



CITY OF NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS  
Office of the City Clerk

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**Meeting of the North Adams City Council**  
**Tuesday, March 9 2021**  
**7:30 PM**

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the North Adams City Council will be conducted via remote, no in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, This meeting can be viewed live on the Northern Berkshire Community Television station and will be posted to their website as soon as possible.

I hereby notify that at twelve noon today, March 3, 2021, the following items of business have been filed with this office and will be acted upon at the Regular Meeting of the City Council in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, Tuesday evening March 9, 2021 at seven-thirty o'clock according to Section 8, Rules and Orders of the City Council.

Deborah M. Pedercini  
City Clerk

**AGENDA**

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL**  
**March 9, 2021**

Roll Call

Moment of silent remembrance

Approval of the minutes of February 23, 2021

Hearing of Visitors on Agenda

- 11,790** Communication submitted by Councilor Bona regarding short term rentals and the requirements of the City which was postponed at the meeting of September 22, 2020.
- 11,910** An Ordinance amending Chapter 27, entitled Dog Regulations, adding a new section 27-12, entitled Prohibition of the Sale of Dogs, Cats, or Rabbits by Pet Shops which was postponed at the meeting of February 23, 2021.
- 11,943** An Ordinance amending Chapter 7, Department of Public Services, Section 7-1, Establishment of Department, Fire Hydrant Division which was postponed at the meeting of February 23, 2021.
- 11,944** Mayor's communication #18 regarding fire hydrant replacement and repairs to water system improvements.

- 11,944** An Order authorizing the Treasurer with the approval of the Mayor to borrow the sum of \$300,000 for the replacement and repairs of fire hydrant water system improvements under MGL, Chapter 44, Section 20.
- 11,945** Communication submitted by Councilor Lamb regarding the recommendation to include a Grants and Communications Coordinator in the FY 22 budget.

## LICENSES

An application from Elsa Moreno, 127 Bridges Road, Williamstown, MA for a license to drive a taxi for RJ's Taxi.

### OPEN FORUM MAYOR'S CONCERNS COMMITTEE REPORTS AND MINUTES LIAISON UPDATES AND COUNCILOR CONCERNS CORRESPONDENCE ADJOURNMENT

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.  
When: March 9, 2021 07:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Topic: City Council

Please click the link below to join the webinar:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82814314309>  
Or iPhone one-tap :  
US: +19292056099,,82814314309# or +13017158592,,82814314309#  
Or Telephone:  
Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):  
US: +1 929 205 6099 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 669 900 6833 or +1  
253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799  
Webinar ID: 828 1431 4309  
International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kc4Y7vM6ob>



CITY OF NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS

Office of the Mayor  
**Thomas W. Bernard**

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<b>Communication #</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Date</b>
18	Fire Hydrant Update and Order	March 9, 2021

Honorable Members of the City Council  
North Adams, Massachusetts

Dear Honorable Councilors:

Everyone in service to the City of North Adams is committed to the health and safety of our community, and to protecting the lives and property of North Adams residents, businesses, and visitors. As mayor I take this responsibility seriously, something I know I share with every member of the City Council as well as with our first responders in the fire, police, and public services departments.

Currently, the condition of the fire hydrant system in the city represents a significant threat to our shared commitment, as well as to the physical safety and peace of mind of our residents. The North Adams Fire Department's response to the January 29, 2021, fire on Greylock Avenue was made more difficult due to several fire hydrants in the neighborhood not working. The response to the February 12, 2021, fire on Veazie Street also was hampered by an inoperative hydrant adjacent to the property where the fire occurred, as well as by a missing hydrant further down the street. We all are concerned about the loss of property, proud of our first responders, and grateful that there were no injuries, but these fires highlighted significant issues of communication and maintenance among and between city departments and city leadership.

This situation is unacceptable to me. I know it is unacceptable to the Council and to the community.

As I stated in my recent State of the City address we need to take short, medium, and long-term action to correct the deferred maintenance situation with our fire hydrant system. Following the fire on Veazie Street I brought together key staff including public safety and public services leadership to start this work. I know community members have seen one of the most visible signs of these efforts in the bagging of inoperative hydrants throughout the city. This is an important step so that people in our community can see and understand the scope of the challenge we are facing.

Other actions have been less visible, but have been part of our immediate and ongoing response:

- We recently hired a new employee to fill an open, budgeted position in the Water Department.
- Water Department staff are inspecting every hydrant in the city; removing, cleaning, and greasing caps where needed; and bagging those hydrants deemed inoperative.
- As part of this work, Water Department employees are verifying and documenting hydrant GPS locations, as well as the make and year of each unit. We have added additional Public Services crews to assist the Water Department with this documentation.
- Through this work to date the Water department has identified 55 inoperative hydrants, 12 hydrants that currently are not listed on the city's GIS record, and returned 3 hydrants to service.
- This information about hydrant condition will be provided to the Fire Department to ensure their records are up to date; the Public Services department has ordered an additional GPS unit to assist with streamlining this work in the field.
- The updated GPS data will allow for the Public Services and Water Departments and the Fire Department to identify priority locations for immediate hydrant replacement.

As we identify these priority sites I want to move swiftly to address the most critical areas of need. In my State of the City Address, I mentioned that we were looking at a possible funding source through the USDA – upon further investigation this program did not align with our immediate needs. **Accordingly, enclosed with this communication is an Order to borrow \$300,000 “to pay the costs associated with the repair and replacement of fire hydrant water system improvements located in public ways throughout the City, and for the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto.”**

If approved by the Council, we estimate that we will be able to put a project out to bid to replace 50-60 hydrants aligned with the priorities identified by the Fire and Public Services departments, and to begin and complete this work as quickly as possible.

While this will not resolve all the issues with the system it will address many immediate concerns and remedy the areas where our investments have not kept pace with our needs. Concurrently we will build a clear, consistent hydrant replacement program into the budget and capital plan that I will be presenting to the Council and the community this spring.

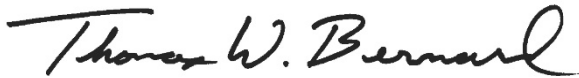
This will be part of a larger consideration of how we fund our water system and infrastructure. This long-term hydrant plan will also be aligned with how we use our Community Development Block Grant funds; during the current funding cycle we hope to include fire hydrants in the bid specs for planned projects on Liberty and North Houghton Streets, and will make this a priority in future street improvement projects.

Finally, and concurrent with this work we will review our existing policies and procedures, especially those related to interdepartmental communication, including benchmarking these against models from other communities to identify areas where we can improve operations and processes.

This immediate investment, and the work both planned and underway will enable us to make progress and to set an agenda for this year and the years to come that supports our first responders and meets our shared commitment to protect and serve the City of North Adams.

I request that the Council adopt this Order as presented.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas W. Bernard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'T'.

Thomas W. Bernard  
Mayor

TWB/me



# City of North Adams

## In City Council

March 9, 2021

Ordered:

That the sum of **THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS** (\$300,000.00) be and is hereby appropriated to pay the costs associated with the repair and replacement of fire hydrant water system improvements located in public ways throughout the City, and for the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto, and that to meet this appropriation, the Treasurer, with the approval of the Mayor, is authorized to borrow said amount under and pursuant to Chapter 44 of the General Laws, or pursuant to any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the City therefor; and further, that any premium received by the City upon the sale of any bonds or notes so approved, less any such premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to the payment of costs approved hereby in accordance with Chapter 44, Section 20 of the General Laws, thereby reducing the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs by a like amount; or to take any other action relative thereto.

**AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED** that the Treasurer is authorized to file an application with the appropriate officials of The Commonwealth of Massachusetts ("Commonwealth") to qualify under Chapter 44A of the General Laws any and all bonds of the City to be issued pursuant to this Order, and to provide such information and execute such documents as such officials of the Commonwealth may require.



**Benjamin Lamb**  
North Adams City Councilor

February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Dear Fellow Councilors,

As a City, we have the potential for massive opportunities in growth and improvement if we adequately leverage the various resources for funding and support that exist from foundations, and at local, state and federal levels. Unfortunately, the various grants and programs that exist require a significant amount of time and energy to discover, apply for, track and report on. This is something that has historically been delegated as an added duty in our numerous City departments, with some departments in the city having significant numbers of individuals who spend time applying for one grant or another, and others not having any bandwidth to seek out these funds. This creates a model of inefficiency, inequity, incomplete data, and ultimately, an under-supported approach to grant acquisition and application within the municipal structure. We need to change this approach and put the necessary resources in place to create a sustainable conduit to apply for and receive the grants and resources that can help us for years to come.

Based on regional salary rates, the average grant writer regionally is paid between \$44,000 and \$57,000 per year. These are positions that can provide a significant return on investment, in some cases producing more than 50 times their salary in annual grants received, while also being key communicators of organizational undertakings. This makes the work of a grant writer not only self-sustaining, but also a critical source of viability to the organizations and agencies that opt to employ someone in this capacity.

In North Adams, we have lacked a formalized structure for seeking out, applying for, administering, tracking and strategically allocating grants. We have also seen gaps in the conveying of these critical efforts to the public. These are missed opportunities, and ones that we can no longer overlook. As we look at how we plan to retain quality staff, tackle the massive amounts of infrastructure work that must be undertaken, and address the variety of wants and needs we have for our community's future, a strategic approach to grants and resource acquisition will be paramount. Additionally, if we want the public to be as informed as possible, there must be a reinforced structure of information distribution and outward communications on City efforts. Therefore, I would like to recommend that in our budget process going into FY22, we build in funding specifically to employ a Grants and Communications Coordinator. Based on positions identified in other municipalities, and the specific needs of our City, I envision this position would be primarily focused on seeking out, applying for, administering, and tracking grants for the city. They would additionally function as the primary point person to all City departments when it comes to grant management and would act as a key outwards communication hub on the wide array of City endeavors. In this model, we could continue to benefit from the specialized grants that departments regularly apply for, but with a more comprehensive city-wide strategy and approach to garnering broader resource pools, while our capacity to convey information on projects and ongoing efforts, would also be greatly improved.

In order to take the action needed for the next era of opportunity in North Adams, I feel this is a critical step and a vital investment to take on. Therefore, I request that this matter be referred to the Mayor as well as the City Council Finance Committee for consideration in the budgeting process forthcoming.

Sincerely,

Councilor Benjamin J. Lamb

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
City Of North Adams

FEES 10.00

To The Honorable City Council:

I, ELSA MORENO, hereby make application to be granted a  
Name

LICENSE TO DRIVE A TAXICAB FOR RSS Taxi  
Employer's name

Height 5 ft 3 in Weight 186 lbs Color of Hair Brown Color of Eyes Hazel

Date of Birth 4/27/1974 Birthplace NARH Gender F Citizen Y

I hold a Massachusetts Driver's # \_\_\_\_\_ and have held this license for how long 30yrs.

My license has  has not \_\_\_\_\_ been suspended or revoked in Massachusetts or any other jurisdiction.

If yes explain Citations- Paid

I have  have not \_\_\_\_\_ been convicted of a felony. If yes explain: Larceny

Are you currently on any medication that would hinder your driving ability yes \_\_\_\_\_, no .

Do you currently have any open criminal court cases, yes \_\_\_\_\_, no . Explain on page 2.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT, IF GRANTED THIS LICENSE, I WILL STRICTLY CONFORM AND ADHERE TO THE LAWS OF THE COMMONWEALTH, THE ORDINANCES OF THE CITY AND SUCH RULES AND REGULATIONS AS THE CITY COUNCIL MAY ESTABLISH.

I do solemnly, sincerely and truly affirm the foregoing application to be true to the best of my knowledge and belief and do so under the pains and penalties of perjury.

E. Moreno  
Signature  
127 Bridges Rd  
Address  
Williamstown  
City/Town

.....  
**TO BE COMPLETED BY EMPLOYER**

.....  
**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE POLICE DEPT**

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

THE ABOVE APPLICATION IS HEREBY

If granted a TAXI DRIVER'S LICENSE

APPROVED  DISAPPROVED \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of applicant  
WILL DRIVE FOR ME.....

This 4 day of FEBRUARY, 2021

\_\_\_\_\_  
TAXI OPERATOR'S SIGNATURE

[Signature]  
NORTH ADAMS POLICE DEPARTMENT  
11 SUMMER STREET  
NORTH ADAMS, MA 01462  
POLICE DEPARTMENT