



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 24, 2024

7:00 PM

NOTICE: This is NOT the official version of the City Council'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.

1. OPENING CEREMONIES

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM by Ward Seven City Councilor Judy Pineda Neufeld. The City Council entered recess at 7:12 PM and returned at 7:16 PM. The City Council entered Executive Session at 7:37 PM and returned at 9:11 PM.

- 1.1. Roll Call Call of the Roll.
(ID # [24-1521](#))

Councilor Wilson arrived at 7:03 PM.
Councilor Mbah arrived at 7:18 PM.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

Present: Ward One City Councilor Matthew McLaughlin
 Ward Six City Councilor Lance L. Davis
 City Councilor At Large Jake Wilson
 Ward Five City Councilor Naima Sait
 City Councilor At Large Wilfred N. Mbah
 City Councilor At Large Willie Burnley Jr.
 City Councilor At Large Kristen Strezo
 Ward Seven City Councilor Judy Pineda Neufeld

Absent: Ward Two City Councilor Jefferson Thomas (J.T.) Scott
 Ward Four City Councilor Jesse Clingan
 Ward Three City Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen

- 1.2. Remembrances Remembrances.
(ID # [24-1522](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

- 1.3. Minutes Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 26, 2024.
(ID # [24-1523](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

2. CITATIONS

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS

4. ORDERS, ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS OF MEMBERS

- 4.1. Order (ID # [24-1514](#)) By Councilor McLaughlin and Councilor Wilson
That the Director of Libraries and other relevant departments discuss strategies and lay out safety protocols in advance to ensure a safe environment for everyone during events that may draw protests.
RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Public Health and Public Safety Committee
- 4.2. Order (ID # [24-1515](#)) By Councilor McLaughlin
That the Director of Public Space and Urban Forestry consider the impact of park equipment that requires special parts that may take long periods to replace when creating future parks.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 4.3. Order (ID # [24-1516](#)) By Councilor McLaughlin
That the Director of Sustainability and Environment invest in rodent proof composting barrels in the upcoming composting pilot program.
RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Rodent Issues Special Committee
- 4.4. Order (ID # [24-1517](#)) By Councilor McLaughlin
That the Director of Engineering address rainwater runoff on Myrtle Street.
RESULT: APPROVED

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

6.A. FINANCE COMMITTEE

- 6.A.1. Committee Report (ID # [24-1508](#)) Report of the Committee on Finance, meeting on October 22, 2024.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.A.2. Order (ID # [24-1300](#)) By Councilor Wilson and Councilor Pineda Neufeld
That the Director of Grants Development and External Funds and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Director update this Council on ARPA grant encumbrances ahead of the obligation deadline of December 31, 2024.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

- 6.A.3. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1332](#)) Requesting approval to appropriate \$100,000 from the Encore Artist and Cultural Support Stabilization Fund to support Local Cultural Council grants to artists, organizations, and schools.

RESULT: APPROVED

AYE: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Mbah, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., City Councilor At Large Strezo, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld

ABSENT: Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, and Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen

- 6.A.4. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1333](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$220,120.80 from the Receipts Reserved-Transportation Network Company Revenue Fund to the Transportation Network Company Special Revenue Fund for Vision Zero Safety efforts.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.A.5. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1334](#)) Requesting approval to create the Prospect Street Traffic Conditions Stabilization Fund and accept a payment to the fund of \$262,000 from the Union Square RELP Master Developer LLC to satisfy special permit conditions.

RESULT: APPROVED

AYE: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Mbah, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., City Councilor At Large Strezo, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld

ABSENT: Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, and Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen

- 6.A.6. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1335](#)) Requesting approval to appropriate \$262,000 from the Prospect Street Traffic Conditions Stabilization Fund to implement the conditions of Planning Board case PB 2019-04.

RESULT: APPROVED

AYE: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Mbah, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., City Councilor At Large Strezo, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld

ABSENT: Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, and Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen

6.A.7. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1374](#)) Requesting the approval of a time-only contract extension for three years with a new expiration date of 9/1/2027, for the Somerville Hispanic Association for community development for restoration of 59 Cross Street.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.8. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1377](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$250,000 grant with no new match required, from MA Department of Transportation to the Mobility Division for an East Somerville soundwall feasibility study.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.9. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1378](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$160 using available funds in the Department of Public Works Administration License Reimbursement Account for commercial license employee expense.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.10. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1379](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$22,633.58 using available funds in the Department of Public Works Buildings Natural Gas Account for prior year balances on bills.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.11. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1380](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$4,675 using available funds in the Department of Public Works Highway Rubbish Removal Account for Recycling Services.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.12. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1381](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$15 using available funds in the Department of Public Works Highway Rubbish Removal Account for disposal of break out material.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.13. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1410](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$33,940.50 grant from Metro North Regional Employment Board to the Health and Human Services Department for the Mayor's Summer Jobs Program.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.14. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1417](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$45.97 using available funds in the City Clerk Maintenance Contract Account for printer/copier service.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.15.Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1429](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$24,802.06 using available funds in the Information Technology Cellular & Paging Services and Leased - Photocopier Equipment Accounts for cellular and copier services.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.16.Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1430](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$542,675 from the Community Preservation Act (CPA) Open Space Reserve Fund for the development of the ArtFarm park improvement project.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.17.Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1431](#)) Requesting the transfer of \$174,776 from the Community Preservation Act (CPA) Fund Undesignated Fund Balance to the Open Space Reserve.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.18.Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1434](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$310,100 grant with no new match required, from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to the Office of Sustainability and Environment for resilience hubs.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.19.Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1443](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$48,930.22 using available funds in the Department of Public Works Electricity Account for solar net metering.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.20.Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1444](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$60 using available funds in the Department of Public Works License Reimbursement Account for employee reimbursement for hoisting licensing.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.21.Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1445](#)) Requesting approval to accept a donation of equipment valued at \$15,000 with no new match required, from the City of Boston Department of Emergency Management to the Department of Public Works for two trailers.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.22.Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1477](#)) Requesting acceptance of an easement for a pedestrian bridge over the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Green Line.

RESULT: WITHDRAWN

6.B. HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- 6.B.1. Committee Report Report of the Committee on Housing and Community Development, meeting on October 21, 2024.
(ID # [24-1507](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.B.2. Order By Councilor Ewen-Campen and Councilor Strezo
(ID # [24-0146](#)) That the Executive Director of the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) update this Council on current efforts to create a Community Center as part of the new developments in Union Square and Boynton Yards.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

- 6.B.3. Resolution By Councilor Clingan, Councilor Wilson, Councilor Strezo, Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor Burnley Jr. and Councilor Mbah
(ID # [24-0902](#)) That the Administration hold a community meeting within the next 30 days to address the impacts of the missing United States Postal Service mail, and the overall lack of mail delivery in various parts of Somerville.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

6.C. LAND USE COMMITTEE

- 6.C.1. Committee Report Report of the Committee on Land Use, meeting in Joint Session with the Planning Board on October 17, 2024.
(ID # [24-1506](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

6.D. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS COMMITTEE

- 6.D.1. Committee Report Report of the Committee on Legislative Matters, meeting on October 15, 2024.
(ID # [24-1505](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.D.2. Resolution By Councilor Mbah, Councilor Sait, Councilor Burnley Jr. and Councilor Ewen-Campen
(ID # [24-1269](#)) That the Administration make it easier for residents to host block parties by simplifying and shortening the approval process, and take steps to provide monetary awards or grants of \$100 for approved block parties.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

- 6.D.3. Mayor's Request Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Section 6-97 of the Code of Ordinances to change the effective date for the Fossil Fuel Free Ordinance.
(ID # [24-1457](#))

RESULT: **ORDINANCE ORDAINED**

AYE: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Mbah, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., City Councilor At Large Strezo, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld

ABSENT: Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, and Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen

6.D.4. Order
(ID # [24-1510](#))

By Councilor Davis

That, effective January 1, 2025, the City Council shall no longer review and approve applications for block parties, and that the City Clerk shall assume responsibility for final approval of applications for block parties.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.E. LICENSES AND PERMITS COMMITTEE

6.E.1. Committee Report (ID # [24-1509](#)) Report of the Committee on Licenses and Permits, meeting on October 23, 2024.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.E.2. License
(ID # [24-1043](#))

New Garage License, Building 2 Owner LLC, 808 Windsor St, 242 vehicles inside, 0 vehicles outside for storing vehicles only, 7 days a week 24 hours.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

7. COMMUNICATIONS OF THE MAYOR

7.1. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1503](#)) Requesting approval of a Deed, Easement and Grant of Maintenance License for 808 Windsor Street.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

AYE: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Mbah, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., City Councilor At Large Strezo, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld

ABSENT: Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, and Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen

- 7.2. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1511](#)) Requesting a supplemental appropriation of \$940,000 from the tax levy to various Fire Department Personal Services accounts to fund a collective bargaining agreement with the Firefighters Local 76.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 7.3. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1512](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$233,881 from the Salary Contingency, Salaries account to various Fire Department Personal Services accounts to fund a collective bargaining agreement with Firefighters Local 76.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 7.4. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1513](#)) Requesting approval of an extension for 15 months with a new expiration date of 3/31/2026, and an increase of \$68,227.63, for the University of Massachusetts Boston for research and implementation services for the Guaranteed Basic Income Pilot.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 7.5. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1491](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$500,000 grant with no new match required, from MA Department of Conservation and Recreation to the Public Space and Urban Forestry Division for the Blessing of the Bay MassTrails improvement project.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.6. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1260](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$171,000 grant with no new match required, from the Boston Mayor's Office of Emergency Management to the Police Department for a Special Response Team rescue vehicle.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

8. COMMUNICATIONS OF CITY OFFICERS

- 8.1. Officer's Communication (ID # [24-1520](#)) City Solicitor requesting that this Council convene in Executive Session to discuss a recent decision in Cobble Hill Center, LLC v. Somerville Redevelopment Authority.
RESULT: APPROVED
AYE: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Mbah, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., City Councilor At Large Strezo, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld

ABSENT: Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, and Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen

- 8.2. Officer's Communication (ID # [24-1432](#)) Director of Health and Human Services conveying the Board of Health Annual Report for 2023.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

9. NEW BUSINESS

- 9.1. License (ID # [24-1492](#)) New Drainlayer's License, A & B Services, Inc.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.2. License (ID # [24-1504](#)) Renewing Drainlayer's License, DOG Excavation.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.3. License (ID # [24-1494](#)) Renewing Lodging House License, Delta Tau Delta Fraternity, 98 Professors Row.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.4. License (ID # [24-1495](#)) Renewing Outdoor Goods License, 130 Broadway, LLC, 130 Broadway.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.5. License (ID # [24-1493](#)) New Second Hand Dealer License, Vintage Treasures, 482 Broadway.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.6. License (ID # [24-1497](#)) Renewing Used Car Dealer Class 2 License, Aris Auto Inc., 3 Craigie Street.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.7. License (ID # [24-1496](#)) Renewing Used Car Dealer Class 2 License, Broadway Brake, 45 Broadway.

RESULT: APPROVED

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- 9.8. License (ID # [24-1498](#)) Renewing Used Car Dealer Class 2 License, Joy St Motors, 24 Joy Street.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.9. License (ID # [24-1499](#)) Renewing Used Car Dealer Class 2 License, Somerville Motors, Inc., 182 Washington Street.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.10. Small Wireless Facility (ID # [24-1519](#)) Crown Castle Fiber LLC applying for a Small Wireless Facility License for facilities on an existing pole at 115 Pearl Street.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.11. Public Event (ID # [24-1500](#)) Madeleine Finkenaur applying for a Public Event License for Fall Samhain Festival on October 25 from 6pm to 11:30pm.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.12. Public Event (ID # [24-1501](#)) Dominique Stassart applying for a Public Event License for Halloween Trick or Treat on October 31 from 3pm to 8pm.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.13. Public Event (ID # [24-1518](#)) Veterans Services Division applying for a Public Event License for Henry Hansen Park Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on November 7 from 8:30am to 10:30am.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.14. Public Event (ID # [24-1502](#)) Union Square Main Streets applying for a Public Event License for 10th Annual Union Square Holiday Stroll on December 7 from 10am to 7pm (raindate December 8).
RESULT: APPROVED
- 10. SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS**
- 10.1. Citation (ID # [24-1535](#)) By Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Burnley Jr., Councilor Davis, Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor Sait, Councilor Strezo, Councilor Wilson and Councilor Mbah Commending Patricia Contente for sixteen years of dedicated service to the City of Somerville.
RESULT: APPROVED
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- 10.2. Order
(ID # [24-1529](#))
- By Councilor Mbah and Councilor Pineda Neufeld
That the Chief of Police provide an explanation regarding why there was no police assistance or crossing guard coverage at the intersection of Curtis Street and Powderhouse Boulevard during school drop-off hours on October 23, 2024.
- RESULT:** APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee
- 10.3. Order
(ID # [24-1530](#))
- By Councilor Mbah and Councilor Pineda Neufeld
That the Chief of Police, in collaboration with the Director of Mobility, develop and present a plan to ensure that crossing guards are adequately stationed at critical intersections near schools during high-traffic hours and that, in the absence of crossing guards, police officers are deployed to ensure the safety of students and families.
- RESULT:** APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee
- 10.4. Communication
(ID # [24-1526](#))
- By Councilor Mbah
Conveying an update on the activities of the Job Creation and Retention Trust Fund (JCRT).
- RESULT:** PLACED ON FILE
- 10.5. Communication
(ID # [24-1527](#))
- By Councilor Mbah
Conveying an update on the activities of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.
- RESULT:** PLACED ON FILE
- 10.6. Resolution
(ID # [24-1536](#))
- By Councilor Burnley Jr. and Councilor Davis
Celebrating National Friends of Libraries Week.
- RESULT:** APPROVED
- 10.7. Resolution
(ID # [24-1528](#))
- By Councilor Wilson, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Burnley Jr., Councilor Davis, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Mbah, Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor Sait and Councilor Strezo
That this Council hereby welcomes Nina Bear Ewen-Campen to Somerville, extends its best wishes to her very proud parents, and looks forward to Nina's bright future in Somerville.
- RESULT:** APPROVED
- 10.8. Mayor's Request
(ID # [24-1531](#))
- Requesting approval of a Pedestrian Crossing Easement Agreement with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA).
- RESULT:** APPROVED
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AYE: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Mbah, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., City Councilor At Large Strezo, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld

ABSENT: Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, and Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen

10.9. Public
Communication
(ID # [24-1524](#))

Harvard University conveying its Fall 2024 Accountability Report.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

10.10. Public
Communication
(ID # [24-1525](#))

Tufts University conveying its Fall 2024 Accountability Report.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

10.11. Public
Communication
(ID # [24-1534](#))

1,034 individuals, including two residents, submitting comments re: ceasefire.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

11. LATE ITEMS

11.1. Order
(ID # [24-1543](#))

That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of Water and Sewer implement a minimum 24-hours notice policy prior to any planned water service interruption.

RESULT: APPROVED

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was Adjourned at 9:59 PM.