



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

April 8, 2019

REPORT OF THE RODENT ISSUES SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Stephanie Hirsch	Chair	Present	
Ben Ewen-Campen	Vice Chair	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One City Councilor	Present	

Others present: Doug Kress - HHS, Georgianna Silveira - HHS, Ms. Lynda Wills resident from MacArthur Street, Rositha Durham - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Hirsch and adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

**Approval of the Minutes of Tuesday, January 29, 2019**

**RESULT:**

**ACCEPTED**

**200246 - That the Administration request rodent sightings be placed as an icon on the Commonwealth Connect app.:**

It was confirmed this request has been completed and 311 has been spoken to about this matter.

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**200628 - That the Supervisor of Inspectional Services consider increasing fines for businesses in violation of rodent prevention measures.:**

Mr. Kress stated that ISD sets the fines not HHS. Councilor McLaughlin believes the fines have been doubled. Mr. Kress will send an email to the committee on this matter along with any recommendations.

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**203792 - That the Administration utilize the drug Senestech to sterilize rats as one of many measures to control the rodent population.:**

Mr. Kress stated this process was short term and not very effective. The process would need to be ongoing in order to show any progress. He is looking into other opportunities on this matter.

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**207379 - That the Commissioner of Public Works explain to this Board the process for procuring, maintaining, and repairing or replacing rodent-proof trash barrels.:**

Mr. Kress stated the barrel request is on 311. Barrels are not rodent proof and should encourage residents to occasionally rinse out the trash barrels. Chair Hirsch suggested there be a communication to the community to inspect their barrels for holes and have them replaced.

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**207380 - That the Administration work with this Board to consider strengthening rodent eradication as part of building demolition, potentially using as an example the ordinance of Nassau County, Long Island, which requires proof of eradication before allowing demolition to proceed.:**

Ms. Silveira updated the committee on progress of making connections with the community and meeting with ISD on the abatement process. She looked into nearby cities and modeled her suggestions based on other communities. There were discussions about permitting when demolition and rodent enforcement. Ms. Silveira also suggested requiring inspection and, if necessary, abatement if doing work that requires excavation. Abatement would need to be done at least 10 days prior to start of work. If rodents are discovered, contractor would have to include a plan to abate. Ms. Silveira also talked about a pilot population survey with hot spots around Union Square restaurants and needing for information around East Somerville to better serve the community. She is planning to send out letters to get participants in the McGrath and Mt Vernon area to put traps on property to see activity of rodents. Letters will go out to owner-occupied residences. Councilor McLaughlin would like to add rat issues to the proposed ordinance that relates to vacation properties.

Councilor Ewen-Campen motioned and it was accepted that the Director of HHS update the Rodent Issues Special Committee on their rodent survey.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**207572 - That the Director of Inspectional Services bait the sewers around the intersection of Highland Avenue and Lowell Street, then down the east side of Lowell Street to Hudson Street and along the north side of Hudson Street from Lowell Street to 80 Hudson Street.:**

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**