



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

December 7, 2017

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Robert J. McWatters	Chair	Present	
Tony Lafuente	Vice Chair	Absent	
Lance L. Davis	Ward Six Alderman	Present	

Others present: Alderman Matt McLaughlin, Stanley Koty - DPW, Tim Snyder - Mayor's Office, Charles Sillari - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman McWatters and adjourned at 7:29 PM.

Chairman McWatters stated that aldermen may amend this report if they would like to keep any item before the committee.

Approval of the October 24, 2017 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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195521: That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of SPCD (ISD) implement a plan to address trash and code violations each May and September, when student moves have the greatest impact on the City.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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195528: That this Board's Committee on Public Utilities and Works explore Boston's Code Ordinance CBC 9-1.3, which requires private rental units to be registered on an annual basis and inspections to be conducted for non-exempt units on a 5-year cycle.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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196186: That the Commissioner of Public Works report to this Board whether it is possible to have the Public Schools open when there is a declared snow emergency, and, if it is possible, to also report the plan for teacher and staff parking, since school parking lots are used then for resident parking.

Alderman Davis said that he was expecting to see a written policy. He would like to know what would happen if parking was not allowed in school yards. Members discussed the distinction between school yards and school parking lots as well as the reasons for school closures during snow events.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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196302: That the Commissioner of Public Works report to this Board on the performance of the contractor who maintains the street lights, the terms of the contract and deliverables, and the process to ensure that street lights are maintained and operable.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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196378: That the Director of SPCD and/or the Commissioner of Public Works notify property owners along lower Broadway of the five year moratorium on renovations to private sewer systems and encourage them to make appropriate plans.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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196983: That the Administration dedicate certain public buildings for community use.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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197238: That the City Engineer review drainage on Shore Drive, especially with storm water runoff during heavy rains, particularly at the corner of Shore Drive and Putnam Street, as well as the impact of development at Assembly Square on the sewer outflow line.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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197277: That the Commissioner of Public Works notify the appropriate utility companies to remove the double pole on Cambria Street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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197428: That the Commissioner of Public Works repair the depression in the roadway in the east bound lane on Broadway just past its intersection with School Street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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197489: That the Commissioner of Public Works report to this Board about how utilities inform residents about work on their streets, utility poles or power lines.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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197625: That NStar Electric report to this Board on its preparations to insure sufficient

power for the redevelopment of Union Square.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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197724: That the Director of SPCD and the Commissioner of Public Works report to this Board on the development, staffing and cost of a program to maintain street trees and keep tree wells clean and weed-free, and/or a program to assist and inspire residents to do so.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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197756: That the Administration report to this Board on its plan to implement the Tree Advisory Committee that is required by Ordinance 12-100, the Tree Preservation Ordinance.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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198088: That the Commissioner of Public Works investigate and report back on installing solar powered kiosks in our parks and playgrounds to communicate youth and family activities in our city.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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198386: That the Commissioner of Public Works update the Ward 5 Alderman on repairs to prevent pedestrians from tripping in the crosswalks at Linden Avenue on the south side of Summer Street, Aberdeen Road by Highland Avenue, and Hall Street by Cherry Street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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198444: That the Director of SPCD (ISD) report to this Board on the process for issuing citations during snowstorms to private plowing and shoveling contractors who are plowing snow into the street or onto neighbors' sidewalks.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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199295: That the Director of SPCD discuss capitalizing on street repaving to bury utilities, beautify the city, and reduce the threat of power outages due to rain/snow/ice storms.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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199547: That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of SPCD work with Eversource to remove the unsafe telephone poles secured to rotting trees on Woods Street at North Street, and on Barton Street at Broadway.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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199869: That the Administration inform the Clark Street neighbors about the TV pipe

testing which should have been performed in 2014.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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199955: That the Director of SPCD (Transportation) consider installing a bollard at the top of the stairs at the Community Path Extension by Lowell Street, to prevent people from accidentally tumbling down the stairs.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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199956: That the Commissioner of Public Works determine if the lighting at the Community Path Extension ramp and stairs by the Lowell Street bridge is sufficient, and if not, install more.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200223: That the Commissioner of Public Works create clearly defined lines along Walnut Street, by Pearl Street and Broadway, to eliminate two lane traffic problems.

Alderman Davis' motion to refer this item to the Traffic and Parking Committee was approved.

RESULT:	REFERRED FOR DISCUSSION
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200440: That the Director of Constituent Services appear before this Board's Committee on Public Utilities and Works with a written report on streetlamp repairs citywide.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200637: That the Director of SPCD provide all Ward Aldermen with the 2016 street paving plan for all Wards.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200645: That the Commissioner of Public Works explain to this Board how to find out when a particular street is scheduled to be re-paved.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200680: That the Commissioner of Public Works appear before the Committee on Public Utilities and Works to address the assistance the City can provide for a city tree root that is growing into the basement of the home at 25 Meacham Street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200773: That the Commissioner of Public Works describe to this Board, the rationale for treating multi-unit residences the same as single family residences for purposes of volume-

based escalation of water rates.

Alderman Davis spoke about separate meters for units in multi-family buildings and Mr. Snyder said that he will look into the matter.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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200874: That the Director of Capital Projects advise the Ward 7 Alderman of the start date and schedule for sewer/relining on Powderhouse Blvd.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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200882: That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Supervisor of Inspectional Services report to this Board on the repair of the sidewalk that is collapsing on Vernon Street, and what precautions are being taken for public safety.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201007: That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of SPCD consider replacing the unused concrete bus shelter at Broadway and Cedar Street with a garden, small park or sitting area, and report back by 5/12/16.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201010: That the Commissioner of Public Works replace the decorative lamppost that is missing from the stump at Old Magoun's Saloon in Magoun Square. (2nd request)

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201012: That the Director of SPCD install pigeon spikes underneath the Lowell Street bridge, above the Community Path Extension. (4th request)

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201144: That the Commissioner of Public Works repair the disintegrating sidewalk at the entrance to the parking lot on Central Street used by the Cambridge Health Alliance, or require them to fix it if it is their responsibility.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201270: That the Commissioner of Public Works inform this Board of the options to adjust new LED street lighting, and the process to request such adjustments.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201303: That the Director of Engineering and/or the Supervisor of Inspectional Services

provide address numbers to the properties on Chestnut Street and notify the property owners to display them on their buildings to facilitate identifying them.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201319: That the Commissioner of Public Works remove trash from the north side of the Cambridge Health Alliance parking lot off Central Street and behind Junction Park, and post NO DUMPING signs there.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201423: That the Commissioner of Public Works address the leaning utility pole at the East Somerville Community School on Glen Street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201473: That the Commissioner of Public Works and/or the City Solicitor report to this Board on efforts to make the Albion Street sidewalk contractor repair the sidewalks or refund the City, and that the Commissioner of Public Works have the sidewalks repaired and report to this Board on when that will happen.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201499: That the Commissioner of Public Works clean the Community Path between Cedar and Lowell Streets, and consider erecting a barrier to prevent erosion from the hill alongside the path.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201504: That the Commissioner of Public Works consider installing an additional street lamp near 27, 31 and 33 Winslow Avenue.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201586: That the Director of SPCD and the Commissioner of Public Works consider creating shade at Grimmons Park and designing future parks with appropriate shade as well.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201618: That the Director of Engineering explain to this Board how to find out when a particular street is scheduled to be re-paved, or provide the city's street paving list. (3rd request)

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201712: That the Commissioner of Public Works repair the brick walkway between Holland Street and College Avenue in Davis Square Plaza.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201713: That the Commissioner of Public Works inspect the damaged wall at 93 Pearson Road and take action to remedy the situation.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201701: That the Commissioner of Public Works replace the 3 raised sidewalk panels at 61 Dartmouth Street. (2nd request)

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201767: That the Superintendent of Inspectional Services direct Healey School staff to keep the grounds clean and properly dispose of trash, due to increased rodent activity around the school.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201771: That the Commissioner of Public Works remove all brush from the Mystic River along Shore Drive.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201778: That the Commissioner of Public Works direct Eversource to immediately remove the heavy plant overgrowth at the transfer station at Willow Avenue and Whipple Street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201795: That the Commissioner of Public Works clean the Sacramento Street ramp that runs beneath the railroad tracks and confirm the regular maintenance schedule previously agreed to.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201797: That the Director of Engineering add Porter Street, between Summer and Elm Streets, to the 5-year paving plan, and include the streets off the west side of Porter Street, especially Carver Street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201826: That the Commissioner of Public Works replace the black hot topped sidewalk at 985-987 Broadway with concrete and explain why Eversource claims they are not allowed

to use concrete when replacing an opened sidewalk.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201906: That the Commissioner of Public Works direct the contractor who recently did work on Porter Street to repair and resurface the sink hole that is beginning to develop on Summer and Porter Streets.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202029: That the Director of SPCD, the Director of Capital Planning, and the City Engineer create a timeline from September 2016 to September 2019 for streetscape reconstruction projects in Ward 2 and post the timeline on the city's website with continual updates as changes occur.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202032: That the City Engineer and the Director of SPCD report back to the Ward 2 Alderman on repairing the sidewalk on the Dane Street bridge and the wooden slats on the Webster Avenue/Newton Street Bridge, and on communications with the responsible State agencies.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202034: That the Director of SPCD add Avon Street to the paving list.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202082: That the Commissioner of Public Works, the Superintendent of Inspectional Services and the City Engineer report to this Board, the process for obtaining permission for a curb cut, including provisions made to ensure that the city's ordinances are followed.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202254: That the Commissioner of Public Works provide a disposition for the replacement of a tree that was removed at 27 Dane Avenue, and explain why repeated requests for tree replacements through 311 have not been answered.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202266: That the Commissioner of Public Works provide an explanation for recycled trash being collected by non-recycling trash companies.

The new recycling trucks are packers.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202305: That the Commissioner of Public Works remove the tree at 151 Pearl Street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202307: That the Commissioner of Public Works take the actions described within regarding the West Somerville Neighborhood School playground.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202330: That the City Engineer install the curb cut at the Warwick Street elbow, by the Community Path Extension ramp, that was promised many years ago as part of the Maxwell's Green development.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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202331: That the City Engineer install curb cuts and sidewalk ramps at the two curbs by Maxwell's Green at the intersection of Clyde and Warwick Streets.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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202332: That the City Engineer repair the curb cut and sidewalk ramp at the intersection of Murdock and Clyde Streets.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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202333: That the City Engineer repair the concrete on the pedestrian and bicycle ramp under the railroad bridge on Sacramento Street between Somerville Avenue and Miller Street. (3rd request)

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202334: That the Commissioner of Public Works address the ongoing graffiti on the Sacramento Street underpass and use a product to cover graffiti more permanently, and improve the lighting there as well.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202724: That the Superintendent of Schools look into how trash is kept at the Healy School, to prevent rodent activity.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202727: That the Commissioner of Public Works work with the Mayor, Representative

Provost and Senator Jehlen to get the appropriate state agency to clean state-owned trash-filled land on the east and west sides of the Central Street Bridge.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202731: That the Administration consider providing a sprinkler and irrigation system for Prospect Hill Park.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202765: That the City Engineer and the Commissioner of Public Works implement an accessible pedestrian walkway on Poplar Street, surrounding ARTFARM, in anticipation of its future development.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202773: That the Director of SPCD update this Board on the Beacon Street reconstruction project with a timeline and significant design changes.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202774: That the Director of SPCD request information from MA DOT about the jersey barriers and asphalt triangle at McGrath Highway, approaching the overpass, and request that the space be converted to permeable green space if there are no further changes planned for the intersection.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202784: That the Administration develop a policy for temporary crosswalk painting or other measures to protect pedestrians when road work or other conditions prevent the immediate re-striping of road markings.

Mr. Koty said that the program was funded through the Engineering Department. He explained the timing process for putting down thermoplastic paint.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202873: That the Commissioner of Public Works replace the sidewalk panels on Highland Avenue, from the Veteran's Honor Roll to Putnam Avenue.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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202934: That the Director of SPCD consider placing Pitman Street on the 2017 street resurfacing list.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203270: That the Administration inform this Board of an action plan for the parking lot at the Cummings School, as parked vehicles obstruct the basketball court.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203282: That the Commissioner of Public Works repair the Union Square businesses sign behind the SCAT building and install a "Welcome to Union Square" sign there as well.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203361: That the Administration, the City Solicitor and the Superintendent of Water and Sewer respond to a letter dated November 16, 2016 disputing St. James's Episcopal Church's water and sewer bills.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203370: That the Commissioner of Public Works replace the burnt out light bulbs in the decorative street lights in Teele Square.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203450: That the City Engineer inspect the intersection of Ware Street and Russell Road, and Russell Road from #s 7 to 35, for the potential of more sink holes.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203496: That the Director of Engineering determine why the repaving job on Pitman Street between Belmont and Spring Streets is in its present condition, and why sink holes are now causing issues on the street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203507: That the Commissioner of Public Works provide shaded areas for public pools including Foss Park and Dilboy.

Alderman McLaughlin would like some trees next season. Mr. Snyder explained that Foss Park is out of the city's control, but perhaps something could be worked out at Dilboy Field, but the life guard sight line is an issue, there. Alderman McLaughlin would like umbrellas.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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203491: That the Administration facilitate the replacement of the wooden slats that provide the pedestrian foundation on the Webster Avenue Bridge.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203510: That the Director of Engineering install the four curb cuts near Maxwell's Green that the city has committed to installing, and notify the Ward 5 Alderman of the timeline for their installation.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203514: That the Commissioner of Public Works remove the overgrowth from the rock outcrop behind the field house at Powderhouse Park, extending to the pedestrian walkway.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203724: That the Director of SPCD consider placing a bump-out at the corner of Lowell and Summer Streets.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203803: That the Director of SPCD coordinate with the Director of Traffic and Parking on all parking restrictions related to park and other construction projects, to ensure ample notice of parking restrictions to neighbors.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203797: That the Director of Water and Sewers repair the storm drain/catch basin that is sinking below the street surface on the south side of Kidder Avenue, by the Brown School near Willow Avenue.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203794: That the Director of Water and Sewers repair the depression around the sewer at the corner of Porter and Summer Streets.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203862: That the Commissioner of Public Works and Arborist implement an inspection and maintenance schedule to prevent the accumulation of trash, invasive plants, trees and weeds along the entire Community Path.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203833: That the Commissioner of Public Works direct the appropriate utility to remove the suspended double pole at 4 Howard Street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203835: That the Director of SPCD prioritize Cameron Avenue for repaving.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203867: That the Mayor's Office, working with the Director of Engineering, report to this Board on improving Eversource's communications with, and responsiveness to, this city's residents, concerning gas meter replacement, street construction and utility work.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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203872: That the Building Department not issue any demolition permits until a rodent elimination program has been completed by the applicant, and provide an explanation to this Board whenever a permit is issued without a completed program.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203873: That the Director of SPCD repave Otis Street.

Mr, Snyder will review the 5-year plan. He discussed the rates of road deterioration and private ways.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203947: That the Director of Engineering inspect the 41 Elmwood Street area for continual water and sewage flooding when severe rain storms occur.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203964: That all future Eversource requests be tabled by this Board until a signed commitment for better communication by Eversource is enacted.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203970: That the Commissioner of Public Works inform this Board of the city's new policies for utility companies to remove double poles and address low hanging wires.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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203983: That the Mayor report to this Board by August 31, 2017 on ways to improve the poor communications from Eversource to residents around gas meter replacement, street construction, and other utility work. (2nd request)

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204219: That the Administration submit a funding proposal for a Priority Streets contract to address sidewalk panels that need replacement.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204220: That the Water Director clean all of the catch basins on Somerville Avenue.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204240: That the Administration update this Board on a process to notify utilities in advance when streets will be opened, so gas leaks can be addressed, including the date and location of notifications that have been provided in the past year.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204263: That the Commissioner of Public Works request that the appropriate utility company address the low hanging wires on Mt. Vernon and Washington Streets.

Mr. Koty stated that Eversource has been notified about the situation and will be notified again. Chairman McWatters suggested having Mr. Zamparelli visit the site.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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204354: That the Commissioner of Public Works replace the removed tree stump at 6 Barton Street with a tree.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204361: That MA DOT, Newport Construction and all other parties with knowledge of the cutting down of trees on Beacon Street on October 6, without any public notice, appear before this Board at its next regular meeting to respond to concerns about the surprise tree removal.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204363: The Administration assign or hire city staff to oversee the daily operations of contractor and utility company activity for the Beacon Street reconstruction project, and adopt a policy of such oversight for every state funded street reconstruction project going forward.

Mr. Snyder stated that new staff will be requested.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204365: That the Director of SPCD estimate for this Board the cost to move overhead wires underground on Beacon Street from Washington to Hampshire Streets, identify potential funding sources, and discuss the feasibility and impact of such an endeavor on the current

Beacon Street project.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204362: That the Director of SPCD work with Mass DOT to cease all work on the Beacon Street reconstruction project until a full report on the removal of trees from the street is received and presented to this Board and until city staff is assigned day to day responsibility for oversight.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204366: That the Director of Parks and Recreation instruct the contractor for the Lincoln Park reconstruction to put up tarps or mesh shields to protect residents of Fremont and Parker Streets from dirt blowing into their houses during construction.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204367: That the Director of Parks and Recreation report back to this Board whether chain link fencing was represented in the original plans for Lincoln Park.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204368: That the Director of Parks and Recreation report back to this Board on whether the intensity of the excavation at Lincoln Park was factored into construction plans, and what steps will be taken to evaluate its impact on properties abutting the park.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204370: That the Director of Water and Sewer inform this Board whether it is protocol to notify residents of excessive water usage on their property, the means by which that is done, and the recourse residents have if they were not notified.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204371: That the Director of Water and Sewer explain to this Board any customer service offered to residents who question their water bills.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204528: Requesting the Administration to compile contact information for all utilities, for reporting such issues as low hanging wires and gas leaks, and make it easily accessible on the city's website.

Mr. Koty said that the Fire Department should be called. Alderman Davis would like the information to be put in one place and to be indexed for logical searches.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204546: That the Commissioner of Public Works post “NO DUMPING” signs, with the amount of the fine, on the north edge of the Cambridge Health Alliance parking lot on Central Street. (2nd request)

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204549: That the City Engineer, the Commissioner of Public Works, and the Water Director repair the pavement on Carver Street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204551: That the Director of Capital Projects or the Director of Communications share with this Board the plan for keeping community members informed on a regular basis about the High School building project.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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204552: That the Director of Capital Projects or the Director of SPCD update this Board about the transportation management and parking plans for both the construction and the post-construction phases of the new High School.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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204446: City Engineer responding to #203947 re: recurring flooding on Elmwood Street.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204506: DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted 10/12/17.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204583: Director of Water and Sewer responding to #204370 re: residential notifications for excessive water use.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204584: Director of Water and Sewer responding to #204371 re: customer service for questioned water bills.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204665: DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted 11/9/17.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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Handouts:

- DPW Responses