



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

June 29, 2022

REPORT OF THE CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENTS
AND PERSONNEL MATTERS COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Judy PinedaNeufeld	Chair	Present	
Kristen Strezo	Vice Chair	Present	
Charlotte Kelly	City Councilor At Large	Present	
Jesse Clingan	Ward Four City Councilor	Present	
Jake Wilson	City Councilor At Large	Present	

Approval of the June 1, 2022 Minutes

RESULT: ACCEPTED

213863: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Neeraj Wadhwa to the Council on Aging.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

214035: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Katherine Garavaglia to the position of Full Member of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Dir. Lewis said that Ms. Garavaglia has been serving on the Zoning Board of Appeals as an alternate member and has gone above and beyond in her work. Ms. Garavaglia spoke to her experience and said that having someone with a legal background on ZBA is helpful because they can highlight different aspects of the work.

Councilor Wilson asked if the zoning overhaul in 2019 seems to be reducing the workload on ZBA members. Ms. Garavaglia said that she joined after the overhaul and does not have context, but that she does not feel overwhelmed by the number of cases now. Councilor Wilson also explained that developers sometimes try to get waivers to avoid compliance with local restrictions, and asked how Ms. Garavaglia would approach a request for such a waiver if opposed by the neighborhood or if it set an unsettling precedent. Ms. Garavaglia replied that it is critical to prioritize the wants and needs of the neighborhood, and that has shown in her work.

Councilor Kelly asked how the candidate sees ZBA’s role both in slowing displacement, in ensuring affordable housing, and pushing for a sustainable future. Ms. Garavaglia talked about the judicial role of ZBA in slowing displacement and how adding more capacity for units would help residents stay in the city. She also said that there is not much community backlash against affordable housing projects in Somerville. On the environmental front, she said that solar projects tend to get installed on large-scale commercial structures and typically require different types of review.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	PinedaNeufeld, Strezo, Kelly, Clingan, Wilson

214034: Requesting confirmation of the promotion of Timothy Van Nostrand to the position of Police Sergeant.

Deputy Chief Ward spoke to Officer Van Nostrand’s experience as a field training officer and education in criminal justice.

Councilor Strezo asked the candidate why he pursued a Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) certification. Officer Van Nostrand explained that as a student at Northeastern University he saw the benefits it gave to women, including confidence to go out and feel safe. He rejuvenated the Somerville RAD program and has received positive feedback from people who took the course. Officer Van Nostrand also described at Councilor Wilson’s request when he took the CIT training and what he learned from the experience.

Councilor Strezo asked how theft is handled, stating that criminalizing shoplifting is not bringing systematic change. Officer Van Nostrand said that shoplifting is a minor property crime, but taking criminal action against shoplifters is always a last resort for him. He said that he engaged the few that were stealing out of necessity to make sure their needs were met, and no criminal action was taken with them.

Councilor Wilson asked the candidate what he would do if he witnessed misconduct by a fellow officer. Officer Van Nostrand said that he would immediately report the misconduct to the Internal Affairs unit if he saw it. Chair Pineda Neufeld asked what the candidate would do if he witnessed an officer being disrespectful or abusive with a community member, particularly one experiencing homelessness. Officer Van Nostrand said there is zero tolerance for abuse and, depending on severity, it would be reported to Internal Affairs. He clarified that something as mild as a rude comment could be addressed by a street supervisor, but anything more would go up the chain of command.

Councilor Kelly asked Officer Van Nostrand his opinion on the role of non-police alternative emergency response programs and how he would support them as a leader in SPD. She also asked about the role of trauma-informed care and the candidate’s philosophy on use of force. Officer Van Nostrand said that trauma-informed care is new to SPD, but he hopes to get more training - and that his CIT training gives him foundations in recognizing trauma in others. He said that use of force is sometimes necessary, but that SPD emphasizes de-escalation and communication.

Chair Pineda Neufeld asked the candidate if he would uphold federal and state protections around immigration, and Officer Van Nostrand answered that it does not pertain to his work because he never asks residents their immigration status.

Chair Pineda Neufeld moved to go into executive session, and the motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote. No votes were taken in executive session.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [4 TO 1]
AYES:	PinedaNeufeld, Strezo, Clingan, Wilson
NAYS:	Kelly

213395: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Gianna Ferrara to the position of Police Officer.

Chair Pineda Neufeld explained that the candidates for items 213395 and 213396 were interviewed a few months ago, but the items are on this agenda because the positions were not available then. Deputy Chief Ward confirmed that there are two openings in SPD.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	PinedaNeufeld, Strezo, Kelly, Clingan, Wilson

213396: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Keighla McAloney to the position of Police Officer.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	PinedaNeufeld, Strezo, Kelly, Clingan, Wilson

213393: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of William Ruocco to the position of Police Officer.

Chair Pineda Neufeld said that the candidate had withdrawn from the position and is no longer being considered.

RESULT:	WITHDRAWN
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213450: That the Administration present an update on the Board and Commission recruitment process, as detailed within.

Ms. Carrillo gave an update on the Administration's effort to reevaluate the Board and Commission recruitment process. They are trying to address boards and commissions holistically, but there is a lot more to do. A key piece is allowing commissions to stay operational while the Administration examines existing policies and protocols, and to do that, the Clerk's Office needs the information in a timely manner. Ms. Carrillo said that having another Legislative Clerk will be helpful for that work. Another key part in updating the process is that the Advisory Appointments Committee has been expanded from three to five members, and regular meeting times have been established. Ms. Carrillo also acknowledged that boards have

not reflected the population historically and that equity and inclusion are at the forefront of the Administration's priorities in this process.

Councilor Strezo expressed support for a resolution to have a commission fair in the fall to aid recruitment. She and Ms. Carrillo discussed some logistics of a potential event. Councilor Clingan said he would like to see active or high-priority committees and commissions sorted by appointment process, as not all commissions go through the Confirmation of Appointments and Personnel Matters committee. Councilor Kelly requested a written response for her questions.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

Reference Material:

- Combined Document Timothy Van Nostrand (with 214034)
- Patrol Seniority 06.29.2022
- SPD Patrol and Rank
- SPD separations from service June 2021-June 2022 (002)
- CAPM approved SPD promotions June 2021-June 2022 (002)