates as provided and a meeting time of 5:30 p.m. Councilor Elkins seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

Councilor Elkins moved to adjourn. Councilor Nash seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

Prepared By:

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