



Committee on City Services and the Northampton City Council

Committee Members:

Councilor Jeremy Dubs, Chair

Councilor Chris Stratton, Vice Chair

Councilor Meg Robbins

Councilor Deborah Klemer

Virtual Meeting
MEETING AGENDA
Date: April 6, 2026
Time: 4 p.m.

The City of Northampton does not discriminate based on disability and is committed to hosting accessible meetings. To request a reasonable accommodation to attend any City meeting, please contact the ADA Coordinator at adacoordinator@northamptonma.gov or call (413) 587-1288.

The April 6, 2026 City Services Committee meeting will be held by remote participation. The public can follow the committee's deliberations by joining the virtual meeting by phone or computer. The meeting will be recorded for later broadcast on Northampton Open Media (Channel 15) and uploaded to the Northampton Government Video Archive on YouTube.

Live public comment will be available using telephone call-in or video conferencing technology beginning at 4 p.m.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CALLING IN OR JOINING THE MEETING

[PUBLIC MEETING LINK](#)

For telephone call-in, call:

+929 436-2866 US

Meeting ID: 880 9207 0092

Participant #: #

Password: 478762

- 1. Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call**
- 2. Announcement of Audio/Video Recording**
This meeting is being audio/video recorded.

3. Public Comment

4. Minutes of Previous Meetings

A. Minutes of March 16, 2026

Documents:

[03-16-2026_City Services Committee.pdf](#)

5. Items Referred to Committee

A. 26.020 Appointments to Various Committees, referred by City Council - 3/5/2026

Board of Health

Luke Messac, 294 Cardinal Way - Deborah Klemer
Term: March 2026 - June 2028
To fill a vacancy

Community Preservation Committee

Leticia Ward, 12 High Meadow Rd - Meg Robbins
Term: March 2026 - June 2028
Filling the position of Debin Bruce

Housing Partnership

Yakov Kronrod, 188 Rocky Hill Rd - Chris Stratton
Term: March 2026 - June 2028
To fill a vacancy

Documents:

[26.020 Appointments to Various Committees.pdf](#)

6. New Business

7. Adjourn

Contact: Jeremy Dubs
jdubs@northamptonma.gov
717.571.9947



Committee on City Services and the Northampton City Council

Committee Members:

Chair: Councilor Jeremy Dubs

Vice-Chair: Councilor Chris Stratton

Councilor Deborah Klemer

Councilor Meg Robbins

Meeting Minutes

Date: March 16, 2026, 4 p.m.

Council Chambers, 212 Main Street
Northampton, MA

1. **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

At 4 p.m., Councilor Jeremy Dubs called the meeting to order. On a roll call, Councilor Dubs, Chair; Councilor Christopher Stratton, Vice Chair, Councilor Deborah Klemer and Councilor Meg Robbins were present. Also present was Administrative Assistant Laura Krutzler.

2. **Announcement of Audio/Video Recording**

Councilor Dubs announced that the meeting was being audio/video recorded.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no general public comment.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 24, 2026**

Councilor Klemer moved to approve the February 24, 2026 minutes. Councilor Robbins seconded.

Councilor Stratton said he thinks the minutes are accurate but he wonders if they are quite as complete as Open Meeting Law (OML) requires. He asked other members their thoughts.

The administrative assistant reminded councilors that the minutes were taken by Chief of Staff Alan Wolf in her absence. She acknowledged they are not as detailed a record as she usually provides but said she believes they technically meet the legal requirements of the OML. She noted that she added a paragraph to explain Councilor Stratton and Councilor Robbins' discomfort with making a positive recommendation on the appointment of the city solicitor, since she has received opinions from the Division of Open Government that, if someone offers an argument against a vote (in this case, the positive recommendation), that person and his comments should be identified in the minutes.

The acting solicitor made some important comments about his approach to his job and some questions were asked and answered that would have been helpful to preserve as part of the record, Councilor Stratton noded.

Councilor Klemer stressed that they meet the legal requirements and the recording is available on YouTube if people want more detail.

Councilor Robbins said she sadly acquired a lot of expertise in taking minutes in the process of helping the Northampton School Committee eliminate a backlog of minutes cited by the state attorney general in 2023.

She offered to fill in in the future if needed. She said she didn't know if it would be the same for City Council, but the School Committee received legal advice that members could take their own minutes in subcommittees.

The motion passed 3:1 by roll call vote with Councilor Stratton opposed.

5. DISCUSSION OF PROCESS FOR REVIEW OF MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS

Since first bringing up the process question, Councilor Stratton said he has talked to a number of people formerly in government and given it a lot of thought. He now thinks they could divide the question into two parts: 1) how they should evaluate proposed appointments by the Mayor, and 2) the broader question of what proactive steps the committee might take to increase transparency in the recruitment of candidates even before the Mayor makes her selections.

With regard to part one, he referred to a key sentence in Charter Section 2-10; "The committee may require any person whose name has been referred to appear before the committee or before the city council to give any information relevant to the appointment that the committee or the city council may require."

He expressed his understanding that the committee's practice has been only to do this for the appointment of department heads. For ordinary appointments, it's been the practice to delegate one member to interview them and report back. He would like to see them be more proactive and, as often as possible, interview people before the whole committee. He thinks it gives candidates a platform to introduce themselves and explain their interest and gives individual committee members the opportunity to satisfy their curiosity as to specific questions they might have.

"Being able to talk to them as a group would be great," he avowed.

Councilor Dubs said he had some strong opinions. He noted, among other things, that Section 2-10 says the committee 'may' rather than 'shall' require people to appear. He feels like requiring such a thing would be creating a barrier to people volunteering their time to serve. From his experience, he not only has found the process effective but has enjoyed it. He thinks it would be intimidating to put people 'on the spot' at a public meeting almost as if they were on trial.

He gives people the option of meeting in person, talking on the phone or by Zoom or corresponding by email. He wouldn't be against giving someone the option of coming to a meeting but would be highly against requiring it. "Sometimes they barely have enough time to be on these committees that they're volunteering their time for," he asserted.

Councilor Robbins said she has never understood why City Services only gets one candidate. What is the role of City Services in interviewing if is only one candidate? She asked.

She asked if the committee ever voted 'no,' and Councilor Dubs said he personally has voted 'no.' While the candidate was ultimately appointed, at least he got to voice his opinion as to why he thought they shouldn't be appointed.

Responding to the points raised, Councilor Stratton said the idea of getting a foot in the door resonates with him. Frankly, he ran for city council because he wasn't sure he'd be appointed otherwise, he shared. However, in terms of the time commitment involved in coming to a meeting, a prospective volunteer may be signing up for 48 meetings so he isn't sure a 49th meeting to kick it off is that much of an ask.

The idea of expanding the slate of contact options to include coming before the committee could be a pathway, he allowed.

As far as proactive steps to enhance recruitment, in the era of Mayor Higgins' administration, he found in his research that the then appointment committee actually interviewed people before the appointment process began. He understands multiple people would appear before the committee to express interest.

Under Worcester's charter, a citizens' advisory committee impanels those interested in appointment, he added. By contrast, Northampton's charter calls for the mayor to appoint and the city council to confirm or reject.

As a committee, they have a broad mandate to involve themselves in the delivery of city services, he pointed out. On an optional rather than mandatory level, members could hold informational sessions and invite people to attend. "It could be treated as an on ramp and an outreach and a recruiting thing, not necessarily just an intimidating interview," he proposed.

Councilor Klemer noted that, of all of them, Councilor Dubs is the only one who has been through the process himself and knows what it's like to be on the other side. She was on the committee for a short time last term and thinks this system works well. Holding interviews would mean they would have to vote in the presence of candidates. She encouraged Councilor Stratton to see how things work before changing to some unknown way of doing things or how they do things in Worcester. "I think we should just keep it the way it is."

Councilor Dubs pointed out that requiring attendance at a fixed monthly meeting does not accommodate the busy schedule of many of their applicants as well as a more flexible one-on-one interview. Also, people don't want to face 'gotcha' questions in public meetings. "Making that some sort of requirement, I think, is harmful to the city, and will create barriers," he volunteered.

Stratton said he is not necessarily talking about making it a consistent requirement. He sees the specificity of schedule as the strongest barrier against his proposal.

Although he is new to this, he asked them to keep in mind that he has been watching public meetings. Most of what he is proposing is based on what he's seen that has not been working.

When asked by Councilor Dubs to give a specific example, he pointed to Councilor Dubs' mention of the time he had a complaint against a certain candidate.

Councilor Dubs asked Councilor Stratton if he wanted to re-litigate an old topic.

Councilor Stratton said he didn't but wasn't sure he agreed with Councilor Dubs that the person was saying what Councilor Dubs thought they were saying.

"I know what they were saying," Councilor Dubs insisted. He said he was not going to talk about a two-year old topic. "We're going to move on," he announced.

Councilor Stratton appealed the ruling of the chair

Councilor Robbins suggested giving candidates the option of coming before the committee. She likes that it takes place in public and that the public gets to meet the candidates. She wouldn't want to put anybody awkwardly on the spot, but some people might not mind.

She proposed including it as a question to people when they interview them so they could get some feedback and revisit it in the future

Councilor Dubs said they could feel free to ask that question. Suggested questions developed by a previous committee are just a guide, he clarified.

Councilor Klemer and Councilor Dubs advocated for tabling the proposal to change the process.

Councilor Stratton asserted that, particularly subsequent to the 2012 charter change, a huge amount of what the city does is now extremely insulated from the public. Committee appointments to long terms made by mayors serving four-year terms themselves creates a long delay in public feedback to much of government operations. The city council is the only branch of government along with its School Committee peers elected to two-year terms. "We are responsive to the public and much of city government is not," he asserted.

The council's charter role in the appointment process is the only influence voters routinely have in a large swath of city government. In watching past councils, he's seen a lot of deferral to the mayor's choice of appointments. He thinks trying when possible to bring people to the committee is important.

He referred to the past case where he and Councilor Dubs had very different impressions. "Depending on who talked to a person, you could get a very different report back and I don't really think that's fair to the candidate." In this case, presentation to the council clearly would have varied depending on who interviewed the candidate, he suggested.

However, Councilor Dubs disagreed, noting that, in the discussion at full council, every councilor was able to express an opinion. "It was democracy," he volunteered.

Councilor Stratton asked if the candidate had a chance to respond to Councilor Dubs' accusations in front of the committee.

Councilor Dubs shouted that he was not going to continue to be grilled. The committee does not have the power to propose charter changes, he stated.

Councilor Stratton said he is not proposing a charter change, he is proposing to use the power written into the charter as it currently stands.

Tentative motions were offered by Councilor Klemer, first not to change the process and then to table the discussion. However, Councilor Dubs decided that a vote was not necessary and that they could simply end the discussion.

Councilor Dubs said he thought Councilor Stratton's suggestion [that the full committee interview candidates] was an implication that he doesn't trust other councilors to report back accurate information, and he finds that offensive.

Councilor Stratton raised the point of order that Robert's Rules explicitly prohibit speculating on the motivations of another member of the body.

Councilor Dubs said he is telling him how he feels. He is following Robert's Rules and doesn't care what Councilor Stratton's interpretation is.

Councilor Stratton appealed the ruling of the chair.

Councilor Robbins said she hoped they could reflect on this conversation and learn from this dialogue. They need to learn to listen to each other, she suggested. "I know we will, together as a group," she assured.

6. ITEMS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

A. 26.020 Appointments to Various Committees, referred by City Council - 3/5/2026

Board of Health

Luke Messac, 294 Cardinal Way
Term: March 2026 - June 2028
To fill a vacancy

Community Preservation Committee

Leticia Ward, 12 High Meadow Rd
Term: March 2026 - June 2028
Filling the position of Debin Bruce

Housing Partnership

Yakov Kronrod, 188 Rocky Hill Rd
Term: March 2026 - June 2028
To fill a vacancy

Members divided up interview assignments, with Councilor Klemer volunteering to interview Luke Messac, Councilor Dubs volunteering to interview Leticia Ward and Councilor Stratton agreeing to interview Yakov Konrod

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

Councilor Dubs recognized former City Councilor Marianne LaBarge, who congratulated Councilor Dubs on doing a great job running City Services.

Councilor Dubs apologized for losing his temper, saying this was a challenging conversation and he's doing his best.

Councilor Stratton said he really would be interested in exploring what this committee could do in terms of outreach and recruitment for roles on city boards and generally easing the process of entry into government.

8. **ADJOURN**

There being no further business, **Councilor Stratton moved to adjourn. Councilor Klemer seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 4:54 p.m.**

Prepared By:

*L. Krutzler, Administrative Assistant to the City Council
413.587.1210; krutzler@northamptonma.gov*



MAYOR GINA-LOUISE SCIARRA

City of Northampton

Office of the Mayor

210 Main Street Room 12

Northampton, MA 01060-3199

(413) 587-1249 Fax: (413) 587-1275

mayor@northamptonma.gov

DATE: March 5, 2026

TO: City Council

FROM: Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra

SUBJECT: Appointment to Boards, Committees, and Commissions

Please find the attached appointments/reappointments to City Boards, Committees, and Commissions:

Board of Health

Luke Messac, 294 Cardinal Way

Term: March 2026 - June 2028

To fill a vacancy

Community Preservation Committee

Leticia Ward, 12 High Meadow Rd

Term: March 2026 - June 2028

Filling the position of Debin Bruce

Housing Partnership

Yakov Kronrod, 188 Rocky Hill Rd

Term: March 2026 - June 2028

To fill a vacancy



Online Form Submittal: Application for Appointment and Reappointment to Boards, Committees and Commissions

noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
To: mayor@northamptonma.gov

Mon, Aug 25, 2025 at 4:23 PM

Application for Appointment and Reappointment to Boards, Committees and Commissions

City of Northampton Application for Appointment to Boards, Committees, and Commissions

Please return the completed form to: mayor@northamptonma.gov or Gina-Louise Sciarra, Mayor 210 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060

Boards and Committees	Health, Board of
First Name	Luke
Last Name	Messac
Title/ Preferred Pronouns	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Address1	294 Cardinal Way
Address2	<i>Field not completed.</i>
City	Northampton
State	MA
Zip	01062
Home Phone	5182756404
Work Phone	5182756404
Cell Phone	5182756404
Occupation & Place of Employment	Emergency physician and historian, Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School
Email	Lukemessac@gmail.com
Are you a Northampton resident?	Yes

Years Lived in Northampton	1 month (I just moved here with my wife and two kids, though have been visiting for seven years as my wife's parents and sister live here)
Age	30 - 39
Sex	Male
Racial / Ethnic Background	Black and white
Please list any other boards or committees of interest	Interested in Housing partnership as well, but I have two small children and may only have time to serve on one committee currently
What skills and experience will you bring to this committee assignment?	<p>I am a board certified emergency physician, so I see the immediate and long-term effects of local and state health policies each day. During medical school I organized medical students and faculty to advocate for Medicaid expansion in Pennsylvania. During the early days of COVID I lobbied the Governor of Rhode Island for access to better personal protective equipment in health facilities. I have also researched and testified before The US Senate about medical debt and debt collection practices. I am passionate about bringing evidence and experience to the pursuit of public health. I want to make sure my two young children grow up in a city where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential.</p> <p>I do not currently work clinically at a local hospital, but I am currently undergoing the credentialing process at Cooley Dickinson and hope to be working in the emergency department there in the near future.</p>
Are you currently serving or have you served on any city committee?	No
Please list other city committees you have served on	<i>Field not completed.</i>
<p>Required: Please read the following, by signing below you state that you understand and agree.</p> <p><i>The filing of this form does not guarantee my appointment. An application is kept on file for two (2) years; after that I must file a new application. Being appointed to a committee, board, or commission means that I am considered a Municipal Employee under MGL Chapter 268A and thereby subject to Conflict of Interest Law MGL Chapter 268A, Financial Disclosure Law MGL Chapter 268B, as well as Open Meeting Law MGL Chapter 39: Section 23B. I understand that I will take the conflict of interest test after being appointed and that I also must be sworn in by the City Clerk. I will contact the appointing authority with any questions about my service. Important: Once this form is submitted it becomes a public document, if there is information you do not want open to the public please do not include it on this form.</i></p>	

Signature	Luke Messac
Date	8/25/2025

Post Application Submission Process

Thank you for taking the time to submit an application to serve on one of the many volunteer city boards, committees, and commissions.

The Mayor's office staff reviews the application and determines if a vacancy exists on the desired board, committee, or commission. If no vacancy exists, your application is put on file for two years for consideration at a later date. If a vacancy exists, the application is sent to the board, committee, or commission staff person for a review of experience and qualifications. In some cases, you may be contacted and asked to attend a meeting of the board, committee, or commission to better confirm your interest.

After the Mayor's staff reviews your application, Mayor Sciarra will consider your application and schedule a brief telephone interview. At this time, she will decide whether or not to put your application forward to the City Council.

If the Mayor submits your name as an appointee to the City Council, the City Council will refer the appointment to its Committee on City Services where you will be further vetted. If you are approved by City Services, your appointment will be referred back to the City Council for a confirmation vote. After City Council confirmation, you will receive an appointment letter from the City Clerk's office with instructions on being sworn in for public service. After being sworn in by the City Clerk, you are ready to serve on your board, committee, or commission.

The appointment process, from application submission to official acceptance, can take 2-3 months, and the submission of an application does not guarantee acceptance. The Mayor appoints members to boards, committees, and commissions at her discretion.

If you have any questions about this process or your application status, please contact Mayoral Assistant, Sydney Fahey, at sfahey@northamptonma.gov or 413-587-1080.



Online Form Submittal: Application for Appointment and Reappointment to Boards, Committees and Commissions

noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
Reply-To: noreply@civicplus.com
To: mayor@northamptonma.gov

Fri, Jan 2, 2026 at 2:42 PM

Application for Appointment and Reappointment to Boards, Committees and Commissions

City of Northampton Application for Appointment to Boards, Committees, and Commissions

Please return the completed form to: mayor@northamptonma.gov or Gina-Louise Sciarra, Mayor 210 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060

Boards and Committees	Community Preservation Committee, Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Board
First Name	Leticia
Last Name	Ward
Title/ Preferred Pronouns	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Address1	12 High Meadow Rd
Address2	<i>Field not completed.</i>
City	Northampton
State	MA
Zip	01062
Home Phone	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Work Phone	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Cell Phone	508-221-1851
Occupation & Place of Employment	retired
Email	leticiaward@gmail.com
Are you a Northampton resident?	Yes

Years Lived in Northampton	1
Age	40 - 49
Sex	Female
Racial / Ethnic Background	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Please list any other boards or committees of interest	<i>Field not completed.</i>
What skills and experience will you bring to this committee assignment?	<p>Construction Project Manager & Director of Facilities for a Health & Human Services company in Cambridge for 10 years, where 30% of my time was dedicated to planning and design, with a particular focus to ADA and universal design standards (including retrofitting existing spaces).</p> <p>Capital Project Manager for the Charleston County Parks and Recreation Commission (SC) for 5 years - heavily involved in the setting the 10 year planning and implementation to retrofit Park spaces to ADA (and beyond) standards. One of 2 capital project managers to review disaster relief proposals and award the multi-year contracts. Capital Project Manager on a wide variety of park accommodations, building and repair projects. Worked with diverse range of communities and gathering public opinion within the Charleston county for park project.</p>
Are you currently serving or have you served on any city committee?	No
Please list other city committees you have served on	<i>Field not completed.</i>
<p>Required: Please read the following, by signing below you state that you understand and agree.</p> <p><i>The filing of this form does not guarantee my appointment. An application is kept on file for two (2) years; after that I must file a new application. Being appointed to a committee, board, or commission means that I am considered a Municipal Employee under MGL Chapter 268A and thereby subject to Conflict of Interest Law MGL Chapter 268A, Financial Disclosure Law MGL Chapter 268B, as well as Open Meeting Law MGL Chapter 39: Section 23B. I understand that I will take the conflict of interest test after being appointed and that I also must be sworn in by the City Clerk. I will contact the appointing authority with any questions about my service. Important: Once this form is submitted it becomes a public document, if there is information you do not want open to the public please do not include it on this form.</i></p>	
Signature	Leticia Ward
Date	1/2/2026

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Online Form Submittal: Application for Appointment and Reappointment to Boards, Committees and Commissions

noreply@civicplus.com <noreply@civicplus.com>
To: mayor@northamptonma.gov

Tue, Nov 4, 2025 at 10:43 AM

Application for Appointment and Reappointment to Boards, Committees and Commissions

City of Northampton Application for Appointment to Boards, Committees, and Commissions

Please return the completed form to: mayor@northamptonma.gov or Gina-Louise Sciarra, Mayor 210 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060

Boards and Committees Community Preservation Committee, Housing Partnership, Human Rights Commission, Planning Board

First Name Yakov

Last Name Kronrod

Title/ Preferred Pronouns *Field not completed.*

Address1 [188 Rocky Hill Rd.](#)

Address2 *Field not completed.*

City Florence

State MA

Zip 01062

Home Phone *Field not completed.*

Work Phone *Field not completed.*

Cell Phone 508-410-0846

Occupation & Place of Employment Senior ML Engineering Manager, Spotify, Inc.

Email yakovkronrod@gmail.com

Are you a Northampton resident? Yes

Years Lived in Northampton 7

Age	40 - 49
Sex	Male
Racial / Ethnic Background	Russian Jewish
Please list any other boards or committees of interest	anything in the realm of housing and education is of interest, as are groups dedicated to the overall and long-term vision for the city
What skills and experience will you bring to this committee assignment?	<p>I have a range of experiences that may be relevant to different committees, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -degree in mathematics and experience in actuarial sciences -experience with emotional intelligence -non-profit work advocating for community power building -local, regional, and national advocacy around drug policy, housing, prison reform, and education -long-term experience as both an organizer with tenants as well as a landlord -human rights work locally, nationally, and internationally -small business owner in Massachusetts and Rhode Island and real estate investor in Pennsylvania -deep expertise in the area of Artificial Intelligence, both from an understanding of the theory and applications as well as general applicability for productivity and data processing
Are you currently serving or have you served on any city committee?	No
Please list other city committees you have served on	N/A
<p>Required: Please read the following, by signing below you state that you understand and agree.</p> <p><i>The filing of this form does not guarantee my appointment. An application is kept on file for two (2) years; after that I must file a new application. Being appointed to a committee, board, or commission means that I am considered a Municipal Employee under MGL Chapter 268A and thereby subject to Conflict of Interest Law MGL Chapter 268A, Financial Disclosure Law MGL Chapter 268B, as well as Open Meeting Law MGL Chapter 39: Section 23B. I understand that I will take the conflict of interest test after being appointed and that I also must be sworn in by the City Clerk. I will contact the appointing authority with any questions about my service. Important: Once this form is submitted it becomes a public document, if there is information you do not want open to the public please do not include it on this form.</i></p>	
Signature	Yakov Kronrod
Date	11/4/2025

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