

CITY OF GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS
CITY COUNCIL APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING OF JANUARY 31, 2022

The Appointment Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Council George C. Tyros at 4:00 p.m. Appointment Committee Members Councilor's James Walsh and Judy Mack were present. Also present was Mayor Nicholson and City Clerk Titi Siriphan.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF OPEN MEETING RECORDINGS: Any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting, or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the chair as to the number, placement and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. Any person intending to make such recording shall notify the Chair forthwith. All documents and exhibits used or referenced at the meeting must be submitted in duplicate to the City Clerk, as they become part of the Meeting Minutes. This information is also posted on the wall by the door for review.

Chair Tyros: Is anyone recording today's meeting? Is anyone recording today's meeting?

As this is the inaugural meeting of this subcommittee, I, George Tyros, would like to make a brief statement before we begin.

As suggested by President Kazinskas and approved unanimously by the City Council, this Committee has been created to oversee the flow of appointments made by the mayor to various positions in city government in a thorough and transparent manner.

These appointments were historically overseen by the Finance Committee, which has oversight of legislative matters of many areas of our City's Government. However, the purpose of this committee is solely focused on appointments made by the mayor for all heads of departments and members of municipal boards that serve the city.

This focus will allow more time for discussion and feedback of these critical appointments, that will better inform councilors when this committee presents our recommendation to the council for their consideration. My intention in chairing this committee is to ensure the timely appointment or reappointment of city officials, and to ensure that the full council has the information they need to make a decision on the mayor's appointment.

To be clear, the mandate of this committee is to gather relevant information and make a recommendation to the full council. This committee is not making the final decision on these appointments and all of our recommendations are subject to approval or rejection by the full council.

Again, this being the first meeting of this committee, I want to lay out how I intend to conduct this process. I will invite the appointees up one at a time to make a brief statement if they wish and take questions from the committee if they are willing. At the conclusion I will entertain motions on recommendations.

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I. Reading and Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting.

No Minutes were presented for review and approval.

II. Appointments:

- A. Ethan Kolodny to the position of Assistant City Solicitor, for a term expiring January 3, 2023. *(In the City council and referred to Appointments Committee 1/18/2022)*

Ethan's statement:

Since July 2020 Ethan has worked with the mayor and department heads helping with union contract negotiation and legal appointments under John Flicks office and is very happy.

Mayor's Statement:

Ethan has worked very admirably in his time as Assistant City Solicitor and played a large role in union negotiations, particularly in the formation of the first contract we have with the newly formed Animal Control Teamsters Union. He has always been responsive and diligent in my dealings with him. He is also currently reviewing new ordinance proposals I plan to put forward to the Council later this spring and has been very thoughtful through that process as well. Resume is on file.

Motion on Recommendation:

On a motion by Councilor James Walsh and seconded by Councilor Judy Mack, it was voted to recommend that the City Council confirm the Mayor's Appointment of Ethan Koldny to the position of Assistant City Solicitor for a term expiring January 3, 2023.

- B. Christine Oliva Kumar to the position of City Assessor, for a term expiring January 19, 2025.

Christine's statement:

Christine started in the assessor's office here in Gardner in 2016 as an Administrative Coordinator. Christine left Gardner to work in other cities and towns. During this time Christine was working toward getting the appropriate certifications to become an Assessor. She has now returned to Gardner to step in the City Assessors position.

Mayor's statement:

Michael is happy to be working with Christine in her role as City Assessor. She has a willingness to learn new things. When the mayor or the public have questions, Christine gives clear direction. The mayor has received great feed back from everyone.

Councilor James Walsh: Have you completed your certification?

Christine: Yes, I just must get a frame to put the certificate in so I can hang it on the wall.

Councilor James Walsh: Have the new tax adjustment been made online to reflect 2022?

Christine: I believe they have, but I will check to make sure that he webs site reflects the update.

Motion on Recommendation:

On a motion by Councillor James Walsh and seconded by Councilor Judy Mack, it was voted to recommend that the City Council confirm the Mayor's Appointment of Christine Oliva Kumar to the position of City Assessor for a term expiring January 19, 2025.

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C. James Wood to the position of Airport Commission Member, for a term expiring January 19, 2025.

James's statement:

James is a resident and is a business owner of Gardner. James has been helping on the airport property with snow plowing as well as making repairs as needed. He has been taking courses towards becoming a commissioner.

Mayor's statement:

James rents a hangar at the airport currently and has been active in the airport in recent years. He is a local business owner and has made a large impact in the city through his role in Woods Ambulance. When Mr. Bonk retired, he recommended James as a replacement for one of the two vacancies on the committee.

Councilor James Walsh: Do you know how many users there are that use the airport?

James: The information is unknown at this time, But I would like to make the changes to track the information. We have visitors from all over that come to Gardner airport.

Councilor James Walsh: Could there be any questions of conflict of interest because of contracts you hold with the city?

James: Most of my business in the city, my daughter handles now.

Mayor: This is not a paid position.

Motion on Recommendation:

On a motion by Councilor James Walsh and seconded by Councilor Judy Mack, it was voted to recommend that the City Council confirm the Mayor's Appointment of James Wood to the position of Airport Commission Member for a term expiring January 19, 2025.

D. Robert R. Swartz, Jr. to the position of Airport Commission Member for a term expiring January 19, 2025.

Robert's statement:

Robert is a business owner in the city and feels he can help build up the airport. He would like to bring in more activity to the airport.

Mayor's statement:

Robert approached me and expressed interest in becoming a member of the Airport Commission. He is a local business owner, leading both Rob's Dyno Service and Energica of New England. Energica has been recognized for its endeavors in operating in a green energy efficient standard lately and is being highlighted for its achievements in this role. He had worked and volunteered at the airport several years ago, and now that he is growing his involvement in the city, he was looking for a way to give back.

Councilor James Walsh: I am glad Robert wants to get greater exposure to the Airport.

Councilor Judy Mack: I remember good times at the airport in my childhood. Judy would like to see the airport brought back for future generations to enjoy.

Motion on Recommendation:

On a motion by Councilor James Walsh and seconded by Councilor Judy Mack, it was voted to recommend that the City Council confirm the Mayor's Appointment of Robert R Swartz, Jr. to the position of Airport Commission Member for a term expiring January 19, 2025.

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E. David Urquhart to the position of Airport Commission Member for a term expiring January 19, 2025.

David's statement:

David is a business owner in Gardner, "New England Wooden Ware". He feels that the airport is underutilized. The airport is supported by the Federal Government and has many new upgrades. Seven or eight new hangars were provided by the state. David has been around airplanes since he was a kid. "Dam fine little airport"

Mayor's statement:

David is currently renting a hangar and has been active in the airport in recent years. He is a business owner and has made a large impact in the city through his role in New England wooden Ware. When Mr. Bonk retired, he recommended David as a replacement for one of the two vacancies on the committee.

Councilor James Walsh: What experiences do you have at the airport?

David: I have been around the airport for 25 years and pay for a hangar there.

Mayor: The hangar rentals are paid to the City of Gardner. Whereas the property tax monies go to the town of Templeton.

Councilor James Walsh: Are there any disclosures that need to be filed?

Mayor: I will check to see if there are any disclosures that need to be filed, but the members are not paid to hold commission positions.

Motion on Recommendation:

On a motion by Councilor James Walsh and seconded by Councilor Judy Mack, it was voted to recommend that the City Council confirm the Mayor's Appointment of David Urquhart to the position of Airport Commission Member for a term expiring January 19, 2025.

III. New Business:

Councilor James Walsh: Nothing to add.

Councilor Judy Mack: Thank you to the members for coming.

Councilor George Tyros: Thank you to the members and the mayor for coming out today.

Mayor: A temporary appointment for Chief of police will be coming. The Chief and Deputy Chief of police have been placed on 30 day paid leave.

On a motion by Councilor James Walsh and seconded by Councilor Judy Mack, all agree to adjourned.

Meeting Adjourned: 4:38 pm.

Faith Glover

Subject: FW: Appointments Committee Comments

From: Mayor <Mayor@gardner-ma.gov>

Sent: Friday, April 8, 2022 3:54 PM

To: Elizabeth Kazinskas <ekazinskas@gardner-ma.gov>; George Tyros <gtyros@gardner-ma.gov>; James M. Walsh <jwalsh@gardner-ma.gov>; Judy Mack <jmack@gardner-ma.gov>; Titi Siriphan <tsiriphan@gardner-ma.gov>

Subject: Appointments Committee Comments

Dear Madam President, Mr Chairman, and Councilors,

My apologies in the delay is sending this correspondence. I have been in Washington, D.C. this passed week meeting with members of the President's cabinet regarding the new grant and funding opportunities that the Biden Administration will be releasing this and next year as part of the yet unreleased ARPA funds and the bipartisan infrastructure bill.

Below are my comments on the appointees-designate that I have submitted to the City Council for confirmation.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike Nicholson

Casey Bradshaw- Alternate Plumbing and Gas Inspector (New Appointment)

- Mr Bradshaw is the current full time Plumbing Inspector for the Town of Orange. He has all of his certifications from the Commonwealth and has been performing work in this field for quite sometime. This is an as needed position but per the Commonwealth's Building Code, must still have an active appointment in order to have the authority to issue citations or inspection certifications. This came following the resignation of or previous Alternate Inspector Edward Tonet. This appointment comes at the recommendation of Commission Jean who would be the Department Head overseeing this work. This is an hourly paid, Unbenefited position.

Airport Commission (Re-Appointments)

- **Philip Morrissey, James Morrissey, John LaVoie, Andre Guertin**

- These are all reappointment sod individuals who have served in their capacities as Airport Commissioners for a few decades. They have continued to have interests in seeing the airport succeed, particularly with the new several million dollar grant the airport just received from the FAA as part of the Infrastructure Bill competitive funding.

Stephen Hirons- Sealer of Weights and Measurers (Re-Appointment)

- Mr Hirons has worked in this position for over a decade and his father held the position prior to him. This position goes around annually to all stores that have scales and ensures that they are all accurately calibrated. This includes everything from gallons of gas at a gas pump or a vegetable scale at a grocery store. He has done quite well in this position. Per the General Laws, this is an annual appointment. This is a stipended position.

Ronald Darmetka, Council on Aging (Re-appointment)

- Mr Darmetka currently serves as the Chair of the Council on Aging and has for approximately a year now. He has been very active in the Senior Center and had helped coordinate many events that the Center has put on. This is a volunteer, unpaid position.

David Orwig - Conservation Commission (Re-Appointment)

- Mr Orwig has served on the Conservation Commission for quite some time. He comes highly recommended by Chairman Dumas and has been an active member in the Commission’s meetings. This position receives an annual stipend of \$750

Golf Commission (All Re-Appointments)

- **Aleksander Dernalowicz, David Noyes, Jeffrey Gallant, Michael Budwick**

- All of the Golf Commission Appointments are re-appointments of individuals who are interested in continuing their service on the Commission. Their current chair is Mr Jeffrey Gallant. Per §152-2(B) of the Code of the City of Gardner, these positions are unpaid and compensated by an annual free family membership to the Golf Course, subject to taxation under the Internal Revenue Code.

Tina Sbrega- Williams-Rockwell Educational Gift Fund Trustee (NEW appointment)

- This is a new appointment in order to fill the vacancy created following the passing of Mr Andrew Boucher. Ms Sbrega is no stranger to the City of Gardner, having worked as the President and CEO of GFA Federal Credit Union for quite sometime. She has a substantial background in business and financial matters and would be an excellent addition to this board. Under Tina’s leadership at GFA, she created a Student Advisory Council for the Credit Union in which she was able to hear first hand from our students what they believed the needs of their generation and our schools are. This is an unpaid, volunteer position.

Mark Monahan- Bandstand Committee (NEW appointment)

- Mr Monahan has worked as a Financial Advisor for Advent Financial Planners since 2015. Following the birth of his son last year, Mr Monahan was looking at ways to give back to the City to help make it a good home for his new family. This is an unpaid position and the volunteers on this board help create the concert schedule and obtain sponsors for the annual Concerts in the Park series.

Gardner Housing Authority (Re-Appointments)

- Stephen Hancock and George Oulette

- Mr Hancock and Mr Oulette have served for several years on the Board of the Gardner Housing Authority. They come highly recommended by Ms Sandy Mullins, former director of the GHA, and their background and experiences on the Board will certainly be helpful during the transition with the new Executive Director who will be starting at the facility imminently. These are unpaid, volunteer positions.

Mario Guay- Board of Registrars (Re-Appointment)

Per the General Laws, the number of Registrars on the Board of Registrars of Voters is set by population and must be an equal amount of Democrats and Republicans in its make up. The City Clerk serves as an ex officio member of the Board and votes in instances of a tie.

Mr Guay has served for just over a decade in this position and is one of the Republican members of the Board.

This position receives an annual stipend of \$750.

Municipal Grounds/Cemetery Commission

- **Brian LaRoche and John Awdycki** have both served for about a decade and a half in these roles

- **Denise Merriam** was appointed following the passing of Commissioner Ludger Robichaud.

- This commission advises the Director of Public Works in the financial aspects and operations regarding City owned lands and the cemeteries and both commissions are required for us to have per our City Ordinances.

- members of the Municipal Grounds Committee receive an annual stipend of \$750

- positions on the Cemetery Commission are unpaid, volunteer positions.

Michael J Nicholson
Mayor, City of Gardner, MA