



MAYOR DAVID J. NARKEWICZ

City of Northampton

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May 27, 2016

Northampton City Council
210 Main Street, Room 3
Northampton, MA 01060

To the Honorable Members of the City Council,

Pursuant to my authority under Article 6, Section 6-1 of the City Charter, I am respectfully submitting the attached Administrative Order making the following three changes to the City's Administrative Code:

(1) Elimination of Public Works Commission as a Multiple-Member body.

My first proposed revision to the Administrative Code is the deletion of Part II, Section 20.0, "Public Works Commission." The Public Works Commission was created in my original September 2014 reorganization of city government as an advisory-only replacement for the Board of Public Works (BPW) whose considerable fiduciary and policy-making powers were shifted to the Department of Public Works (DPW) and Northampton's elected Mayor and City Council. My primary goal in creating the Public Works Commission at the time was to retain the dedicated members of the former BPW in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and City Council.

Defining the role of the new Public Works Commission has been challenging over the last 18 months. This is partially a result of the clearer, more direct line of executive branch reporting authority between the Mayor and the Department of Public Works under our restructured city government. It is also due to changes in our legislative branch, most notably the creation of a the City Council Committee on Public Works and Utilities whose role is to "develop, review, and recommend policies on matters including public works, streets, infrastructure, solid waste, water treatment, buildings, and all utilities including water, sewer and stormwater." With the professional leadership of the DPW and the city's two elected branches of government assuming these new, updated roles in the administration, policymaking, and oversight of public works, the need for a separate, stand-alone advisory body has now been substantially diminished.

The elimination of the Public Works Commission does not eliminate an ongoing and future role for citizen advisors on matters affecting public works. To the contrary, it is my intention to continue to utilize the talents and energy of citizens in advisory roles on public works-related issues whether on the Reuse Committee, Public Shade Tree Commission, Transportation and Parking Commission, Capital Improvements Committee, or in a myriad of other issue-specific advisory roles. The City Council's newly revised rules and restructured committee system provides a similar mechanism for involving citizen advisors through its select committee process.

Out of deference to the current members of the Public Works Commission, I provided a draft version of this Administrative Order to the members and attended their May 23, 2016 meeting to present and review it with them personally. We had a good discussion at which I reiterated my appreciation for their dedication to our public works and expressed my hope that they would continue serving the city in other capacities moving forward.

(2) Revised Authorities and Responsibilities language for the Public Shade Tree Commission

My second revision to the Administrative Code involves the Authorities and Responsibilities clause of Part II, Section 23.0, "Public Shade Tree Commission." City Councilors may recall public concerns being raised about the precise language of my original administrative order creating this new multi-member body back in 2014. I told the City Council at the time that once the Commission was appointed, organized, and operational they could review the language with the newly appointed Tree Warden and make any recommendations for updating or revising it. The updated Authorities and Responsibilities language submitted in the attached administrative order was developed by the Public Shade Tree Commission and Tree Warden this spring and recommended to me by a unanimous 7-0 vote. I support its adoption and incorporation in our code.

(3) Revised Procedure for Appointment of Elected Officials to Serve on Multiple-Member Bodies

During the development of the City Council's new Rules of Procedure at the end of the 2014-2015 term, a question arose regarding the method for appointing members of the City Council to multiple-member bodies with elected official membership. In order to negate a potential conflict between the council rules and the administrative code, I am adding language to Part II, Section 1.03, "Method of appointment; removal; term of office" that defers to the Council's preferred method of appointment by the City Council President.

Thank you in advance for your review of these proposed changes to our Administrative Code. I stand ready to answer any questions or provide additional information and respectfully request the City Council's approval of the attached Administrative Order.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David J. Narkewicz". The signature is fluid and cursive, starting with a large "D" and ending with a long horizontal stroke.

David J. Narkewicz
Mayor

cc: City Clerk



ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

**Amend City of Northampton Administrative Code,
Part II Multiple-Member Appointive Organization, Section 20.0 as follows:**

DELETE IN ITS ENTIRETY

**Amend City of Northampton Administrative Code,
Part II Multiple-Member Appointive Organization, Section 23.0 as follows:**

DELETE AUTHORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES CLAUSE AND REPLACE WITH:

Authorities and Responsibilities

The Public Shade Tree Commission preserves, protects and promotes city shade trees. The Commission advises and assists the Tree Warden and Mayor in researching and developing plans, programs and policies for achieving a tree canopy that supports Northampton's goals of public health, beautification, economic and environmental sustainability, and resilience in the face of climate change. The Commission reviews and makes recommendations on ordinance and zoning regulations related to trees. It receives and reviews input from city residents, businesses, and neighborhoods on issues or concerns related to trees, makes planting and maintenance recommendations guided by industry best practices, and works to promote knowledge and awareness of the benefits of an actively managed urban forest.

The Public Shade Tree Commission is an advisory multiple-member body of the City.

**Amend City of Northampton Administrative Code,
Part II Multiple-Member Appointive Organization, Section 1.03 as follows:**

DELETE IN ITS ENTIRETY AND REPLACE WITH:

Method of appointment; removal; term of office.

The Mayor appoints all members of multiple-member bodies, subject to confirmation by the City Council as provided in City Charter Section 2-10. Unless otherwise provided by law or administrative order, the terms of office of multiple-member bodies are arranged so that 1/3 of the terms, or as nearly that number as may be possible, shall expire each year; vacancies are filled in the same manner of appointment for the remainder of the term. In the case of multiple-member bodies with membership that includes elected officials, the Mayor shall seek appointment recommendations from the President or Chair of the elected body. Unless otherwise provided by law, the length of term shall be three years and appointments shall be effective on the first day of July and shall expire the last day of June. Members may be removed by the Mayor for such cause as the Mayor deems sufficient.