



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 8, 2022

7:00 PM

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Ward One City Councilor Matthew McLaughlin.

1. OPENING CEREMONIES

- 1.1. Roll Call Call of the Roll.
(ID # [22-1523](#))

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 1.2. Remembrances Remembrances.
(ID # [22-1524](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

- 1.3. Minutes Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting, July 14, 2022.
(ID # [22-1525](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

2. CITATIONS

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 3.1. Grant of Location Eversource applying for a Grant of Location to install 10 feet of conduit in
(ID # [22-1479](#)) Columbia St, from Utility Pole 76/3-1X to a point of pickup at 481
Columbia St.

Phyllis Galloway, representing Eversource, explained the reason for the request. There being no further comment, the public hearing was closed.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 3.2. Grant of Location Eversource applying for a Grant of Location to install 42 feet of conduit in
(ID # [22-1480](#)) the intersection of Prospect St and Concord Ave, from Manhole 4121 to
Utility Pole 78/1.

Phyllis Galloway, representing Eversource, explained the reason for the request. There being no further comment, the public hearing was closed.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 3.3. Grant of Location Eversource applying for a Grant of Location to install 45 feet of conduit in
(ID # [22-1481](#)) the intersection of Glen St and Tufts St, from Utility Pole 340/4A to a point
of pickup at the rear of 31 Tufts St.

Phyllis Galloway, representing Eversource, explained the reason for the request. There being no further comment, the public hearing was closed.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 3.4. Grant of Location (ID # [22-1482](#)) Eversource applying for a Grant of Location to install a total of 311 feet of conduit in Webster Ave as follows: Starting from Utility Pole 362/4 to a new Manhole 31615, then continuing to Manhole 4118 located at the intersection of Webster Ave and Columbia St. Installation will also include conduit that will connect Utility Pole 362/5A to Manhole 13078 located at the intersection of Webster Ave and Tremont St.
- Phyllis Galloway, representing Eversource, explained the reason for the request. There being no further comment, the public hearing was closed. Councilor Scott inquired about any special scheduling and coordination with the city to address traffic concerns.
- RESULT: APPROVED**
- 4. ORDERS, ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS OF MEMBERS**
- 4.1. Order (ID # [22-1514](#)) By Charlotte Kelly and Jake Wilson
That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of Parks and Recreation discuss extending the season for pools and splash pads during the Summer of 2023.
- RESULT: APPROVED**
- 4.2. Order (ID # [22-1515](#)) By Charlotte Kelly
That the Director of Inspectional Services and the Environmental Health Coordinator update this Council on the SMART box program and other recent rodent control measures.
- RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION**
FOLLOWUP: Rodent Issues Special Committee
- 4.3. Order (ID # [22-1516](#)) By Charlotte Kelly
That the Director of the Office of Housing Stability discuss the response to the ending of the eviction moratorium, and any current unmet needs of residents who are experiencing housing instability.
- Councilor Ewen-Campen mentioned that an exhibit opened today at the Armory and he urged people to view it.
- RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION**
FOLLOWUP: Housing and Community Development Committee
- 4.4. Order (ID # [22-1517](#)) By Charlotte Kelly and Willie Burnley Jr. and Jake Wilson
That the Director of Finance and the Budget Director update this Council on the progress of the free cash certification and any anticipated plans for additional free cash use.
- Councilor Burnley commented that the public is eager to know how ARPA funds are being used.
- RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION**
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

- 4.5. Order (ID # [22-1521](#)) By Kristen Strezo and Ben Ewen-Campen
That the Director of Inspectional Services increase measures to control the rat population from Vinal Avenue to Walnut Street and from Highland Avenue to Summer Street.
RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Rodent Issues Special Committee
- 4.6. Resolution (ID # [22-1522](#)) By Kristen Strezo and Willie Burnley Jr. and Jesse Clingan and Lance Davis and Ben Ewen-Campen and Beatriz Gomez Mouakad and Charlotte Kelly and Matthew McLaughlin and Judy Pineda Neufeld and Jefferson Thomas (J.T.) Scott and Jake Wilson
In support of the City of Somerville 311 employees' decision to unionize.
Councilor Strezo read the Resolution into the record and said that she is very excited about it. She is unaware if the contracted employees would be part of this effort.
RESULT: APPROVED
5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
6. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES
- 6.A. FINANCE COMMITTEE
- 6.A.1. Committee Report (ID # [22-1519](#)) Report of the Committee on Finance, meeting on September 6, 2022.
Councilor Wilson spoke briefly about the 10 items that were recommended for approval and noted that 2 items were kept in committee.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 6.A.2. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-0432](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$357,881.73 using available funds in the Department Public Works Administrative, Highway, and Sanitation Accounts for the purposes of resolving outstanding invoices.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 6.A.3. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-0477](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a National Park Service Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant of \$750,000, with no new match required, from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA), Division of Conservation Services (DCS) to the Public Space and Urban Forestry Division for the renovation of Conway Park.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 6.A.4. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1420](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$24,500 grant with no new match required, from State E911 to the Police Department for E911 emergency medical dispatch services.
RESULT: APPROVED

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- 6.A.5. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1421](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$295,463 grant with no new match required, from State E911 to the Police Department for E911 Telecommunicator personnel costs.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 6.A.6. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1422](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$104,951.96 grant with no new match required, from State E911 to the Police Department for E911 Training and Certification of 911 Telecommunicators.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 6.A.7. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1433](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$207.69 using available funds in the Fire Department and Vehicle Repairs Account for the purchase of automotive parts.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 6.A.8. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1434](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$60.06 using available funds in the Fire Department and Vehicle Repairs Account for supplies for the repair shop.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 6.A.9. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1437](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$371.24 using available funds in the Health and Human Service Professional and Technical Account for Service Labor Cost for Mobile Market Van.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 6.A.10. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1438](#)) Requesting approval to pay a prior year invoice totaling \$29,820 using available funds in the Law Department Outside Legal Counsel Services Account for Legal Services.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 6.A.11. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1441](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$108,226.71 grant from Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to the Health & Human Services for the Public Health Shared Services Grant.
RESULT: APPROVED

6.B. LAND USE COMMITTEE6.B.1. Committee Report Report of the Committee on Land Use, meeting on September 1, 2022.
(ID # [22-1518](#))

Councilor Ewen-Campen briefly spoke about 4 zoning amendments that were recommended for approval. Councilor Burnley inquired about backyard cottages and Councilor Wilson explained that this was an effort to reduce red tape and increase housing in the city. Councilor Burnley asked if there isn't another space beyond the public realm and how often they're rejected. Councilor Wilson said it's not that're being rejected and there are very few. Councilor Ewen-Campen explained that the zoning code was changed to allow backyard cottages to be built as residential units. Councilor Wilson commented that if a backyard cottage is a third unit in an NR district, it would have to be affordable.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.B.2. Mayor's Request
(ID # [22-0654](#))

Requesting a text amendment to the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to repeal all references to a Certificate of Zoning Compliance and replace with a requirement for the Building Official to conduct a zoning compliance review and maintain a public record of such reviews for all development.

RESULT: ORDINANCE ORDAINED

AYE: City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., City Councilor At Large Kelly, City Councilor At Large Strezo, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, Ward Five City Councilor Gomez Mouakad, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld

6.B.3. Ordinance
(ID # [22-0825](#))

By Jake Wilson

Proposing an amendment to the Zoning Ordinances, Section 3.1.6.d, Residence District, to permit the Backyard Cottage accessory building type by right.

RESULT: ORDINANCE ORDAINED

AYE: City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., City Councilor At Large Kelly, City Councilor At Large Strezo, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, Ward Five City Councilor Gomez Mouakad, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld

- 6.B.4. Public Communication (ID # [22-0929](#)) Three owners requesting the adoption of an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Map to change the zoning district of 129R Highland Ave from UR to NR.
- RESULT:** **ORDINANCE ORDAINED**
- AYE:** City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., City Councilor At Large Kelly, City Councilor At Large Strezo, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, Ward Five City Councilor Gomez Mouakad, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld
- 6.B.5. Public Communication (ID # [22-1031](#)) Vivaldo Meneses Sr. requesting the adoption of an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Map to change the zoning district of 82-84 Prospect Street from MR5 to UR.
- RESULT:** **ORDINANCE ORDAINED**
- AYE:** City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., City Councilor At Large Kelly, City Councilor At Large Strezo, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, Ward Five City Councilor Gomez Mouakad, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld
- 6.B.6. Public Communication (ID # [22-1110](#)) Thomas J. Cooke requesting the adoption of an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Map to change the zoning district of 14 White Street Place from NR to MR4.
- RESULT:** **WITHDRAWN**
7. **COMMUNICATIONS OF THE MAYOR**
- 7.1. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1494](#)) Requesting the acceptance of Section 84 of Chapter 179 of the Acts of 2022 for local approval of the provisions of the Clean Energy and Offshore Wind Act.
- RESULT:** **REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
- FOLLOWUP:** Legislative Matters Committee
- 7.2. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1512](#)) Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Lamia Mamoon to the Library Board of Trustees.
- RESULT:** **REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
- FOLLOWUP:** Confirmation of Appointments and Personnel Matters Committee

- 7.3. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1513](#)) Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Janaki Perera to the Library Board of Trustees.
- Councilor Pineda Neufeld moved to waive the reading and refer the item to the Committee on Confirmation of Appointments and Personnel Matters.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Confirmation of Appointments and Personnel Matters Committee
- 7.4. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1510](#)) Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Mark Sternman to the Library Board of Trustees.
- Councilor Pineda Neufeld moved to waive the reading and refer the item to the Committee on Confirmation of Appointments and Personnel Matters.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Confirmation of Appointments and Personnel Matters Committee
- 7.5. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1505](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$147.50 using available funds in the City Clerk Office Supplies Account for Archives storage boxes.
- RESULT: APPROVED**
- 8. COMMUNICATIONS OF CITY OFFICERS**
- 8.1. Officer's Communication (ID # [22-1520](#)) Charter Review Committee conveying its recommendations and proposed Charter text.
- President McLaughlin permitted members of the Charter Review Committee to speak on this item. A brief overview was presented to the Council. The committee was created in October, 2021 to review the charter and make recommendations to improve and modernize the city's structure and governance. Four key values were sought, JUST, EMPOWERING, RESPONSIVE and INNOVATIVE. All topics of the charter were reviewed. The goal of the committee was to contact as many residents as possible for community engagement. The highlights of the recommendations was presented, including an improved appointment process, a 4-year term for the Mayor, adding a Chief Administrative Officer, implementing a study of ranked choice voting, and implementing a study of public financing of campaigns. Several councilors thanked those who served on this committee and Councilor Burnley asked what the next steps might be. The response was that the Council would have to draft legislation for approval by the state legislature as the first next step. The Council could also opt to place the matter on the ballot. President McLaughlin stated that he will convene a Committee of the Whole to discuss this matter in depth before the end of this year.
RESULT: PLACED ON FILE AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Special Committee on Charter Review

9. NEW BUSINESS

- 9.1. Public Communication (ID # [22-1491](#)) 77 registered voters requesting a Public Hearing on adopting a Green New Deal.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Open Space, Environment and Energy Committee

- 9.2. License (ID # [22-1504](#)) New Sign/Awning License, Athleta, 501 Assembly Row, 2 blade and 2 illuminated channel signs.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.3. Public Event (ID # [22-1483](#)) Rob Maher applying for a Public Event License for Spring Hill BP on September 10 from 10am to 11pm (raindate September 17).

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.4. Public Event (ID # [22-1495](#)) Gilman Sq Neighborhood Association applying for a Public Event License for Gilman Sq Arts and Music Festival on September 10 from 11am to 7pm.

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.5. Public Event (ID # [22-1484](#)) Macy Coffey applying for a Public Event License for Lowden BP on September 10 from 12pm to 9pm (raindate September 11).

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.6. Public Event (ID # [22-1507](#)) Brandon Wilson applying for a Public Event License for Josephine Ave Neighborhood BP on September 10 from 3pm to 9pm (raindate September 25).

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.7. Public Event (ID # [22-1485](#)) Emily Hardt applying for a Public Event License for Teele Square Neighborhood BP on September 11 from 2pm to 8pm (raindate September 24).

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.8. Public Event (ID # [22-1486](#)) Helen Corrigan applying for a Public Event License for Irving St BP on September 17 from 10am to 8pm (raindate September 18).

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.9. Public Event
(ID # [22-1498](#)) Tristan Cunha applying for a Public Event License for Holyoke Rd BP on September 17 from 11am to 7pm (raindate September 18).
Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.10. Public Event
(ID # [22-1487](#)) Janet McNamara applying for a Public Event License for Grove St BP on September 17 from 2pm to 8pm (raindate September 18).
Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.11. Public Event
(ID # [22-1500](#)) Nelson Salazar applying for a Public Event License for Virginia St BP on September 18 from 2pm to 8pm (raindate September 25).
Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.12. Public Event
(ID # [22-1488](#)) Nels Nelson applying for a Public Event License for Prospect Hill BP on September 18 from 3pm to 8pm (raindate October 2).
Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.13. Public Event
(ID # [22-1499](#)) Anton Tutter applying for a Public Event License for Outside on Oxford on September 24 from 1pm to 10pm.
Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.14. Public Event
(ID # [22-1497](#)) Pearl Emmons applying for a Public Event License for Glenwood Rd BP on October 15 from 12:30pm to 9:30pm (raindate October 16).
Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 10. SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS**
- 10.1. Order
(ID # [22-1527](#)) By Beatriz Gomez Mouakad and Kristen Strezo
That the Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management provide an update on the status of the School Building Feasibility Study.
Councilor Gomez Mouakad commented that the chiller at the Kennedy and Winter Hill Schools have failed recently. She read a document from the City of Chelsea regarding school building maintenance and said that Somerville is on the threshold of having schools closed because of problems.
RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: School Building Facilities and Maintenance Special Committee

- 10.2. Order
(ID # [22-1528](#))
- By Beatriz Gomez Mouakad and Kristen Strezo
That the Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management provide an update on the status of the School Building Systems Feasibility Study.
- Councilor Gomez Mouakad commented that the chiller at the Kennedy and Winter Hill Schools have failed recently. She read a document from the City of Chelsea regarding school building maintenance and said that Somerville is on the threshold of having schools closed because of problems.
- RESULT:** APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: School Building Facilities and Maintenance Special Committee
- 10.3. Order
(ID # [22-1529](#))
- By Kristen Strezo
That the Director of Health and Human Services take steps to install emergency contraception dispensers in designated city bathrooms.
- RESULT:** APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Public Health and Public Safety Committee
- 10.4. Communication
(ID # [22-1530](#))
- By Matthew McLaughlin
In his capacity as President, conveying the creation of a Special Committee on Charter Review.
- The committee will be comprised of 3 City Councilors and will meet as a Committee of the Whole.
- RESULT:** PLACED ON FILE
- 10.5. Mayor's Request
(ID # [22-1509](#))
- Requesting acceptance of an additional \$500,000 grant with no new match required, from the MA Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development for Clarendon Hill Project infrastructure improvements.
- RESULT:** REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 10.6. Mayor's Request
(ID # [22-0486](#))
- Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$9,877 grant with no new match required, from The Home Depot Foundation to the Veterans' Services Department for the Team Depot Volunteer Project to build a veterans moving wall.
- Councilor Kelly moved for approval. Councilor Strezo asked Home Depot to create a discount card for veterans.
- RESULT:** APPROVED
- 10.7. Mayor's Request
(ID # [22-1502](#))
- Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$23,313.19 using available funds in various Parks & Recreation Department accounts for unpaid 2021 and 2022 invoices.
- Councilor Kelly moved for approval and said that most of the funds are for port-a-potties.
- RESULT:** APPROVED

- 10.8. Public Event
(ID # [22-1532](#)) Veterans' Services Department applying for a Public Event License for 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony on September 11 from 8:30am to 11:30am.
Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 10.9. Public Event
(ID # [22-1531](#)) John Long applying for a Public Event License for Chandler St BP on September 17 from 2:30pm to 7:30pm (raindate September 18).
Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 10.10. Public Event
(ID # [22-1533](#)) Somerville Homeless Coalition applying for a Public Event License for Somerville 5K Road Race on October 1 from 6am to 11:30am.
Councilor Burnley moved to waive the reading and approve the item.
RESULT: APPROVED

11. LATE ITEMS**12. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was Adjourned at 8:10 PM.