

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING – FEBRUARY 1, 2023**  
**Meeting held in-person at 50 Payson Avenue and remotely by Google Meet**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**Members Present:** President Homar Gomez, Vice-President Salem Derby, Owen Zaret, Daniel Rist and Thomas Peake were present in person. Councilors James Kwiecinski, Koni Denham and Brad Riley were present remotely. Councilor David Meunier was absent.

**Pledge of Allegiance.**

**Approval of Minutes:** On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Derby it was unanimously voted (by roll call) to approve the minutes of the Jan. 18, 2023 meeting.

**Public Speak Time Summary:** Sindy Mojica, the Diversity and Inclusion Liaison at Easthampton High School, announced two upcoming events hosted by the high school. On Feb. 10, 2023 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. there will be a Black History Museum event at the high school auditorium. The other event is a Black Heroes Panel to take place on Feb. 17, 2023 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at 50 Payson Ave., City Council Chambers.

Doris Madsen spoke about the Emily Williston Memorial Library. She said that it is necessary for the city and library board to work together toward funding the library.

Jim Nash, Northampton City Council President, thanked President Gomez and the City Council for allowing himself and Northampton City Council Vice-President Foster to attend tonight's meeting and learn more about how Easthampton City Council conducts hybrid meetings.

**Communications from elected officials, boards and committees:** Councilor Zaret spoke about the tragic shooting of Tyre Nichols. He also introduced mass shooting statistics since he had promised the Council that these are topics that he would keep talking about.

**Mayor Communications:** None

**Correspondence, Announcements & President/Vice-President Communications:** Councilor Derby read a Black History Month Proclamation which had been prepared by the Mayor.

President Gomez said that Black History Month should not just be a "checkbox" and that we need to do more. He said that we need to put our actions where our words are and to start doing things to support everybody, especially the Black community.

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Derby it was unanimously voted (by roll call) to open the public hearing.

**PUBLIC HEARING – STARTING AT 6:15 p.m.**

**Supplemental Appropriation – Stabilization Funds:** Second reading by Councilor Rist on the request to transfer \$3,000,000.00 from Free Cash to three Stabilization Funds. Recommended by the Finance Committee.

Councilor Rist reported that since the Finance Committee did not meet as scheduled due to the impending snowstorm, he would like to continue the Public Hearing until the next City Council meeting on February 15, 2023.

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Derby it was unanimously voted (by roll call) to continue the Public Hearing until February 15, 2023.

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Zaret it was unanimously voted (by roll call) to close the public hearing.

**Reports of Standing Committees:**

**FINANCE:** Councilor Rist reported the Finance Committee will meet next on Feb. 8th at 5:15 p.m.

**FY '24 City Council Budget:** Councilor Rist reported that the Finance Committee had met Jan. 31<sup>st</sup> to discuss the FY '24 City Council Budget. He clarified that the newly added legal expenses item will not increase the overall budget. This will allow for more transparency and also let the City Council have a better idea of the legal expenses incurred by their department by separating the amount from the general legal expenses budget.

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Derby it was unanimously voted (by roll call) to approve the proposed City Council budget as presented and to send it to the Mayor for her review.

**PUBLIC SAFETY:** Councilor Zaret reported the Public Safety Committee had not met since the last council meeting. The next meeting will be held on Feb. 28<sup>th</sup>.

**APPOINTMENTS:** No report.

**ORDINANCE:** Councilor Derby reported the Ordinance Committee had met on Jan. 24<sup>th</sup>. Councilor Derby did not schedule an Ordinance Committee at this time but said the meeting will be set within the next two weeks.

**PROPERTY:** No report.

**RULES & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS:** Councilor Rist reported the Rules Committee had met on Jan. 26<sup>th</sup>. Councilor Rist said at the meeting they had a good debate about the two proposed Charter amendments as well as discussion of an ordinance to create a Xerxes Society Bee

Committee or "Climate Action Committee." Councilor Rist said that the Rules Committee will next meet on Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup> at 5 pm.

**New Business:**

a. **Establish Donation Account – Mt. View School Grades K-5:** On motion made by Councilor Derby and seconded by Councilor Zaret it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED** (by roll call) that pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53A approval is given to establish an account for the purpose of receiving funds designated for Mountain View School Grades K-5.

b. **Supplemental Appropriations:** First reading by Councilor Rist on the following three Supplemental Appropriation requests (all from Free Cash):

- \$20,000 to supplement the FY '23 Legal Services budget
- \$194,000 for various Fire Dept. personnel & expense appropriations
- \$73,390.70 for Police Dept. retirement, new hire expenses & a FY '22 medical bill

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Kwiecinski it was unanimously voted to refer all three to the Finance Committee and to schedule public hearings for the Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> council meeting.

On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Zaret it was unanimously voted (by roll call) that this meeting **ADJOURN**.

**TIME: 6:30 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Asst. City Clerk