



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

March 4, 2020

REPORT OF THE CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENTS AND PERSONNEL MATTERS COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Mary Jo Rossetti	Chair	Present	
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Vice Chair	Absent	
Wilfred N. Mbah	City Councilor at Large	Present	
Jesse Clingan	Ward Four City Councilor	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One City Councilor	Present	

The meeting was held in the Committee Room and was called to order by Chair Rossetti at 6:03pm and adjourned at 7:08pm.

Councilor Scott was unable to attend as he was representing the Committee on a Civil Service matter; Councilor Mbah was late due to the same matter.

Chair Rossetti confirmed with Ms. Connor that the administration will ensure that the Planning Board members can be present for the next meeting in March, and that they will let the Chair know the dates for the 16 Police confirmations anticipated in April.

Others present: Annie Connor - Mayor's Office; Sarah White - OSPCD; Kimberly Wells - Assistant Clerk of Committees

Approval of the February 5, 2020 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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204131: Requesting the appointment of Peter Kaplan as an Alternate Member of the Historic Preservation Commission.

The administration informed the Committee that this candidate is no longer under consideration.

RESULT:	PLACED ON FILE
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204656: Requesting the re-appointment of Ryan Falvey to the Historic Preservation Commission.

Ms. White updated the Committee that she has worked with Mr. Falvey for the last five years and appreciates his rational approach, thoughtfulness, and succinctness. He also fills the role of an Urban

Planner, which is a specific professional role that the Commission requires. Mr. Falvey noted that he has served on the Commission for 11-12 years. His interest in preservation was highlighted while updating his home and he was surprised at home many architects suggested that he demolish and expand the space. His passion comes from hands on work and helping homeowners with restoration.

Councilor Clingan commended the candidate's work. Councilor McLaughlin asked if Mr. Falvey has any conflicts of interest that would prevent him from doing his job. Mr. Falvey noted that he did recuse himself from a conversation about a property located close to his employer, even though the employer is moving soon, and would do the same for anything near his office or home. Chair Rossetti confirmed that Mr. Falvey is able to attend most of the Commission meetings and the candidate responded that he is very proud of his attendance record and he is able to attend 85-90% of meetings.

RESULT:

APPROVED

204657: Requesting the re-appointment of Eric Parkes to the Historic Preservation Commission.

Ms. White shared that Mr. Parkes serves in the role of Architect, and has excellent expertise in dissecting components of a building. He is very helpful with on-boarding new members to the Commission and she would love to continue to work with him. Mr. Parkes added that he joined the Commission 11 years ago and also sought to join after completing work on his home that earned him a preservation award. He formerly worked on large projects such as libraries and schools, but is now running his own practice focusing on residential buildings.

Councilor McLaughlin asked if Mr. Parkes would have any conflicts of interest and how he would handle them. Mr. Parkes noted that he would recuse himself and not even be in the room for any conversation, but it has only come up a couple of times in his 11 years. Councilor Clingan noted that the candidate's passion was evident and thanked him for his work. Chair Rossetti asked about the candidate's attendance, and he responded that he misses one to two meetings per year at most.

Chair Rossetti confirmed with Ms. White that there are 12 members on the Commission total (7 regular and 5 alternate) and there are approximately four vacancies. Councilor Clingan asked about the Commission's involvement in advising homeowners, and residents can ask to be on the agenda, as well as requesting information from staff. Once CPA funds are given, a property falls under a preservation restriction, which is overseen by the Commission.

RESULT:

APPROVED

204658: Requesting the re-appointment of Abby Freedman to the Historic Preservation Commission.

The administration informed the Committee that this candidate no longer lives in Somerville.

RESULT:

PLACED ON FILE

204661: Requesting the re-appointment of Heather Davies as an Alternate Member of the Historic Preservation Commission.

The administration informed the Committee that this candidate no longer lives in Somerville.

RESULT:

PLACED ON FILE

207036: Requesting that the members of the Somerville Women's Commission be designated as Special Municipal Employees.

Chair Rossetti noted that this was discussed previously, and she has confirmed with Mr. Kress, who oversees the Women's Commission, that this request was specific to one individual who is no longer serving on this Commission, and is not a concern of the Commission as a whole.

RESULT:

PLACED ON FILE

207097: Requesting the reappointment of Mary Cassesso to the position of Trustee of the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

The administration informed the Committee that the candidate was unavailable this evening and requested that this be rescheduled.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

207099: Requesting the reappointment of Donna Haynes to the position of Trustee of the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

The administration informed the Committee that the candidate was unavailable this evening and requested that this be rescheduled.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

204909: Requesting the re-appointment of Edward Bean as Finance Director.

Mr. Bean summarized that he will be celebrating his 30th anniversary with the City in April. He began as a Public Information Officer, and then worked as the Mayor's Assistant, where he established the Personnel and Purchasing Departments. He then served as the Personnel Director, following which he left briefly to attend graduate school and work for the Department of Transitional Assistance. The Mayor at that time requested that he return to a newly consolidated Finance Department as the City Auditor. Mr. Bean was appointed to the Finance Director role in 2005.

Councilor McLaughlin asked why Mr. Bean holds two roles, and Mr. Bean clarified that the state statute requires that the Finance Director be either the Treasurer or Auditor. His predecessors were Treasurers, but he was more familiar with the Auditor role. Councilor Mbah asked where Mr. Bean sees the City going and Mr. Bean noted that the CIP is ambitious but doesn't cover everything. Planning and continued growth are important to finance the City's needs. He is also focused on debt service to ensure that the City remains within its means. Many of the collective bargaining agreements will also impact the budget in the next fiscal year. He will try to leverage low interest rates to give the City some additional capacity. Mr. Bean added that the level of service requested and interaction with government has increased dramatically, and the City is constantly working to accommodate residents' needs. Councilor Clingan asked how Mr. Bean reacts to plans such as SomerVision, and Mr. Bean noted that they are aspirational, but focusing on the long-term goals serves as a good guide. Councilor Clingan asked as well which departments Mr. Bean supervises, and he noted that the Finance team consists of Assessing, Auditing, Grants Development, Purchasing, and the Treasurer/Collector, but each Director runs his/her own division in terms of

personnel and procedures, but he ensures that the finance team remains on the same page operationally.

Councilor McLaughlin wondered what the response would be to requests to audit the City and Mr. Bean noted that the City is indeed audited annually by a third party. Councilor Mbah asked about convenience fees for payments and Mr. Bean noted that this is paid to the credit card companies and not to the City. For the City to assume those costs would be over \$500k annually. The alternative is to pay in person at City Hall or through checks sent in the mail. It would be difficult to differentiate between Somerville and non-Somerville residents and the City would particularly not want to incur convenience fees for non-residents.

Chair Rossetti shared that the budget process will evolve differently this year, with the Finance Committee working closely with department staff prior to the release of the budget book and Mr. Bean elaborated that budgeting is setting priorities, and the Budget Manager is taking the lead on the process. The deadline for the Program Improvement Requests (PIR) internally is this week. There are many items, such as health insurance and debt service, that are unknown until later in the year. Additionally, the more time that Assessing staff has in the field to determine new growth also allows for more accurate predictions. Chair Rossetti also asked about the process of sending feedback and Mr. Bean shared that he would be happy to receive priorities and information from the Council sooner rather than waiting until budget hearings. Similarly, the administration will share the PIRs with the Finance Committee as early as possible. Chair Rossetti also noted that Mr. Mastrobuoni could benefit from assistance with the budget process, and Mr. Bean is hoping to get the Deputy Auditor more involved and include a newly hired Accounting Analyst in the process.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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207096: Requesting the re-appointment of Edward Bean to the position of City Auditor.

See 204909.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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204850: That the Administration work with this Board to join the 15 ‘Age Friendly Communities’ in Massachusetts by implementing age-friendly employer initiatives and encouraging our local businesses to do the same.

Chair Rossetti noted that she submitted this in 2018 in response to a constituent concern. Somerville has since received this designation, spear-head by the Council on Aging Director, Ms. Hickey. It has since been renewed each year. The Chair expressed an intent to have Ms. Hickey share the Age Friendly Communities work with the Council during Older Americans Month in May.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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Handouts:

- Resume - R Falvey (with 204656)
- Resume - E Parks - (with 204657)