



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

November 19, 2015

REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE MATTERS COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Mary Jo Rossetti	Chair	Present	
Mark Niedergang	Vice Chair	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Absent	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One Alderman	Present	
William A. White Jr.	Alderman At Large	Present	

Others present: David Shapiro - Law, Oliver Sellers-Garcia - OSE, Mark Levy - Assessing, Omar Boukili - Mayor's Office, Charles Sillari - Clerk of Committees

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:00 PM by Alderman Rossetti and adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Document List:

- Plastic Bag Draft Ordinance (with 198251)

197626: That the City Solicitor appear before this Board's Committee on Confirmation of Appointments to discuss the hiring of a Director of Recreation and Youth.

Chairman Rossetti expressed her concern that the Chair of the Recreation Commission did not appear, as requested at the last committee meeting. Mr. Boukili stated that the Administration is not opposed to the Board's concern over the hiring process and is willing to make the change.

Alderman Rossetti's motion that the City Solicitor prepare and forward to the Board of Aldermen and the Recreation Commission, an amendment to the Code of Ordinances to allow for Board of Aldermen approval of new hires, was approved.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
----------------	--------------------------

199553: Requesting revisions to the City Charter and Ordinances to adjust the threshold for written contracts to align with MA General Law.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
----------------	--------------------------

199726: Requesting amendments to Ordinance 2-369 to align the threshold for written contracts with MA General Law.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
----------------	--------------------------

199727: Requesting an amendment to the City Charter to align with a related proposed revision to the City Ordinances and with MA General Law regarding written contracts.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
----------------	--------------------------

198251: Assistant City Solicitor submitting a proposed Plastic Bag Reduction Ordinance.

The committee examined samples of various plastic bags. Mr. Sellers-Garcia discussed the most recent revisions to the proposed ordinance and said that definitions need to be clear and that public education on the issue would be beneficial. Alderman White expressed his concern for small business owners who might have problems with compliance. Mr. Sellers-Garcia stated that the proposed ordinance would be enforced one year after its passage and he discussed the time line stores may need to adopt. Alderman Niedergang objects to the one year waiting period and believes that the environment is more important than the cost of bags purchased by a business. Mr. Boukili spoke about the need for a communication strategy and said that six months is not enough time. Seventeen percent of Somerville businesses contain over 10,000 square feet of space. Alderman White requested that the city provide assistance to businesses impacted by this ordinance. Alderman White would also like to give businesses 2 weeks to remedy an initial warning and asked that there be at least 2 weeks between the issuance of first and second offenses.

The following change proposed by Alderman Niedergang was approved:

- businesses of 10,000 s/f and larger shall have 9 months to comply and all other businesses shall have 12 months to comply.

RESULT:	APPROVED AS AMENDED
----------------	----------------------------

198630: Clint Richmond submitting comments re: the plastic bag ban.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
----------------	-----------------------