



## City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

*In the City Council, March 12, 2025*

Upon the Recommendation of:      Councilor Marissa Elkins  
   Councilor Alex Jarrett  
   Councilor Stanley Moulton III

### **R-25.223**

#### **A RESOLUTION CENSURING COUNCILOR ROTHENBERG FOR CONDUCT DURING PUBLIC SAFETY DISPATCH CALL OF FEBRUARY 18, 2025**

**WHEREAS**, Section 2-3(b) of the Northampton City Charter states “No city council or any member of the city council shall give orders or directions to any employee of the city appointed by the mayor, either publicly or privately.”; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 3-2 of the Northampton City Charter states that “The executive powers of the city shall be vested solely in the mayor and may be exercised by the mayor either personally or through the several city agencies under the general supervision and control of the office of the mayor.”; and

**WHEREAS**, Massachusetts General Laws chapter 268A, §23(b)(2)(ii),<sup>1</sup> governing standards of conduct for public officials, states “[n]o current officer or employee of a state, county or municipal agency shall knowingly, or with reason to know... use or attempt to use such official position to secure for such officer, employee or others unwarranted privileges or exemptions which are of substantial value and which are not properly available to similarly situated individuals”; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 18, 2025 at 11:19 pm, Northampton Ward 3 City Councilor Quaverly Rothenberg called the non-emergency dispatch line<sup>2</sup> and engaged two city employees in a communication that violated the city charter, potentially violated Massachusetts rules and laws governing the ethical conduct of public officials, harassed city employees and generally behaved in a manner unbecoming to a city councilor; and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://malegislature.gov/laws/generallaws/partiv/titlei/chapter268a/section23>

<sup>2</sup> Audio recording of call: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-cZ2sf-y13ToxT1yq-O7oRGRsFdEvc0k/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-cZ2sf-y13ToxT1yq-O7oRGRsFdEvc0k/view?usp=drive_link)

**WHEREAS**, in the call, Councilor Rothenberg misappropriated valuable time of dispatch employees during an ongoing winter storm response; and

**WHEREAS**, in the call, Councilor Rothenberg used her position in an improper way in an attempt to coerce city employees to violate protocols of their employment; and

**WHEREAS**, in the call, Councilor Rothenberg alleged, either knowingly falsely or with reckless disregard to the truth, that Donna LaScaleia, Director of the Northampton Department of Public Works, had resigned without notice to the city; and

**WHEREAS**, in the call, Councilor Rothenberg told city employees that city councilors “outrank the Mayor” and “everybody in this city works for the City Council”; and

**WHEREAS**, at the call’s conclusion, Councilor Rothenberg did not request attention to any reported specific location in her ward requiring urgent road treatment but instead requested that a DPW employee be dispatched to her home address with sand and salt,<sup>3</sup> and

**WHEREAS**, during the February 20, 2025 city council meeting, Councilor Rothenberg made an announcement describing much of this call, but omitted the false information she claimed about Director LaScaleia; and

**WHEREAS**, Councilor Rothenberg’s false statement destabilized the Department of Public Works, compelling Director LaScaleia to “spen[d] considerable time over the past two weeks working with my Superintendents to allay their concerns, reassure employees about potential confrontation with an elected official and stabilize Department morale in the midst of an extremely challenging weather event and its aftermath, which has required all of our operational attention and capacity<sup>4</sup>.”

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Northampton City Council hereby censures Councilor Rothenberg for her egregious conduct as described above; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be delivered to Mayor Sciarra, Director LaScaleia and Public Safety Dispatch Director Kelly Schuetze as notice of this council’s action; and

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<sup>3</sup> In her announcement in City Council, Councilor Rothenberg stated that she did not actually need the road treated at her residence and was merely trying to get a DPW employee to respond to her questions about the storm response.

<sup>4</sup> Email from Director LaScaleia: <https://www.northamptonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30178/25223-LaScaleia-Email-re-2-18-25-Dispatch-Call>

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this Council acknowledges the Mayor's executive authority in the charter and recommends that she take all steps she deems necessary to protect city employees from Councilor Rothenberg's charter-violative behavior; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that it is this Council's expectation that the mayor will take no action that abrogates or diminishes Council's authority afforded by Section 2-3 of the Northampton City Charter to access information, Section 2-9 to promulgate legislation, Section 2-10 to confirm certain appointments, or any other legislative power delegated to the City Council as stated in Section 1-3 of the City Charter.

**Adopted in Final Reading on Roll Call Vote of 7 Yes, 1 No, 1 Absent (Councilor Dubs opposed; Councilor Rothenberg recused)**  
**In City Council, March 12, 2025**

Attest: Janet Krutger, Clerk of Council

**I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Northampton City Council on March 12, 2025**  
**Per Charter Section 3-6, non-binding resolutions are not required to be presented to the Mayor for approval.**

Attest: Janet Krutger, Clerk of Council