



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 23, 2026

6:00 PM

Committee of the Whole

This meeting was held via Zoom and in the City Council Chamber and was called to order by Chair Wheeler at 6:03 PM and adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Councilor Ewen-Campen joined the meeting at 6:09 PM.

Councilor Mbah joined the meeting at 6:13 PM.

Others present: Jake Wilson - Maypr, Michael Mastrobuoni - Budget Director, Karin Carroll - Director of Health and Human Services, Thomas Galligani Executive Director of the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, Madalyn Letellier – Assistant City Clerk.

Roll Call

Present:	City Councilor At Large Jon Link, City Councilor At Large Kristen Strezo, Ward Seven City Councilor Emily Hardt, Ward Two City Councilor Jefferson Thomas (J.T.) Scott, City Councilor At Large Ben Wheeler, Jesse Clingan, Ben Ewen-Campen, Lance L. Davis, Wilfred N. Mbah, Matthew McLaughlin and Naima Sait
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1. Review of the FY 2027 Budget

2. Submission of Orders and Resolutions by City Councilors

2.1 Resolution by Councilor Strezo 6/9/26

That the collective salaries of Licensing Commissioners be increased to \$15,180 with the Chair receiving \$5,180 and Licensing Commissioners 2 and 3 receiving \$5,000 each annually.

Councilor Strezo explained her intention behind this item after hearing the Licensing Commission has not received an increase in pay since 2012 and did not receive an increase during the most recent compensation study. Budget Director Mastrobuoni shared there is the possibility to return to the Municipal Compensation Advisory Board and re-visit the pay of all the boards and commissions.

The Resolution was approved by unanimous consent.

2.2 Resolution by Councilor Link 6/15/26

That the Administration add \$400,000 in funding for Youth Development Services grants so that Teen Empowerment may have full funding.

Councilor Link shared there has since been clarification about where funding sources will come from and this resolution may not be needed. Chair Wheeler stated there is a plan for three request-for-proposals (RFP) to

solicit bids for services, two have already been solicited and closed, and the awarding of the bids is scheduled to happen tomorrow, they will go into effect on July 1, 2026. Councilor McLaughlin requested confirmation from the administration that no services will be disrupted to Teen Empowerment. Mayor Wilson stated the city is not knowledgeable of the operations of Teen Empowerment but is under the impression that the July 1 award bid should assist the programming. In response to Councilor Hardt Budget Director Mastrobuoni said until the grant has been awarded the funds cannot be discussed during the bid process. Councilor Scott spoke to the difficulties of program planning for the facility without assurance it will be funded moving forward from the administration. As it stands the possible grants awarded are about \$300,000 and urges the administration to fund the rest of the \$100,000.

The Resolution was approved by unanimous consent.

2.3 Resolution by Councilor Strezo:

That the funding for the previously cut Home Visitor position within the Summer Baby Program be reinstated through Health and Human Services and be inclusive of post-partum care.

Councilor Hardt shared from a previous conversation that there are still enough home visitors to meet the demand. Director Carroll stated there is enough staff across divisions to fulfill the needs for the Summer Baby Program.

The Resolution was approved by unanimous consent.

2.4 Resolution by Councilor Strezo:

That the Administration allocate \$20,000 to support teens on early release Wednesday with additional out of school time programming.

The Resolution was approved by unanimous consent.

2.5 Resolution by Councilor Link:

That the crossing guards receive a 10% raise in the FY 2027 budget.

Councilor Strezo spoke to the struggles in previous years negotiating with unions, and the difficulty in recruitment, and retention with crossing guards.

The Resolution was approved by unanimous consent.

2.6 Resolution by Councilor Mbah:

That the Administration restore the funding for the cut positions in the Racial and Social Justice Department and restore funding towards the mission of the Racial and Social Justice Department.

Councilor Mbah spoke to the re-allocation of roles within the Racial and Social Justice (RSJ) Department and the transition of roles into the new department Equity & Belonging. He spoke to concerns of the goals of Equity & Belonging and the possibility of broadening scope and losing impact

under the new structure.

The Resolution was approved by unanimous consent.

2.7 Resolution by Councilor Mbah:

That the administration utilize the Small Business Stabilization Fund in FY 2027 to infuse spending to local small businesses and educate them on how to use these funds.

Councilor Mbah asked how the city assists departments in keeping funding local. Budget Director Mastrobuoni shared steps throughout the procurement process to ensure local and minority owned business are being engaged with. Executive Director Galligani spoke to increase the amount of local business new methods are continuously being explored. In recent years a disparity study was done to understand more in depth how to best interact and work within the confines of what the city can provide. He continued to speak to the efforts made by the department to share with businesses the benefits of working with the city and recruiting partnerships.

The Resolution was approved by unanimous consent.

3. Enterprise Funds

- 3.1 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0952](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$24,672,499 to fund the Fiscal Year 2027 Water Enterprise Fund budget.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION

- 3.2 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0963](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$2,000,000 from the Water Enterprise Retained Earnings Account to the Water Capital Stabilization Fund.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION

- 3.3 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0951](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$39,633,688 to fund the Fiscal Year 2027 Sewer Enterprise Fund budget.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION

- 3.4 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0962](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$16,000,000 from the Sewer Enterprise Retained Earnings Account to the Sewer Capital Stabilization Fund.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION

- 3.5 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0970](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$238,791 from the Kennedy School Pool Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings to support the Fiscal Year 2027 Kennedy School Pool Enterprise Fund Budget.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION

- 3.6 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0953](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$794,782 to fund the Fiscal Year 2027 Kennedy School Pool Enterprise Fund budget.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION

- 3.7 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0969](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$86,200 from the Dilboy Fields Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings Account to subsidize the Fiscal Year 2027 Dilboy Fields Enterprise Fund Budget.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION

- 3.8 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0954](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$237,500 to fund the Fiscal Year 2027 Dilboy Fields Enterprise Fund Budget.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION

- 3.9 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1015](#)) Requesting approval to appropriate and transfer \$1,000,000 from the Community Benefits Stabilization Fund to the Housing Assistance Stabilization Fund for housing assistance.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION

4. Infrastructure

- 4.1 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0965](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$7,150,000 from the Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the Street Reconstruction and Renovation Stabilization Fund to support the 5-Year Capital Investment Plan.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION

- 4.2 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1016](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$549,399 from the Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the Traffic Safety Stabilization Fund for traffic safety improvements.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION

5. Salary and Retirement

- 5.1 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0961](#)) Requesting approval of a transfer of \$1,676,728 from the Salary Contingency Account-Salaries to the Salary & Wage Stabilization Fund.
RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION
- 5.2 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0966](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$1,000,000 from the Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the Salary & Wage Stabilization Fund.
RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION
- 5.3 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0967](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$1,200,000 from the Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust Fund.
RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION
- 5.4 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1008](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$200,000 from the Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the Compensated Absence Liability Fund.
RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION

6. FY27 Budget

- 6.1 Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0950](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$376,778,493 to fund the Fiscal Year 2027 General Fund Operating Budget.
- Councilor Scott spoke to the options available to the Council this evening regarding the budget. He expressed the possibility of voting the budget down completely and asking the administration to come back with a new budget on Thursday evening. Councilor Scott spoke to the attempt of the Council to act as financial carriers for the city and would rather focus his motions on legislative intent. He spoke to concerns throughout the budget season regarding Teen Empowerment, layoffs, increase to Police funding, and the School Committees request to add money and positions to their budget. He continued to speak to his ability to act as an advocate for his constituents during the budget season and ensure their priorities are funded. Councilor Scott shared he would be voting “no” on this item.
- Councilor Ewen-Campen spoke to previous budget seasons and the active shift in efficiency and process from Councilors and staff. He spoke to his support to pass the budget before the Council. The Councilor stated his inability to support the six additional positions that were proposed during

the School Committee budget proposal due to the financial constraints currently facing the city. Councilor McLaughlin expressed his intent to vote to approve the budget and in the face of a large deficit not approving the budget would not assist anyone in the city. Councilors Mbah, Link, Hardt, and Sait expressed similar concerns regarding the hurdles faced this budget season and the impact it has had on schools, residents, and employees.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: City Councilor At Large Link, City Councilor At Large Strezo, Ward Seven City Councilor Hardt, City Councilor At Large Wheeler, Ewen-Campen, Mbah, McLaughlin and Sait

NAY: Ward Two City Councilor Scott

RECUSED: Clingan and Davis