

City of Somerville, Massachusetts
Matters of Business of the Board of Aldermen

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

October 14, 2014, 7:00 PM
Aldermanic Chambers

NOTICE: This is NOT the official version of the Board of Aldermen's minutes. While reasonable efforts have been made to assure the accuracy of the data provided, do not rely on this information without first checking with the City Clerk.

OPENING OF THE MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM by Alderman At Large William A. White Jr.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
John M. Connolly	Alderman At Large	Absent	
Mary Jo Rossetti	Alderman At Large	Present	
Dennis M. Sullivan	Alderman At Large	Present	
William A. White Jr.	Alderman At Large	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One Alderman	Present	
Maryann M. Heuston	Ward Two Alderman	Present	
Robert J. McWatters	Ward Three Alderman	Present	
Tony Lafuente	Ward Four Alderman	Present	
Mark Niedergang	Ward Five Alderman	Present	
Rebekah L. Gewirtz	Ward Six Alderman	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	

1. Roll Call Call of the Roll.
197863
(ID:10322)

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE
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CITATIONS

PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. Public Hearing on #197732, the Mayor's Communication conveying the veto of #197438, the so-called "Pay to Play" Ordinance.

The President opened the public hearing and gave a brief description of the "Pay to Play" ordinance. Miriam Schwartz spoke about too much corporate influence on government. Nelson Salazar spoke about conflict of interest if any Aldermen run for Mayor in the future. Alex Pirie spoke about Somerville being an example and leading the way for other cities. Clara Serpa spoke about the need for full disclosure in the city. Rand Wilson spoke about his support of transparency and added how workers cannot compete with contributions from large developers. Kyann Anderson expressed concern about future development in Somerville. Ken Brociner doubted this ordinance would politicize the Planning Board. Gene McCarty spoke about the amount of politics that has been in Somerville over the years, saying he would like the Board to be on the residents' side. Bill Shelton spoke about how the Mayor was originally voted into office and his fundraising. In total, 17 persons spoke. All speakers were in favor of the override, stating

that even with imperfections this ordinance was an improvement over the status quo, and adding suggestions that would improve this ordinance once adopted. With no other public speakers, the President closed the public hearing.

ORDERS, ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS OF MEMBERS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

3. Mayor's Communication 197732 (ID:10286) Conveying the veto of #197438, the so-called "Pay to Play" Ordinance.

<p>Alderman Gewirtz spoke strongly about limiting developers' contributions and how this is a very needed policy change. Alderman Heuston stated this ordinance does not undo the influence of developers and discussed its imperfections. Alderman Niedergang spoke about the foundation this ordinance would build and working with the Board and the Mayor on radical campaign finance reform. Alderman Rossetti expressed her concerns for the loopholes in this ordinance. Alderman Sullivan talked about the Aldermen having the residents' best interests in mind and hoping to be an example for other municipalities to follow. Alderman McLaughlin expressed support for the ordinance and his fear of the power developers have with their contributions. Alderman Ballantyne showed her support and stated that a reduction in contributions will help limit the influence developers have. Alderman McWatters spoke about development in the area and the need to have a limit, but said this ordinance needs additional work to be successful. Alderman Lafuente discussed his personal experience of being defeated by developers' influence, saying no contributions from developers would remove their influence altogether. Alderman White supported this ordinance, talking about its history and the detail and research that went into it.</p> <p>A motion was made to override the Mayor's veto. An override requires 8 votes. A Yes vote was a vote to override the veto. A No vote was a vote to sustain the veto. The motion failed with 7 votes in favor and 3 against.</p> <p>RESULT: NOT APPROVED. [7 TO 3]</p> <p>AYES: Sullivan, White Jr., McLaughlin, Lafuente, Niedergang, Gewirtz, Ballantyne</p> <p>NAYS: Rossetti, Heuston, McWatters</p> <p>ABSENT: Connolly</p>

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

COMMUNICATIONS OF THE MAYOR

COMMUNICATIONS OF CITY OFFICERS

NEW BUSINESS

SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS

LATE ITEMS

4. Public Rep. Provost submitting comments re: #197438, the so-called "Pay to Play"
Communication Ordinance.
197864
(ID:10426)

The communication was submitted as part of the Public Hearing.
RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was Adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Submitted by John J. Long, City Clerk.