



**CITY COUNCIL
NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

January 19, 2017

Dear Chair Murphy and Members of the Committee on Finance,

As you know, the Charter requires the City Council to hold public hearings and to vote on both the city budget and the capital improvement program as part of the annual budget process. Unfortunately, for the last two years, these hearings have garnered little to no attendance by the public.

Because the budget is a document of central importance that the community should consider and understand, the City Council should be active in its outreach to the public as part of its responsibilities in the budget process.

Therefore pursuant Section 2.3.8 of the Council Rules, please consider this request that the Committee on Finance discuss and propose a plan to increase citizen participation and engagement in the City Council's budget hearings for fiscal year 2018, and report back to the full Council.

Sincerely,

William H. Dwight
City Council President

Ryan R. O'Donnell
City Council Vice President