



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

CLERK OF COMMITTEES

February 6, 2018
REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
William A. White Jr.	Chair	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	Vice Chair	Present	
Ben Ewen-Campen	Ward Three Alderman	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One Alderman	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	

Others present: Alderman Mark Niedergang, Ed Bean - Finance, Rob King - Capital Projects, Brad Rawson - OSPCD, Candice Cooper - Personnel, Ellen Collins - Personnel, Doug Kress - HHS, David Grossfield - Law, Jackie Rossetti - Communications, George Proakis - OSPCD, Alan Inacio - OSPCD, Mike Glavin - OSPCD, Richard Raiche - Engineering, Kelly Donato - OSPCD, Mike Feloney - OSPCD, Denise Taylor - Communications, John DeLuca - Water/Sewer, Annie Connor - Legislative Liaison, Charles Sillari - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman White and adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Approval of the January 16, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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204497: Requesting an appropriation and authorization to borrow \$2,000,000 in a bond to repair and improve the Buena Vista Garage.

Mr. Grossfield discussed the re-negotiation of the 100-year lease signed in 1987 and advised the Committee that under the law, the Board of Aldermen did not vote on the setting of the lease for the garage under the parking deck. Mr. Grossfield also advised the Board that in the event the Board failed to approve the request, the City would be in breach of its contract and would be liable for damages to the garage caused by any leaks. In addition, if the parking deck was not repaired cars would be unable to park and the City would lose revenue.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [4 TO 1]
AYES:	White Jr., Ewen-Campen, McLaughlin, Ballantyne
NAYS:	Rossetti

205012: Requesting approval to appropriate \$71,383.60 from the USQ Revitalization Stabilization Fund for legal services.

Mr. Inacio told the committee that the funds will be used for eminent domain defense services.

Prior to beginning the discussion of the following transfer of funds items 20515, 205016, 2015017, 205019, 205020, 205021, 205022,205023,205024, 205025, 205026, 205027, 205028, 205029, 205030, 205031, 205032, 205033 and 205044, Mr. Bean informed the Committee that the amounts of the transfers had to be resubmitted because they included the amount of benefits to be paid to the employees and the benefit funds would actually come from the existing budget and did not require any transfer. Chairman White said that the Committee would discuss the positions and await the new transfer amounts.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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204518: Requesting a transfer of \$32,500 from the Salary Contingency Account to the Health & Human Services Personal Services Salaries Account to fund an Environmental Health Liaison.

Mr. Kress explained that the increase in construction would lead to an increased visibility of rats. This position will deal with businesses and residents on various issues, including noise pollution. Alderman McLaughlin feels this job could be combined with another position and Alderman Rossetti asked why the position isn't listed in the city's budget. Alderman Ewen-Campen asked if a full time staff person would solve the problem and Alderman Ballantyne asked how contamination issues would be delegated among departments.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205014: Requesting approval of a mid-year staffing request to fund construction oversight, management and associated issues.

This request covers items 205015, 205016, 205016, 205017, 205018, 205019, 205020. Alderman McLaughlin and Chairman White questioned why this wasn't being presented during the FY-19 budget meetings in 4 months and noted that the items were referenced in the mayor's recent inaugural speech. Ms. Cooper stated they are all non-union jobs and not appointments that need to be approved by the BOA. Alderman Ballantyne asked that the department heads for these positions explain why these positions were not discussed 6 months ago. Alderman McLaughlin asked why there is a rush to fill these positions and Alderman Rossetti expressed concern about the costs of adding to the payroll and questioned how the additional cost would be offset. There are 18 full time positions being requested and the committee would like to know how many employees the city currently has. Alderman Ballantyne asked for clarification as to how these new positions will impact the upcoming budget. Mr. Bean went over the free cash balance and what the appropriation for this item would be. The committee discussed recent fee increases,

income from various fees and methods of coming up with proposed salaries and asked Mr. Bean if fees could be increased to pay for the additional positions.

Mr. King and Mr. Raiche spoke on this item and told the committee that there is much more capital improvement happening in the city that is causing the need for more manpower. Project managers focus on the scope, schedule and budget of projects and bring in city staff at the right times to keep projects moving. Members were told that the positions need to be filled as soon as possible. Various job descriptions were distributed and discussed along with construction work schedules, the association between down time and labor costs, working hour time restrictions and contract oversight. Members were told that the construction liaison would be engaging with the community before construction starts and, along with the project manager, will be able to deal with 'pain points' and keep problems to a minimum. Chairman White suggested combining the two positions into one, as he feels there is not enough work in each for a 40 hour work week. Alderman Rossetti questioned the need for so many project managers.

Mr. Raiche said the city is going into this project intentionally lean and not overstaffed and he explained how the individuals in the 4 new engineering positions would be ramped up to be productive. He also spoke about the workings of a construction crew saying that there are about 10 people in each crew at a cost of \$1,000/hour for each crew. Mr. Raiche said there is money to be saved by controlling things and that adding these positions would yield a return on investment of 8,000%.

Alderman Niedergang asked to speak on the item and told the committee that he worked on the Cedar Street project over the summer and Mr. Raiche worked hard dealing with constituents.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205029: Requesting the approval of funding to establish an Office of Housing Stability in SPCD.

The Committee did not have an opportunity to address this item and related positions because of the length of discussion on the other matters addressed by the Committee.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205015: Requesting the appropriation of \$20,750 from Unreserved Fund Balance ('Free Cash') to the Engineering Division Salaries Account to fund a Construction Liaison and Compliance Manager.

See discussion of #205014.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205016: Requesting the appropriation of \$24,500 from Unreserved Fund Balance ('Free Cash') to the Engineering Division Salaries Account to fund a Construction Project Manager.

See discussion of #205014.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

205017: Requesting the appropriation of \$20,750 from Unreserved Fund Balance ('Free Cash') to the Communications Department Salaries Account to fund a Construction Information Officer.

See discussion of #205014. Alderman Rossetti recused herself from all discussion and action on this item.

Ms. Taylor discussed the role of this proposed position and the types of projects to be worked on and said that the Communications Department staff is getting over burdened and may not be able to meet the demand for communication and engagement. Ms. Taylor also pointed out that there could be a position entirely dedicated to the GLX. Mr. King said he is beginning to identify how the GLX project will impact other city projects and how things will need to be communicated.

Alderman Ewen-Campen spoke in favor of this item. Alderman McLaughlin is concerned about overlapping responsibilities and envisions some positions being consolidated, specifically mentioning the GLX project which he believes wouldn't be full time. Chairman White would like to see an early document showing a construction time-line so people will know what to expect and when to expect it.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

205018: Requesting the appropriation of \$10,000 from Unreserved Fund Balance ('Free Cash') to the Communications Department Professional and Technical Services Account to fund construction translation services.

See discussion of #205014. Alderman Rossetti recused herself from all discussion and action on this item.

Ms. Taylor explained that the funds would be used for the SomerViva team's translation needs as it is overburdened serving immigrants with very pressing issues. Alderman McLaughlin commented that \$10,000 may not be enough.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

205020: Requesting the appropriation of \$25,750 from Unreserved Fund Balance to the Capital Projects Department Salaries Account to fund a Project Manager.

See discussion of #205014.

Mr. King went over the projects that this position would work on, pointing out that there are several projects coming up and he discussed why the city needs these positions. Alderman Rossetti expressed concern about the increased funding and high salaries for the positions and would like to see more information before she votes on the item. Ms. Cooper said the salaries relate to experience, education, level of authority and accountability. Chairman White said that he needs justification as to why this job is needed mid-fiscal year.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205019: Requesting the appropriation of \$23,250 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to SPCD's Transportation & Infrastructure Division Salaries Account to fund a GLX Project Liaison.

See discussion of #205014.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205021: Requesting the appropriation of \$23,250 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to SPCD's Transportation & Infrastructure Division Salaries Account to fund a Streetscape and Public Space Planner.

The Committee did not have time to discuss this item.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205022: Requesting the appropriation of \$25,750 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the Engineering Department Salaries Account to fund a Project Manager.

See discussion of #205014.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205023: Requesting the appropriation of \$24,500 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the Engineering Department Salaries Account to fund a Junior Project Manager.

See discussion of #205014.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205024: Requesting the appropriation of \$25,750 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to SPCD's Transportation & Infrastructure Division Salaries Account to fund a Senior Urban Forestry & Landscape Planner.

The Committee did not have time to discuss this item.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205025: Requesting the appropriation of \$25,250 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to SPCD's Transportation & Infrastructure Division Salaries Account to fund a Transportation Planner.

The Committee did not have time to discuss this item.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205026: Requesting the appropriation of \$25,750 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free

Cash") to the Inspectional Services Department Salaries Account to fund a Senior Zoning Review Planner.

Mr. Proakis explained how the position encompasses ISD and the Planning Department utilizing a conservative approach in reviewing building permit applications and conditions in relation to the City's zoning ordinance.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

205027: Requesting the appropriation of \$27,000 from Water Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings to the Water Enterprise Fund Salaries Account to fund a Director of Finance & Administration.

Mr. Deluca said he needs the support as the department is handling \$36 million annually. The position will be paid for from retained earnings. Mr. Bean stated that this position is appropriate given the magnitude of the Funds and that this position had been included in the rate projection study that had been submitted to the Board last year.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

205028: Requesting the appropriation of \$32,000 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the Capital Projects Department Salaries Account to fund a Capital Projects Assistant Director.

See discussion of #205014.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

205030: Requesting the appropriation of \$29,500 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the SPCD Office of Housing Stability Salaries Account to fund a Director of Housing Stability.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

205031: Requesting the appropriation of \$24,500 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the SPCD Office of Housing Stability Salaries Account to fund a Deputy Director of Housing Stability/Program Development.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

205032: Requesting the appropriation of \$19,500 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the SPCD Office of Housing Stability Salaries Account to fund a Housing Counselor/Case Manager.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

205033: Requesting the appropriation of \$19,500 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the SPCD Office of Housing Stability Salaries Account to fund a Housing

Counselor/Case Manager.

See discussion of item #205029

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205034: Requesting the appropriation of \$17,000 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the SPCD Office of Housing Stability Salaries Account to fund a Housing Intake Specialist.

See discussion of item #205029

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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Handouts:

- Organizational Data (with 205014)
- Job Descriptions (with 205014)