



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 19, 2022

Virtual Meeting

This meeting took place during a regular meeting of the Northampton City Council.

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

At 8:08 p.m., Chair Karen Foster called the meeting to order. On a roll call, Councilor Foster, Councilor Jamila Gore, Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge and Councilor Garrick Perry were present. Also present were City Councilors Marissa Elkins, Alex Jarrett, Rachel Maiore, Stanley Moulton, III, Jim Nash, Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra, Central Services Director Pat McCarthy and Administrative Assistant Laura Krutzler.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Councilor Foster offered those present the opportunity to comment, but no one took her up on it.

3. ITEMS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

A. 22.102 Appointment of Patrick McCarthy as Central Services Director, referred by City Council – 5/5/2022

Mayor Sciarra said she is very happy to bring them the appointment of Patrick McCarthy as Director of Central Services. As they know, they have been without a director for most of this calendar year after the retirement of former director David Pomerantz. Mr. McCarthy has been the Facilities Coordinator here since 2015. During the time they have been without a director he has really been filling in and finding himself doing multiple jobs. He has a wonderful background of working in public and affordable housing and doing other project management and construction and brings an unbelievable wealth of knowledge and experience to this position. He is also a joy to be with and has a very calming presence which she thinks is a really good quality in a director. He works very well with people and is a wonderful communicator. She is very happy and excited to be putting forward his appointment.

Pat McCarthy said he is humbled and honored to be before them tonight. He has actually worked with and in the City of Northampton for the past 22 years, first in his capacity as a project manager for Valley Community Development Corp. (Valley CDC) as well as doing a small stint as an intern in the planning department back in 2001 with James Thompson, who was his teacher for a certificate at Holyoke Community College. He did a short stint in Springfield in 2012 and 2015 working on the renovation of tornado-damaged buildings and had the opportunity to come back to Northampton after his agency

purchased the New South Street Apartments. In 2015, he started working under former Director David Pomerantz as the facilities project manager. He has enjoyed that position and is happy he will be maintaining a lot of those functions.

Councilor Maiore said she was also impressed with his background and glad he has already joined them at the Northampton Energy and Sustainability Commission (NESC). She asked his thoughts on how he would integrate the climate and energy crisis into his decision-making and into his department.

One of his interview questions was relevant to that so he had the opportunity to give it some thought, Mr. McCarthy responded. Making Northampton carbon neutral by 2030 is a huge task and has actually informed a lot of their decisions since he started working there in 2015. If they were to have a boiler break down say at the Academy of Music, they actually did a lot of research trying to find the most efficient boiler or way to reduce carbon usage and increase energy efficiency so they've actually been doing this on a day-to-day basis. His understanding is that 2030 is a goal, and that it's going to take a series of very small baby steps to get there. Right now it seems an insurmountable leap to get there by 2030 but it is a spectacular goal – very positive – and informs some of their day-to-day decisions moving forward. Some of his thoughts are that the technology has not caught up to the reality and they need to be cautious with their decisions. For example, if they replace a boiler it probably has a life span of 40 years. Heat pumps are still in their infancy and he thinks they need to proceed slowly and cautiously with each individual decision to make replacements of equipment in a smart way and also considering the budget. Eventually they will get there by keeping in mind that the goal is an important one and that they need to make those decisions on a day-to-day basis.

Councilor LaBarge said she is so happy he was selected. Just looking at his resume, how could they ever say no working with David Pomerantz. He has done a tremendous job here and she is very pleased with his selection.

It was an honor working under David Pomerantz, Mr. McCarthy noted. Dave was a fireman in his previous life and his personality reflected that. Nothing was a crisis to him after that work.

Councilor Nash said he served on the search committee and it was a real pleasure getting to know Mr. McCarthy during that process. He appreciates that his beginning was as an HVAC technician and that this has led him through a varied career. He has been involved in so many aspects of managing public buildings, bringing them on line and maintaining them.

Councilor Foster said his background particularly with municipal experience and public housing is a great background. She asked what initiatives he's excited to move forward with Central Services.

The energy management systems that the city has been wise enough to invest in over the years are somewhat underutilized, Mr. McCarthy observed. He is excited to have some control to try to use more of their capacity in service to the city. The city has two systems: Johnson Controls and Automated Logic. All of the buildings have one or the other. It gives them the opportunity not only to maintain the HVAC equipment they have but to gain insight on how to make changes in the future. He would like to get more staff in training on it.

Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the appointment of Patrick McCarthy as the new Central Services Director. Councilor Perry seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.

4. ADJOURN

There being no further business, Councilor Gore moved to adjourn. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion carried 4:0 by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Prepared By:

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