



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

May 29, 2014

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Tony Lafuente	Chair	Present	
Maryann M. Heuston	Vice Chair	Absent	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	
John M. Connolly	Alderman At Large	Present	
William A. White Jr.	Alderman At Large	Present	

Others present: Alderman Rossetti, Peter Forcellese, Jr., Marc Levye, Steve McEachern, Emily Monea, Stan Koty, Ed Bean, Omar Boukili, Frank Wright, Michael Capuano, Arn Franzen and Tanya Cafarella.

**Approval of the Minutes of May 07, 2014**

**RESULT:**

**NO ACTION TAKEN**

**196227 - That the Director of Finance and this Board's Committee on Finance review the attached article on Arlington's "visual budget":**

Mr. Bean stated that Somerville already has the same data on the web, but not in graphical form. He feels that this would be a worthwhile project to explore for the city's new website and he believes that it might be able to be accomplished in-house. Mr. Boukili referenced the city's Data Dashboard, developed by SomerStat, and asked the aldermen to review it for feedback.

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**196288 - Requesting the transfer of a parcel of land at 163 Glen Street to the Redevelopment Authority for neighborhood development.:**

Mr. Boukili reported that the details are still being worked out.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196889 - That the Commissioner of Public Works appear before this Board to present all purchase orders, payments and inventory for the \$26,000 appropriation approved during FY14 budget hearings.:**

Mr. Koty distributed printed materials and reviewed data with the committee. Alderman White requested that quantities and per unit prices for the listed items be emailed to him.

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**196919 - That the City Solicitor advise whether this Board has the authority to pass an ordinance that requires the approval of this Board for any agreement for payment in lieu of taxes.:**

Mr. Wright informed the members that the Board of Aldermen has no authority in this matter as it is an Executive function. Mr. Wright is not aware of what other communities might be doing relative to PILOT agreements, but he will explore that avenue with caveat that it is not indicative of what Somerville does. Alderman White requested that the relevant statute reference and legal memo be provided.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**196950 - Requesting an appropriation of \$1,212,158 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the DPW Snow Removal Account to mitigate the FY2014 Snow Removal deficit.:**

Mr. Koty and Mr. McEachern spoke about the additional work of clearing snow from bus stops and HP ramps, as required by the government. In addition to that and the normal clearing of streets, the DPW also responded to calls made to 311 for areas not required to be cleared.

Mr. Koty reported that the average overtime rate is approximately \$46 per hour and that timing of the storms, i.e., nights and weekends, increased overtime costs. Alderman White requested a detailed breakdown of the associated overtime expenses and Alderman Connolly requested that, in the future, detailed data be provided for each individual storm.

A majority of the repairs to snow fighting equipment was done in-house while larger repairs, such as replacing a transmission or straightening a damaged frame, were performed off site. Alderman White asked that a more detailed breakdown of the repairs and parts costs and for the last three years be provided.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**196951 - Requesting Transfers Totaling \$300,000 from the DPW Sanitation Division to the Snow Removal Account to help mitigate the FY 2014 Snow Removal deficit.:**

These surplus funds resulted from the city being charged less than expected for sanitation transfer rates. Mr. Bean reported that, as of this point in time, and prior to this request, the free cash balance is \$8,954,364.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**196952 - Requesting the acceptance of a grant of \$22,125.85 from the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management, for the Police Department's target hardening project.:**

Alderman White requested that the documentation for this item be emailed to all members.

**RESULT:****KEPT IN COMMITTEE****196958 - DPW Commissioner responding to various Board Orders submitted April 24, 2014.:**

Mr. McEachern spoke about DPU and state regulations. The minimum height for wires is 14 feet over a roadway and 11 feet over a sidewalk. Double poles change those heights during equipment transfers. Mr. Koty spoke about low voltage fees that utility companies planned to pass onto its customers.

**RESULT:****WORK COMPLETED****197043 - Requesting an appropriation of \$1,355,671 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the Community Preservation Act Fund, for community preservation projects.:**

Ms. Monea made a presentation on the CPA and outlined its various requirements and applications and explained how this appropriation would increase the matching return from the state. There was a discussion about the state match not being "dollar for dollar".

**RESULT:****APPROVED**