

CITY OF GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS
APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING OF AUGUST 17, 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, Lt Eric McAvene, Sergeant Lorin Walter 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.

I. Reading and Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting.

Councilor James Walsh would like to make a correction on the meeting minutes of July 12, 2022, page 3, a comment from the Mayor, to correct the spelling of Assistant City Solicitor's last name, Ethan Kolodny.

Councillor Judy Mack also would like to make a correction to the last name spelling of Donna "Lehtinen" on page 3 as well.

On a motion by Councilor James Walsh and Seconded by Councilor Judy Mack, it was voted to waive the reading, accept the minutes as amended, and printed of July 12, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes.

II. Appointments:

#10735 - A Measure Confirming the Mayor's Appointment of Lorin Walter to the position of Sergeant, for permanent. (In the City Council and Referred to Appointments Committee 7/5/2022; More Time 8/1/2022).

Mayor Nicholson informed the committee that Sergeant Walter is present with newly appointed Police Chief, Eric McAvene. He stated that he is very happy and impressed with Sergeant Walter's work with the city. He is looking forward to working with Sergeant Walter moving forward.

Sergeant Walter would like to thank the Mayor for accepting him back into the city. His role as a supervisor for the Gardner Police Department. It means a great deal to him

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to finish his career here with the city and the men and women he served for the last 10 years.

Councillor James Walsh questioned Sergeant Walter if he was aware that his appointment was on the agenda for the July 12th meeting.

Sergeant Walter responded that he was not aware until five minutes before the meeting was to take place. He had just worked a double that night and he had no prior knowledge to that.

Mayor Nicholson mentioned that moving forward, he will give people a week's notices before the meeting.

Councillor James Walsh questioned why Sergeant Walter submitted a resignation in July 2021 after almost 9 years with the department.

Sergeant Walter responded that at the time, it was a hostile environment, and he had a dispute with the administration. Mainly the Deputy Chief and Police Chief. He decided to give his resignation before things transpired and got worse. He decided to try something else. He worked as a CDL driver and part time Templeton Police officer so that he could keep his certifications.

Councillor James Walsh had some concerns that Sergeant Walter left because of difficulties with his superiors and now he is back with a different administration. How do you respond to criticism when your faced with difficulty with you superiors? How do we know you won't quit again?

Sergeant Walter responded that responded that he felt targeted and micromanaged when he worked here before. He decided to remove himself from the situation before it became a toxic environment. After being gone for 9 months, Lt. McAvene asked him to come back, and he jumped at the chance. He enjoys working with 99.9% of all the people at the Gardner Police Station. They are a great crew, and they are his brothers and sisters till the end and there nothing he wouldn't do for them.

Lt. McAvene also spoke in favor of Sergeant Walter's appointment. He is happy to have him back and mentioned that he is a valued member to the department.

On a motion made by Councillor Judy Mack, seconded by Councillor James Walsh, it was voted to recommend to the City Council confirmation of *A Measure Confirming the Mayor's Appointment of Lorin Walter to the position of Sergeant, permanent.*

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#10761 – A Measure Confirming the Mayor’s Appointment of Nancy Binder to the position of Bandstand Committee Member, for term expiring July 25, 2025. (In the City Council and Referred to Appointments Committee 8/1/2022)

Mayor Nicholson informed the committee that the next two subsequent appointments are all reappointments to the bandstand committee. This is a volunteer committee that fundraise money for concerts in the city at no cost to the city.

On a motion made by Councillor James Walsh, seconded by Councillor Judy Mack, it was voted to recommend to the City Council confirmation of *A Measure Confirming the Mayor’s Appointment of Nancy Binder to the position of Bandstand Committee Member, for term expiring July 25, 2025.*

#10762 – A Measure Confirming the Mayor’s Appointment of Edward Vipond to the position of Bandstand Committee Member, for term expiring July 25, 2025. (In the City Council and Referred to Appointments Committee 8/1/2022)

Mayor Nicholson informed the committee that this appointment was for the exact same explanation in the previous appointee.

On a motion made by Councillor James Walsh, seconded by Councillor Judy Mack, it was voted to recommend to the City Council confirmation of *A Measure Confirming the Mayor’s Appointment of Edward Vipond to the position of Bandstand Committee Member, for term expiring July 25, 2025.*

#10763 – A Measure Confirming the Mayor’s Appointment of Donna Russo to the position of Bandstand Committee Member, for term expiring July 25, 2025. (In the City Council and Referred to Appointments Committee 8/1/2022)

Mayor Nicholson informed the committee that this appointment was for the exact same explanation in the previous appointee. He did mention the Ms. Russo is also a performer at the bandstand concerts.

On a motion made by Councillor James Walsh, seconded by Councillor Judy Mack, it was voted to recommend to the City Council confirmation of *A Measure Confirming the Mayor’s Appointment of Donna Russo to the position of Bandstand Committee Member, for term expiring July 25, 2025.*

#10764 – A Measure Confirming the Mayor’s Appointment of Anne Hurst to the position of Disability Commission Member, for term expiring July 25, 2025. (In the City Council and Referred to Appointments Committee 8/1/2022)

Mayor Nicholson informed the committee that the disability commission, by state statue is restricted to members who are either disabled themselves or an immediate

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family member of someone who is disabled. Ms. Hearst fits in the category being an immediate family member who is disabled. She has been on this committee and served various officer positions in this role for the past 10 years.

On a motion made by Councillor James Walsh, seconded by Councillor Judy Mack, it was voted to recommend to the City Council confirmation of *A Measure Confirming the Mayor's Appointment of Anne Hurst to the position of Disability Commission Member, for term expiring July 25, 2025.*

III. New Business

Councillor James Walsh would like to ask the Mayor if there are any upcoming appointments.

Mayor Nicholson informed the committee that he did notify the Council on the process of the Police Chief search. Following the search, 3 applicants were chosen based on the search committee's recommendation. His top rank choice he has chosen was Lieutenant Detective Eric McAvene to position of Police Chief. Chief McAvene accepted the position this morning, pending Council vote. They will be posting the position for Deputy Police Chief next week. Greg Dumas, chair of the conservation committee, has resigned. Katie Guertin, Conservation Agent as left for a lateral move to Ashburnham, where she resides.

On a motion made by Councilor Walsh and seconded by Councilor Mack, it was voted viva voce to adjourn at 4:26 p.m.