



City of Fitchburg Massachusetts 01420

CITY COUNCIL

Councillors at Large

**Sally H. Cragin
Marcus L. DiNatale
Amy Green
Samantha M. Squailia
Anthony M. Zarrella**

President

Anthony M. Zarrella

Vice President

Andrew J. Van Hazinga

Ward Councillors

**Ward 1 – Bernard J. Schultz III
Ward 2 – Paul R. Beauchemin
Ward 3 – Andrew J. Couture
Ward 4 – Andrew J. Van Hazinga
Ward 5 – Marisa R. Fleming
Ward 6 – Derrick J. Cruz**

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Fitchburg was held at the Legislative Building at 700 Main Street and over the Zoom meeting platform and live streamed at FATV Studios, Fitchburg, on January 3, 2023.

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Andrew Van Hazinga at 7:09 P.M. The meeting opened with a salute to the Flag led by Councilor Couture. The City Clerk called the roll and 10 Councilors were present, President Zarrella was absent.

I. PUBLIC FORUM

This meeting will be open to the public. Persons who wish to participate remotely in the Public Forum portion of the meeting may request a remote attendance link by contacting the City Clerk at cityclerk@fitchburgma.gov.

Police Chief Martineau spoke in favor and support the appointment of Ms. Murphy as the next Executive Director of Community Development and Planning for the City of Fitchburg with her 16 years of service working within the department.

Mike O'Hara, Principal Planner, spoke in support of the appointment of Ms. Murphy as the Executive Director of community Development and planning for the City of Fitchburg, Mr. O'Hara has worked with Ms. Murphy for 16 years highly recommends her.

Jacquelyn Wehtje addressing agenda item II. Reports of the Appointment Committee: Ms. Wehtje requested the council reject the report of the appointments committee and not appointment Ms. Murphy.

Mary Jo Bohart, Director of Economic Development, spoke in support of Ms. Murphy, has worked with Ms. Murphy over the last seven years and the leadership she has shown in Fitchburg and at a regional level for housing, community development and administration is a defining aspect on why someone would want to come to Fitchburg.

II. REPORT OF THE APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Appointments Committee
Oral Report
Meeting of January 3, 2023

Re-Appointment:
Fitchburg Housing Authority
(Term to expire December 1, 2027)
Linda E. Byrne

Re-Appointment:
Zoning Board of Appeals
(Term to expire January 1, 2027)
Joseph Byrne

New Appointments:
Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority
(Term to expire July 1, 2026)

Maribel Cruz
Board of Park Commissioners
(Term to expire January 1, 2028)
Colby O'Brien

Councilor Beauchemin requested to have the Executive Director of Council on Aging and Executive Director of Community Development and Planning be pulled from the report and voted on individually.

Report read and accepted. Appointments confirmed by unanimous consent 10/0. 10 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

Councilor Green recused herself from the meeting at 7:16 PM

Executive Director Council on Aging
(Term to expire August 24, 2025)
Jennifer Brennan

Councilor Beauchemin does not support this appointment, the Council on Aging search committee recommended a different candidate for this position. Council Beauchemin feels if search committees are established to recommend candidates the City should follow their recommendations.

Councilor DiNatale advised they were an advisory committee, the Mayor is the appointing authority for the position.

Motion and second to appoint Jennifer Brennan, as Executive Director of the Council on Aging was confirmed by a vote of eight (8) in favor, one (1) opposed (Beauchemin). 9 members present. Board consists of 11 member.

Executive Director of Community Development and Planning

(Term to expire December 12, 2025)

Elizabeth Murphy

Councilor Beauchemin does not support this appointment, would like to ask Ms. Murphy some questions.

1. What are you going to do for neighborhoods?

Ms. Murphy shared that she has partnered with NewVue with the work at Plymouth and Elm Street, the city had knocked down housing that did not have parking. Several parcel where replaced and created single family housing. Invest in the infrastructure around neighborhoods when we have the funding to do that. Work with Councilors, business partners, nonprofit, business developers. Change takes a long time to see the change, even when we are in the middle of it. We are creating the vacant property ordinance to encourage investor who are holding onto vacant property to either redevelop it or sell it.

2. Do you have five yours of planning?

Ms. Murphy shared she has 16 years of working in the Community Development department and some of the work is planning. Ms. Murphy has a degree in Human Services because she wants to help people by helping the community.

Other councilors all spoke in support of Ms. Murphy in this position, they have had the opportunity to work with her, and thanked her for her service to the City of Fitchburg. Motion and second to appoint Elizabeth Murphy, as Executive Director of Community Development and Planning was confirmed by unanimous consent. 9 members present. Board consists of 11 member.

Councilor Green rejoined the meeting at 7:40 PM

III. REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RECORDS

The Committee on records reported the minutes were correctly recorded through December 20, 2022. Report accepted and minutes adopted.

IV. COMMUNICATION

Office of the City Auditor

The Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services has certified the following amounts of available funds or Free Cash as of July 1, 2022:

General Fund	\$6,514,191
Water Enterprise Fund	\$387,524
Wastewater Enterprise Fund	\$15,438,938

The communications has been filed at the City Clerk office by unanimous consent 10/0. 10 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

V. ORDERS

- 003-23. ORDER THAT: the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of funds from the I. C. Federal Credit Union gift in the approximate amount of \$5,000.00 (FIVE THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) for the purpose of said gift, which is to provide heating assistance to city residents.
- 004-23. ORDER THAT: the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of funds from the MEMA Emergency Management Performance grant in the approximate amount of \$20,150.00 (TWENTY THOUSAND, ONE HUNDRED FIFTY AND 00/100 DOLLARS) for the purpose of said grant, which is to purchase two haz-mat suits, two gas meters, and two battery powered generators.
- 005-23. ORDER THAT: the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of funds from the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services, Firefighter Safety Equipment grant in the approximate amount of \$24,999.00 (TWENTY-FOUR THOUSAND, NINE HUNDRED NINETY-NINE AND 00/100 DOLLARS) for the purpose of said grant, which is to update the communication base stations located at each of the city's three fire stations.
- 006-23. ORDER THAT: there be and hereby is transferred from within the sum of TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$25,500.00) same to be transferred from RESERVE FOR OTHER MUNICIPAL PURPOSES, CAPITAL EXPENSES and credited to INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EXPENSES, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS for the purpose of installing drops and conduits at the Senior Center.
- 007-23. ORDER THAT: there be and hereby is transferred from within the sum of ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$100,000.00) same to be transferred from RESERVE FOR OTHER MUNICIPAL PURPOSES, CAPITAL EXPENSES and credited to CAPITAL PROJECTS, LONGSJO SCHOOL BOILER REPLACEMENT for the purpose of paying costs for the replacement of boilers at the Arthur M. Longsjö Middle School, including a feasibility study and all other costs incidental or related thereto, and for which the City of Fitchburg may be eligible for a grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), said amount to be expended under the direction of Fitchburg Public Schools. The City of Fitchburg acknowledges that the MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any costs the City incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the City of Fitchburg.
- 008-23. ORDER THAT: there be and hereby is transferred from within the sum of SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$700,000.00) same to be transferred from EMPLOYEE BENEFITS, HEALTH INSURANCE and credited to SCHOOL EXPENSES.
- 009-23. ORDER THAT: there be and hereby is appropriated the sum of TWO HUNDRED FIFTY-EIGHT THOUSAND, FIFTY-TWO AND 49/100 DOLLARS (\$258,052.49) from RESERVE FOR APPROPRIATION, PEG ACCESS and credited to INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, FRANCHISE FEE for the purpose of paying FATV for franchise fees received during the second and third quarters of 2022.

- 010-23. ORDER THAT: there be and hereby is appropriated the sum of THREE HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$350,000.00) same to be charged against AVAILABLE FUNDS and credited to STABILIZATION FUND.
- 011-23. ORDER THAT: there be and hereby is appropriated the sum of TWO HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$250,000.00) same to be charged against AVAILABLE FUNDS and credited to OTHER POST EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS (OPEB) TRUST FUND.
- 012-23. ORDER THAT: there be and hereby is appropriated the sum of TWENTY-SEVEN THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$27,500.00) same to be charged against AVAILABLE FUNDS and credited to RESERVE FOR OTHER MUNICIPAL PURPOSES, CAPITAL EXPENSES.

Wave the reading and refer the following orders to the Finance Committee by unanimous consent 10/0. 10 members present. Board consists of 11 members.

VI. PETITIONS

- 013-23. Councilors Marcus DiNatale and Andrew Couture, on behalf of Mark Balfe, to inspect and seek remedy to recurring water runoff problem occurring at 178 Stickney Road, including probable installation and/or repair of berm to the right of the driveway. Water entering property and causing significant property damage. (Refer Public Works)
- 014-23. Councilors Marcus DiNatale and Andrew Couture, to install new streetlights where appropriate along McIntire Road where new home developments have/are taking place up to the corner of Alpine Road. (Refer Public Works)

With the council consent, wave the reading and refer the above petition to the Public Works.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Schultz submitted: The next meeting of the Widowed Helping Widowed Support Group will take place on Thursday, January 12, 2023 from 4 until 5:30 p.m. in Room 203 at the Fitchburg State University Recreation Center, 130 North Street. Kelley Lynn and Bernie Schultz will co-facilitate the meeting.

Ward 1 City Councilor Bernie Schultz is hosting a Ward 1 Community Meeting on Thursday, January 12, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall's North Conference Room, Room 300. City of Fitchburg Manager of Information Technology Trevor Bonilla and City Editor for the Sentinel & Enterprise Newspaper Jake Vitali will make presentations, and then answer questions following their presentations.

The Montachusett MLK Coalition will hold its 24th Annual Martin Luther King Jr Celebration on Monday, January 16, 2023 right here in the Fitchburg Legislative Building from 1 until 3

p.m. Stephanie Williams, Chief Diversity Officer for Mount Wachusett Community College, will deliver the keynote address at the celebration.

Councilor Green submitted: Fitchburg Historical Society Grand Finale Trivia Night, Saturday, January 28, 2023, 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM, tickets cost \$25.00 and are available online. Admission includes a soup, sandwiches and beverages.

Councilor Cragin Submitted: Stratton Players Club will be hosting a dinner with George and Lucy Fay, at the Fay Club, Friday January 23, 2023, at 6:00 PM, please call the club for tickets.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Next Regular Meeting
Tuesday, January 17, 2023, at 7:00 PM

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 P.M.

Joanna Bilotta-Simeone

Joanna Bilotta-Simeone, City Clerk