



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

June 3, 2019

REPORT OF THE CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENTS AND PERSONNEL MATTERS  
COMMITTEE

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

Others present: John Long - City Clerk, Candace Cooper - Personnel, Julie McKenzie - Law, George Proakis - OSPCD, Michael Feloney - OSPCD, Rositha Durham - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:02 PM by Chairman Scott and adjourned at 8:11 PM.

**Approval of the May 6, 2019 Minutes**

**RESULT: ACCEPTED**

**207610: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Rachel Schwarz to the Human Rights Commission.**

**RESULT: WITHDRAWN**

**208173: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of David Castellarin to the Retirement Board.**

Candidate is out of town.

**RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**208172: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Sarah Sweeting to the Urban Forestry Committee.**

This is the first youth appointment. Student is part of the honor roll society and could not attend tonight's meeting.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**207545: Requesting confirmation of the re-appointment of Mara Santana to the Housing Authority Board of Commissioners.**

Mr. Feloney introduced the candidate on behalf of Ms. Galante who could not attend due to being in interviews to fill the current vacancies. The candidate has been serving as the treasurer for the housing authority board of commissioners for the past month and has been on the commission since 2015. Ms. Santana oversees every expenditure that comes in monthly which includes expenses for other buildings. There were discussions about work being bid out and awarding to the lowest bidder. The candidate currently lives in Ward 4. The candidate would meet with the chairman and executive office if something inappropriate happened in housing authority.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**207766: Requesting the reappointment of William Gage to the Redevelopment Authority.**

Mr. Proakis introduced the candidate who was first appointed in 2008 and reappointed in 2013. There were discussions about issues with urban renewal plans and demonstration project plans. The candidate's background is in environmental compilation and is active with MEPA. Please see attached letter from Councilor Niedergang in support of this candidate. The chairman asked about the new set of tools and responsibilities for the redevelopment authority. Councilor Ewen-Campen stated he has worked alongside Mr. Gage who has put in an enormous amount of work and stands up to developers.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**208174: Requesting confirmation of the re-appointment of Christopher Allen to the Licensing Commission.**

Mr. Long introduced Mr. Allen. Mr. Allen appeared before the committee approximately 8 months ago. The first license commission meeting was held last November. The licensing commission operations out of the city clerk's office. This role will soon have the responsibility of marijuana. This is a 3 year term and will be overlapping/staggered each year for re-appointments.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**205937: That the Director of Purchasing inform this Board of how it monitors the gender and ethnicity/race of employees of City contractors in compliance with "good faith" efforts as specified in the City's procurement guide.**

Councilor Hirsch asked to hold this item in committee for a future meeting.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**206072: That the Administration provide a detailed explanation for the accrual of pension**

**or creditable service for Board and Commission members, including how these positions are adjudicated differently from part-time employees who earn more than \$5,000 yearly.**

Ms. Connor will reach out to Councilor Hirsch offline to get more direction on her specific concerns.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**206240: That the Administration establish an independent task force to look into hiring more minorities in various departments, most especially the Fire and Police Departments.**

Items 10 and 12 were discussed together.

Ms. Connors from the Mayor's office, stated she will have a conversation with Councilor Mbah off-line on this and how he proposes to shape this matter.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**206922: That the Mayor direct the Director of Personnel to immediately begin filling vacancies in the promotion hierarchy of the Police Department.**

Ms. Cooper stated there were interviews two weeks ago and should have results within a couple of weeks. There are openings for 2 captains, 3 lieutenants and 2 sergeants. Ms. Cooper is hoping the committee will see the names before the break at the end of the fiscal year.

**RESULT:**

**WORK COMPLETED**

**206939: That the Administration create an equity task force to look at the city's hiring practices for all city positions and boards/commissions.**

Items 10 and 12 were discussed together. Ms. Connors from the Mayor's office, stated will have a conversation with Councilor Mbah off-line on this and how he proposes to shape this matter.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**207439: That the Director of Personnel present to this Board the Civil Service hiring processes involving Reserve Lists, in particular, the process followed to authorize the use of a Reserve List for the Police and Fire Departments, the current status of those Reserve Lists, a 12-month projection of those Departments' staffing needs, and a summary of Civil Service Commission decisions against the City over the past 10 years.**

Ms. Cooper and Ms. McKenzie provided a summary with a list of civil service matters in which the city of Somerville was named a party in a case against the City. The committee members asked questions about how often the city has cases brought against them? How often are the cases in the city's favor? It was stated that many on the list are bypass or disciplined. There were discussions on how to change the policy to avoid these issues. Other discussions about strict procedures complying with the city regulations and the commission guides the process. There were emails sent to the committee on the process previously with questions about conditional offers and the city solicitor's feedback on the committees' ability to meet with candidates prior to the candidate meeting. Ms. Cooper stated that the BOA accepted use of the

reserve list back in April 2008. It was stated that a call went out to HRD to come to Somerville and only 2 out of the 26 came in. Additionally, between 11/13-1/22/19 three vacancies, 11/27-1/10/19 two additional patrol left and another five additional vacancies with a total of 10 vacancies. Ms. Cooper discussed vacancy projections stating that in FY2020, there will be 10 individuals in police and 10 will hit 80% within FY2020. In fire, there is one mandatory, 9 other made it known maybe retiring and 29 will hit 80% maximum.

Ms. Cooper handed out an Optimal Police Reserve Timeline listing the critical dates to get police through screening process. There are 9 seats currently reserved in the academy. Two out of the 6 candidates graduated from the academy and some individuals withdrew for a variety of reasons. The committee discussed reasons that candidates may withdraw from the list and new approach to getting candidates interested. One option is to demystify what police work entails and community policing model.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

### **Handouts:**

- Allen, Christopher - AAC Licensing Commission recommendation\_Redacted (with 208174)
- Allen, Christopher Licensing (with 208174)
- Civil Service Decision (with 207439)
- Civil service flow chart FINAL 6.26.18 (with 207439)
- Optimal Police Reserve Timeline (with 207439)
- Communication - M Niedergang (with 207766)
- Gage, William SRA CV and cover letter (with 207766)
- LICENSING COMMISSION (with 208174)
- Response (with 207439)
- Santana, Mara SHA CV (with 207545)
- Somerville Housing Authority (with 207545)
- Somerville Redevelopment Authority description (with 207766)
- UFC ordinance (with 208172)
- Updated UFC ordinance (with 208172)