



MAYOR DAVID J. NARKEWICZ

**City of Northampton
Office of the Mayor
210 Main Street Room 12
Northampton, MA 01060-3199
(413) 587-1249 Fax: (413) 587-1275D
mayor@northamptonma.gov**

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Mayor David Narkewicz Will Not Seek Re-Election

NORTHAMPTON - Today Mayor David J. Narkewicz announced that he will not be a candidate for re-election to a fourth term as Mayor of Northampton in this fall's municipal election. He released the following statement:

Serving as Mayor of Northampton has been one of the greatest honors of my life and I have enjoyed working every day on behalf of the residents of this great city. As I begin my tenth year as mayor, I am extremely proud of the things we have accomplished together as a community.

We've stabilized and strengthened city and school budgets, reorganized our government and departments, increased transparency, access, and communication, and made record investments in critical priorities like education, infrastructure, affordable housing, open space, our parks and recreation areas, and the arts. We've done this through focused and disciplined stewardship of our finances over the last nine years, steadily rebuilding the city's depleted reserves year after year while increasing our bond rating from A to AAA+ during that same period. Twice we've presented multi-year budget plans to the voters of Northampton and twice they have affirmed them by passing general overrides in 2013 and 2020 by significant margins.

We've also worked to promote economic development, grow our tax base, and support local businesses in downtown Florence and Northampton, along the expanding King Street and Pleasant Street corridors, and at Village Hill. We've been regional leaders in protecting our business community from the potential negative impacts of casino gaming and we've been statewide leaders in welcoming the emerging medical and adult-use cannabis industry to our city. We've taken regional leadership roles in responding to public health issues from the opioid epidemic to the deadly COVID-19 pandemic. We've responded to the existential threat of global warming by being a national leader in sustainability and working to advance renewable energy, alternative transportation, and climate regeneration and resiliency.

Finally, we've stood up for our values as a safe and welcoming community. We've rejected the politics of hate and division and worked to serve the interests of all residents whether that meant standing up for LGBTQ+ equality, protecting immigrants by declaring ourselves a sanctuary city, defending frontline workers against wage theft, promoting gender equality, condemning racism in all of its forms and declaring unequivocally that Black Lives Matter, or serving the houseless

and other at-risk and marginalized people. These are the values that make our city great and they have been my compass as its leader.

When I first announced my candidacy for Mayor of Northampton back in March of 2011, I said it was time for “a new generation of leadership to move our great city forward.” Now, after what will be a decade of significant work and progress for Northampton, the time for new leadership has come again. Today I am announcing that I will not seek a fourth term as your mayor.

I have had the privilege of serving the City of Northampton in both appointed and elected roles for more than twenty years. Now I want to step back and let other community members bring their ideas and energy forward to address the important issues and challenges facing our city. Please know that I will continue working hard on those issues and challenges every day for the remaining months of my term, including leading our city safely through the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, writing my tenth and final city budget, and completing several high-priority capital and planning projects.

I have been privileged to work with a skilled, experienced, and dedicated group of department heads who are committed to their agency missions and the larger team mission of delivering high-quality municipal services to the taxpayers. There is no better illustration of that spirit of teamwork and collaborative problem-solving than the city’s ongoing multi-departmental emergency response to COVID-19 over these last many months. I am grateful to them, the members of my staff, and all of the hard-working city and school employees that I have been honored to serve alongside and lead.

Finally, and most importantly, I want to thank my wife and daughters for their love and support and the many sacrifices they have made to allow me to do this important work. My family has been my biggest supporters and my safe harbor during the many challenging times I’ve faced as mayor.

I love this city and understand the critical role of the mayor in its ongoing success. That is why I am making my political intentions known early in order to allow other city residents the opportunity to consider running and form campaigns. I pledge to work with whomever Northampton voters select to succeed me to ensure a smooth transition on January 2, 2022.

David Narkewicz was first elected to a two-year term as the City of Northampton’s 44th Mayor on November 8, 2011. Following a charter change, Narkewicz was re-elected to the city’s first four-year mayoral term in 2013 and then re-elected again to his current four-year term in 2017.

Prior to becoming the city’s chief elected official, Narkewicz served three terms on the Northampton City Council. He was elected Ward 4 City Councilor in 2005 and re-elected in 2007.

In 2009, Narkewicz was elected Councilor at Large and his colleagues elected him City Council President. His council presidency included serving four months as the city’s Acting Mayor following the early retirement of Mayor Clare Higgins on September 9, 2011.

Before his 16 years in elective office, Narkewicz served as an appointed member of two Northampton boards and commissions. Mayor Mary Ford appointed Narkewicz to the Zoning Board of Appeals in 1999, where he served as vice-chair. Mayor Clare Higgins appointed him to the Transportation and Parking Commission in 2003, a newly created board Narkewicz would later go on to chair.

Mayor Narkewicz informed city department heads of his decision not to seek re-election at a meeting earlier today. Narkewicz appointed eleven of the seventeen current department heads during his tenure, including the historic appointments of women to serve as Police Chief and Director of Public Works.

Mayor Narkewicz has held multiple regional and statewide leadership roles during his tenure. He has served as Chair of the 24-community Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) Advisory Board since 2015. He also represents Hampshire County as an elected member of the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization, which allocates state and federal transportation dollars in the region. At the statewide level, he was appointed by Governor Baker to the Local Government Advisory Commission, was elected to the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Municipal Association, is part of the leadership of the Massachusetts Mayors' Association, and is a member of the Cannabis Control Commission's Cannabis Advisory Board.

When he completes his term, David Narkewicz will be among the city's longest-serving mayors. Only Mayor David Musante (12 years) and Mayor Clare Higgins (11 years, 8 months) will have held the corner office longer.

The City of Northampton will hold its municipal election on November 2, 2021. If more than two candidates for mayor are certified, a preliminary election would be scheduled in September to narrow the field to two for the general election.

For more information, please contact the Mayor's Office at mayor@northamptonma.gov or 413-587-1249.