



Committee on Community Resources and the Northampton City Council

Committee Members:

Chair: Councilor James Nash

Vice-Chair: Councilor Alex Jarrett

Councilor Karen Foster

Councilor John Thorpe

Meeting Minutes

Date: February 3, 2020

Time: 5 p.m.

Location: Council Chambers, 212 Main St., Northampton, Massachusetts

1. **Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call.** At 5 p.m. Councilor Nash called the meeting to order. Present on roll call were Councilors Karen Foster, Alex Jarrett, John Thorpe and James Nash.
2. **Announcement of Audio/Video Recording**
Councilor Nash announced that the meeting was being audio and video recorded.
3. **Public Comment**
There being no members of the public present there was no public comment.
4. **Election of Chair/Vice Chair**
Councilor Nash explained the procedure he would use in conducting the election. He then opened the floor to nominations for chair.

Councilor Thorpe nominated Councilor Nash. Councilor Jarrett seconded.

There being no further nominations, Councilor Nash closed the nominations.

Councilor Nash accepted the nomination and thanked fellow members. On a roll call, the nomination of Councilor Nash was unanimously approved by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed.

Vice Chair Election

Councilor Foster nominated Councilor Jarrett. Councilor Thorpe seconded.

Councilor Jarrett nominated Councilor Thorpe. Councilor Foster seconded.

Nash asked if there were any other nominations.

Councilor Thorpe nominated Councilor Foster. Councilor Nash seconded.

Councilor Nash offered the nominees an opportunity to speak to their selection.

Councilor Jarrett said he is interested in serving as vice chair and is bringing his experience. He has extensive experience in consensus building in the worker's cooperative movement with the Valley Alliance of Worker's Cooperatives (VAWC). He is also interested in learning more about the leadership in council meetings and getting some experience in that process. He would be happy to serve.

Following Councilor Jarrett's remarks, Councilor Thorpe respectfully withdrew his nomination. Councilor Foster also respectfully declined/withdrew her nomination. She expressed appreciation for the nomination but noted that she just became vice chair of the City Services Committee.

Councilor Jarrett said he wanted to bring up the issue of diversity among the city's leadership. He and Councilor Foster spoke ahead of time but he couldn't speak to either of the other members due to Open Meeting Law (OML) constraints. They are wanting to be thinking about opening up the leadership. He thinks Councilor Thorpe would be a great leader. He wants to be mindful of who steps up and who feels confident stepping up. As a white man, stepping up may feel easier to him, and he wanted to have a conversation about it. He is happy with the result of the election.

Councilor Thorpe thanked Councilor Jarrett for bringing the issue to the committee's attention. He thinks as they go forward as a full City Council it would be great to see greater diversity in their leadership.

Councilor Foster echoed Councilor Thorpe's comments. Opening up to greater representation is very important, she agreed.

Councilor Nash said he appreciated Councilor Jarrett's willingness to step up into the vice chair role and thought both other members would be great as well. The sensitivity that they're showing right now is what should be the essence of the Community Resources Committee, he suggested.

Councilor Jarrett's nomination was unanimously approved by a roll call vote of 4 Yes, 0 No.

5. Minutes of October 21, 2019

Councilor Thorpe moved to approve the minutes of October 21, 2019. Councilor Jarrett seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by voice vote.

6. Set 2020 - 2021 Meeting Schedule

Councilor Nash moved to approve the 2020 – 2021 Meeting Schedule. Councilor Foster seconded.

Councilor Jarrett pointed out that the April 20, 2020 and April 19, 2021 proposed meetings fell on Patriot's Day. Members discussed alternatives for the April 2020 meeting. Mrs. Krutzler suggested the second Monday (4/13/2020) at 4 p.m. (before Legislative Matters), and members agreed.

By mutual agreement, the April 19, 2021 date was changed to 'To Be Determined' with the intent to pick an alternative date as the date approaches.

Councilor Jarrett asked if anyone was interested in moving the July meeting to earlier in the month, and councilors agreed to meet Monday, July 13, 2020 at 4 p.m. instead of July 20, 2020.

Councilor Nash called the motion In favor of approving the 2020 – 2021 meeting schedule as amended to a vote, and it passed unanimously 4:0

New Business

Councilor Nash opened the floor to members to throw out ideas for topics they might want to discuss in Community Resources over the next few months. At an event last week, former Mayor Clare Higgins with Community Action Pioneer Valley requested the opportunity to come in and talk about programs Community Action does in the Northampton community. He had a chance to meet with a member of the Housing Authority and the director and knows that housing is of interest to people as well.

Councilor Nash read the jurisdiction of Community Resources from the council rules for reference, including land use, housing and affordability and economic development, among others. It is pretty wide open, he noted. He asked if there were any other ideas.

Councilor Jarrett said he would be interested under economic development in inviting some people from cooperatives whether they be consumer cooperatives, worker cooperatives, credit unions, etc. There are a lot of different businesses and organizations that support cooperatives. Downtown Sounds and the Roost are working to convert to worker cooperatives from a more conventional business. He would love to explore how this city could support those conversations. Many cities across the U.S. are putting significant resources into promoting cooperatives. He mentioned the Cooperative Fund of New England, the ICA group and the Valley Alliance of Worker Cooperatives as potential guests, disclosing for the record that Pedal People is a member of the alliance.

Councilor Thorpe said he had nothing at this time.

Similarly, Councilor Foster said she would like to spend some time thinking about this.

Councilor Jarrett said he would appreciate overview of how to get items on the agenda.

Community Resources often deals with items sent to it by City Council, Councilor Nash said. Topics in the past have included a report on downtown businesses and the state of downtown. It has also been the outreach committee to solicit public comment on topics such as surveillance cameras and zoning ordinances.

He recognized Council President Gina-Louise Sciarra, who was present in the audience. She explained that the council president can make a committee study request, which is the equivalent of a request to a subcommittee to do a more in-depth study and produce a report. Community Resources is often the subcommittee where community forums happen, she confirmed as it turns out to be good place for more robust discussions with the public.

Referrals generally come from the council but occasionally the committee has discussions that are generated from within. If members sense at City Council that an item needs more public discussion, this is a good place for it to go, Councilor Nash observed. The chair sets the agenda, he noted.

7. **Items Referred to Committee**

None.

8. **New Business**
None.

9. **Adjourn.** Councilor Thorpe moved to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Jarrett seconded. The motion was approved on a voice vote of 4 Yes, 0 No. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Prepared By:
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City Council Committee on Community Resources Meeting Schedule 2020-2021

Note: All meetings start at 5 p.m. in Council Chambers unless otherwise posted.

No January Meeting	TBD (Meeting falls on MLK Day)
February 3, 2020	TBD (Meeting falls on President's Day)
March 16, 2020	March 15, 2021
April 13, 2020 (4 p.m.)	TBD (Meeting falls on Patriot's Day)
May 18, 2020	May 17, 2021
June 15, 2020	June 21, 2021
July 13, 2020 (4 p.m.)	July 19, 2021
No August Meeting	No August Meeting
September 21, 2020	September 20, 2021
October 19, 2020	October 18, 2021
November 16, 2020	November 15, 2021
December 21, 2020	December 20, 2021