



## **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: May 1, 2023  
Time: 5 p.m.  
Via Teleconference

1. **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

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

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

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

3. **MINUTES OF APRIL 3, 2023**

**Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the minutes of April 3, 2023. Councilor Gore seconded. The motion passed unanimously 3:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Perry absent.**

4. **ITEMS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE**

A. **23.283 Appointments to Various Committees, referred to City Services Committee - 3/30/2023**

**Conservation Commission**

**Kevin Lake**, 35 Washington Avenue, Northampton  
Term: July 2023-June 2026  
*Reappointment*

**Disability Commission**

**Kathy Murri**, 50 Laurel Park, Northampton  
Term: July 2023-June 2026  
*Reappointment*

**Housing Partnership**

**Edgardo Cancel**, 37 Indian Hill Road, Florence  
Term: July 2023- June 2026

*Reappointment*

**Gordon Shaw**, 482 Haydenville Road, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Leeds,  
Term: July 2022-June 2025  
*Reappointment*

**Hannah Shaffer**, 115 Milton Street, Florence  
Term: July 2023-June 2026  
*Reappointment*

**Ace Tayloe**, 14 Fruit Street, Northampton  
Term: July 2023-June 2026  
*Reappointment*

**Parks & Recreation Commission**

**Julia Chevan**, 8 Cosmian Avenue, Florence  
Term: July 2023-June 2026  
*Reappointment*

**David Cronin**, 103 Pioneer Knolls, Florence  
Term: July 2022- June 2025  
*Reappointment*

**Whiting Street Fund Committee**

**Joseph Misterka**, 312 Chesterfield Road, Leeds  
Term: July 2023- June 2026  
*Reappointment*

Councilor Foster read the reappointments into the record.

**Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the reappointments as a group. Councilor Gore seconded. The motion passed unanimously 3:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Perry absent.**

B. **23.295 Appointments to Various Committees, referred to City Services - 4/13/2023**

C. **Energy & Sustainability Commission**

**Angela Gregory**, 595 Haydenville Road, Leeds  
Term: May 2023-June 2026  
*To fill a vacancy*

**Eric Winkler**, 105 Pine Street, Florence  
Term: May 2023-June 2026  
*To fill a vacancy*

**Urban Forestry Commission**

**Richard Parrish**, 138 South Street, Northampton  
Term: May 2023-June 2026  
*To fill a vacancy*

**Zoning Board of Appeals**

**Sherry Taylor**, 25 Edwards Square, Northampton (Associate Member)  
Term: May 2023-June 2026  
*To fill a vacancy*

Councilor LaBarge said she was very impressed with Angela Gregory. She asked why she wanted to be on the Energy and Sustainability Commission and was told that she had dedicated over 20 years of her professional life to the realm of sustainability. She has worked in various sectors with a sustainability focus from political lobby groups to grassroots political organizations as well as in the academic sector and as a small business owner. She has been a resident since 2008 and has sought out meaningful ways to connect with and support her community. She has participated regularly on the reuse committee as well as the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee and has created three public-facing communication materials for the city, including one that was a personal project and is now a city-sanctioned document on the DPW's' traffic-calming site. Two others are translations of extensive planning documents (the Sustainable Northampton Comprehensive Plan and Affordable & Attainable Housing Plan) with a media-rich map of dramatic areas of public consumption. She has been deeply engaged in sustainability topics throughout her recent Masters in Sustainability Science with a concentration in urban sustainability and as the associate director of the Energy Transition Institute at the University of Massachusetts Amherst where she has been supporting research around energy justice.

When asked about the expertise she could bring to the commission and what possible changes she would like to see happen, Angela said she felt that her expertise would bring topically-expansive energy efficiency on a residential and large building scale to understand how the energy system in Massachusetts functions. She holds a certification as an LEED Green associate as well as certificates in climate hazard and green infrastructure planning as well as permaculture design and nature-based solutions. She has a strong understanding of the research and legislative landscape in Massachusetts and also brings emerging knowledge from the academic realm. She has extensive experience with initiative building and implementation and translation of information from technical material to general audiences and is comfortable communicating with the public around the topics of sustainability and energy. As a new member of the commission, she would first start by working to understand the commission's trajectory and city policy guiding its vision as well as the commission's main priorities for the next few years. She would then work to gather additional information and resources to help inform the process in addition to her existing knowledge and experience. She believes that she can bring an informed perspective that is current as well as willingness to work with others on behalf of the city and to get the work done.

She feels it is important that the commission have a strong foundation of mutual respect and effective means of communication and understands this needs to be a working commission to function effectively. She imagines each commissioner will spend time outside of meetings to advance the work. She believes it is important to have transparency and accountability across the commission and aims to create a positive rapport with her peers as they work together to meet their charge. She looks forward to serving and hopes they can provide concrete and actionable outcomes to address climate action for their city.

**Councilor LaBarge moved to make a positive recommendation to appoint Angela Gregory to the Northampton Energy and Sustainability Commission (NESC) to the full City Council. Councilor Gore seconded. The motion passed unanimously 3:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Perry absent.**

Councilor Gore said she talked to Eric Winkler, who has lived in Northampton since 1987 and has a PhD in Environmental Chemistry and Soil Science. He has years of experience in storm water and waste water technology. He spent three decades working in energy and the environment, during which he did small-scale wastewater management before transferring in the 2000's to energy for regional power systems and working for UMass. He now does energy consulting. As a professor at UMass, he taught for 11 years and is now retired and wants to give back to the community.

Former planning director Wayne Feiden approached him to join NESC. He applied and the position was filled, but then he was made aware that the position was open again and he applied again. He has the time and experience to dedicate to this position. Most of his life he's been working on sustainability and he has a very detailed knowledge of the power grid. He would like to learn more about the Sustainable Northampton Plan and to focus on regeneration and he is interested in community choice aggregation. He wants to learn what's being done to become net zero in seven years and to be able to move things forward in the commission. He believes in educating the public on the power grid because it's complicated. Changing infrastructure is difficult and trying to find the equity in that is what he wants to focus on. Energy is not going to be cheaper as they focus on being more sustainable and he wants to talk to people about the economics of climate change and power generation. Power generation will never be less expensive so he wants to educate the public on that.

**Councilor Gore moved to positively recommend Eric Winkler to NESC. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion passed unanimously 3:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Perry absent.**

Councilor Perry is sick and was unable to make the meeting but gave her a brief summary of his conversation with Richard Parrish, Councilor Foster related.

Richard Parrish has been volunteering with Tree Northampton for years and is ready to help with the urban tree landscape even more by serving on the Urban Forestry Commission. Councilor Perry felt good about making a positive recommendation on his behalf.

**Councilor LaBarge moved to positively recommend the appointment of Richard Parrish to the Urban Forestry Commission. Councilor Gore seconded. The motion passed unanimously 3:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Perry absent.**

She spoke to Sherry Taylor this morning, Councilor Foster related. She has lived in Northampton since 2007 and owns a number of rental properties. She is familiar with the ZBA process and her real interest in zoning and planning was piqued years ago when she was not able to build a garage on her property because it was too close to the property line. She was asked to serve by another member and has been open to serving for several years and just waiting for a vacancy. She loves Northampton and is looking forward to volunteering in a capacity that can benefit the city.

**Councilor Foster moved to forward the appointment of Sherry Taylor to the ZBA with a positive recommendation. Councilor Gore seconded. The motion passed unanimously 3:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Perry absent.**

## 5. NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Gore reminded councilors that they had accepted assignments at a previous meeting to look into public spaces where the City Council meeting could be accessed/viewed.

It slipped off the radar when the City Council decided to continue meeting in hybrid format, Councilor Foster said. The question might be whether the committee wants to continue pursuing this inquiry.

Councilor LaBarge said she would like to wait on that. Councilor Gore agreed.

Councilor Foster said they have their assignments and will revisit them when it feels needed.

Councilor LaBarge said she had brought up that JFK has excellent parking. They have residents in rural areas that do not want to come down to Main Street for council meetings. They had talked about holding meetings there on a rotating basis.

That may be a discussion for the full council, but she had been meaning to ask committee members how they want to continue meeting as a committee, Councilor Foster said.

Members decided to meet remotely in June and to put a broader discussion of meeting format moving forward on the June agenda.

Councilor Foster said she had reached out to the mayor's office on the suggestion of asking for an update on the Northampton Policing Review Committee (NPRC) report's recommendations. She has not heard back yet but said she would follow up.

And, Councilor Foster said she spoke to DPW Director LaScaleia on Friday. She is willing to come talk to them but doesn't think she has much new information to report. She said she could report on the status of vacancies at the budget hearing. She noted that it is an industry-wide shortage and the job market is very competitive. She has been using contractors as needed for really time-sensitive work.

Councilor LaBarge accepted an urgent outside phone call and the meeting recessed briefly until she could rejoin.

Councilor LaBarge said she talked to Director LaScaleia herself and also talked to a resident who is the assistant DPW director in another city. The director said she even went and raised the scale of the wages. She doesn't think they need to bring her in after all.

6. **ADJOURN**

There being no further business, **Councilor Gore moved to adjourn. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion carried 3:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Perry absent. The meeting was adjourned at 5:31 p.m.**

*Prepared By:*

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