



# ***CITY OF EASTHAMPTON***

## **OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

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### ***Minutes***

#### ***City Council Finance Committee Meeting, 3/8/2023***

##### **Attendees:**

##### **Finance Committee Members:**

Councilor Dan Rist, Chair  
Councilor Tom Peake, Clerk  
Councilor Koni Denham

##### **Other Attendees:**

Mayor Nicole LaChapelle  
City Treasurer Jessica Hebert  
DPW Director Greg Nuttleman  
City Auditor Hetal Patel  
City Council President Homar Gomez  
Library Board President Elizabeth Appelquist  
Easthampton Public Library Director Katya Shapiro  
Williston Academy CFO Chuck McCullagh  
Library Board Member Laurel Gardner  
CitySpace President Burns Maxey  
CitySpace Board Member Marcia Morrison

Meeting was called to order at 5:15 PM.

- 1) Approval of Minutes: No minutes were approved.
- 2) Mayor's Communication: None
- 3) Public Speak: None
- 4) New Business
  - a) **\$50,000 for contingency funding for Cherry St. reconstruction project:** For "providing contingency funding for the Cherry Street reconstruction project". **On motion made by Councilor Denham and seconded by Councilor Peake, it was voted 3-0 to recommend the appropriation to the full Council.**
  - b) **\$125,000 for various maintenance/security needs at 3 vacant schools & 75 Oliver.** For "various maintenance needs at the 3 vacant elementary school properties, including

plumbing/heating repairs and elevator maintenance & repair. This funding will also cover expenses incurred to secure 75 Oliver Street, building winterization costs and alarm system monitoring.” **On motion made by Councilor Peake and seconded by Councilor Denham, it was voted 3-0 to recommend the appropriation to the full Council.**

- c) **\$30,000 for engineering construction phase services – Union St. reconstruction:** For “engineering construction phase services for the Union Street Reconstruction Project.” **On motion made by Councilor Peake and seconded by Councilor Denham, it was voted 3-0 to recommend the appropriation to the full Council.**
- d) **\$510,000 from Cannabis Stabilization to the Emily Williston Memorial Library:** Mayor LaChapelle stated that there had been a memorandum of understanding between the city and the library for some time, with the last one signed in 2017. The funds would pay for additional services that would be negotiated between the Mayor and Library Board President Elizabeth Appelquist. She stated that the funds would support the library to transition to a new space. Councilor Rist stated that he supported the appropriation, but that the funds were very generous. He asked whether the funds would allow the library to move forward. Board President Appelquist stated that the funds would help to demonstrate to Easthampton Savings Bank that the Library was financially stable. She also stated that money would go to increase staffing to support programming and take pressure off current staff. Additionally it would be used to pay for repairs of the book bike and trailer and replace computers, A/V equipment, and furniture. It would also allow the library to bring in more programming and workshops. The funds would also be used to hire a fundraiser to conduct capital campaigns. Library Director Katya Shapiro stated that the library had done “real marvels” with limited resources. Some things that she wanted to do could not be done without a new space, but she believed there were many things that could be done soon with these funds. Williston CFO Chuck McCullagh stated that the library was evaluating what was required in order to accept the donation of the Main Street building and issue a bond. He provided a new financial forecast that showed the library’s budget when accounting for the appropriation, as well as incremental increases to the city’s contribution to the library. Part of that would involve investing the city’s funds in fixed income assets. There was some discussion about the future relationship between the library and the city. Councilor Denham asked if the library delivery service would be supported by this appropriation. Director Shapiro stated that the service was not in jeopardy any more than the rest of the library, but that it could be expanded. Laurel Gardner, a member of the library board, thanked Doris Madsen, another member of the public who was present, for her work in past decades to improve the relationship between the city and the library. **On motion made by Councilor Peake and seconded by Councilor Denham, it was voted 3-0 to recommend the appropriation to the full Council.**
- e) **\$1,250,000.00 transfer for Phase II: construction of ADA entrance & elevator:** Councilor Rist stated that the CPA Committee unanimously supported the transfer. In this Phase II, CitySpace would match these funds. These funds have already been set aside for CitySpace, so the cash balance of the CPA account is unaffected. CitySpace President Burns Maxey gave a presentation on the project. The only thing that had changed was the cost estimate, which has been separated out into three phases. Phase I is complete, and Phase II involves the construction of the elevator. A historic stain glass window will be incorporated into the elevator’s design. All levels of the building will be accessible through the elevator. She hoped that construction for the project would be complete by next Spring. They are closing in on their private contribution to this phase, and will not be able to go out for bids until all the cash is in place. CitySpace Board Member Marcia Morrison spoke to the importance of accessibility in this project. **On motion**

**made by Councilor Peake and seconded by Councilor Denham, it was voted 3-0 to recommend the appropriation to the full Council.**

5) Continuing Business

a) **Quarterly fiscal reports from the City Auditor:** This was not discussed tonight.

**On motion made by Councilor Peake and seconded by Councilor Denham, the meeting was adjourned at 6:21 PM**

Next meeting: 3/22/23