



## ***Committee on Finance and the Northampton City Council***

*Councilor David A. Murphy, Chair*

*Councilor Maureen T. Carney*

*Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge*

*Councilor James Nash*

**City Council Chambers, 212 Main Street  
Wallace J. Puchalski Municipal Building  
Northampton, MA**

Meeting Date: January 5, 2017

Note: The Finance Committee Meeting will take place during the City Council Meeting as announced. The City Council Meeting is scheduled to begin at 7:05 pm.

- 1. Meeting Called To Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Approve Minutes Of The December 15, 2016 Meeting**

Documents:

[finance\\_minutes\\_dec\\_15\\_2016.pdf](#)

#### **4. Financial Orders**

- A. 16.226 An Order To Authorize Expenditure Of \$3,120 From Senior Services Gift Fund**

Documents:

[16.226\\_senior\\_services\\_gift\\_fund.pdf](#)

- B. 16.227 An Order To Authorize Payment Of A Prior Year Bill In The Amount Of \$1,379 For Legal Work**

Documents:

[16.227\\_prior\\_year\\_bills\\_for\\_jankowski\\_and\\_spencer.pdf](#)

- C. 16.228 An Order To Declare Surplus Space At NHS For The Purpose Of Leasing To Public Access Television**

Documents:

[16.228\\_surplus\\_nhs\\_space\\_for\\_public\\_access\\_tv.pdf](#)

- D. 16.229 An Order To Authorize A Five-Year Contract For Ticket Processing Services**

Documents:

[16.229\\_five\\_year\\_contract\\_for\\_ticket\\_processing\\_services.pdf](#)

**E. 16.230 An Order To Accept A Storm Drain Easement On Holyoke Street**

Documents:

[16.230\\_order\\_for\\_vcdc\\_storm\\_drain\\_easement.pdf](#)

**F. 17.231 An Order To Authorize The Mayor To Acquire By Gift One Or More Public Right Of Way Easements On The Sturbridge Development LLC Property**

Documents:

[17.231\\_order\\_sturbridge\\_development\\_village\\_hill\\_easement.pdf](#)

**5. New Business**

*-Reserved for topics that the Chair did not reasonably anticipate would be discussed.*

**6. Adjourn**

*Prepared by:*

*P. Powers, Administrative Assistant to the City Council*

*[ppowers@northamptonma.gov](mailto:ppowers@northamptonma.gov), (413) 587-1210*



## **Committee on Finance and the Northampton City Council**

*Councilor David A. Murphy, Chair*

*Councilor Maureen T. Carney*

*Councilor Marianne L. LaBarge*

*Councilor James Nash*

**City Council Chambers, 212 Main Street  
Wallace J. Puchalski Municipal Building  
Northampton, MA**

Meeting Date: December 15, 2016

### MEETING MINUTES

1. **Meeting Called To Order:** At 7:46 p.m. Councilor Murphy called the meeting to order.
2. **Roll Call:** On a roll call the following committee members were present: Councilor Murphy, Carney, LaBarge and Nash. Also present from the City Council were: Councilors Bidwell, O'Donnell, Klein, Sciarra and Dwight.
3. **Approve Minutes Of November 17, 2016 Meeting:** Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting; Councilor Carney seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.
4. **Financial Orders**

**A. 16.216 An Order To Authorize The Purchase Of 5.5 Acres On Burts Pit Road**

Councilor LaBarge moved to return a positive recommendation back to the full City Council; Councilor Carney seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

Sarah LaValley was present to talk about the orders before the committee this evening.

This order is the only order discussed tonight that is not a Community Preservation Committee recommendation. It is also the only acquisition that has not yet been approved by the City Council. The property sits directly adjacent to the Burts Bog project. The owner came in to talk about possible development of the 5.5 acres. The land is developable; it would require a wetlands crossing which he would be able to do by law. There is enough space on this lot to build a house. The owner has also expressed an interest in buying a piece of developable land that is part of the Burts Bog project.

Committee on Finance Meeting Minutes for December 15, 2016

Ms. LaValley explained that the Burts Marsh name will be changed to Burts Bog as a result of the land status. The bog itself sits between Stone Ridge Road, Crestview and Ellington. Councilor LaBarge recalls that there are houses that sit in close proximity to the bog on Ellington. There were problems with beaver dams in this location in the past.

Ms. LaValley explained that the property is formerly a peat bog that was part of the Northampton State Hospital property. The state hospital dug up the peat for farming. It is the only such bog in Northampton and in western Massachusetts.

Councilor Dwight asked what the difference was between a bog and a marsh. Ms. LaValley explained that bogs have more acidic environments and as a result they do not have as many species as a marsh would. There is definitely less plant growth in a bog.

**B. 16.218 - 16.225 Community Preservation Committee Recommendations  
For Funding**

**16.218 Beaver Brook/Broad Brook Greenway  
Improvements, Broad Brook Coalition and Leeds Civic  
Association: \$16,947**

Councilor LaBarge moved to return a positive recommendation back to the full City Council; Councilor Carney seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

A map shows that the land represented in this order sits near Route 9. Between Route 9 and the parcel there is a wetlands area that is not easily accessible. The Broad Brook Coalition and the Leeds Civic Association have teamed up to put together a proposal to add a small parking area, a corrosion control facility, trails, picnic areas and other amenities to allow visitors in this area. Even with the trails, it will still be difficult to access the wetlands. The plans show that the upgrades will take place between Route 9 and the wetlands only.

Councilor LaBarge thinks that the project is excellent. She notes that the Leeds Civic Association is comprised of volunteers working together. Ms. LaValley agrees. She notes that the property was acquired in 2010 and the Community Preservation Committee felt this was a great collaborative project. Councilor Klein agrees; people who live in Leeds have an enormous amount of pride and involvement with the natural environment around the neighborhoods. Everyone in the Association works hard to keep the woods pristine; this is a perfect example of a community group contributing to the City in an incredible way. Councilor LaBarge reflected that it has always been this way in Leeds.

Councilor Bidwell asked about the timetable for the project. Ms. LaValley explained that all of the permitting requirements have been met; the project will begin in the spring once the snow melts.

**16.219 Burts Bog Affordable Housing and Open Space, Office  
of Planning and Sustainability: \$234,700**

Councilor LaBarge moved to return a positive recommendation back to the full City Council; Councilor Carney seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

Ms. LaValley explained that this project is in the same area that was previously discussed this evening. The project has already been approved by the City Council. Ms LaValley presented a map showing the areas that will be preserved as “open space” and the area that will be sold at market rate as well as three affordable housing lots. The affordable lots may go to Habitat for Humanity and will be in perpetuity making them affordable to future buyers.

Councilor Murphy asked whether the plans included land on Overlook that was to be made affordable; Ms. LaValley explained that the developer is retaining some lots that are not shown.

Councilor LaBarge believes that the project is very valuable especially adding affordable homes. By preserving 114 acres everything is starting to flow with the trails reaching Mineral Hills and other areas.

Councilor O'Donnell asked how the 100% of area median income was decided upon. Ms. LaValley explained that some of the SRO units go down to 60% AMI, but because these are single family homes, 100% is generally the standard. It is also the most that can be used for CPA awards. Councilor O'Donnell recalls that affordability is defined as 80% of area median in City codes, which is just for rental, while home ownership can extend up to 100%. Ms. LaValley notes that under the CPA law homeownership or rental could be 100% of AMI. The market forces that drive this make 100% a lot easier to work with. She also notes that it goes even higher for senior affordability units.

Councilor Murphy understands that the value is capped; appreciation cannot skyrocket. These are not subsidized so homeowners need to be able to afford to buy them. When they are sold they have to remain affordable to the next buyer. Ms. LaValley notes that there will be a deed restriction placed on the property. Any future buyers will also need to qualify to buy the home.

Councilor Dwight asked what the AMI is for Northampton; Ms. LaValley believes it is around \$40,000 for one person. She will double check the numbers to be sure.

Councilor LaBarge asked if there were a few homes that were classified as affordable. Councilor Murphy stated that there were. Ms. LaValley stated that in this area there will be market rate properties as well as affordable. Councilor Bidwell asked whether the RFP will be sent out; Ms. LaValley stated that it would. Councilor Bidwell noted that likely Habitat for Humanity would be one of the organizations that would be qualified to respond to the RFP.

### **16.220 Broad Brook to Beaver Brook Acquisition, Northampton Conservation Commission: \$80,000**

Councilor LaBarge moved to return a positive recommendation back to the full City Council; Councilor Carney seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

This property sits between the Fitzgerald Lake conservation area to the east and the Broad Brook Greenway to the west. This parcel will fill the gap between parcels that are protected on Route 9 and North Farms Road.

**16.221 Connecticut River Greenway Improvements,  
Northampton Office of Planning and Sustainability: \$90,000**

Councilor LaBarge moved to return a positive recommendation back to the full City Council; Councilor Carney seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

Ms. LaValley reports that this project has been in development for many years. The initial project had some cost overruns due to unforeseen circumstances. This resulted in paving projects left uncompleted as well as incomplete work to the dock to make it handicap accessible. The City has already received a grant in the amount of \$90,000. This order will address the matching contribution required by the City.

Councilor Bidwell remarked about the property in general. It is been a long time since the sighting of the property and the completion of the project; he feels it is important to complete the remaining paving work.

Councilor Murphy asked if there were plans to put restrooms at the site. Ms. LaValley stated that Northampton Community Rowing is responsible for the programming at that location and she is not sure what their plans are. Councilor Bidwell did not see any plans developing to install bathrooms in the foreseeable future. Currently there is no plumbing available at that location for water and sewer.

**16.222 Hampshire County Courthouse Restoration,  
Hampshire Council of Governments: \$100,000**

Councilor LaBarge moved to return a positive recommendation back to the full City Council; Councilor Carney seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

Ms. LaValley reports that CPA funds were used in a previous project to refurbish the courthouse steps. The Council of Government's next plan is to deal with the building's tower. Ms. LaValley provided pictures showing that there were plants growing out of the parapet, damage to the mortar, and daylight coming in through cracks in the walls. These monies will be used to match bond bill funds that are not currently available. If the funds are not available from the state, then these funds would be returned to the committee.

Councilor LaBarge asked the age of the courthouse; Ms. LaValley stated that the building is post Shay's Rebellion which took place on the lawn at that location.

Councilor Dwight reports that the courthouse is 129 years old.

## **16.223 51 Main Street Historic Building Study, Smith Charities: \$10,000**

Councilor LaBarge moved to return a positive recommendation back to the full City Council; Councilor Carney seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 3 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention (Councilor Murphy).

Smith Charities has requested funds for a study of the building. The will of Oliver Smith prevents Smith Charities from using any of its funds for anything other than charitable purposes. Repairs to the historic building are necessary as the brownstone is flaking apart and on the second floor there is evidence of flaking paint and other damage.

The monies would only be used to fund a study to find out what the needs are. Additional funds would be required to perform the actual renovations. Smith Charities is also prevented from using any of its funds for the purpose of capital projects. Councilor Klein asked whether Smith Charities wanted to apply for funds for repairs. Ms. LaValley states that while the organization could come back and ask for funds to undertake the repair projects, the CPC made it clear that it was highly unlikely that funds would be available for this purpose.

Councilor Murphy indicated that he is Northampton's elected representative to Smith Charities. It is for this reason that he will be abstaining from this and any other vote for this organization.

Councilor Dwight asked about the repair process for the flaking brownstone. Ms. LaValley indicated that Smith Charities would need to seek expert opinion about this. Councilor Murphy noted that the brownstone would need to be treated so that it will stop flaking. He notes that it is the same stone that is in the Smithsonian. It comes from a quarry in Glastonbury Connecticut. The quarry is no longer operating and will not allow any further brownstone to be taken. It is the oldest building on that block along Main Street. Oliver Smith died before the civil war and his will is very specific. The funds must be invested in real estate mortgages and then all of the proceeds are supposed to be given away to beneficiaries. A small portion of the funds are used to sustain the operations, while most of the funds are given away. A small amount of money goes to Smith Voke school each year.

Councilor Klein asked if there was a long range plan once the study is produced. Ms. LaValley notes that Smith Charities intends to address funding the improvement projects once the study is complete. They are not sure what the results will be nor do they have a clear understanding about what their options are moving forward.

Councilor Murphy points out that the building has its original slate roof. Windows have been replaced and other work has been done. What has really hindered the organization is the real estate market.

Councilor Klein's concern is that if monies are being used to fund a study, she wonders if the organization has been thinking about how the money is going to be raised to complete the projects. When looking at a capital improvement plan, you think long range about the

kinds of things that need to be done. She is surprised that this wasn't done hand-in-hand with the study.

Ms. LaValley points out that there is underutilized space in the building that could be rented out in the future.

### **16.224 Mineral Hills Acquisition, Northampton Conservation Commission: \$240,000**

Councilor LaBarge moved to return a positive recommendation back to the full City Council; Councilor Carney seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

Ms. LaValley presented a map showing the location within in the City. It has frontage on Glendale Road and Route 66. The location was previously approved for a 25 house subdivision. It includes a cold water stream. There are four adjacent lots being developed for affordable housing.

Councilor LaBarge went to a hearing where changing the 25 housing subdivision was discussed and changed to four affordable homes. If the fifty three acres are not kept as open space then there is the threat of the land being developed. The land has abundant wild life and it is critical to protect the 53 acres.

### **16.225 Conservation Fund, Northampton Conservation Commission: \$80,000**

Councilor LaBarge moved to return a positive recommendation back to the full City Council; Councilor Carney seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

Ms. LaValley points out that this request has been made each year; this is the eleventh CPA request to fund this for "fast action" transactions.

Councilor O'Donnell asked about the statement "meets the goals of the Northampton sustainability plan"; Ms. LaValley indicated that each project that comes forward will meet the plan. Councilor O'Donnell asked about the amount; Ms. LaValley noted that this was the amount requested based on projections. The requests have been as high as \$100,000 and as low as \$10,000.

Councilor Bidwell asked if funds were used for items like option payments, due diligence expenses, etc. Ms. LaValley explained that options payments are generally not required because the Community Preservation Commission has a good track record for pre application things. The monies will be used for surveys, title searches, hazardous waste assessments, etc. Councilor Bidwell wondered what happens when final decisions are made and the acquisitions come through. Ms. LaValley explained that the funds are not replenished as the account is not a revolving fund.

Councilor LaBarge reminded the committee that this is something the committee votes on yearly.

**5. New Business: None**

**6. Adjourn: At 8:25 p.m. Councilor LaBarge moved to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Carney seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.**

*Prepared by:*

*P. Powers, Administrative Assistant to the City Council*

*[ppowers@northamptonma.gov](mailto:ppowers@northamptonma.gov), (413) 587-1210*

**City of Northampton**  
MASSACHUSETTS

---

*In City Council* January 5, 2017

Upon recommendation of the Mayor

**16.226**

**An Order**

**to authorize expenditure of \$3,120 from Senior Services Gift Fund**

*Ordered, that*

The following expenditure from the Senior Services Gift Fund (2522541-57806)  
be approved:

\$3,120 for 13 software licenses for use by seniors in the Senior Center  
computer room

**City of Northampton**  
MASSACHUSETTS

---

*In City Council*

January 5, 2017

Upon recommendation of the Mayor

**16.227**

**An Order**

**to authorize payment of a prior year bill in the amount of \$1,379 for legal work**

BE IT ORDERED

that the Council authorize payment of a prior fiscal year bill (FY2016) in the amount of \$1,379 to Jankowski and Spencer, P.C. for legal work relative to a land acquisition project.

**City of Northampton**  
MASSACHUSETTS

---

*In City Council* \_\_\_\_\_ January 5, 2017

Upon recommendation of the Mayor

**16.228**

**An Order**

**to declare surplus space at NHS for the purpose of leasing to public access television**

*Ordered, that*

WHEREAS, the School Department has leased out space at Northampton High School to Northampton Cable TV (NCTV) since 2006 and currently has a lease with NCTV ending August 30, 2017;

WHEREAS, before the space can be leased again, the School Committee and the City Council must vote to declare that the space is not needed for school department purposes, and the School Department must obtain permission from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to lease the surplus space;

WHEREAS; School Administrators feel there is substantial benefits to the students to having a public access television station located in the building;

WHEREAS; an RFP will be issued to lease the space for public access television purposes;

WHEREAS, M.G.L. c. 30B, s. 16 requires a vote of the City Council to surplus any interest in public property prior to its disposal,

Ordered that,

the space at Northampton High School currently occupied by NCTV is declared surplus and available to be leased for public access television purposes for a period not to exceed ten years.

# City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

---

*In City Council* January 5, 2017

Upon recommendation of the Mayor

**16.229**

**An Order**

**to authorize a five-year contract for ticket processing services**

*Ordered, that*

Whereas, ticket processing services are a necessity to efficiently operate our parking enforcement program;

Whereas, a five year contract is necessary for continuity and consistency for ticket processing services, and provides the best value to the City,

*Now therefore be it ordered,*

That the Treasurer/Collector's Parking Enforcement Division is authorized to enter into a five-year contract for provision of ticket processing services.



## City of Northampton

### Massachusetts

*In City Council,* January 5, 2017

Upon the recommendation of Mayor David J. Narkewicz

#### 16.230

#### An Order

#### to accept a storm drain easement on Holyoke Street

***Ordered, that***

- WHEREAS, A brick Market Street to Mill River storm sewer, built in circa 1846, is located on the property that was formerly the site of Northampton Lumber Company at Pleasant and Holyoke Streets, shown as Parcel 171 on Assessors Map 32C, and now or formerly owned by Gail M. Labarge (“Northampton Lumber Property”); and
- WHEREAS, The storm sewer has no recorded easement where it crosses the Northampton Lumber Property; and
- WHEREAS, The City received a MassWorks grant that will allow us to replace 310 feet of that storm sewer, both replacing legacy infrastructure and leveraging economic development; and
- WHEREAS, Valley Community Development Corporation, which is under contract to purchase the Northampton Lumber Property, has offered to donate an easement for the replacement storm sewer system on that property;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

That the City of Northampton City Council authorizes the Mayor to acquire by gift storm drain easements in, on and under the Northampton Lumber Property on such terms and conditions as the Mayor deems advisable.





## City of Northampton

### Massachusetts

*In City Council,* January 5, 2017

Upon the recommendation of Mayor David J. Narkewicz

**16.231**

**An Order**

**To authorize the Mayor to acquire by gift one or more public right of way easements on the Sturbridge Development LLC property**

***Ordered, that***

WHEREAS, In 2009, City Council authorized the City, through the Conservation Commission, to accept a deed or deeds to the buffer on the outside of the developed Village Hill area at the former Northampton State Hospital on the north campus; and

WHEREAS, Sturbridge Development, LLC owns land on the northwest corner of Village Hill Road in Village Hill more particularly shown as 2016 Assessors Map ID 31C-017; and

WHEREAS, Sturbridge Development, LLC, has offered, through the land use permitting process, to donate one or more Public Right of Way Easement(s) to allow access from their housing development to the open space on the northerly side of their development for pedestrian access and an eventual multi-use trail;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

That the City of Northampton City Council authorizes the Mayor to acquire by gift one or more public right of way easements on the Sturbridge Development LLC property on such terms and conditions as the Mayor deems advisable.

