



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

June 18, 2020  
REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Chair	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Vice Chair	Present	
William A. White Jr.	City Councilor At Large	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	City Councilor at Large	Present	
Wilfred N. Mbah	City Councilor at Large	Present	

Others present: Annie Connor-Mayor's Office, Rich Raiche-Infrastructure & Asset Management, Alex Lessin-Water & Sewer, Jill Lathan-Parks & Recreation, Mike Mastrobuoni-SomerStat, Steve MacEachern-DPW, Kristen Stelljes-SomerStat, Alan Inacio-OSPCD, Luisa Oliveira-OSPCD, and Balkys Sicard-DPW

The meeting was held virtually and was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Chairperson Scott and adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Before going through the agenda, Chair Scott asked the committee for their preference on how to go through the agenda items. Councilor White stated his preference would be to continue to review the Water & Sewer Enterprise accounts at the next meeting after the committee receives the retained earnings calculations. Ms. Connor stated Mr. Lessin did the calculations and prepared for tonight's meeting and will send the calculations to the committee in writing prior to the next meeting. Councilor Rossetti asked if the water and sewer rate hike would be reviewed at Monday's night's meeting and suggested the rate hike and enterprise fund be discussed together. Councilor Ballantyne asked for the list of departments to be discussed on which nights to be prepared for the budget hearings.

**201740: Proposing an ordinance relative to a mid-fiscal year report of municipal finances, with next-fiscal year budget projections.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**209789: That this Council's Committee on Finance discuss the peoples' budget and priorities for FY21.**

Chair Scott discussed the finance meetings scheduled for 6/22 and 6/23 to review departments and continue to review W&S, with a committee of the whole for public hearing on 6/24. He

stated the registration for public hearing is live. Those from the public wishing to ask questions will use the question box to enter their name and address. The chair will unmute those from the public one at a time. At present, there are no projected attendance for that meeting. Additionally, the chair stated it is expected to be a long meeting and may limit the time for public speakers.

The chair stated the June 29 committee of whole meeting may be to review police department and engage in the usual cut night. Then make a recommendation out to the city council with a meeting on June 30 which is not scheduled yet.

Chair Scott asked Mr. Mastrobuoni for a list of departments to be reviewed on June 22 and June 23. Councilor Rossetti stated it's important to know in advance who the committee will meeting with to allow the councilor's and departments time to get prepared.

The chair asked the finance committee for suggestions on the review process for the departments. It was suggested maybe put OSPCD on Monday night, since it is one of the larger departments. Councilor Ballantyne suggested grouping together departments that would be less intensive such as finance, executive office, communications and finish off with law office, information technology, and city clerk's office.

Councilor White questioned whether the committee could review the budget in a short time and whether the city will have to submit a continuing appropriation order for salaries, school dept and contracts for the month of July. This approach would give the finance committee more time to review the budget in July.

Councilor Rossetti motioned for the administration prepare 1/12-month budget for a continuing appropriation budget. This motion was withdrawn stating it would be better to make this motion at Friday night's meeting. The chair will make the motion at the start of the meeting tomorrow night, if necessary.

Mr. Mastrobuoni stated they are currently working on continuing appropriation budget for submission before the end of the fiscal year. He will check in with Mr. Bean on this matter who has been taking point on this matter.

Councilor White suggested the chair look at schedules in the past and decide if less time is needed and pick ones that may not need as much time. Chair Scott will put out a provisional schedule some time tomorrow. Ms. Connor asked to weigh in on schedule in advance.

Mr. Mastrobuoni mentioned difficulty to avoid continuation for water & sewer. If possible to review and make decision prior to the end of fiscal year and suggested schedule for the first night.

Councilor Ballantyne reconfirmed that Mr. Lessin will provide something in writing to the committee tomorrow. Ms. Connor stated the analysis is completed and will be sent out tomorrow.

Councilor Ballantyne stated that a public hearing is one of many ways to communicate with city councilors. Some people from the public may want to talk and others will email. Both oral and written testimonies are valued equally.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**210297: Requesting the appropriation of \$699,725 from the Water Enterprise Fund**

**Retained Earnings Account to subsidize the FY21 Water Enterprise Fund Budget.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**210296: Requesting the appropriation of \$15,914,535 to fund the FY21 Water Enterprise Fund Budget.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**210295: Requesting an appropriation of \$26,004,509 to fund the FY21 Sewer Enterprise Fund Budget.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**210278: Requesting the approval of FY21 expenditure limitations for departmental Revolving Funds.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**210265: Requesting a transfer of \$500,000 from the Engineering Capital Outlay Street Repairs Account to the Street Reconstruction and Resurfacing Stabilization Fund to preserve funds for needed street repairs.**

Mr. Raiche stated he sent an email on Tuesday to the committee with background and links with legislative records. He stated in late calendar year 2019 there was a paving program and made an additional appropriation. Mr. Raiche stated the city had bid out the project and was put on hold due to COVID-19. Postponing bid until after winter for spring work, should bring in better bid prices. The city wants to put the funds in paving stabilization to use next year. Appropriation came from general fund supplemental item, an amended FY20 budget item.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
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**210266: Requesting the appropriation of \$80,000 from the Snow Removal Account to the Sanitation Recycling Account to fund the May/June recycling invoice.**

Ms. Sicard looking transfer to cover year end invoice for Langston & Douglas for the final amount. The current balance for the snow removal account is \$395,000 and will bring down the account to \$315,000 if the request is approved.

Councilor Rossetti asked if snow removal lines are carried over from year to year or does it go back to Free Cash if anything is left. Mr. Mastrobuoni states it acts as a regular line and money leftover is used to fund any deficits and does not roll over to the following year.

Councilor Mbah asked if the money was surplus and if was to go to Free Cash. Councilor White stated transfers are made for a variety of reasons to balance the books. Once done, then Free Cash is calculated at the end of the year.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**210267: Requesting approval of a transfer of \$40,000 from the DPW Snow Removal Account to the Sanitation Rubbish Removal Account to fund the June Waste Management rubbish removal invoice.**

Ms. Sicard stated same as previous item. The current purchase order has \$110,543 left on it and the last invoice was nearly a \$120,000 and it has been increasing. This request is for additional funds as a safeguard.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**210268: Requesting a transfer of \$3,900 from various City Clerk's Office Accounts to the Clerk of Committees Salaries Monthly Account to fund an FY20 deficit.**

Mr. Long could not join the meeting tonight, covering License Commission meeting. Funds requested needed to cover multiple committee meeting hours for Mr. Peter Forcellese.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**210269: Requesting a transfer of \$1,000 from the Economic Development Personal Services Account to the Redevelopment Authority Personal Services Account to cover a year-end deficit.**

Mr. Inacio stated that in last year's budget projects for redevelopment there was minor error creating a \$1,000 deficit. The position was funded for the entire year with left-over salary. The amount for the SRA was not correct, creating a small calculation error.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**210270: Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$31,291.50 using available funds in the DPW's Lights and Lines Account.**

Ms. Sicard stated this predates her employment with the city and is for an old contract for line 8 with an electrical construction company that was not paid. Councilor Rossetti reviewed the invoices and it dates back to August 1, 2019. Mr. MacEachern stated the city was trying to bring street lights in-and house the requested fund is to balance the rest of the invoice for the fiscal year. DPW is upgrading street lights and relying on contractors to help out with the request.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**210271: Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$10,975.06 using available funds in various DPW General Fund Accounts.**

Ms. Sicard stated this is for prior year invoices that were not paid for a number of reasons. There were confusion with the vendor, invoices not received such as with McMaster Carr, Pat's Towing, and fleet invoices for \$3,682. There are also miscellaneous invoices in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter cleanup for year end. Councilor Rossetti asked about a vendor ATC. Mr. MacEachern stated

ATC is a hazardous waste company on contract to address Edgerly School issues. The original invoice was submitted incorrectly and the city was waiting for the revised invoice before paying. Councilor Rossetti asked about Pat's Towing for numerous vehicles that went to Stoneham or DPW to insure they are not private vehicles. Mr. MacEachern stated that the front end loader, Ford Focus green hatchback and vans are city vehicles, and were towed to be repaired by city fleet mechanics. Chair Scott suggested sending the committee a list of city-owned vehicles that the committee can match up to the invoices. The committee discharged this item without recommendation to await information from Mr. MacEachern.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>DISCHARGED W/NO RECOMMENDATION</b>
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**210277: Requesting approval of a time-only contract extension for the street resurfacing contract with D&R General Contracting Inc.**

Mr. Raiche stated this is a prior year paving contract two seasons ago with a number of outstanding punch list items, some rework to be done and panels out of specification. The contract needs to be extended to allow the contractor to comeback to finish the work. The contractor has not been paid for the work that has not been completed. Councilor White asked if this is the same contractor to cover panels on Cedar Street and was told that was a different vendor. That vendor is to come back when they are in the area and will finish the work which was delayed due to COVID-19. Councilor White stated he is concerned that work may not be done this season. Mr. Raiche will follow up with vendor.

Mr. Raiche stated D&R has a number of different locations on Lowell Street to finish the work. Councilor Scott stated that Bolton Street may be one of them and residents are still upset about flooding. Chair Scott will follow up off line.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
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**210298: Requesting the repurposing of \$300,000 in CPA funds awarded to the City's Public Space and Urban Forestry Division for the rehabilitation of the Central Hill Campus.**

Ms. Stelljes spoke on items 210298 and 210299 which are related. The city had requested emergency funding to allow Central Hill playground project to move forward. Councilor Rossetti stated that the high school building committee came before the committee because of the long process it was taking with the central hill project and funds were taken out of the high school project being put towards central hill campus plan. Funds are now being severed out of the high school project contingency line so the Central Hill project will ADA compliant. The high school contingency line is less than \$100,000. Mr. Raiche and Councilor Rossetti are planning a meeting with State Rep Pat Jehlen for Tuesday to request help with funding for the high school project.

Councilor Ballantyne asked how the money is moving around and asked about \$300,000 that is open space recreation land fund that was awarded to Public space and urban forestry in FY20. It was stated that \$300,000 is to be used for the playground. Ms. Oliveira stated they have a qualified bidder for \$906,000, CPC has granted an emergency funding. It was also stated that the \$400,000 is state grant funding and \$206,000 came from CPA emergency funding

Councilor Mbah asked if the funding put towards Central Hill was strictly for the playground or if it included the stormwater mitigation. It was stated that the funds requested is strictly for building the playground. Councilor Mbah also asked about the parking situation.

Chair Scott asked Ms. Oliveria about parking on Central Hill and it was stated that the \$400,00 grant is for the playground and has nothing to do with parking.

Councilor Rossetti stated the rest of the Central Hill redesign is on hold by the city under capital projects. There were some things that were going to be done such as ADA design and pavers in front, the bill was bounced back to the high school building committee budget of about \$500k which has decreased the contingency line.

Mr. Raiche stated the pavers and walkways will be done now, the rest of the Central Hill project will happen at a later date.

Mr. Raiche stated next week will have a to refund to the contingency line for \$596k by advancing this portion of the construction plan. He also stated they will talk to State Rep Jehlen about the CARES Act funding and that some districts that have high school construction projects have large COVID expenses. He will ask that the Baker Administration make 75% CARES money available to MSBA to help with cost of schools.

Repurposing funds for Central Hill playground.

Councilor White stated there was an appropriation originally for the entire plan, this was included in the overall appropriation. Then the appropriation amount should be reduced by the amount requested in this item.

Chair Scott asked how was the appropriation was funded. Ms. Connor said the questions should be directed to Mr. Bean and will have him get in contact with Councilor White.

Councilor White motioned and it was accepted **that Director Bean address this committee on the bonding status of the \$4,320,000 appropriation, and whether the amount should be reduced by \$206,000 CPA fund.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
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**210299: Requesting the appropriation of \$206,080 from the CPA Fund Open Space/Recreational Land Reserve to the Public Space/Urban Forestry Division for the rehabilitation of the Central Hill Playground.**

See item 210298

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
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**210300: Requesting approval to extend the contract for the Somerville Museum's FY16 CPA grant for an additional three years.**

Councilor White is a trustee and recused himself.

Ms. Stelljes stated the museum is required to install an elevator to be ADA accessible. There was a lawsuit that was appealed. The lawsuit created a delay and could not complete project within the allotted time. The city is looking to move ahead with this request this summer.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**210301: Requesting the appropriation of \$91,324 from the Salary Contingency Salaries Account to the Fire Alarm Personal Services Account to fund the FY20 Agreement with the Firefighters Local 76 Fire Alarm Unit.**

Ms. Connor stated this portion funds FY20 and was voted on at the last full councilor meeting on item 210214 with retroactive FY19 Fire Alarm Personal Services.

Chair Scott asked Ms. Connor if there will be future items for transfer. She will check with Mr. Bean on this matter.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**Handouts:**

- Mini-Packet Fire Alarm 6.16.20 (with 210301)