



# Office of the City Clerk

## City of North Adams

10 Main Street Room 109  
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Deborah M. Pedercini  
City Clerk

### Regular Meeting of the City Council

January 26, 2021

A meeting of the North Adams City Council was held at 7:30 p.m. via remote.

COUNCILORS PRESENT: Councilors Blackmer, Bona, Harpin, Hopkins, LaForest, Lamb, Oleskiewicz, Councilors absent, Sweeney, Wilkinson.

Council President Hopkins read the following statement regarding COVID-19. 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 limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the North Adams City Council is being conducted via remote participation and in City Council Chambers. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order.

The President called for a motion to approve the minutes for the meeting of January 12, 2021.

On motion of Councilor Oleskiewicz, duly seconded by Councilor LaForest, it was VOTED: to approve the minutes.

The President called for hearing of visitors, hearing none.

The President stated that there was only one change to the Committee Assignments; Councilor Lamb is stepping down from Public Safety and Councilor Harpin would be taking his place.

**11,876** The President presented communication submitted by Councilor Lamb addressing speed limits and safety concerns in the Autumn Drive and Birchwood Terrace area which was postponed at the meeting of December 22, 2020.

On motion of Councilor Lamb, duly seconded by Councilor Harpin, it was VOTED: to file the communication.

**11,876** The President presented an Order authorizing the installation of "Slow, Children at Play" sign at the intersection of Autumn Drive and Route 2/Mohawk Trail and

additional sign, “Slow, Children at Play” at intersection of Autumn Drive and Birchwood Terrace.

On motion of Councilor Lamb, duly seconded by Councilor LaForest, it was VOTED: to adopt the Order.

The Order was adopted by ye and nay vote, ye, Councilors Blackmer, Bona, Harpin, Hopkins, LaForest, Lamb, Oleskiewicz, nay none.

**11,876-a** The President presented an Order authorizing the installation of a “25 mile per hour” speed limit sign at Autumn Drive and Birchwood Terrace in accordance with MGL, Title XIV, Chapter 90, Section 17, entitled “Speed Limits”.

On motion of Councilor Lamb, duly seconded by Councilor Oleskiewicz, it was VOTED: to Adopt the Order.

The Order was adopted by ye and nay vote, ye, Councilors Blackmer, Bona, Harpin, Hopkins, LaForest, Lamb, Oleskiewicz, nay none.

**11,910** The President presented 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 December 8, 2020.

On motion of Councilor Blackmer, duly seconded by Councilor Oleskiewicz, it was VOTED: to postpone to the meeting of February 23, 2021

**11,933** The President presented Mayor’s communication #8 recommending the reappointment of Dean Bullett to the North Adams Airport Commission for a term to expire March 1, 2024.

On motion of Councilor Oleskiewicz, duly seconded by Councilor Blackmer, it was VOTED: to confirm the reappointment.

Councilor Harpin stated her concern about having the available upcoming board and commission openings posted on the City’s website so that people who had an interest could request to be appointed to a board when a vacancy was available. She stated that she did see that just today such notice was posted and stated she was happy to see this.

**11,934** The President presented Mayor’s communication #9 recommending the reappointment of Rebecca Choquette to the North Adams Human Services Commission for a term to expire February 1, 2024.

On motion of Councilor Oleskiewicz, duly seconded by Councilor Lamb, it was VOTED: to confirm the reappointment.

**11,935** The President presented Mayor's communication #10 recommending the reappointment of Jason Moran to the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art Cultural Development Commission for a term to expire February 1, 2024.

On motion of Councilor Blackmer, duly seconded by Councilor Lamb, it was VOTED: to confirm the reappointment.

**11,936** The President presented Mayor's communication #11 recommending the reappointment of Kyle Hanlon to the North Adams Planning Board for a term to expire February 1, 2026.

On motion of Councilor Oleskiewicz, duly seconded by Councilor LaForest, it was VOTED: to confirm the reappointment.

**11,937** The President presented Mayor's communication #12 recommending the reappointment of Brian Miksic to the North Adams Planning Board for a term to expire February 1, 2026.

On motion of Councilor Oleskiewicz, duly seconded by Councilor Blackmer, it was VOTED: to confirm the reappointment.

The President presented an application from William H. Wheeler, 332 North Street, Williamstown, MA for a license to drive a taxi for RJ's Taxi.

Councilor LaForest stated that his packet did not include a copy of the license application. Councilor Bona stated that it was on the agenda, however the application was omitted in error. The City Clerk offered to scan and send to Councilors.

On motion of Councilor Blackmer, duly seconded by Councilor Oleskiewicz it was VOTED: to postpone to the meeting of February 9, 2021.

The President called for Open Forum.

Bryan Sapienza, 113 Pleasant Street, stated that at any time residents can simply write a letter of interest in serving on a board or commission and encouraged residents to do so. He also requested that the Public Safety Commission and Traffic Commission place a 25 mile-per-hour speed limit sign on Pleasant Street.

The President called for Mayor's Concerns.

The Mayor stated there was a snow emergency; a fire hydrant was struck at the Ashland and Church Street intersection, advising residents to use caution. The Mayor spoke about Phase 2 COVID-19 vaccines, the mechanism for registering is an online form, causing some difficulty accessing for seniors. The Mayor stated they will work with Council on Aging for assistance to those in need.

The Mayor spoke about his concerns of the closing of TB Bank. He stated he was unsure as to why this branch located downtown and having a drive-up ATM, would be closing. He stated it was developing information, and there would be more to come.

The Mayor thanked Councilor Harpin and Mr. Sapienza for their discussions and awareness of the open seats on boards and commissions. He stated that now that the openings are on line, it will make it easier for residents to participate.

The President called for Committee Reports and Minutes.

Councilor Lamb gave an update on the IDEA Working Group upcoming trainings. He thanked everyone for holding dates, however released the February 2, session. He will be sending an email.

Councilor Harpin gave an update on the North Adams Retirement Board's yearly portfolio, stating that there has been a good growth of 18%.

The President called for Liaison Updates and Councilor Concerns.

Councilor Blackmer spoke about the MMA Annual Meeting that she attended last week. She stated that the sessions were informative and spoke about a 3.5% increase for budget. She stated there were good discussions and was happy to see so many diverse municipal members in attendance; not just Councilors. She urged the Councilors that were unable to attend to try to attend next year.

Councilor Harpin stated that she too attended the MMA Annual Meeting and was happy with the information she received. One of the sessions she attended was on diversity, she stated it was a great session and stated you cannot be afraid to question anything whether it be work, friendships, gatherings. She stated that she was very happy with the City's progress on diversity.

Councilor Lamb stated that he attended the Public Arts Commission meeting and their master plan was presented. They will be seeking additional comment and trying to engage more communities that might naturally be drawn to a Public Art Commission meeting. When the link goes live, he will share that with other Councilors.

The President reminded residents to please return their local Census, street listing, that they should have received last week to the City Clerk's office.

The President stated that the City Clerk Screening Committee is still at work looking at dozens of applications. He thanked the committee for their hard work. He stated at sometime in the near future there will be a decision made, he could not give a date certain at this time.

Councilor Bona stated that he was able to follow-up on Windom Terrace, in regards to the wall that was discussed at last meeting. He took video of the wall and fence and is forwarding it to the Public Works department. He stated that the resident would like to see the street designated a one-way street; he informed her she could put a paper through to City Council.

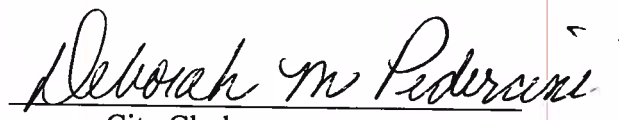
Councilor Bona inquired what the time frame was on hiring a new Fire Chief. The Mayor stated he was not sure at this time; he has asked Chief Meranti to stay on for a while longer until the decision has been made.

Councilor LaForest wanted to make residents aware that COVID-19 is still very real, as he himself, even after the vaccine, in fact test positive for the virus. He urged everyone to follow the protocol of wearing masks, social distancing, and washing hands.

The President called for a motion to adjourn.

On motion of Councilor Blackmer, duly seconded by Councilor Lamb, it was VOTED: to adjourn at 8:08 pm.

A True Record  
Attest,

  
City Clerk