



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 10, 2026

6:00 PM

This meeting was held virtually via Zoom and was called to order at 6:09 pm by Chair Wheeler and adjourned at 7:11 pm with a roll call vote of 5 in favor (Councilors Link, Strezo, Hardt, Scott and Wheeler), none opposed, and none absent.

Others present: Delaney Fisher-Cassiol - Clerk of Committees

Roll Call

Present: City Councilor At Large Jon Link, City Councilor At Large Kristen Strezo, Ward Seven City Councilor Emily Hardt, Ward Two City Councilor Jefferson Thomas (J.T.) Scott and City Councilor At Large Ben Wheeler

1. Public Hearing

- 1.1. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0950](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$376,778,493 to fund the Fiscal Year 2027 General Fund Operating Budget.

Chair Wheeler opened the public hearing at 6:09 pm.

Twenty-four residents spoke on the proposed budget.

Eight residents commented on public safety and policing, with several questioning current police staffing levels. A few referenced a police department staffing study that found shifts could be reduced from seven officers to six without impacting operations. Multiple residents opposed proposed increases to police spending, including funding related to body-worn cameras, and expressed concerns regarding police accountability, civilian oversight and racial justice. A few community members emphasized maintaining police staffing and public safety resources.

Ten residents addressed schools and youth programs, particularly Teen Empowerment. Several residents expressed concern regarding current student academic outcomes. Multiple residents supported the School Committee's requested funding levels and opposed the exclusion of six special education specialist positions from the budget. Seven residents spoke in support of Teen Empowerment, urging continued or level funding and describing the program as an important source of mentorship, leadership development and community building.

Six community members focused on housing affordability and social services. Residents raised concerns regarding rising housing costs,

displacement prevention, rental assistance and support for immigrant communities. Several urged continued investment in social services and permanent housing solutions. One community member expressed appreciation for the proposed \$1 million Housing Stabilization Fund allocation.

Three residents raised broader budget and staffing concerns, with several expressing concern regarding recent City staff layoffs and departmental reorganization. They voiced support for preserving diversity, equity and inclusion and immigration services. One resident also suggested consideration of a Proposition 2½ override and expressed concern that the budget reduces the role of city government.

Three residents addressed additional community priorities. One resident supported composting initiatives and their potential role in rodent mitigation efforts. Another proposed restructuring the Somerville Arts Council as an independent nonprofit. A third requested comprehensive antisemitism training for City employees and expressed concerns regarding the City's response to antisemitism.

Chair Wheeler closed the public hearing at 7:09 pm.

RESULT: LAID ON THE TABLE

2. Unfinished Business

2.1 Resolution By Councilor Strezo 6/9/26

That the collective salaries of Licensing Commissioners be increased to \$15,180 with the Chair receiving \$5,180 and Licensing Commissioners 2 and 3 receiving \$5,000 each annually.