

## **DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

### **Select Committee on Pesticide Reduction of the Northampton City Council**

Date: July 8, 2019

Time: 10:00 a.m. –12:00 p.m.

Location: CityCouncilChambers

Puchalski Municipal Building

212 Main Street,

Northampton, MA

**Members:** Councilor Alisa F. Klein, Councilor James Nash, Adele Franks, Cynthia Suopis, Katherine Simmons

**Acting Chair Alisa Klein called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM**

**1. Alisa Klein announced that the meeting was being video and audio recorded**

**2. Introductions.** Alisa Klein welcomed everyone and ask that committee members introduce themselves.

Present: Alisa Klein, Jim Nash, Adele Franks, Cynthia Suopis

Absent: Katherine Simmons

**3. Nominations and vote for Chair and Vice-Chair**

Alisa Klein opened the floor for nominations for Chair of SCPR.

Motion was made by Alisa Klein to nominate Adele Franks as Chair, Jim Nash seconded the motion.

Alisa Klein called for other nominations. Finding none Ms. Klein closed nominations.

Alisa called for a voice vote to elect Adele Franks as Chair.

Yes: Alisa, Jim, and Cynthia

No: none

Abstained: Adele

**Adele Franks was elected Chair and** she assumed the role of Chair from Alisa Klein

Adele opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair of SCPR

Motion was made by Alisa Klein to nominate Cynthia Suopis as Vice Chair, Jim Nash seconded the motion.

Adele Franks closed nominations and called for a voice vote.

Yes: Alisa, Jim, Adele,

No: none

Abstained: Cynthia

Cynthia Suopis was elected Vice Chair

#### **4. Discussion and decision re: note-taking/clerk duties including scheduling of meetings**

Alisa shared that Jim Nash had volunteered to take the minutes for this meeting. Alisa shared that the SCPR does not have clerical staff assigned to the committee, requiring committee members to record minutes. Alisa suggested rotating this duty between members or possibly a committee member could take on the task. Cynthia volunteered to take minutes in future meetings. Alisa advised Cynthia to find another committee member to record the minutes should she be chairing the meeting.

Alisa shared that she would take on the responsibility scheduling meeting space and postings. Alisa also shared that Laura Krutzler, the Administrative Assistant for City Council was willing to assist the committee around scheduling and posting.

Discussion ensued concerning scheduling and the short time frame for the committees' work and Adele asked that this discussion take place during agenda item 10.

#### **5. Public comment**

Chris Helman of 625 Westhampton Road in Florence

Mr. Helman shared that he is a member of the Community Preservation Committee and that he is interested in seeing the city develop guidelines for pesticide use. He noted that recently the CPC had approved funding for herbicide application to address invasives on property managed by Broad Brook. Mr. Helman added that the CPC had also turned down a funding request at the community gardens also dealing with invasives. In each case the issue of safety was raised and Mr. Helman felt this discussion did not belong at the CPC, and he hopes the SCPR could arrive at recommendations around pesticides to guide their process.

Nancy Schroeder of Amherst

Ms. Schroeder share that she was attending to listen and learn. She noted that Northampton is well ahead of Amherst around having this discussion.

## **6.Presentation by City Solicitor Alan Seewald re: Massachusetts Open Meeting Law**

Attorney Seewald provided an overview of Open Meeting Law. He shared that a quorum of the committee is three. He strongly advised members to avoid serial email and avoid hitting “reply all” with committee members. All discussion needs to occur in a public meeting.

Attorney Seewald shared that minutes for all meetings are required. Lengthy notes are not needed, just a summary of the discussion and a record of any votes made by the committee. Attorney Seewald also shared that a committee member can meet remotely as long a quorum is physically present. He also cautioned that subcommittees need to be careful to not deliberate outside of a public meeting.

## **7.Discussion and decision re: regular meeting times**

Chair Adele Franks asked that we move this item to our discussion at item 9

## **8.Review of the Resolution Establishing A Select Committee on Pesticide Reduction**

Alisa Klein provided a summary of the “A Resolution Establishing a Select Committee On Pesticide Reduction”. She reviewed the resolution’s definition of pesticide and she spoke to a number of impacts highlighted in the resolution

Alisa Klein read into the record Item 2, The Committee Shall Study and Evaluate,

- A. The city’s current management of turf, conservation areas, and other municipal green space, particularly around schools and other locations where children play;
- B. Alternatives to pesticide use, including but not limited to, integrated pest management and organic management;
- C. Policies and practices from other jurisdictions to reduce pesticide use;
- D. Estimated costs as well as potential grants, incentive programs, and other financial resources to implement pesticide reduction projects

E. Recommend benchmarks with respect to the goal of achieving an overall reduction in the use of pesticides consistent with sound pest management practices; and

F. Other related issues.

### **9.Process and tasks/topics to cover—discussion and decision re: division of labor**

- Vision for final report to City Council
- Invitations to submit to Mayor for presentations by key City staff
- Effects of pesticide use
- Current management of municipal green spaces in Northampton, e.g. conservation areas; reservoir watershed; farmland; gardens; parks; playing fields; cemeteries; sidewalks and tree belts; and general highway/public works
- Policies and practices from other municipalities focused on pesticide reduction
- Estimated costs; potential grant programs; incentives available to municipalities
- Development of recommendations, including benchmarks for reduction, for City Council

Adele Franks opened discussion of this item first focusing on current management of municipal green spaces. Discussion ensued around the range of green space owned by the city, which departments heads the committee would like to hear from, and how best to work with the Mayor to seek the input of city administrators. Committee members shared that they would like to hear from the Department of Public Works, Board of Health, Planning Department, Agricultural Commission, Health Department, and School Department. Alisa Klein shared with the committee that the Mayor had expressed that the School Department is outside our jurisdiction. Both Adele Franks and Cynthia Suopis wanted to explore this limitation further. Alisa Klein suggested we invite the Mayor to our next meeting to discuss all these matters.

**Adele Franks committed to extending an invitation to the Mayor to our next meeting and that we would hold off on inviting department heads until after this discussion.**

**Adele Franks inquired with committee members about possible assignments.**

**Committee members volunteered to take the lead on these areas.**

**Cynthia and Adele- Exploring policies and practices from other communities**

**Cynthia and Jim - Engagement with Northampton city departments (including awareness of grant opportunities)**

**Alisa Klein- Grants, costs and funding opportunities**

**Katherine Simmons (assigned in her absence) - Effects of pesticide use**

During discussions committee members spoke of additional research and testimony outside of the tasks listed under item 9.

Cynthia would like to have information provided by a colleague at UMASS

Alisa and Cynthia would like to understand more about the MMA's stance and efforts around pesticide reduction

Jim would like to hear testimony from SCPR committee applicants who are currently involved with the management of city property or have developed practices toward pesticide reduction.

Adele asked that committee members come with a list of people they would like to hear from for our next meeting.

Adele would like us to develop a plan for outreach and community engagement and she plans to have this a topic on our agenda at our next meeting.

#### **10.Discussion of resources (Wakelets; Beyond Pesticides; ToxicsAction Center; NOFA;TURI;Chip Osborne;etc.)**

Alisa shared how she has established a Wakelet folder for the committee to store and access information.

#### **11.New business**

There was no new business

#### **12.Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn by Jim Nash at 11:45, Second by Alisa Klein, unanimous voice vote.