



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

October 19, 2021

REPORT OF THE CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENTS AND PERSONNEL MATTERS COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Mary Jo Rossetti	Chair	Present	
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Vice Chair	Present	
Wilfred N. Mbah	City Councilor at Large	Present	
Jesse Clingan	Ward Four City Councilor	Present	
Kristen Strezo	City Councilor at Large	Present	

Others present: Sarah Lewis - Director of Planning, Denise Molina Capers - Director of Racial and Social Justice, Jill Lathan - Director of Parks and Recreation, Lauren Racaniello Legislative Affairs, Hannah Carrillo - Legislative Liaison, Peter Forcellese - Legislative Clerk.

The meeting took place virtually via GoToWebinar and was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chair Rossetti and went into recess at 7:21 PM and reconvened at 7:30 PM. The meeting adjourned at 9:16 PM on a roll call vote of 5 in favor (Councilors Mbah, Clingan, Strezo, Scott and Rossetti), 0 against and 0 absent.

Note: Councilors Scott, Clingan and Mbah had other meetings occurring while this meeting was underway. Councilor Clingan left this meeting after roll call and returned at 6:49 PM. Councilor Mbah left this meeting at 6:50 PM and returned at 7:19 PM. Councilor Scott arrived to this meeting at 7:30 PM

211970: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Christina Morone to the Commission for Women.

Director Molina Capers introduced Christina Morone and noted that she has volunteered on the Commission for Women since 2021 and presently works as a PA at MGH. The search of an Executive Director for the Commission is continuing. Interviews for hiring a Coordinator to assist in this process are currently being conducted. Ms. Morone addressed the committee and feels grateful to have the opportunity to serve the community. Councilor Strezo noted Ms. Morone's connection to health care and asked what she could bring to the commission in that respect. Ms. Morone replied that she has developed a network of health care providers and would be able to use those resources to benefit women with regard to infant mortality rates. Councilor Mbah asked for her thoughts about the commission and Ms. Morone replied that it's a huge learning experience for her and she's meeting many people from various areas of the city and she's looking forward to collaborating with them, and others, to do the work of the commission. Chair Rossetti commented that she was impressed with Ms. Morone's resume, especially being a co-founder of One Nation Every Voice. Chair Rossetti moved for approval and advised the

candidate that the appointment will not become official until it is approved by the City Council on October 28th.

RESULT:

APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]

AYES:

Rossetti, Scott, Mbah, Clingan, Strezo

211906: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Russell Pildes as an Alternate Member of the Planning Board.

Director Lewis introduced Russell Pildes and said that his background fits well with the makeup of the Planning Board. This appointment would fill the last alternate slot, completing the Board. Mr. Pildes addressed the members and thanked them for their time. He recently moved here from Michigan and is looking forward to serving the community. Councilor Mbah asked the candidate what he sees as the city greatest issue and Mr. Pildes replied that it is the shortage of housing and the high cost of renting. Asked about how he would deal with bad development, he said that getting the community involved in more open discussion and asking the right questions would be a huge step in the right direction. Chair Rossetti asked the candidate if he has participated in public hearings, and he commented that he has attended several in Somerville. She noted his Masters Degree in Urban and Regional Planning and expertise in Transportation Planning. He spoke about his concern for air quality and said that it's obvious when you see it. Chair Rossetti said that she hopes that Mr. Pildes would bring this issue to the forefront when given the opportunity. She noted that although this is for an alternate position, the work involved, and the time commitment is formidable. Councilor Strezo spoke about air quality and commented that the state has much of the say in what gets done, adding that she looks forward to seeing what might get done at the local level. Chair Rossetti moved for approval and advised the candidate that the appointment will not become official until it is approved by the City Council on October 28th.

RESULT:

APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]

AYES:

Rossetti, Scott, Mbah, Clingan, Strezo

212186: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Ann Fullerton to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Director Lewis introduced Ann Fullerton and stated that she is an architect and would be filling one of the vacant positions on the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Ms. Fullerton shared her background with the committee and said that she cares about the evolution of the city. She had practiced for several years in Boston and has recently started her own company and understands the complications of zoning. Chair Rossetti asked the candidate about her work on high end development, saying that this made her nervous and she asked if Ms. Fullerton would be able to switch gears. Ms. Fullerton said that she represented developers in the past when she did commercial work, but now she represents homeowners in their efforts. She appreciates the need for every resident to have quality and pride in their homes. She would advocate for all aspects of construction/improvement and said she's not interested in having an elitist neighborhood. Councilor Strezo asked Ms. Lewis to explain what makes one candidate get recommended as a full member and another as an alternate member. Ms. Lewis replied that, in this case, the applicant being an architect better suited the makeup of the Board. Councilor Clingan asked Ms. Fullerton if any of the companies listed on her resume were non-union and she acknowledged that some were, and she went on to explain the differences between union vs. non-union workers. Chair Rossetti commented that some of the wording on the candidate's resume might be problematic for the City Council when it comes to approving this appointment. Ms. Fullerton reiterated that she intends to advocate for people who want to stay in their homes. Chair Rossetti moved for approval and advised the candidate that the appointment will not become official until it is approved by the City Council on October 28th. The motion was

approved on a roll call vote of 2 in favor (Councilors Clingan and Rossetti), 1 against (Councilor Strezo), and 2 absent (Councilors Mbah and Scott). Councilor Mbah returned to the meeting and indicated his support for the candidate, therefore Chair Rossetti moved for reconsideration of the prior vote. The motion for reconsideration passed on a roll call vote of 4 in favor (Councilors Mbah, Clingan, Strezo and Rossetti), 0 against and 1 absent (Councilor Scott). Chair Rossetti again moved for approval of the item.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [3 TO 1]
AYES:	Rossetti, Mbah, Clingan
NAYS:	Strezo
ABSENT:	Scott

212187: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Stephanos Axios to the Zoning Board of Appeals as an Alternate Member.

Ms. Lewis introduced Stephanos Axios and said that he is an engineer who thinks logically and rationally. Mr. Axios addressed the committee and explained that his job requires him to give technical details/opinions and he can see how this would help in making decisions on the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Councilor Strezo asked the candidate why he volunteered for the ZBA, and Mr. Axios replied that there's a substantial level of long-lasting impact that could be made, adding that he wants to be of service to the community. Councilor Mbah asked the candidate what projects in the city have a lasting impact and Mr. Axios deferred to the goals in SomerVision 2040. Councilor Mbah asked the candidate how he would push back on bad development and Mr. Axios said that he would rely on the needs of the community. Councilor Scott spoke about the powers given to zoning boards and he asked Mr. Axios about his personal experience with trying to add an in-law apartment to a property in Worcester. Mr. Axios stated that he understands the reasoning behind some of the requirements and he believes that decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis. Councilor Scott commented on some of the variance requests made for large projects and asked the candidate how he would balance all of the input to make a decision. Mr. Axios explained that he would assign a weight to the input as to how it would conform to the goals of SomerVision 2040. Councilor Scott asked if the candidate was involved with any of the neighborhood councils in the city. Chair Rossetti commented that she doesn't feel the ZBA is the best place for Mr. Axios, and she suggested that he explore possibilities serving on an environmental board or commission. She will contact Director Sellars-Garcia to reach out to the candidate.

Chair Rossetti moved to not approve. She advised the candidate that this action will not become official until it is approved by the City Council on October 28th.

Mr. Axios asked for the names of some of the groups where he could learn more about the zoning issues happening in the city and Chair Rossetti provided several references for him to explore.

RESULT:	NOT APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	Rossetti, Scott, Mbah, Clingan, Strezo

210870: Requesting confirmation of the re-appointment of Zachary Zasloff to the Condominium Review Board.

Legislative Liaison Hannah Carrillo introduced the candidate Zachary Zasloff who read a statement into the record describing his work on the Condominium Review Board (CRB). Councilor Scott commented that it's difficult to find any minutes of CRB meetings and Liaison Carrillo said that she would forward

the link to him. Councilor Scott asked the candidate to explain how the CRB operates to protect tenants against displacement and Mr. Zasloff stated that the Board has taken actions to uphold tenants' rights by not approving a developer's plans and by negotiating with developers and tenants. He stated that he has provided the time for everyone to be heard on matters. Councilor Scott explained that the members of the CRB are entrusted to protect the rights of tenants and he spoke about 2 brothers who were evicted from their home and subsequently became homeless. Liaison Carrillo explained that this happened prior to reaching the CRB so there was nothing that the CRB could have done. Ms. Carrillo will research the particulars of the incident to verify her recollections.

Chair Rossetti moved for approval and advised the candidate that the appointment will not become official until it is approved by the City Council on October 28th.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	Rossetti, Scott, Mbah, Clingan, Strezo

210913: Requesting confirmation of the re-appointment of Patricha Paul to the Condominium Review Board.

Legislative Liaison Hannah Carrillo introduced the candidate Patricha Paul. Ms. Paul said that it's been an honor to serve on the Condominium Review Board (CRB) and she looks forward to bringing equity to the condominium issue. Councilor Scott asked if she found any of her work on the CRB to be frustrating. Ms. Paul said there were such times, but the new regulations have made enforcement easier. She said that developers/owners need to make better efforts to locate tenants rather than simply submitting a paper saying that they tried. Chair Rossetti asked if addresses could be checked against the voting list to identify tenants and Liaison Carrillo replied that this had been done in the past.

Chair Rossetti moved for approval and advised the candidate that the appointment will not become official until it is approved by the City Council on October 28th.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	Rossetti, Scott, Mbah, Clingan, Strezo

207413: Requesting confirmation of the re-appointment of Jill Lathan as Director of Parks and Recreation.

See 211287

RESULT:	APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	Rossetti, Scott, Mbah, Clingan, Strezo

209503: Requesting confirmation of the re-appointment of Jill Lathan as Director of Parks and Recreation.

See 211287

RESULT:	APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	Rossetti, Scott, Mbah, Clingan, Strezo

211287: Requesting confirmation of the re-appointment of Jill Lathan as Director of Parks

and Recreation.

Director Lathan appeared before the committee and said that she still loves doing what she does and considers it a privilege and an honor to work for the people of Somerville. Councilors Strezo, Mbah, Clingan and Scott thanked Director Lathan for her service and dedication. Director Lathan praised her team for doing exemplary work for the city. Chair Rossetti expressed her appreciation for the Parks and Recreation department's interaction with the city's School Department to provide after-school programming for students.

Chair Rossetti moved for approval and advised the candidate that the appointment will not become official until it is approved by the City Council on October 28th.

Director Lathan thanked Chair Rossetti for her support, diligence, consistency, tenacity and tireless efforts over the years behalf of Somerville's youths and students.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	Rossetti, Scott, Mbah, Clingan, Strezo

211303: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Mark Lawhorne as Superintendent of Highways, Lines and Lights.

RESULT:	PLACED ON FILE
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Referenced Material:

- CRB Reappointment Statement - Zasloff (with 210870)
- Zachary Zasloff Resume 2021 Redacted Resume (with 210870)
- Ppaul Resume (with 210913)
- Jill Lathan Resume 10.19.21 CC (002) (with 207413, 209503, 211287)