



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

January 22, 2019  
REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
William A. White Jr.	Chair	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	Vice Chair	Absent	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One Alderman	Present	
Ben Ewen-Campen	Ward Three Alderman	Absent	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Ward Two Alderman	Present	
Jesse Clingan	Ward Four Alderman	Absent	
Mark Niedergang	Ward Five Alderman	Present	
Lance L. Davis	Ward Six Alderman	Absent	
Stephanie Hirsch	Alderman At Large	Absent	
Wilfred N. Mbah	Alderman at Large	Present	

Others present: Machael Fager - CPA, Kristen Stelljes - CPA, Alison Mitchell - Library, Cathy Piantigini - Library, Michael Richards - Purchasing, Nicole Vieli - SHS, Jill Lathan - Recreation, Chief Charlie Breen - SFD, Chief of Operations Chris Major - SFD, Alan Inacio - OSPCD, George Proakis - OSPCD, Tom Galligani - OSPCD, Ed Bean - Finance, Rich Raiche - Capital Projects, Eileen McGettigan - Law, John DeLuca - Water & Sewer, Chief David Fallon - SPD, Annie Connor - Legislative Liaison, Rose Durham - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chairman White and adjourned at 8:45 PM.

**Approval of the December 11, 2018 Minutes**

**RESULT: ACCEPTED**

**206003: Requesting approval of an Order of Taking for 90 Washington Street.**

**RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**206004: Requesting an appropriation and authorization to borrow \$8,745,000 in a bond to purchase land by eminent domain.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**206005: Requesting an appropriation and authorization to borrow \$1,860,000 in a bond for new Public Safety Building design, architectural, engineering, and owner's and contractual project management services.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**206286: Director of Capital Projects and Planning submitting the Public Safety Feasibility Study/Programming and Site Evaluation Report (related to #s 206003, #206004, and #206005).**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**206735: Attorney Robert McLaughlin, Sr., submitting a court decision relevant to #206003, an Order of Taking for 90 Washington St.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**207077: That the Administration provide an updated cost for the proposed public safety building at 90 Washington Street, including fire equipment.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**207078: That the Administration detail how the parcel at 90 Washington Street will be used, and whether underground parking is possible.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**207079: That the Administration provide a realistic estimate of the value of the property at 90 Washington Street.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**207093: Requesting approval to appropriate \$33,102 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for the purchase of gym equipment.**

Nicole Viele and Jill Lathan had previously appeared before the committee to respond to Alderman Scott's questions about the layout and equipment. Ms. Viele stated that there was temporary space in the high school Atrium that is used for weight lifting but will not be available during construction activities and that they have been moving the equipment back and forth to the Veteran rink. Alderman Ballantyne suggested using the YMCA at \$75 per person to provide weight lifting access for approximately 400 students. After further discussion it did not appear that the YMCA choice would be viable because the current membership of the Y utilizes the facilities and there would not be available space to add 400 students. Alderman Scott raised safety concerns about the space housing so much equipment. Ms. Viele stated that she had done

an enormous amount of research on the equipment and solutions for the students. .Chair White asked if this proposed use was temporary or whether it would continue to be used after the new high school was complete with its own weight equipment. The answer was that it would. It became clear to the committee that this equipment being located in the Rink really wouldn't benefit all high school students but was designed to provide space for some of Somerville High School's sporting teams. Because of the small amount of the appropriation and the fact that it would benefit the training of high school athletes, it was approved.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
----------------	-----------------

**207118: Attorney Michael Corcoran submitting comments re: #206003, a proposed Order of Taking of 90 Washington St.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**207199: Requesting approval to pay a prior year invoice totaling \$3,692.26 using available funds in the Planning Division Ordinary Maintenance Account for prior year neighborhood planning invoice.**

Alan Inacio stated a late invoice was submitted by the vendor.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
----------------	-----------------

**207200: Requesting acceptance of a \$224,099 grant with no new match required, from the State 911 Office to the Police Department to fund E911 personnel costs.**

Chief Fallon stated this request was discussed in the last budget hearing to fund E911 personnel costs.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
----------------	-----------------

**207201: Requesting acceptance of a \$49,091 grant that requires a match, from the Department of Homeland Security to the Fire Department for portable radios.**

Chief Breen stated this grant requires a match of \$11,500 and the funds will be used to purchase 18 portable radios.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
----------------	-----------------

**207202: Requesting acceptance of a grant of up to \$8,734, with no new match required, from National Grid to the Housing Residential Energy Efficiency programs.**

Alan Inacio stated the funds would be used for Mass State efficiency program. No new match required. Because Ald. McLaughlin recused himself, a quorum was not present to vote on the item.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**207204: Requesting acceptance of a \$1,332 grant with no new match required, from the Urban Directors Sustainability Network to the Housing Division Residential Energy Efficiency programs for a Peer Learning Exchange Program.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
----------------	-----------------

**207251: Requesting approval to create the Jobs Creation Trust Fund**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**207252: Requesting the appropriation and authorization of total project costs for the renovation of Prospect Hill Park, the rededication of the Park to park purposes in perpetuity, and the authorization to seek funding from the PARC Grant Program.**

Alan Inacio stated that this formal approval by the Board was required by the State in order for the City to qualify for this second PARC grant.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
----------------	-----------------

**207285: Requesting the appropriation of \$542,675 from the CPA Fund Open Space/Recreational Land and Budgeted Reserve Accounts to the City for the ArtFarm project.**

CPA President Michael Fager stated the funds would be used for garden space, open lawn type space and open park planning. Kristen Stelljes distributed documentation for CPA non-bonded FY19 funding reserve allocations by projects. Alderman Ballantyne would like to see plans for the next couple of years. In addition to this appropriation for the Art Farm, the CPA also intends to utilize \$1,000,000 from a bond. The CPA is awaiting for language from the bond counsel and will come back to the BOA at a later date for the Bond approval. Because there were these two funding sources for the project, the Committee wanted to address them both at the same time, so the item was kept in committee until the submission of the bond.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**207286: Requesting the appropriation of \$500,000 from the CPA Fund Historic Resources and Budgeted Reserve Accounts to the Somerville Hispanic Association for Community Development to restore of the Grace Baptist Church.**

CPA President Michael Fager funds would be used for a church on Cross Street that is no longer a church and used as office site, daycare and is a historic building

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
----------------	-----------------

**207287: Requesting the appropriation of \$113,120 from the CPA Fund Historic Resources Reserve Account to the Mission Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ for the rehabilitation of their roof.**

CPA President Michael Fager talked about the historic building and maintaining the historic status for a very large roof.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
----------------	-----------------

**207288: Requesting the appropriation of \$100,000 from the CPA Fund Historic Resources Reserve Account to the Somerville Museum for collection preservation.**

Alderman White recused himself and this item was kept in committee due to not having a quorum.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**207289: Requesting the appropriation of \$65,000 from the CPA Fund Open Space/Recreational Land Reserve Account to the City for the rehabilitation of the Kennedy School front schoolyard.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
----------------	-----------------

**207290: Requesting the appropriation of \$28,000 from the CPA Fund Historic Resources Reserve Account to the Elizabeth Peabody House Association for a building condition assessment.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
----------------	-----------------

**207291: Requesting the appropriation of \$6,055 from the CPA Fund Historic Resources Reserve Account to the Public Library for restoration of its WPA wood bas-relief.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
----------------	-----------------

**207292: Requesting the appropriation of \$3,888 from the CPA Fund Open Space/Recreational Land Reserve Account to the Friends of the Community Growing Center for the replacement of an electrical cabinet.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
----------------	-----------------

**207294: Requesting acceptance of a \$200,000 grant with no new match required, from the MA Department of Housing and Community Development to SPCD for the Gilman Square Housing Choice Grant .**

Alan Inacio stated there was one minor update and that the City would have to match \$30,000, which would not require additional funds but would come from CDBG or planning professional service line.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
----------------	-----------------

**207296: Requesting acceptance of a \$73, 658 grant with no new match required, from the**

**MA Office of Public Safety and Security to the Fire Department for fire staffing costs.**

Chief Breen will use funds for overtime costs.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**207297: Requesting acceptance of a \$20,460 grant with no new match required, from the MA Emergency Management Agency to the Fire Department for the establishment of a bicycle team.**

Chief Breen will use funds to purchase several mountain bikes and helmets to carry medical equipment used for special events such as: road races and getting through crowd.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**207337: Requesting an appropriation and authorization to borrow \$1,600,000 for the renovation and construction of the West Branch Library.**

Rich Raiche presented to the BOA the reasons why the bid that the City wishes to accept for the project was 15% higher than anticipated causing the need for additional funds. Because of the construction boom in Boston, there is less competition. There were 41 general contractors who pulled the plans with only 3 bids received and 2 of the 3 were disqualified/non-responsive from DCAM qualifications. Contractors are being more selective and not conservative in terms of pricing. 156 subs pulled plans with 13 trades filed sub-bids. There 56 only sub-bids received and some of them were retracted, restricted or disqualified. Mr. Raiche also talked about the increasing costs of materials such as: lumber, aluminum, and sheet metal. There are two options to either rebid or award the bid as is. All bidders have already seen everyone's numbers and have gone through a lengthy review process so if the project were rebid, it is likely that the price would even be higher. The bidder has done work with Somerville past on Capen Court for senior housing. The total project cost is \$12,899,000. Chair White questioned Mr. Raiche about the change order process and who approves the change orders. Alderman Ballantyne reminded the administration that she has stated that she wishes to see the debt summary report each time there is a request for approval of a bond. Because that summary was not provided to the Committee, Alderman Ballantyne asked that the vote be delayed until that summary was provided, to which the committee agreed. Mr. Bean stated that he would provide this information to the entire BOA. The administration has until February 28<sup>th</sup> to sign a contract. Members from the library trustees were also in attendance at the meeting and were in favor of the request.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**207338: Requesting an appropriation and authorization to borrow \$425,670 in a bond and expend the same amount for a Sewer Cleaner Vehicle (Vactor) and accessories.**

John DeLuca attended the meeting. Again Alderman Ballantyne requested to see the city's debt summary report showing the impact of this request before voting, to which the committee agreed. Mr. DeLuca stated that he will use the state approved bid list to purchase the item,

which was on the list of equipment that needed to be replaced that had been provided to the Board during the budget process.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**207339: Requesting acceptance of a \$49,597 grant with no new match required, from the State E911 Office to the Police Department for 911 training and emergency medical dispatch services.**

Chief Fallon stated this request was discussed in the last budget hearing to fund 911 training and emergency medical dispatch services.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**207343: Director of SPCD conveying the draft Memorandum of Agreement with the Redevelopment Authority for 90 Washington Street.**

Mr. George McLaughlin, who represents two of the owners of 90 Washington, Cobble Hill Associates LLC., stated the owners are frustrated with the litigation that prevented the development of the site. Essentially there was an internal partnership dispute which the Court decided. . The Court found that there was a split of 60%, 20% and 20% between the three partners and that one of the partners, Mr. Mullens had acted in bad faith The Court found that two-thirds of the owners have the right to sell the property and that Mr. McLaughlin's clients together hold 80% so that they can now move forward to develop the site. He stated that they could hire a top notch firm and have an agreement in place with a developer within 4 months. Additionally Mr. McLaughlin stated the preliminary appraisal of property is \$26M not the \$8,745,000 That the City has requested from the Board of Aldermen to bond to go forward with the eminent domain taking of the property.

Ms. McGettigan and Mr. Galligani appeared before the committee to discuss a proposed process to deal with the site. Essentially, the BOA and Somerville Redevelopment Authority would agree to a Memorandum of Understanding. The Somerville Redevelopment Authority would then acquire the site by eminent domain. It would not be taken as an urban renewal project, but, instead as a "Demonstration Project." A Demonstration Project allows a redevelopment authority to take property to eliminate blight that is located outside of an existing urban renewal area. The Demonstration Project approach would allow the City to build a public safety building and also use a portion of the site for a transformative mixed-use development. The current appraisal will expire in March 2019, so the administration would like a vote by the Board of Aldermen prior to that date. A few of the aldermen stated that although they are not fans of eminent domain in general, this appeared to be a viable option to address the problems at the site. The proposed Memorandum of Agreement would specify the respective roles that the BOA and SRA would play in this project if it goes forward as a demonstration project. Ms. McGettigan stated that because the president of the BOA can designate an alderman to serve on the SRA, that alderman could participate in the SRA handling of the demonstration project.

The Chair, Alderman White stated that he wanted to insure that the BOA participate in this process, even with one member serving on the SRA, and that there would be a public process with appropriate public hearings. Ald. McLaughlin stated that he definitely wanted to participate and provide input since he is the ward alderman. Ms. McGettigan stated that the draft

memorandum of agreement provided that there would be joint public hearings between the SRA and BOA on any public hearings that are held. Chair White asked that all members take home the documents received tonight and be ready to discuss them at the next finance committee meeting.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**207344: Director of SPCD conveying the draft Demonstration Project Plan for 90 Washington Street.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**207346: Director of Parks and Recreation and Director of High School Athletics responding to #207093, requesting the appropriation of \$33,102 for High School gym/weight equipment.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>PLACED ON FILE</b>
----------------	-----------------------

**Handouts:**

- CPA Appropriation Requests (with 207285 through 207292)
- West Branch Additional Funding Request (with 207337)
- Demonstration Project Plan (with 207344)