



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

CLERK OF COMMITTEES

July 20, 2010

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Sean T. O'Donovan	Chair	Present	
Walter F. Pero	Vice Chair	Absent	
Robert C. Trane	Ward Seven Alderman	Absent	
William A. White Jr.	Alderman At Large	Present	
Dennis M. Sullivan	Alderman At Large	Present	
John M Connolly	Alderman At Large	Present	
Bruce M. Desmond	Alderman At Large	Present	
William M. Roche	Ward One Alderman	Present	
Stan Koty	Commissioner of Public Work	Present	
Steve MacEachern	Superintendent of Lines and Lights	Present	
Phillip Ercolini	Director of Housing	Present	
Nicholas Stiles	Police Officer	Present	
William Zamparelli	Public Affairs Representative	Present	
Interested members of the public		Present	

Alderman Connolly appointed himself to the committee for this meeting only, to establish a quorum.

Alderman Roche recused himself because of a conflict on interest.

The meeting was held at the Cross Street Center, 165 Broadway.

189805 - That the Committee on Public Utilities and Public Works requests that a representative from NStar appear before the Committee to address concerns over the numerous recent power outages in Ward One and the measures being implemented to ensure that such outages cease, and that this meeting be held at the Cross Street Senior Center, if possible.:

The committee discussed the recent power outages in East Somerville with NSTAR representative William Zamparelli and heard comments from several residents on the matter. Several members expressed concern that an engineer and/or technical expert from NSTAR was not present at this meeting, leading Alderman White to request that the City Solicitor file a complaint with the Department of Public Utilities regarding the issues with NSTAR's service, with the understanding that it would be withdrawn in the event that an adequate solution to the problem is found prior to the next meeting of the Board of Aldermen. Alderman White read a newspaper article into the record (regarding an NSTAR official who had problems in his own neighborhood).

Commissioner Koty told the members that there is a lack of cooperation from NSTAR and that antiquated equipment should be replaced. Mr. Zamparelli spoke about the equipment in the Ward 1 area, noting that there is one particular circuit that is a problem, and he spoke about the outage that occurred on May 23rd, leaving 2,000 customers without service. Mr. Zamparelli explained the complexities involved in circuit distribution and reviewed the steps taken by NSTAR to deal with the problems. He told the members that he would return with an action plan after the engineering analysis is completed.

The committee heard from several members of the public on this matter, summarized as follows:

- A suggestion that NSTAR be penalized for outages
- NSTAR needs to do a better job of informing residents of the problems
- Problems related to the transformer on Cross Street East
- NSTAR's claims procedure is not helpful
- Outages cause angst among the elderly population and those needing electricity to deal with medical issues
- Outages may lead to an increase in crime
- Complaints of weekly outages (since May)

Mr. Zamparelli told the members that he would respond by August 3rd.

Motion: That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Superintendent of Lines and Lights confer with the City Solicitor to prepare to file a complaint with the Department of Public Utilities regarding the issues with NSTAR's service.

Submitted by Alderman White.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	Sean T. O'Donovan, John M Connolly
ABSENT:	Walter F. Pero, Robert C. Trane