



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

Committee Members:

*Chair: Councilor Karen Foster  
Vice-Chair: Councilor Jamila Gore  
Councilor Marianne LaBarge  
Councilor Garrick Perry*

Meeting Minutes

Date: January 3, 2023  
Time: 5 p.m.  
Via Teleconference

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

At 5 p.m., Councilor Karen Foster, Chair, called the meeting to order. On a roll call, Councilor Foster, Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge and Councilor Garrick Perry were present. Vice Chair Councilor Jamila Gore was absent.

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

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There being no members of the public present, Councilor Foster moved to the next item on the agenda.

3. MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 6, 2022, NOVEMBER 7, 2022 AND NOVEMBER 22, 2022

Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the minutes of September 6, 2022, November 7, 2022 and November 22, 2022 as a group. Councilor Perry seconded. The motion passed unanimously 3:0 by roll call vote.

4. ITEMS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

A. 22.205 Appointment to Human Rights Commission, referred by City Council - 12/01/2022  
Human Rights Commission

**Alton McKray** 80 Damon Rd., #8201, Northampton

Term: July 2022-June 2025

*To fill a vacancy*

Councilor Perry said he had the pleasure of talking to Alton. He really enjoys talking to anyone looking into serving the city and Alton was also excited to meet him. As Councilor Foster had informed him, Alton had actually met Human Rights Commission (HRC) Chair Megan Paik at an event and, when presented with the opportunity to join the HRC, was very excited and immediately applied. He has lived in the area for about 12 years having come because of the VA hospital since he is a vet. He has done a lot of advocacy work with the VA and feels that that previous advocacy work plus his passion for the city makes him a great choice for the HRC.

They talked about why it is important for a diverse group of people to be a part of these commissions. He unfortunately has also had some negative racial interactions with the police but, instead of turning him away from the city, he felt that was another call for him to have a voice.

With that being said, **Councilor Perry said he could do nothing but positively recommend the appointment of Alton McKray to the Human Rights Commission. Councilor LaBarge seconded.**

Councilor Foster spoke in favor of the appointment.

**The motion passed unanimously 3:0 by roll call vote.**

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

Councilor LaBarge asked about inviting the DPW director to City Services to update them on vacancies in the DPW since she is up to 19 vacant positions and is having great difficulty filling them. She's even increased some of the salaries. A resident on Cardinal Way who is an assistant DPW director in Chicopee told her Chicopee is having the same problem.

Councilor Foster said she could reach out to the Mayor's office on that.

Councilor LaBarge said she was shocked to learn today that Department of Community Care (DCC) Implementation Manager Sean Donovan no longer works for the city and would also like to know what the Mayor's expectations are for filling that position.

That may be a question for Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Commissioner Merridith O'Leary, Councilor Foster said. She also has residents who are eager for an update on the DCC. She said she would follow up with the Mayor's office on these two items.

6. **ADJOURN**

There being no further business, **Councilor Perry moved to adjourn. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion carried 3:0 by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 p.m.**

*Prepared By:*

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