



*CITY COUNCIL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 212 MAIN STREET
Northampton, Massachusetts
June 20, 2024*

Roll Call

A regular meeting of the City Council was called to order by Council President Alex Jarrett at 6:31 p.m. Upon a roll call, the following City Councilors were present:

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| At-Large Councilor Marissa Elkins | At-Large Councilor Garrick Perry |
| Ward 1 Councilor Stanley Moulton, III | Ward 2 Councilor Deborah Klemer |
| Ward 3 Councilor Quaverly Rothenberg | Ward 4 Councilor Jeremy Dubs |
| Ward 5 Councilor Alexander Jarrett | Ward 6 Councilor Marianne LaBarge |
| Ward 7 Councilor Rachel Maiore | |

Announcement that Meeting Audio/Video Recorded

Councilor Jarrett announced that the meeting was being audio/video recorded.

Public Hearings

Public Hearings
None.

Public Comment

Public Comment
Councilor Jarrett explained the procedure he would use in conducting public comment and opened the floor to comments.

Over the next 90 minutes, 39 speakers including numerous staff, faculty and students of Northampton Public Schools (NPS) addressed the council, the vast majority advocating for level service funding. Excerpts from their comments are as follows:

Citing the evident disagreement and dissension, **Tom Riddell of Aldrich Street** said the refrain of those contesting level-service funding has been that you can't fund recurring expenses with one-time revenues and that you should trust the mayor. Regarding the city's funding of the schools for the last four years, just over \$4 million of school choice funds were used to support the school budget. In the midst of COVID, the federal government established the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) program and the city received over \$5.2 million dollars. Between the two, over \$9 million was used over the last four years to support the NPS budget. "That, my friends was one-time money" used to support recurring expenses in the schools, he pointed out. Those funds allowed the city to finance the school department with less of its own recurring revenue, consequently making that revenue available to support other city departments/priorities. As has been pointed out, using one-time funds to cover recurring expenses is not financially sustainable; yet the mayor and city council approved this approach in their deliberations about these city budgets. Was there a plan to address the problem? Nope, it got kicked down the road. Other city spending priorities were favored but the dilemma for the schools was unresolved. Last year, when the mayor added \$1.2 million to the school budget, she warned of the problem and said it would be worse this year and compounded in the future. But nothing was done to anticipate where they are now. The mayor is the chair of the School Committee. Why no planning? Why no financial strategic planning committee or process? He asked. He offered the suggestion that there was a plan; namely, fiscal stability, a AAA bond rating and other favored priorities supported by the mayor and city council, leaving the schools underfunded and with no plan for correction. "Two weeks ago I was sad; today I'm mad as hell," he stated.

Nancy Smith, Chapel Street, told those listening that Councilor Rothenberg and Al Simon's presentation at the June 17, 2024 special City Council meeting is a 'must see,' that, in her words, lays out a 'comprehensive community-driven budgeting model' for funding level services at the schools. At the 6/17 special meeting, Joanne Morgan told them of post-WINS, pre-COVID staffing levels being unsafe and children and staff being physically injured while Kate Fontaine let them know the real cost of underfunding is loss of math and reading support specialists, leaving struggling students no choice but to move to IEP's, costing much more. Other cities and towns recognize the obligation to fund schools as the highest priority, "not just use schools as an excuse to squirrel away excessive funds for personal as opposed to community priorities," she charged, asserting that "the love and abuse of power permeates."

At the same meeting, she continued, Councilor Elkins used a 'common tactic' of this administration to discredit and demean those who challenge them by stating that Mr. Simon's presentation could not be

comprehensive because it did not include a report that was publicly available on the city website; however, the report was *not* posted to the website. The next day, a few people received a private apology but her false accusation remained. The city is in desperate need of a massive change in leadership. This is not the end. It is just the beginning. "We will not quit," she assured.

Rod Cleaver, Maplewood Terrace, commented that issues need to be addressed through logical argument, sound reasoning and evidence. Logical argument is not a zero sum gain; I win, you lose. The goal is to come to the best resolution of the issue together, typically arriving at some middle ground. The mayor moved from a planned 4% school budget increase to 5% and then 8%; the opposing side flatly rejects that. They have indulged in ad hominem fallacies by characterizing the mayor's efforts to fund the resilience hub as being for show. That is an offensive 'begging the question' fallacy and social prejudice. Ad hominem for the superintendent also. She is charged with being disdainful and disparaging towards students, not the issue at hand. Of course they've heard the special attack of being morally reprehensible and the most egregious 'either/or' fallacy: "If you care about our children in this community you will support a 14% increase." That's false; offensive. Shouldn't we be caring about the entire community? In his case, the assessment of his house has been raised 54% in the last two years. "I may be driven from the only home I've ever known." Keep in mind that without empathy there is no democracy. What's next? A self-appointed ad hoc group redoing the budget at the eleventh hour? He is concerned about the effect of this prolonged disagreement.

"We don't have a school deficit in Northampton; we don't even have a budget problem; we have a representation problem," **Haley Pearl of Florence** asserted. "Many of our elected officials don't represent us; they represent the mayor and her mission to fund projects instead of children."

How does it feel to be a human rubber stamp? She asked. "You may see yourselves as the arbiters of logic and reason among an emotional constituency, but really you are just her human rubber stamps."

"Toughen up; leave a legacy, not a stain on our city."

Zara Usman of Florence, a rising junior at Northampton High School (NHS) and member of the student union, said she served this past year as the student representative to the School Committee, so she has seen this budget crisis first-hand. The student union released a statement about the budget. She quoted from it that, "making reductions to offered electives and increasing class sizes will not allow their district to maintain its competitive edge." She attended the special city council meeting Monday and was appalled by the level of disrespect she saw among the group of leaders. Referring to qualified, engaged members of their community as outsiders is inaccurate and rude. Panelists are not just members of their community, "to you they are your constituents." She is an elected representative and understands the expectations of her position; she would never undermine the people she represents or the expertise of her peers. At student union meetings, differing opinions are always respectful and not damaging to their working relationships. During the meeting, Councilor Rothenberg's competence was questioned. The United States of America was founded on many ideals of democracy, including consent of the governed and popular sovereignty. Both of these theories highlight the importance of the government accurately representing the will of its people. They have heard the overwhelming will of their constituents, and she urged them to fulfill the expectation of their positions and vote accordingly. "Preserve my education and fully fund NPS," she urged.

Tracey Culver, Florence, seconded Tom Riddell's comments, agreeing that they should ask the big question, why no planning? She also sympathized with the older gentleman hoping to stay in his home on a fixed income. She's grown increasingly unhappy with their mayor and city council. Their homes were recently reassessed based on inflated COVID sale prices. This move by the city was ill-timed and merciless. She lost all respect for administrators when they did this, and she has not regained any trust. A year ago, the city council and the mayor gave themselves raises. The mayor's salary increased \$37,500 from \$92,500 to \$130,000. City Councilor's pay went from \$9,000 to \$16,900, an increase of \$7,900 per councilor. A 2% cost of living increase was also approved. Residents' water bills also saw large increases with the invention of a new base rate. This was put into place because the loss of income from the departure of Coca-Cola was not budgeted for. Why not? The loss of COVID relief funds for the school was also not budgeted for; why not? She doesn't understand this lack of foresight. Why no planning? The \$3 million church purchase that helped enrich Mr. Suher makes no sense. She must also mention the \$20,000 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle manhole covers as 'an international joke.'

"I vote no confidence in our mayor," she concluded. "The only way I will vote for an override in November is if that income goes directly into a dedicated fund for our public schools. I'm not willing to enable the mayor and councilors in their foolish, reckless spending."

Scarlett Bowman, Florence, a rising sophomore at NHS and student union member, said student union has taught her so much about what it means to represent a group of people, and she is so disappointed in how their leaders are handling the representation of their city. She has seen people from their schools crying during public comment, teachers who have been pink-slipped telling them how dehumanizing the whole process has been and students telling them they are terrified for their future as NHS students. As representatives, that is the worst possible thing they could hear from their community. Tonight, she wanted to remind them of their values and their promises. She quoted the mayor as saying, 'you can't make good decisions without listening to all the voices and seeking broad consensus,' and, in this room, she thinks it's very clear what the broad consensus is.

By not fully funding schools they are not being anti-racist or fulfilling the promises that got them elected in the first place. At the meeting Monday, she was shocked by the amount of disrespect and lack of active listening. Councilor Rothenberg made an eloquent and informed presentation, clearly stating that their city does not have a deficit. However, the term deficit was continuously reiterated and panelists from the community were referred to as outsiders. Councilor Rothenberg was rudely questioned about her knowledge of finance. Please vote for level services.

Fran Volkmann, 26 Crabapple Lane, spoke in favor of the Community Preservation Committee's (CPC's) recommendation to fund Lathrop Communities' project to remove invasive species. They are trying to create an environment that supports all the creatures from the smallest bugs to the bears and removal of invasives is a part of that. It is good for the whole community, not just Lathrop. They really appreciate the CPC's recommendations and the council's support.

While she's here, she wanted to say she is so grateful for everything all of them are doing. She knows it isn't easy; she thinks it's horrible. She's sat on both sides of this table. She would urge people - please, please address the issues and not the people.

Rowan Hashim, Florence, said she hopes they realize before they vote that these budget cuts threaten the positions of some of the greatest teachers she's ever had. Daniel Graham and Tray Jones are once in a lifetime teachers. When her parents split, there was a choice between her going to school in Northampton or Vermont. The school in Vermont was not diverse and offered an average education compared to Northampton, which they saw as offering an amazing education where she would excel. They chose Northampton thinking it would be better quality. Now as a rising freshman, she and many of her peers worry that their future and educations are at stake. Northampton does not have a deficit, it is making a selfish choice that will impact hundreds of students as they rise to the future.

Brian Jerskey, Ward 1, noted that, in the special meeting this past Monday, when Councilor Rothenberg had the opportunity to present a plan, some of them said the working group's proposal was interesting but a little too late. He was frustrated to hear this because many of them have been suggesting this idea since April. To act like this is the first time some of them have heard it shows they're not listening. He was rightly offended by the way some councilors treated Councilor Rothenberg, mocking the ideas and seemingly annoyed that Councilor Rothenberg sought outside independent experts. The best government officials work hard but, most importantly, listen to their constituents. He thanked Councilor Rothenberg for doing exactly that. He recently watched an exchange between Massachusetts Secretary of Education Tutwiler and Senator Comerford, who has passionately advocated for reforming Chapter 70. She asked if they could look at the Ch. 70 formula, crack it open and figure it out. The Secretary graciously said that, if the legislature has an appetite for a working group, he'd be a willing partner, and the senator said that was a beautiful offer. It was such a pleasant exchange and it reminded him that he is pretty sure they're all on the same side. They are all in favor of supporting their schools, their teachers and their students. If that's everyone's goal, then why not when one of their colleagues has some ideas, work together and collaborate to solve this issue.

Karen Hildago, Barrett Street, a school counselor at NHS, highlighted a few key points previously sent via email, including that the academic, social and emotional needs of their students are real. Among other things, she said she was interested to learn where the city ranks as far as reserves. Why would one of the cities with the strongest reserves not be able to fund its schools adequately? She asked. Please use all available funds to keep as many essential staff as possible, including spending the Smith College gift in two years. She sent them figures showing that NHS is under-staffed compared to other high schools. They need all of their teachers to fully schedule students and they really need their regular education adjustment counselor.

She questioned the statement that using one-time funds would cause reserves to be drained in two years, asking what projection this is based on. How conservative is the estimate of revenues that would result in running out of revenue in two years? No matter what happens here tonight, the work will need to continue, she stressed.

Liz Boughan, Ward 7, said she asks the council again tonight what their plan is for meeting the expenses that will be created by the mayor's cuts. Less than a full gut job is still significant cuts. When no money miraculously appears from the state, what is the plan? When the cost of ethically and effectively running a school system continues to outpace what the mayor wants it to cost, what is the plan? She pressed.

They are already doing more with less so what's the plan. The city is going to have to allocate the funds when DESE cites them for violations. It seems pretty clear that theoretical pet projects are more important to them than actual present expenses and obligations. She doesn't understand how they can have the gall to bring up an override, refuse to state that it will go 100% to the schools and expect them to support it. "Why on earth would I trust you with more money?"

Meg Robbins, Ward 4, focused her comment on the special education reserve fund, which the city is proposing to seed tonight with \$800,000 and then withdraw \$200,000 from for the FY2025 budget. The new reserve will be under the joint control of the school committee and city council, requiring a majority vote of both bodies and taking it out of school district control. Its legal purpose is to fund unanticipated special education funding so it cannot be used for anticipated special education expenses. This fund is an accounting mechanism to park a significant amount of taxpayer money in a low-yield return account. The fund is proposed to be annually funded by student Medicaid receipts, taking those from school district revenue. So while Mayor Sciarra touts it as adding \$800,000 to the school budget; it is not. She asked Councilor Elkins last night why the council thought putting \$800,000 of critically-needed city funds in an account that requires a full council vote to release and cannot be used to meet the immediate needs of children in front of them was a good idea. Her response was, 'we don't trust the school committee.' She further confirmed this by saying that the school committee spent down school choice and could not be trusted with large amounts of money.

Instead of seeding the reserve account with \$800,000, she asked councilors to instead use \$200,000 for this purpose and put the other \$600,000 in the FY2025 school budget 'where it will do the most good for the most children.'

"Our house is burning. Please don't bring a full bucket of water to the flames, pour a few spoonfuls on and pull the bucket away," she requested.

Isabelle Miller, Northampton, said her daughter's 2nd grade class will have 25 students next year, an increase of 50% compared to this year and larger than 95% of the second grade classes in the state. She completely agrees with Tracey Culver on every single point. She thinks they really need to look at Smith College. It's great that Smith is gifting \$500,000 but UMass Amherst is gifting something like \$5 million over five years to Amherst public schools. Smith's PILOT program needs to change. Instead of raising taxes so people can't afford to live in their own homes, "you need to make Smith pay more," she asserted.

Kara McLaughlin, Ward 7, advocated for fully-funding the FY2025 school budget now and throwing all of their collective efforts over the next two years into changing the Chapter 70 funding formula at the state level. "Let's go to Secretary Tutwiler together and demand more money for our schools," she urged.

Natalie, a rising 4th grader at Bridge Street School, expressed concern for people in the schools who will lose their jobs because of cuts. If they make cuts, next year they're going to have to hire more people and more kids will leave to go to other schools. "Teachers shouldn't lose their jobs," she stressed.

Barbara Madeloni, Northampton, referred to the opportunity for public comment before a mayor and city council who have responded to the public's questions and ideas over the last few weeks with, in her words, 'dismissiveness' and a 'profound lack of curiosity' as a 'curious thing.' Instead, she addressed herself to the public, saying she wanted to prepare them for what they will and will not hear tonight.

First, she encouraged those listening to substitute different terms for the words they *do* hear. When they hear 'deficit,' she wants them to think 'underfunding.' When they hear 'override' she wants them to think 'Free Cash.' When they hear a fear-generating description of a downward spiral towards a fiscal cliff that will be created by level-service funding, "remember Councilperson Rothenberg's presentation Monday evening and think 'municipal appropriation plan,'" she advised.

As far as tone, "you're going to find yourself being treated with dismissiveness, defensiveness and disdain," she warned. "When you experience this, look to your left; look to your right and say to yourself, 'the people of Northampton.'"

Lastly, there are some words they are not likely to hear, and they need to say these are words to themselves on a regular basis: children, educators, public education, democracy, values . . . “Your actions should reflect these words.”

Amy Martyn, Ward 5, parent of an NPS graduate, spoke on behalf of the coordinating team of Racial Equity and Learning (REAL) in Northampton Public Schools. REAL is a volunteer group of caregivers, parents, educators and community members who support a level-services budget and urge the mayor and city council to make it happen. REAL members know elected officials understand the value of a well-resourced education and know that public schools are the most widely-accessible learning institutions. They must fully fund their public schools and avoid harmful cuts that would disproportionately impact kids of color and other marginalized groups, she exhorted. The kids and families of Northampton deserve it, Northampton public school employees deserve it; “we all deserve this.” Tomorrow let’s start the hard work of figuring out sustainable school funding going forward.

Jackie Ballance, Baystate, said she has been listening to the public comments on school funding. The overwhelming voices are both passionate and reasoned for fully funding the schools. “If you represent your constituents, I think you will have to listen to these voices and reconsider the budget,” she counseled. Monday night’s meeting did not show the council at its best behavior. She hopes she doesn’t have to write in ‘no confidence’ for everybody in city government on the next election ballot. “You represent the people or you represent the mayor. Your vote tonight will tell us,” she admonished.

Liz Falco, Greenfield, said she was speaking specifically as an English teacher at Northampton High School who received a RIF (reduction in force) notice and has yet to be recalled. She is trying to hold out hope for her students and colleagues all over the district, not only those who have been RIF’d but those who will somehow have to fill the roles of skilled educators in their absence. Many of her colleagues have shared personal testimony, statistics, and detailed explanations of what happens in a classroom in 2024. Her colleagues have warned about the immediate and long-term consequences of failing to fund the schools. Frankly, teaching in Northampton should not be considered a volatile job. This district should be attracting, cultivating and retaining the best teachers to serve its students. Instead, next year the city will lose talented and dedicated staff because of active choices to defund the schools. True, NPS already employs incredibly talented educators, support staff, etc. but do not interpret their hard work, competence and dedication as evidence that they will always be happy to do more with less.

There is no deficit, but if you listen to some voices, you’d think the deficit was insurmountable and layoffs and cuts inevitable, **Lisa Modenos of Florence** observed. In psychology, it’s called the ‘illusory truth effect,’ the tendency to believe inaccurate statements after hearing or reading them multiple times despite evidence to the contrary. The data shows there is no deficit, there is a lack of support to fully fund the schools. Easthampton acted to save its schools but Northampton won’t act to save theirs. “Your priorities are showing and they don’t reflect the priorities of the community,” she stated.

They know that when budget cuts happen anywhere in the public sector, the most vulnerable suffer the consequences. This is an equity issue, Northampton. It’s within public schools where they can best counter inequity for children. This aspect of the cuts has been rendered invisible by the continued narrative of deficit. The mayor and city council should and can support their schools by pushing for level service funding next year. “You have the money; use it to show your city that your priorities are truly about justice, equity, children and public education,” she urged. She imagines those are the exact same issues they all are going to campaign on in the next election year.

Ward 4 School Committee representative Mike Stein, 14 Columbus Ave, said he continues to be amazed by the grassroots organizing and civic participation that resistance to the mayor’s school austerity plan has generated. For the first time they are having substantive conversations about the benefits and drawbacks of the fiscal stability plan as a community. He shared a few things he has realized:

- 1) Residents of Northampton deeply value public education and want elected officials to, at minimum, provide level-service funding in the FY2025 budget.
- 2) This process has produced an education voter base that won’t disappear before the next election.
- 3) The city of Northampton continually runs surpluses and has no deficit.
- 4) The fiscal stability plan has been wildly successful in generating cash for savings, capital and special projects at the expense of adequately funding core city services like education.
- 5) The fiscal stability plan itself and blindly trusting the previous mayor are what produced the current manufactured fiscal crisis. Those who retort that they should stop complaining, take their medicine and simply trust the mayor today have learned nothing.
- 6) It was political choices that locked up the mountain of cash behind invisible fences and political choices can open those gates and reconfigure those pastures; what they lack is the political vision or will to rethink their policies.

7) The mayor and a majority of this city council do not have a plan to fix, nor do they want to fix, the city's inability to fund the operations of NPS; rather, they prefer to continue generating excessive amounts of cash for other priorities. The dogmatic fealty to the fiscal stability plan is astounding.

8), Officials who dismiss inconvenient facts as misinformation sound oddly like another US politician who complained of fake news and promoted alternative facts when confronted with the reality of his choices. For your own sakes, please stop echoing talking points without doing the work necessary to understand the data, policies, state law and accounting terminology. It's embarrassing.

Marethea Wallace, an ESP at JFK, reiterated her concern that the students being harmed the most by the cuts are black and brown students. If they cut away services black and brown kids receive on a daily basis they are doing them a disservice. "It doesn't affect most of you but it does affect them," she assured. In all their talk about budgets, the city council has forgotten about students. "Do not forget black and brown students, because you are."

Don't underfund the schools and don't cut services; it's just irresponsible when you don't have a plan, **Daniel Cannity** asserted. He has asked several times what exactly is going to be cut and no one seems to be able to consistently articulate it. If they cut without knowing, they are very liable to make mistakes. He doesn't know how they can describe the city's finances as healthy while making unplanned, unaccounted for cuts across the board in services.

The mayor referenced a two-year plan to work with the school committee to make cuts while addressing needs; that sounds like a reasonable path forward but it takes time. It does not make sense to cut in six or even a few months without doing that work. He found fault with Councilor Klemer's use of the term 'outside residents,' saying it sounded extraordinarily exclusionary and called Councilor Elkins' criticism of someone for not reading documents that turned out not to be available 'irresponsible' and 'political theater.' He would love to see this energy put towards budgets in the future. Don't cut any funding for the schools, don't cut any services for the schools and please vote with your heart and community in mind.

Debra Thompson, Florence, shared personal impressions from attending several months of community meetings, charging, among other things, that the discussions have created an environment of anger and mistrust. She voiced her perception that the majority of public comment has been in favor of level services but that it does not feel to her that the majority's needs are being represented or heard. She described the 'disturbing' behavior of community leaders as dismissive, rude, patronizing and, at times, deliberately misleading, reporting that she had seen whispering, eye rolling and mobile phone checking while students and teachers cried and pleaded for their jobs or support services. At the last city council meeting, many of them watched in horror as councilors gas-lighted Councilor Dubs and responded with dismissive comments as he tried to educate them on how able-ist comments are perceived by someone in the disability community. She recommended that they all go back and watch themselves. In a community that prides itself on striving for a just, equitable, diverse town, she reminded them that being less classist, anti-ableist and anti-racist is more than just a lawn sign. Cuts will hurt all students but especially those who have less means, are black or brown or need supportive services.

Michael Romco, Ward 1, chose to live in Northampton because it was famous for its progressive values. Since moving here 14 years ago, he never concerned himself with local politics in spite of having a long history of political activism and serving as an elected official because he trusted he was living in a progressive, liberal city. Why is he active now? Because he became concerned. He saw a mayor who ran for office claiming a progressive agenda but instead proposing fiscal conservatism. All the concerns around this budget are about needs and priorities. The city council needs to keep the mayor in check and insure oversight. The lack of city council oversight means that concerned citizens need to step in. Education means emancipation. As a council, please choose the progressive and collaborative path. They have 10 more days to work on this year's budget and 12 more months to work on the next budget.

Northampton Association of School Employees (NASE) President Andrea Egitto, a kindergarten teacher at Ryan Road, said she is horrified by what she's heard over the past few days, specifically, the display of 'gas-lighting' and disdain toward Councilor Rothenberg, teachers and members of their community Monday night and the report tonight that an elected official said she doesn't trust an entire elected body to use funds appropriately. The only reason school choice funds were spent down was because the city didn't adequately fund the schools in the first place, she countered. They are in the process of potentially losing almost 20 positions from their schools. There are 30 students in a class and students on waiting lists because they can't get into AP courses. In the elementary schools, the youngest and most vulnerable students are losing support staff that make it possible for them to access the curriculum and classes of their peers. This budget asks to put more invisible fences around money. Money for reimbursement for school services should be part of the school budget anyways. This budget drags out the Smith College gift for three years which doesn't make any sense. The mayor and director

continue to give one-time funds that perpetuate the underfunding. The money is there. Mayor, you can make this right tonight.

Joanne Sickels, Northampton, said she was absolutely appalled at the treatment of Councilor Rothenberg Monday night. She is the councilor for their ward and she listens to her constituents. If she had the power she'd call for a no confidence vote. All of them are trying to convince the people of this community that there is a deficit, saying that by FY2028 or '29 it will be somewhere around \$9 million. She wanted to know if any of the numbers they are putting out there have been certified by a CPA. The priority in this community should be their children, she stressed.

Sandy Bombard, Ward 6, echoed the idea that, contrary to the mayor's contention, she has the money to fund their schools. As a Northampton school employee, she herself at one point went five years without a raise and, for several years, teachers took 0% raises, she reported. Taxes on her house in Florence are seven times what she originally paid and the house's value has not increased that much.

Delia Martinez, Northampton, suggested that money raised by overrides in the past has gone for things other than schools; she was surprised to learn that \$3 million was paid for a church. Please look at your finances and take care of these teachers and kids, she implored. They cannot continue to throw money away and use it for pet projects other than schools.

Speaking as the owner of a local business, State Street Fruit Store/Cooper's Corner, **Mike Natale** said he hires many NPS students and supports dollars for scholars. He asked that they please keep their scholars enrolled by fully-funding NPS.

Sue Timberlake, Florence, addressed the question of whose job it is to plan for the schools. The school committee develops a budget based on a number set by the mayor and city council so the mayor and city council are accountable and responsible, she asserted. "I think to some degree we're mixing up the roles in this." To correct a previous speaker, Easthampton actually did a whole bunch of things to get where it is, they didn't just use their rainy day funds. Her party - she's a lifelong Republican - always looks for someone else to blame. Don't do that, we need to stick together. Well-run communities plan.

Cathy McNally, 2 Gleason Road, expressed frustration at not having heard more of an explanation of councilors' thought processes in rejecting the request for level-service funding other than very general statements. "I feel like there's a real disincentive to think independently in this room."

In contrast, she expressed her belief that Councilor Maiore has a unique quality of vision; she is thoughtful and kind but she articulates that vision and is willing to vote 'no.' She has voted no on the mayor's budget when she had a substantive difficulty with it. There seemed to be an extremely choreographed behavior to humiliate her that night. It was the cruelest, most official-looking cruelty, subtlety and subtext. "That's what people see happens to independent thinkers who are sometimes disobedient," she observed. Obedience is the value here.

Melissa Maciborski stated, "it's enough. It's time to fund our schools." The only apology that would suffice for those who have come every day after work in the heat is funding the budget this year and having a plan for doing so going forward, she concluded.

Jennifer James, said she just wanted to say, "I need you to level fund our schools."

A woman who declined to identify herself said she wouldn't share her name and where she lives because her family has been traumatized in Northampton for "asking that we teach our children to read." Look at the data, you will see that a large number of children in this community cannot read. Watch the 'White Right to Read' film, she suggested. Northampton is the perfect example of a community where white students' families pay for reading instruction and they learn to read while the rest of the students without those resources will not learn and end up in prison.

With the help of her daughter **Ruby** and **Andrea Egitto**, **Nykole Roche**, unfurled a petition with 1,000 signatures. Level services is the bare minimum, she suggested. "When you say that our students deserve less than what they're getting now," that's not a progressive value. She identified Councilor Rothenberg, Councilor Dubs and Councilor Maiore as councilors who have stood with them. She hopes the rest of them are inspired by their community and make the choice tonight to vote against a budget that is demeaning to their teachers and students.

Zara Usman held a cell phone to the microphone so student union colleagues **Giselle** and **Ana-Lucia Ohm, Ward 2**, could comment from an airport in Korea. They are watching this meeting even though they are out of the country on vacation because it means everything to them, Giselle explained. There is no

	<p>doubt about it, every student at their school is advocating for level funding this coming year, she said. They were at the special Finance Committee meeting Monday and were really disappointed in the council's general reception to the presentation. "Please level fund our schools," she implored.</p> <p>The allotted time being over, Councilor Jarrett ended public comment.</p>
<p><u>Recess</u></p>	<p><u>Recess</u> The City Council recessed briefly at 8:02 p.m. The council reconvened at 8:15 p.m.</p>
<p><u>Announcements</u></p>	<p><u>Announcements</u> This weekend is a weekend of action, Councilor Klemer announced. June 24th marks two years since the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, and Alex Jenkins is organizing a rally for reproductive freedom in front of City Hall on Saturday, June 22nd at 11 a.m. Representative Sabadosa, the Raging Grannies and she will speak among others. The event is co-sponsored by Indivisible Northampton and Swing Left.</p> <p>As a sequel to prior updates, Councilor Elkins reported that the Northampton High School Blue Devils Girls Varsity Ultimate Frisbee Team went to nationals and placed 5th. She offered her congratulations.</p> <p>The Northampton Family Fourth Festival with fireworks and other activities starts at 5 o'clock at Look Park this Saturday with a rain date of Sunday, Councilor Jarrett reminded.</p> <p>Councilor Jarrett announced a Public Hearing on 24.058 National Grid/Verizon Pole Petition for King Street (Petition #30867364) as follows: Per M.G.L. Ch. 166, Section 22, the Northampton City Council will hold a public hearing on Thursday, July 11, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers, 212 Main Street, Northampton, MA on National Grid/Verizon's petition to install one jointly-owned pole on King Street 260 feet south of the centerline of the intersection with Damon Road for service for EV chargers at #375 King Street. (Petition #30867364). Instructions for accessing the hearing may be found on the July 11, 2024 City Council agenda to be posted no later than 48 hours prior to the hearing. The City Council will hear all persons who wish to be heard thereon.</p> <p>Councilor Jarrett spoke to decorum at recent council meetings. He has been concerned with the interruptions and lack of respectful dialogue. He asked that if councilors disagree, they do so respectfully. If someone else has been disrespectful it is appropriate to address that but important not to escalate it.</p>
<p><u>Presentations</u></p>	<p><u>Presentations</u> None.</p>
<p><u>Consent Agenda</u></p>	<p><u>Consent Agenda</u> Councilor Jarrett reviewed the items on the consent agenda. There being no requests for removal, Councilor Moulton moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion passed 8:0 by roll call vote.</p> <p>The following items were approved as part of the consent agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. <u>Minutes of Special City Council/Finance Committee Meeting May 29, 2024 (FY2025 Budget hearing)</u> B. <u>24.095 An Order to Accept DA Sullivan \$10,000 Gift for Purchase of Storage Trailer – 2nd reading</u> C. <u>24.097 An Order to Approve FY2024 End of Year Budget Transfers – 2nd reading</u> D. <u>24.102 Appointments to Parks and Recreation Commission, for referral to City Services Parks and Recreation Commission</u> <p>Glenn Connly, 49 Platinum Circle Term: July 2024 to June 2027 <i>Reappointment</i></p> <p>Kristin Dardano, 281 Elm Street Term: July 2024 to June 2027 <i>Reappointment</i></p>

For the text of financial orders approved as part of the consent agenda, see Financial Orders (on 2nd reading) below.

**Financial Orders
(on 2nd reading)
24.092 An Order to
Appropriate
\$800,000 Free Cash
to NPS Special
Education
Stabilization Fund –
2nd reading**

Financial Orders (on 2nd reading)

With the council's consent, Councilor Jarrett took financial orders on second reading out of order.

24.092 An Order to Appropriate \$800,000 Free Cash to NPS Special Education Stabilization Fund – 2nd reading

Councilor Jarret reviewed the history.

Councilor Elkins moved to approve the order. Councilor LaBarge seconded.

Councilor Jarrett moved to suspend council rule 4.13.4 Reconsideration. Councilor Elkins seconded.

In support, he noted that the purpose of minority reconsideration is to allow time for submission of new or additional information. Since a charter objection was raised at the last meeting, he believes that time has already been given.

The motion passed 6:3 by roll call vote with Councilors Dubs, Maiore and Rothenberg opposed.

The order is to appropriate money to the special education stabilization fund, Councilor Jarrett advised. The fund has already been established, Mayor Sciarra confirmed.

Councilor Elkins expressed her understanding that it is being seeded with money from undesignated funds (Free Cash) so that, if they don't seed it by June 30th, they would have to find another source.

Mayor Sciarra confirmed that Free Cash is frozen June 30th. Regarding an alternative source if Free Cash is no longer available, they would likely take the \$800,000 out of stabilization and replace it with Free Cash once it has been certified.

Councilor Moulton voiced his assumption that the fund is being established to address unanticipated special education costs. He asked the mayor to address the suggestion to consider using it for *anticipated* costs.

The fund can be used for unanticipated and unbudgeted expenses, Director Nardi clarified. Once the budget is set, an additional appropriation can be made if unbudgeted special education costs arise.

Mayor Sciarra confirmed that, as chair of the school committee, she has witnessed the need from time to time to cover unanticipated costs.

Directing her comment to the Mayor, Councilor Rothenberg voiced the assumption that, if the Mayor's budget passes, "you will have many unbudgeted schools costs - two million dollars' worth." Councilors have heard that bare minimum staffing is not going to cover new kids coming into schools who will need IEP's or kids already on IEPs which are currently being reviewed and are not yet approved. She asked if it was her intention to use more than \$200,000 in FY2025.

That would be up to the school committee and city council, Mayor Sciarra said.

Councilor Rothenberg asked what her prediction is of how much money will be needed to mitigate the cost of cuts.

She doesn't have a prediction, the mayor said.

Finally, is there a limit to how much they would be able to withdraw in FY2025? She asked.

City officials can withdraw up to \$350,000 a year, Mayor Sciarra said.

Councilor Maiore said she supports the idea of establishing a special education stabilization fund but asked the mayor to review again why they can't just put this money into the school's operating budget to meet immediate special and regular education needs.

The purpose of the stabilization fund is to create a stable source of additional funding over a number of years, a request for which has been heard in previous budget discussions, Mayor Sciarra reminded. Using one-time money this year will lead to a deficit next year since those funds will no longer be there.

Councilor Rothenberg asked if it didn't make sense instead to give the \$600,000 in Free Cash to the schools to stave off a potential increase in special education needs, thereby saving money that otherwise would have to be spent on special education services. If they pay for interventionists and smaller class sizes now with that \$600,000, wouldn't that be cheaper than having to use the same money for more expensive services later? She asked.

Mayor Sciarra said she thinks it makes sense to create a recurring fund that can be used for years and not just this year.

Councilor Maiore said she feels like they have an urgent situation in front of them. If it were either/or, she would rather fund the urgent situation with more flexibility. Why can't we address what's in front of us? She asked.

Since seeding the fund has very little if nothing to do with solving the budget problem this year, in her opinion, it is not an appropriate time to be moving this money, Councilor Rothenberg said. She supports the idea of this kind of a fund, but it makes no sense to create more special education needs just to create an account for special education savings and spending, she suggested. If the mayor were to do both, she would fully support it. But putting this money away now is going to cause immediate harm if the schools are not fully funded. This will be an abstention for her.

In an earlier comment, the Mayor mentioned she didn't agree with Councilor Rothenberg's premise that they will necessarily be creating more special education needs, Councilor Jarrett reminded. He too has had conversations with some school staff and School Committee members to the effect that the budget as now proposed is workable, he volunteered.

Obviously, there are different opinions, Mayor Sciarra said. What she's heard from the superintendent is that, while there are still cuts, the point they have gotten the budget to now will not have such detrimental effects.

Councilor Rothenberg questioned the finance director about steps the administration has taken to make more money available for operating expenses, such as reducing Free Cash projections and 'pushing' revenue estimates. She also maintained that, as an existing revenue source, Medicaid reimbursement is already available for appropriation to the schools without the creation of a special account. However, she recognized that this proposal would designate it specifically for special education expenses.

Director Nardi clarified that money from Medicaid reimbursement will have to be moved into the special education stabilization account with an order from the City Council.

She holds the same position that it's not the right time and that money in Free Cash should be directed to the schools this year, Councilor Rothenberg reiterated.

In response to Councilor Rothenberg's earlier query about revenue estimates, Finance Director Nardi said she increased revenue projections for FY2025 over FY2024 by the following percentages:

Motor vehicle excise - 11.5%
hotel/motel - 12%
meals - 11%
ambulance - 10%

The Mayor and finance director also directed department heads to tighten budgets to reduce the amount of money returned to Free Cash as 'tailings' and decreased contributions to OPEB and capital projects, they advised.

This touches upon a bigger, philosophical difference in approach, Councilor Maiore reflected. Although best practice is not to use non-recurring funds, they know they lawfully can be used to fund the schools. If she were making the decision, she would put the money into the current school budget with faith that the community would not allow the trend of deficit-spending to continue indefinitely. "I think we're all pretty changed by this experience," she observed. Her way of doing it would be to address what's in front of them in terms of funding the schools.

That being said, she doesn't get the feeling that this money will otherwise go to the school budget, so she is going to support seeding this. But she did need to say that the way she would do this would be different.

Councilor Jarrett shared his opinion that this seems like a practical way to add flexibility for special education needs.

There being no further discussion, he called the motion to a vote, and the **motion carried 8:0 by roll call vote with one abstention (Councilor Rothenberg).**

The following order passed final reading:

24.092 An Order to Appropriate \$800,000 Free Cash to NPS Special Education Stabilization Fund – 2nd reading

City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council June 6, 2024

Upon recommendation of Mayor Sciarra

24.092 An Order to Appropriate \$800,000 Free Cash to NPS Special Education Stabilization Fund

Ordered, that

The City Council authorize the appropriation of \$800,000 from the FY2024 Undesignated Fund balance to the Northampton Public School Special Education Stabilization Fund established pursuant to Chapter 40, §13E of the Mass. General Laws to cover special education costs as described in the statute and per the policy as recommended by the Mayor, contingent on the Northampton Public School Committee also voting to accept M.G.L. Chapter 40, §13E and establishing the reserve fund.

Rules suspended, passed final reading and enrolled.

24.093 An Order to Approve Using \$500,000 Smith College Gift to Support FY25, FY26, FY27 NPS Budget – 2nd reading

24.093 An Order to Approve Using \$500,000 Smith College Gift to Support FY25, FY26, FY27 NPS Budget – 2nd reading

Councilor LaBarge moved to approve the order. Councilor Klemer seconded.

Councilor Jarrett moved to suspend council rule 4.13.4 Reconsideration. Councilor Klemer seconded.

In favor of suspension, Councilor Elkins noted that the School Committee meets tomorrow and needs an approved budget in order to recall any teachers whose jobs would be preserved by the Smith College gift, the seeding of the special education fund and the additional \$737,000. Until they pass a budget with those amendments, it is her understanding that they cannot recall pink-slipped teachers.

However, Councilor Maiore said they need to listen to what the teachers are saying, and they're not saying 'do this as fast as possible.'

Councilors received an email from the principal of Jackson Street School and she has heard from other teachers that they would like the budget to be approved, Councilor Elkins reported. Councilor Rothenberg pointed out that the jobs of administrators and teachers are different and that administrators may have an interest in recalling teachers as soon as possible whereas teachers may be more concerned with preserving as many jobs as possible for as long as possible.

There being no further discussion, **the motion passed 6:3 by roll call vote with Councilors Dubs, Maiore and Rothenberg opposed.**

After the budget was printed but before it was introduced, Smith College committed to a one-time gift over two years, Mayor Sciarra reminded. At this point, the president does not feel they are able to commit to a recurring annual gift. Their previous gift was over three years.

They normally wouldn't use a one-time gift like this for operating expenses but, due to the situation, she has committed to dedicating it to the operating budget of the schools over three years.

Councilor Rothenberg said it sounds like the difference in splitting it up over three years instead of two is \$84,000. She asked the annual cost of a first-grade paraprofessional and whether it might be possible to save one or two of them with that amount of money.

Mayor Sciarra said she didn't know the exact cost and that wouldn't be her decision.

Councilor Rothenberg expressed her understanding that three first-grade paraprofessionals are presently proposed to be cut. She is not convinced that a city of Northampton's wealth would find it hard to fill a hole of \$84,000 but she is certain it will be very hard for three first-grade teachers to fill the hole left by three paraprofessionals. She asked the mayor how she weighs that.

She is very sorry that the reality is that some cuts are necessary, Mayor Sciarra said. She has tried to direct as much money into this budget as possible without being reckless.

Councilor Rothenberg said she imagines the combined salaries of the mayor, finance director, auditor, economic development director, city attorney and CAPA director approach \$1 million dollars. She asked the Mayor if she thinks it is harder for her to find \$84,000 or for three 1st grade teachers to cover the work of three paraprofessionals indefinitely.

Mayor Sciarra said she didn't know how to answer that question.

There being no further discussion, **the motion carried 8:0 by roll call vote with one abstention (Councilor Rothenberg).**

The following order passed final reading:

24.093 An Order to Approve Using \$500,000 Smith College Gift to Support FY25, FY26, FY27 NPS Budget – 2nd reading

City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council

June 6, 2024

Upon recommendation of the Mayor

24.093 An Order to Approve Using \$500,000 Smith College Gift to Support FY25, FY26, FY27 NPS Budget

WHEREAS, Smith College and the City of Northampton acknowledge that they have a valuable partnership; and

WHEREAS, Smith College pledged \$500,000 over two years as part of its commitment to being good neighbors and responsible community members; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Sciarra is grateful for this unrestricted gift and has directed it to support the Northampton Public Schools budget over the next three years (FY25, FY26, FY27).

Now Therefore Be It Ordered,

The Northampton City Council appreciates the \$500,000 gift over two years from Smith College and in accordance with Massachusetts General Law 44, Section 53A approves using the gift over the next three fiscal years in the amount of \$166,666 each year to support the FY2025, FY2026, and FY2027 Northampton Public School Budget.

Rules suspended, passed final reading and enrolled.

24.069 An Order to Approve FY2025 General Fund Budget - 2nd reading

The mayor has submitted budget amendments but since they do not change any of the budget areas in which he has a conflict of interest, he may participate in acting on the amendments, Councilor Jarrett advised.

24.069 An Order to Approve FY2025 General Fund Budget - 2nd reading

He offered to entertain a motion to accept the amendments. **Councilor Klemer so moved. Councilor LaBarge seconded.**

The proposed amendment increases the overall GF budget by \$1,104,750 by drawing \$737,556 more from the fiscal stability stabilization fund, \$200,528 from special education stabilization and \$166,666 from the Smith College gift and applying it to the FY2025 Northampton school budget, Councilor Jarrett explained.

Councilor Jarrett moved to suspend council rule 4.13.4 Reconsideration. Councilor Klemer seconded. The motion passed 6:3 by roll call vote with Councilors Dubs, Maiore and Rothenberg opposed.

This amendment creates a very difficult situation for the budget because the budget as it stands is not something she can in good conscience and with integrity approve on behalf of Ward 3, Councilor Rothenberg shared. However, because this amendment can only be passed if the budget is passed, it places \$1.1 million at risk of not being given to the schools if the budget fails.

She requested that the mayor bifurcate this amendment from the budget and put it forth as a separate financial order so that councilors who find the budget unsatisfactory are not in the position of feeling forced to consent and pass a budget of which they do not approve.

The council president sought to clarify if additional orders affecting the FY2025 budget could be accepted at this point in the budget process or whether they would have to be considered outside the General Fund budget process, in other words, after July 1st.

Councilor Rothenberg said she checked with DOR and they can pass appropriations simultaneously with the budget appropriation.

The amended budget is the budget she put forward, Mayor Sciarra stressed. However, she is committed to the additional funds so, if the amendment is not approved, she will put forward an order for the additional funding in July.

Recess

Recess

At Councilor Rothenberg's request, **the City Council recessed at 9:25 p.m. The council reconvened at 9:35 p.m.**

Financial Orders (on 2nd reading continued) 24.069 An Order to Approve FY2025 General Fund Budget - 2nd reading

Financial Orders (on 2nd reading continued)

24.069 An Order to Approve FY2025 General Fund Budget - 2nd reading

The council resumed deliberations on the amendments to 24.069.

Councilor Moulton said he is not sure of the purpose of Councilor Rothenberg's request (to bifurcate the budget and present a separate financial order with the amendments) but he takes a dim view of any further effort to delay passage of the General Fund budget.

Councilor Maiore said her interpretation of Councilor Rothenberg's request is that she doesn't feel she can vote positively on the budget so she wants to separate out the amendments so they aren't negatively affected by a 'no' vote.

His concern is to deliver a whole budget to the school committee tomorrow, Councilor Moulton clarified. If they bifurcate it, the amendment is not going to come to them until July 1st.

"The crux of the problem is this mayor did not get us to a 'yes,'" Councilor Rothenberg suggested. Unless the kind of work that's going to be done tonight is to revise her amendment to bring it up to level services, she does not see what other kind of work can be done.

Councilor Jarrett said he wasn't hearing Councilor Rothenberg say there would be a 'yes' if amendments were separated from the budget. He sought to refocus the discussion on the amendments themselves.

Councilor Elkins said she believes the amendments reflect a lot of new information and work to continue evolving the budget from the one originally presented May 16th. She remains committed to approving it with the amendments and wants to do so tonight.

Councilor LaBarge noted that the amendments bring the budget increase up from 4.5% to 8%. The mayor and councilors worked tirelessly on these amendments together and have added more money. To split this budget now to her is the wrong way to go. "We have done our best here."

However, if the mayor *can* find more money, "find it, because we're in a predicament that's so unhealthy," she observed.

More money for the schools is excellent, and he understands that it carries consequences and entails greater financial risk, Councilor Jarrett said. He is in favor of it and is looking at this number as a minimum.

Mayor Sciarra reiterated that the budget represents a \$4.2 million increase over the budget from last year which is being built into the base. At 8%, it is the largest increase in at least 32 years, she pointed out.

Since 8% includes the \$1.2 million in one-time funds, the increase would actually be 11.52% if the \$1.2 million wasn't included, Councilor Jarrett volunteered.

The mayor makes an important point; they have made a commitment to building the increase into the base, Councilor Moulton noted. He is comfortable taking nearly \$2 million dollars from the Fiscal Stability Stabilization Fund (FSSF) despite the risk that has been acknowledged. This action underscores the need for placement of the \$3 million override question on the ballot later tonight.

Saying she wanted to dispel the notion that the schools somehow became 8%, 14% or even 17% more expensive, Councilor Rothenberg restated her belief that the schools on average grew by 4% over the last seven years and by 3% for the past two years. She further expressed her understanding that when the council votes on the budget, it is not approving parameters the mayor may have used in setting the budget; i.e. – they are not voting on an override or voting 'yes' to cutting the school's growth in FY2026 from 4% to 3%.

She expressed her belief that there are many, many ways to grow the budget to make permanent, full room for the schools. The 8% number isn't satisfactory for Ward 3. "We're voting on the appropriation and the appropriation is not sufficient."

If they wanted to amend it on the floor tonight to reach level services, then she could pass the budget and the amendment.

There being no further discussion, **the motion on the amendments passed 8:0 by roll call vote with one abstention (Councilor Rothenberg).**

Councilor Jarrett disclosed that, as a member of the Pedal People Cooperative, he has a conflict of interest on the General Fund budget due to a pre-existing contract with Central Services' Parking Maintenance division. Councilor Maiore has agreed to accommodate this conflict by dividing the motion.

If the amended budget doesn't pass, the mayor's budget presented May 16th will take effect July 1st unless the council meets before June 30th to amend the budget, he clarified. He recused himself.

Councilor Elkins moved to suspend rule 4.13.4. Reconsideration. Councilor Klemer seconded. The motion failed 5:3 with Councilors Dubs, Maiore and Rothenberg opposed and Councilor Jarrett recused.

Councilor Maiore called for a motion to put adoption of the General Fund budget as amended on the floor for discussion (not the order itself, but the budget in conceptual form for the purposes of discussion).

Councilor Elkins so moved. Councilor Klemer seconded.

Councilor Elkins moved to divide the question to remove the Central Services Parking Maintenance Division budget. Councilor Moulton seconded. The motion passed 8:0 with Councilor Jarrett recused.

Councilor Jarrett resumed the position of chair, thanking councilors for accommodating him.

In the discussion that followed, councilors inclined to vote favorably acknowledged that it has been a long and difficult process and that the budget as amended reflects a painful compromise between student needs, wider community needs and long-term fiscal responsibility. If he had seen a plan this week that offered a concrete path forward with financial sustainability, he would have supported it, but he did not,

Councilor Perry reported. He, too, doesn't see a better option for sustainable funding than what's currently on the table, Councilor Jarrett agreed. While he is willing to vote for this budget, he doesn't like it. After listening to many voices he personally advocated with the mayor for additional funding and thanks her for putting it forward. However, she indicated to him that she is not going to add more, so the only practical effect of more delay would be to postpone the school department's ability to recall staff.

An override passing in November is critical to maintaining the proposed levels of service for the schools and other departments, Councilor Jarrett stressed. One of the most concerning things he's heard is the belief that they can fund everything without an override. That's true only in the very short term by completely depleting their reserves. Without an override, by his calculations, it would only be a few years before Free Cash, the Fiscal Stability Stabilization Fund and general stabilization would be gone and they would see tremendous cuts across the board.

Councilors declining to endorse the amended budget cited either dissatisfaction that more wasn't done to save additional positions or unwillingness to cut services to the schools at all.

He is here to represent the people of Northampton and not to be a rubber stamp, Councilor Dubs stated. He expressed his understanding that the budget as presented would cut teachers, support staff, specialists who work with children with disabilities and essential services to their most vulnerable students. The budget is unacceptable and does not represent the community's values and priorities, he maintained. "I cannot in good conscience approve of it," he concluded.

Recess

Recess

The City Council recessed briefly at 10:25 p.m. The council reconvened at 10:28 p.m.

Financial Orders (on 2nd reading continued) 24.069 An Order to Approve FY2025 General Fund Budget - 2nd reading

Financial Orders (on 2nd reading continued)

24.069 An Order to Approve FY2025 General Fund Budget - 2nd reading

Councilor Maiore identified one reason for the lack of consensus as 'fundamental visionary disagreement' over how to proceed. She believes the Mayor has done all she feels she can but she still thinks they could go a little further because 'every position matters and even one or two positions makes a huge difference in the environment of the school and in the experience of the students.' She understands the fiscal stability concerns but feels the years in students' lives are something they can never give back.

Maybe the conversation was too much all or nothing, level service funding or not, she reflected. Now that she's sitting here, she really wishes she could just grab anything she can for the schools.

She reminded the public that the council moves money all the time outside of the budget season and that, if the mayor sees an opportunity to do so, she will. It sounds like they are going to have to fill voids almost as soon as they get out of this budget season. City government is constantly in motion, she assured.

She stressed that her dissatisfaction is not necessarily with the failure to fund level services but with the failure to work harder to save even a few more positions. She accepted a share of responsibility for this failure in that she herself did not propose a specific amendment to restore positions. "In the end, I have to vote with my conscience. I don't think this budget is all we could do," she concluded.

Councilor Moulton acknowledged it is distressing to vote for a budget that results in people losing their jobs. "It's a terrible thing," he agreed. He expressed hope that they can emerge from what has been a divisive period and commit to future collaboration.

Regarding the school budget, it is difficult to be at a point where they are having to consider how to triage the needs of the schools, he acknowledged. He recognizes the need to go beyond the 8% but doesn't want them to be in a situation where they continue to use non-recurring revenue. He sees work to be done both on the budgetary front and internally within the schools, such as looking at the inclusion model.

He feels like they have done what they can at this point to holistically address the needs throughout the city in a sustainable way. He will vote for the budget, and his vote for the school budget is a vote of confidence in the superintendent, he confirmed.

Councilor Rothenberg related an experience highlighting how much her daughter values and benefits from the services of a staff member who works with her on communication breakdown. Her daughter is incredibly smart and taught herself reading, math and Polish, but has difficulty understanding the meaning of nonverbal communication. It serves to illustrate that it is not for them to say that a particular position such as an interventionist is not needed. As they move forward, she hopes they all really try to open their

minds and realize that schools today don't look like they looked 30, 40 and even 50 years ago. They provide different services - essential services and services that change the world - and that's why it's an essential value to the community.

Councilor Klemer and Councilor Elkins used closing statements to reaffirm their support for the Mayor's budget, although both cited disappointment with the rancorous process that led them here. She fully supports people who want to make changes but to make big changes she thinks it is important to learn from one's colleagues, Councilor Klemer said. Overestimating one's own abilities and knowledge while disregarding or undervaluing the expertise of others can be disruptive and counterproductive to collaborative decision-making. At Monday's special meeting, there was no immediate plan to fully fund the schools; the suggestion was to use Free Cash with no plans to replenish it. Director Nardi illustrated with graphics that the money would run out in short order. "Ultimately, Councilor Rothenberg's numbers were exposed for what they are – smoke." She described the Ward 3 councilor's proposal as being 'to proceed to empty our savings and then spend next year in a series of endless brainstorming.'

She will be voting to approve this budget and is not supportive of further delay, Councilor Elkins reiterated. The mayor has brought forth a responsible budget in terms of funding their priorities as robustly as possible. With the budget before them, Northampton is well in excess (around 140%) of net school spending and has ended up at the number of Dr. Bonner's first-look budget. All the levers advocates requested to be used to direct more money toward the schools have, in fact, been used, she pointed out. "We can't push any of those levers as much and as hard as we'd all like" to fund level services. . . I am proud of what we have achieved," she concluded.

She echoed Councilor Maiore in saying she regrets that this year became 'an all or nothing' proposition.

From what she understands, the amended budget is not going to pass so what will go through is the original budget, Councilor Rothenberg shared. It is a strong mayor form of government and this budget will need to stand as the Mayor's budget. If they all feel like the budget is as good as it can be, they should be proud to have their names on it, she suggested. "I'm sorry that I can't put Ward 3's name on it."

There being no further comments, **the motion to adopt the General Fund budget with the Central Services Parking Maintenance budget removed passed 6:3 by roll call vote with Councilors Dubs, Maiore and Rothenberg opposed.**

Councilor Jarrett recused himself for the vote on the Central Services Parking Maintenance Budget.

The motion to approve carried 6:2 by roll call vote with Councilor Jarrett recused and Councilor Dubs and Councilor Rothenberg abstained.

With conceptual discussion of the budget over, Councilor Maiore called for a vote on the order itself **(24.069 An Order to Approve FY2025 General Fund Budget as amended).**

FAILED - 24.069 An Order to Approve FY2025 General Fund Budget - 2nd reading

Councilor Elkins moved to approve the order. Councilor Moulton seconded. The motion failed by a vote of 5:3 with Councilor Jarrett recused and Councilors Dubs, Maiore and Rothenberg opposed.

The amended budget did not pass, Councilor Maiore confirmed.

Councilor Jarrett resumed his position as chair.

24.094 An Order to Place \$3 Million Operating Override on November 5, 2024 State Election Ballot – 2nd reading

24.094 An Order to Place \$3 Million Operating Override on November 5, 2024 State Election Ballot – 2nd reading

Councilor Elkins moved to approve. Councilor LaBarge seconded.

As discussed, using almost \$2 million in reserves and committing to that being rolled into the budget permanently and being recurring requires a \$3 million Proposition 2 and ½ override, Mayor Sciarra presented. As explained when the amended budget was presented, to keep the override to \$3 million and have it last at least four years, the FY2026 school budget will need to keep within a 3% increase which can hopefully be built back to 4% in subsequent years.

In making a positive recommendation, there wasn't a great deal of discussion in Finance or public comment by anyone outside the committee, Councilor Moulton reported. The action to put a question on the ballot is procedural in nature, and that's how he described it.

The impact of the override will be to increase property taxes by \$60 per \$100,000 valuation but the overall impact on individual properties depends on their valuation, Director Nardi related. They will have specific estimates for residents before they go to the polls.

Councilor Moulton said he talked to the principal assessor who said that, had the override taken effect this year (FY2024), the average annual assessment would have increased by \$286. That’s just a ballpark but may serve as something of a guide.

With regard to a public comment about assessments having gone up, that’s not a decision made by the local municipality; it is required by state law, Director Nardi clarified.

Councilor Maiore agreed the vote to place the question on the ballot is a procedural step necessary to let voters decide.

There’s a difference between the average rate of inflation and the 2 ½% increase allowed by Proposition 2 and ½, so periodic overrides are required to prevent cuts to services, Councilor Jarrett added.

On behalf of Ward 3, “we are just opposed to general overrides,” Councilor Rothenberg stated. As ward councilor, she doesn’t feel they have exhausted other ways of looking at finances and their budget.

Councilor Elkins noted that Ward 3 overwhelmingly passed the last override, and Councilor Rothenberg countered that it was a different context and she has since heard quite a swing. Right now, confidence is too low to support an override.

The motion passed 8:1 by roll call vote with Councilor Rothenberg opposed.

The following order passed final reading:

**APPROVED -
24.094 An Order to
Place \$3 Million
Operating Override
on November 5,
2024 State Election
Ballot – 2nd reading**

City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council June 6, 2024

Upon the recommendation of Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra

24.094 An Order to Place \$3 Million Operating Override on November 5, 2024 State Election Ballot

Ordered, that notice be sent to the State Elections Division for an override question to be placed on the 2024 State Election ballot to be held in Northampton on November 5, 2024, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 59 Section 21 C (g):

Shall the City of Northampton be allowed to assess an additional \$3,000,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of funding the operating budgets of the City and Public Schools for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025?

Yes _____ No _____

Passed final reading and enrolled.

**Financial Orders
(on 2nd reading,
continued)**

Financial Orders (on 2ND reading, continued)

A - 1 2nd round of FY2024 Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Community Preservation Act (CPA) Funding Recommendations

- A. 24.080 An Order to Appropriate \$720,000 in CPA Funds for Ryan Road School Playground for All - 2nd reading**
- B. 24.081 An Order to Appropriate \$50,000 in CPA Funds to Habitat for Humanity for Affordable Home on Woodland Drive - 2nd reading**

- C. 24.082 An Order to Appropriate \$300,000 in CPA Funds for Critical Repairs and Rehabilitation to Memorial Hall - 2nd reading
- D. 24.083 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds for Invasive Species Removal at Lathrop Community - 2nd reading
- E. 24.084 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds for Affordable Housing Monitor - 2nd reading
- F. 24.085 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds for Local Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program - 2nd reading
- G. 24.086 An Order to Appropriate \$200,000 in CPA Funds to Valley CDC for Downtown Affordable Housing Creation Project - 2nd reading
- H. 24.087 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds to Historic Northampton for Parsons and Shepherd House Project - 2nd reading
- I. 24.088 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds to OPS for Downtown Park Design - 2nd reading

Councilor Elkins made a motion to approve agenda item #10 A – 1, the nine financial orders associated with the 2nd round of FY2024 Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding as a group. Councilor Moulton seconded.

Councilor Jarrett recognized the presence of Office of Planning and Sustainability Assistant Director Sarah LaValley. In answer to a question raised in Finance, the park in front of First Churches on Main Street does extend from Center Street all the way to Gothic Street, Assistant Director LaValley advised.

The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote.

The following orders passed final reading:

24.080 An Order to Appropriate \$720,000 in CPA Funds for Ryan Road School Playground for All - 2nd reading

City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council, June 6, 2024

Upon the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee

24.080 An Order to Appropriate \$720,000 in CPA Funds for Ryan Road School Playground for All

Ordered, that

WHEREAS, the Ryan Road School submitted an application for Community Preservation Act funding for creation of an inclusive playground at the Ryan Road School;

WHEREAS, a new playground is necessary to replace the existing playground that will soon no longer be usable due to age-related corrosion and surface failure;

WHEREAS, the project will create a playground that is accessible and inclusive to all, including children and caregivers of varying cognitive, sensory and social-emotional abilities;

WHEREAS, the playground has widespread support and will contribute to positive health status of residents and enhance quality of life;

WHEREAS, on April 17, 2024, the Northampton Community Preservation Committee voted unanimously to recommend that \$720,000 in Community Preservation Act funds be used to support this project.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED,

That \$720,000 be appropriated from Community Preservation Act funding to the Ryan Road School for the Playground for All Project. And, that the grantee meets the conditions approved by the Community Preservation Committee, the Mayor, and City Council.

Specifically: That, pursuant to the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee and in addition to other amounts appropriated therefor, the sum of Seven Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$720,000) is hereby appropriated from the Community Preservation Fund to pay costs of design and construction of a playground located at the Ryan Road School in order to make it more functional for its intended use and any costs incidental and related thereto (the "School Playground Project"); that to meet this appropriation, the Treasurer, with the approval of the Mayor, is authorized to borrow said amount under and pursuant to Chapter 44B, Section 11 of the General Laws, or pursuant to any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the City therefor; that the Mayor is authorized to take any action necessary or convenient to carry out the School Playground Project.

Passed final reading and enrolled.

24.081 An Order to Appropriate \$50,000 in CPA Funds to Habitat for Humanity for Affordable Home on Woodland Drive - 2nd reading

City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council, June 6, 2024

Upon the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee

24.081 An Order to Appropriate \$50,000 in CPA Funds to Habitat for Humanity for Affordable Home on Woodland Drive

Ordered, that

WHEREAS, Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity submitted an application for Community Preservation Act funding for creation of an energy efficient affordable house on Woodland Drive;

WHEREAS, Habitat for Humanity has an excellent record of creating housing throughout the Pioneer Valley and beyond, and the project has wide community support, leverages funding from many other sources, and utilizes volunteer labor;

WHEREAS, the house will be permanently restricted to individuals and families earning 80% of area median income or below;

WHEREAS, on April 18, 2024, the Northampton Community Preservation Committee voted unanimously to recommend that \$50,000 in Community Preservation Act funds be used to support this project.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED,

That \$50,000 be appropriated from Community Preservation Act funding to Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity for the Woodland Drive Affordable Home project. And, that the grantee meets the conditions approved by the Community Preservation Committee, the Mayor, and City Council.

Specifically, \$50,000 is appropriated from the CPA Budgeted Reserve (account #2344930-359930).

Passed final reading and enrolled.

24.082 An Order to Appropriate \$300,000 in CPA Funds for Critical Repairs and Rehabilitation to Memorial Hall - 2nd reading

**City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS**

In City Council, June 6, 2024

Upon the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee
24.082 An Order to Appropriate \$300,000 in CPA Funds for Critical Repairs and Rehabilitation to Memorial Hall

Ordered, that

WHEREAS, Northampton Central Services submitted a CPA application for critical repairs and rehabilitation to Memorial Hall, including exterior foundation waterproofing, masonry work, and flashing and repointing;

WHEREAS, the work will conform to the Secretary of the Interior’s standards for historic rehabilitation, and will contribute to securing the envelope of the 1872 historic public structure that is a critical component of the downtown National Register District;

WHEREAS, on April 17, 2024, the Northampton Community Preservation Committee voted unanimously to recommend that \$300,000 in Community Preservation Act funds be used to support this project.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED,

That \$300,000 be appropriated from Community Preservation Act funding to the Northampton Central Services for Memorial Hall Repair and Rehabilitation. And, that the grantee meets the conditions approved by the Community Preservation Committee, the Mayor, and City Council.

Specifically, \$130,088 is appropriated from the CPA Budgeted Reserve (account #2344930-359930) and \$169,912 is appropriated from the CPA Historic Reserve (account #2344930-359932).

Passed final reading and enrolled.

**24.083 An Order to
Appropriate CPA
Funds for Invasive
Species Removal at
Lathrop Community
- 2nd reading**

**City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS**

In City Council, June 6, 2024

Upon the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee
24.083 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds for Invasive Species Removal at Lathrop Community

Ordered, that

WHEREAS, the Lathrop Communities submitted an application for Community Preservation Act funding for continued priority invasive species removal at its North and East campuses, on both of which the City holds permanent Conservation Restrictions.

WHEREAS, the project will continue to help improve and preserve the health of sensitive habitats in the Parsons and Broad Brook watersheds, has strong community support, and will continue to leverage private funds and extensive volunteer efforts.

WHEREAS, the applicant has welcomed public use of its popular trails, and will continue to increase public knowledge of the trails on the property as part of this project.

WHEREAS, on April 17, 2024, the Northampton Community Preservation Committee, voted to recommend that \$19,131 in Community Preservation Act funds be used to support this project.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED,

That \$19,131 be appropriated from Community Preservation Act funding to the Lathrop Communities for the Invasives Removal and Education project . And, that the grantee meets the conditions approved by the Community Preservation Committee, the Mayor, and City Council.

Specifically, \$19,131 is appropriated from the CPA Budgeted Reserve (account #2344930-359930).

Passed final reading and enrolled.

**24.084 An Order to
Appropriate CPA
Funds for Affordable
Housing Monitor -
2nd reading**

City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council, June 6, 2024

Upon the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee

24.084 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds for Affordable Housing Monitor

Ordered, that

WHEREAS, the Office of Planning and Sustainability submitted an application for a Community Preservation Act funding for an Affordable Housing Monitor to oversee six privately owned, affordability-restricted units for which a Monitor is required by deed rider;

WHEREAS, the project will preserve existing affordable housing units by ensuring that owners and buyers are eligible purchasers, by conducting a lottery for qualified homeowners in the event of a sale, documenting eligible purchasers, and ensuring compliance with fair housing laws during a lottery;

WHEREAS, on April 17, 2024, the Northampton Community Preservation Committee, voted unanimously to recommend that \$6,000 in Community Preservation Act funds be used to support this project.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED,

That \$6,000 be appropriated from Community Preservation Act funding to the Affordable Housing Monitor project. And, that the grantee meets the conditions approved by the Community Preservation Committee, the Mayor, and City Council.

Specifically, \$6,000 is appropriated from the CPA Budgeted Reserve (account #2344930-359930).

Passed final reading and enrolled.

24.085 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds for Local Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program - 2nd reading

City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council, June 6, 2024

Upon the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee

24.085 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds for Local Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program

Ordered, that

WHEREAS, the Office of Planning and Sustainability submitted an application for Community Preservation Act funding for an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program to provide funding to preserve Northampton farmland through the purchase of APR's on the land;

WHEREAS, the project will protect tracts of agricultural land that are important to protect as active farmland but are not large enough or valuable enough to qualify for the Commonwealth's APR Program;

WHEREAS, on April 17, 2024, the Northampton Community Preservation Committee, voted unanimously to recommend \$60,000 in Community Preservation Act funds be used to support this project.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED,

That \$60,000 be appropriated from Community Preservation Act funding to the Office of Planning and Sustainability for Northampton Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program. And, that the grantee meets the conditions approved by the Community Preservation Committee, the Mayor, and City Council.

Specifically, \$60,000 is appropriated from the CPA Budgeted Reserve (account #2344930-359930).

Passed final reading and enrolled.

24.086 An Order to Appropriate \$200,000 in CPA Funds to Valley CDC for Downtown Affordable Housing Creation Project - 2nd reading

**City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS**

In City Council, June 6, 2024

Upon the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee
24.086 An Order to Appropriate \$200,000 in CPA Funds to Valley CDC for Downtown Affordable Housing Creation Project

Ordered, that

WHEREAS, Valley Community Development Corporation submitted an application for Community Preservation Act funding for creation of an affordable housing project at 27 Crafts Avenue;

WHEREAS, CPA funds will be used to create 20 fossil-fuel free affordable units in the heart of downtown, with close access to bus transportation, bike travel or by walking to an abundance of workplace opportunities, services and amenities;

WHEREAS, CPA funds will be used to leverage significant funds from a variety of other sources, including an already-received \$921,300 Municipal Vulnerability Program grant, and anticipated additional state grants and low income and renewable energy tax credits;

WHEREAS, on April 17, 2024, the Northampton Community Preservation Committee, voted unanimously to recommend that \$200,000 in Community Preservation Act funds be used to support this project.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED,

That \$200,000 be appropriated from Community Preservation Act funding to the Downtown Affordable Housing Creation Project. And, that the grantee meets the conditions approved by the Community Preservation Committee, the Mayor, and City Council.

Specifically, \$200,000 is appropriated from the CPA Budgeted Reserve (account #2344930-359930).

Passed final reading and enrolled.

24.087 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds to Historic Northampton for Parsons and Shepherd House Project - 2nd reading

**City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS**

In City Council, June 6 2024

Upon the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee
24.087 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds to Historic Northampton for Parsons and Shepherd House Project

Ordered, that

WHEREAS, Historic Northampton, Inc. submitted a CPA application for work to complete engineering and architectural examinations to the Parsons and Shepherd Houses;

WHEREAS, the studies will use archaeology protocol and historical analytic techniques to yield important information about one of Northampton's oldest structures;

WHEREAS, the project has widespread public support and is a necessary step toward reopening the Parsons House to the public;

WHEREAS, on April 17, 2024, the Northampton Community Preservation Committee voted unanimously to recommend that \$47,104 in Community Preservation Act funds be used to support the project.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED,

That \$47,104 be appropriated from Community Preservation Act funding to Historic Northampton Inc. for the Parsons and Shepherd House project. And, that the grantee meets the conditions approved by the Community Preservation Committee, the Mayor, and City Council.

Specifically, \$47,104 is appropriated from the CPA Budgeted Reserve (account #2344930-359930).

Passed final reading and enrolled.

24.088 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds to OPS for Downtown Park Design - 2nd reading

City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council, June 6, 2024

Upon the recommendation of the Community Preservation Committee

24.088 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds to OPS for Downtown Park Design

Ordered, that

WHEREAS, the Office of Planning and Sustainability submitted an application for Community Preservation Act funding to complete design of a small park on Main Street;

WHEREAS, the design will include modification to the space from the Art Kiosk to Center Street to create a public speaking and resting landscaped space that accommodates existing mature shade trees;

WHEREAS, the project meets the goals of the Sustainable Northampton Plan and the Open Space, Recreation and Multiuse Trail Plans by use of open space and recreation to enhance the downtown center;

WHEREAS, on April 17, 2024, the Northampton Community Preservation Committee, voted unanimously to recommend that \$77,000 in CPA funds be used to support this project.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED,

That \$77,000 be appropriated from Community Preservation Act funding to the Office of Planning and Sustainability for the Downtown Park Design Project at First Church. And, that the grantee meets the conditions approved by the Community Preservation Committee, the Mayor, and City Council.

Specifically, \$77,000 is appropriated from the CPA Budgeted Reserve (account #2344930-359930).

Passed final reading and enrolled.

Financial Orders (in 1st reading)
24.098 An Order to Appropriate FY2025 Cash Capital to Various Capital Projects - 1st reading

Financial Orders (on 1st reading)

24.098 An Order to Appropriate FY2025 Cash Capital to Various Capital Projects - 1st reading

Finance Director Nardi reviewed the cash capital projects, reminding councilors that 'cash capital' is money appropriated from the regular FY2025 budget. The new bottle-filling system in City Hall will be put in in conjunction with asbestos removal from the attic. In order to deal with significant roof leaks it is necessary to abate the asbestos, the Mayor explained.

Councilor Elkins moved to refer the order to the consent agenda. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion passed 8:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Rothenberg abstained.

See minutes of July 11, 2024 for final reading.

24.099 An Order to Authorize FY2025 Intermunicipal Agreements - 1st reading

24.099 An Order to Authorize FY2025 Intermunicipal Agreements - 1st reading

Councilor Moulton noted that the Public Health Excellence (PHE) Collaborative mentions 17 communities but only 14 are listed. Another clause indicated that the Amherst contract for kennel services is needed for FY2024 and that should be updated to FY2025.

Councilor Moulton moved to refer the order to the consent agenda. Councilor Maiore seconded. The motion passed 8:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Rothenberg abstained.

See minutes of July 11, 2024 for final reading.

24.100 An Order to Approve Using Gift for Forbes Library Bathroom Project - 1st reading

24.100 An Order to Approve Using Gift for Forbes Library Bathroom Project - 1st reading
Following an explanation of the order, Councilor Elkins moved to suspend the rules. Councilor Rothenberg seconded. The motion passed unanimously 9:0 to roll call vote.

Councilor Elkins moved to approve the order. Councilor Rothenberg seconded. The motion passed unanimously 9:0 to roll call vote.

The following order passed final reading:

City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council June 20, 2024

Upon recommendation of the Mayor

24.100 An Order to Approve Using Gift for Forbes Library Bathroom Project

Ordered, that

The Northampton City Council in appreciation of the \$37,000 gift to the City of Northampton from the Trustees of Forbes Library approves using the gifted funds to support the Forbes Library Bathroom Improvement Project, in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 53A.

Rules suspended, passed final reading and enrolled.

24.101 An Order to Approve FY2024 End of Year Budget Transfers - 1st reading
Councilor Elkins moved to suspend the rules. Councilor LaBarge seconded. The motion passed 8:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Rothenberg abstained.

Councilor Elkins moved to approve the order. Councilor LaBarge seconded.

Following an explanation by Finance Director Nardi, the motion passed 8:0 by roll call vote with Councilor Rothenberg abstained.

The following order passed final reading:

24.101 An Order to Approve FY2024 End of Year Budget Transfers - 1st reading

City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council

June 20, 2024

Upon recommendation of Mayor Sciarra

24.101 An Order to Approve FY2024 End of Year Budget Transfers

Ordered, that

the following FY2024 budgetary transfers be made:

Department	Description		Fund/Org	Object	Transfer From:	Transfer To:
Personnel Benefits	Cover Benefits paid upon separation from the city	PS	19491	519700		\$ 67,502.00
Veteran's Service	OT	PS	15431	513000		\$ 15.00
Undesignated Fund Balance		PS			\$ (67,517.00)	
Information Technology Services	Expenses	OM				\$ 24,983.00
Information Technology Services	Salaries	PS	11551	511000	\$ (24,983.00)	
Total					\$ (92,500.00)	\$ 92,500.00

Rules suspended, passed final reading and enrolled.

Orders

Orders
None.

Ordinances

Ordinances
None.

Zoning Ordinances

Zoning Ordinances
None.

Resolutions

Resolutions
None.

Financial Orders (on 2nd reading)

Financial Orders (on 2nd reading)
The following orders were approved as part of the consent agenda:
24.095 An Order to Accept DA Sullivan \$10,000 Gift for Purchase of Storage Trailer – 2nd reading

24.095 An Order to Accept DA Sullivan \$10,000 Gift for Purchase of Storage Trailer – 2nd reading

City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council

June 6, 2024

Upon recommendation of the Mayor

24.095 An Order to Accept DA Sullivan \$10,000 Gift for Purchase of Storage Trailer

Ordered, that

The Northampton City Council gratefully accepts the donation of \$10,000, a gift to the City of Northampton from D.A. Sullivan and Sons, Inc., and in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 53A approves using the gifted funds to fund the purchase of a trailer to store assets including the portable stage, the wooden dance floor and other assets that are frequently transported around the city, as well as regular maintenance to resurface the cafe/ dance area of Pulaski Park under the direction of the Northampton Arts and Culture and the Economic Development Departments.

Passed final reading and enrolled.

24.097 An Order to Approve FY2024 End of Year Budget Transfers – 2nd reading

24.097 An Order to Approve FY2024 End of Year Budget Transfers – 2nd reading

City of Northampton
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council

June 6, 2024

Upon recommendation of Mayor Sciarra

24.097 An Order to Approve FY2024 End of Year Budget Transfers

Ordered, that

the following FY2024 budgetary transfers be made:

Department	Description		Fund/Org	Object	Transfer From:	Transfer To:
Public Safety and DHHS	FEMA - Covid19 Activities	OM	2131			\$ 258,821.00
Undesignated Fund Balance (ARPA Loss Revenue)	Undesignated Fund Balance (ARPA Loss Revenue)				\$ (258,821.00)	
Arts & Culture	Salaries	PS	16991	511000		\$ 584.00
Central Services	R&M Buildings	OM	11922	524001		\$ 37,085.00
Undesignated Fund Balance	Undesignated Fund Balance				\$ (37,669.00)	
City Council	Salaries	PS	11111	511000		\$ 716.00
City Council	Travel	OM	11112	571001	\$ (716.00)	
Solid Waste Enterprise	Solid Waste Closure	OM	3200640	553030		\$ 250,000.00
Solid Waste Enterprise	Landfill Closure Fund	OM	5000	340589	\$ (250,000.00)	
Highways	Road Improvements	OOM	14223	584010		\$ 170,500.00
Highways	Highway Salaries	PS	14221	511000	\$ (170,500.00)	
Highways	Tree Canopy and Park Improvements	OM	14923	529004/530000		\$ 244,500.00
Highways	Administration and Engineering	PS	14211	511000	\$ (31,000.00)	
Highways	DPW Parks Salaries	PS	14921	511000	\$ (213,500.00)	
Stormwater Enterprise - Flood Control	Overtime	PS	62611	511000		\$ 55,000.00
Stormwater Enterprise	Salaries	PS	62631	513000	\$ (55,000.00)	
Stormwater Enterprise	Flood Control Professional Expenses	OM	62632	530000		\$ 19,115.40
Stormwater Enterprise	Stormwater Expenses	OM	62612	548000	\$ (19,115.40)	
Total					\$ (1,036,321.40)	\$ 1,036,321.40

Passed final reading and enrolled.

New Business

New Business
None

Adjourn

Adjourn
Councilor Elkins moved to adjourn. Councilor Rothenberg seconded. The motion passed unanimously 9:0 by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 11:56 p.m.

Attest: _____, Administrative Assistant

EXHIBIT A

List of Documents Reviewed at June 20, 2024 Northampton City Council Meeting

1. June 20, 2024 Agenda
2. Minutes of Special City Council/Finance Committee Meeting May 29, 2024 (FY2025 Budget Hearing)
3. 24.095 An Order to Accept DA Sullivan \$10,000 Gift for Purchase of Storage Trailer
4. 24.097 An Order to Approve FY2024 End of Year Budget Transfers
5. 24.102 Appointments to Parks and Recreation Commission - Memo from Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra to City Council dated June 20, 2024 re: Appointments to Boards, Committees and Commissions proposing the appointment of Glenn Connly and Kristin Dardano to the Parks and Recreation Commission, together with their applications for appointment.
6. 24.098 An Order to Appropriate FY2025 Cash Capital to Various Capital Projects
7. 24.099 An Order to Authorize FY2025 Intermunicipal Agreements
8. 24.100 An Order to Approve Using Gift for Forbes Library Bathroom Project
9. 24.101 An Order to Approve FY2024 End of Year Budget Transfers
10. 24.092 An Order to Appropriate \$800,000 Free Cash to NPS Special Education Stabilization Fund
11. 24.093 An Order to Approve Using \$500,000 Smith College Gift to Support FY25, FY26, FY27 NPS Budget
12. 24.069 An Order to Approve FY2025 General Fund Budget
13. 24.069 An Order to Approve FY2025 General Fund Budget AMENDED
14. 24.094 An Order to Place \$3 Million Operating Override on November 5, 2024 State Election Ballot
15. 24.080 An Order to Appropriate \$720,000 in CPA Funds for Ryan Road School Playground for All
16. 24.081 An Order to Appropriate \$50,000 in CPA Funds to Habitat for Humanity for Affordable Home on Woodland Drive
17. 24.082 An Order to Appropriate \$300,000 in CPA Funds for Critical Repairs and Rehabilitation to Memorial Hall
18. 24.083 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds for Invasive Species Removal at Lathrop Communit
19. 24.084 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds for Affordable Housing Monitor
20. 24.085 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds for Local Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program
21. 24.086 An Order to Appropriate \$200,000 in CPA Funds to Valley CDC for Downtown Affordable Housing Creation Project
22. 24.087 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds to Historic Northampton for Parsons and Shepherd House Project
23. 24.088 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds to OPS for Downtown Park Design

Record of City Council Votes for June 20, 2024		Dubs	Elkins	Jarrett	Klemer	LaBarge	Maiore	Moulton	Perry	Rothenberg	Total	
Roll Call by Laura Krutzler, Administrative Assistant to the City Council @ 6:30 p.m.		Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	9 Present	
Approval of Consent Agenda		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Second Yes	Yes	Motion to approve Yes	Yes	Abstain	Motion passed 8:0; Rothenberg abstained	
Minutes of May 29, 2024 Special City Council/Finance Committee Meeting (FY2025 Budget Hearing)												Consent
24.095 An Order to Accept DA Sullivan \$10,000 Gift for Purchase of Storage Trailer - 2nd reading												Consent
24.097 An Order to Approve FY2024 End of Year Budget Transfers - 1st reading												Consent
24.102 Appointments to Parks and Recreation Commission, for referral to City Services		Consent										
4.098 An Order to Appropriate FY2025 Cash Capital to Various Capital Projects - 1st reading		Referred to consent	Yes	Motion to refer	Yes	Yes	Second Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abstain	Motion passed 8:0; Rothenberg abstained
24.099 An Order to Authorize FY2025 Intermunicipal Agreements - 1st reading		Referred to consent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Second Yes	Motion to refer	Yes	Abstain	Motion passed 8:0; Rothenberg abstained
24.100 An Order to Approve Using Gift for Forbes Library Bathroom Project - 1st reading		Suspend rules	Yes	Motion to suspend	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Second Yes	Motion passed 9:0; roll call
		Approve	Yes	Motion to approve	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Second Yes	Motion passed 9:0; roll call
24.101 An Order to Approve FY2024 End of Year Budget Transfers - 1st reading		Suspend rules	Yes	Motion to suspend	Yes	Yes	Second Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abstain	Motion passed 8:0; Rothenberg abstained
		Approve	Yes	Motion to approve	Yes	Yes	Second Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abstain	Motion passed 8:0; Rothenberg abstained
24.092 An Order to Appropriate \$800,000 Free Cash to NPS Special Education Stabilization Fund - 2nd reading		Suspend rule 4.13.4	No	Second Yes	Motion to suspend	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Motion passed 6:3, Dubs, Maiore & Rothenberg opposed
		Approve	Yes	Motion to approve	Yes	Yes	Second Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abstain	Motion passed 8:0; Rothenberg abstained
24.093 An Order to Approve Using \$500,000 Smith College Gift to Support FY25, FY26, FY27 NPS Budget - 2nd reading		Suspend rule 4.13.4	No	Yes	Motion to suspend	Second Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Motion passed 6:3, Dubs, Maiore & Rothenberg
		Approve	Yes	Yes	Yes	Second Yes	Motion to approve	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abstain	Motion passed 8:0; Rothenberg abstained
Motion to accept 24.069 as amended		Suspend rule 4.13.4	No	Yes	Motion to suspend	Second Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Motion passed 6:3, Dubs, Maiore & Rothenberg opposed
		Approve	Yes	Yes	Yes	Motion to approve	Second Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abstain	Motion passed 8:0; Rothenberg abstained
Motion to put adoption of the FY2025 GF budget as amended on the floor for discussion (not the order itself, but the budget in conceptual form for the purpose of discussion)		Suspend rule 4.13.4	No	Motion to suspend	Recused	Second Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Motion Failed 5:3; Dubs, Maiore & Rothenberg opposed/ Jarrett recused
		Approve	No	Motion to approve	Yes	Second Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Motion passed 6:3; Dubs, Maiore & Rothenberg opposed

Record of City Council Votes for June 20, 2024		Dubs	Elkins	Jarrett	Klemer	LaBarge	Maiore	Moulton	Perry	Rothenberg	Total
Motion to divide the question to separately consider the Parking Division - Maintenance (as opposed to Parking Division - Enforcement) OM Budget	Divide question	Yes	Motion to divide	Recused	Yes	Yes	Yes	Second Yes	Yes	Yes	Motion carried 8:0; Jarrett recused
Vote on Central Services Parking Division - Maintenance OM Budget		Abstain	Yes	Recused	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Abstain	Motion carried 6:2; Dubs & Rothenberg abstained/Jarrett recused
24.069 An Order to Approve FY2025 General Fund Budget as Amended - 2nd reading	Approve	No	Motion to approve	Recused	Yes	Yes	No	Second Yes	Yes	No	Motion Failed 5:3; Dubs, Maiore & Rothenberg opposed/Jarrett recused
24.094 An Order to Place \$3 Million Operating Override on November 5, 2024 State Election Ballot - 2nd reading	2nd reading	Yes	Motion to approve	Yes	Yes	Second Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Motion passed 8:1; Rothenberg opposed
24.080 An Order to Appropriate \$720,000 in CPA Funds for Ryan Road School Playground for All - 2nd reading	24.080 - 24.088	Councilor Elkins moved to approve CPA orders as a group. Councilor Moulton seconded.									
24.081 An Order to Appropriate \$50,000 in CPA Funds to Habitat for Humanity for Affordable Home on Woodland Drive - 2nd reading	approved as group	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Motion passed 9:0; roll call
24.082 An Order to Appropriate \$300,000 in CPA Funds for Critical Repairs and Rehabilitation to Memorial Hall - 2nd reading											
24.083 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds for Invasive Species Removal at Lathrop Community - 2nd reading											
24.084 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds for Affordable Housing Monitor - 2nd reading											
24.085 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds for Local Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program - 2nd reading											
24.086 An Order to Appropriate \$200,000 in CPA Funds to Valley CDC for Downtown Affordable Housing Creation Project - 2nd reading											
24.087 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds to Historic Northampton for Parsons and Shepherd House Project - 2nd reading											
24.088 An Order to Appropriate CPA Funds to OPS for Downtown Park Design - 2nd reading											
Motion to Adjourn	to Adjourn	Yes	Motion to adjourn	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Second Yes	Motion passed 9:0; roll call

At 11:56 p.m., Councilor Elkins moved to adjourn the meeting; Councilor rothenberg seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote of 9 Yes, 0 No.