



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

March 25, 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: Lt. Timothy Mitsakis - SPD, Tom Galligani - OSPCD, Jill Lathan - P&R, Ben Waldrip - P&R, Alan Inacio - OSPCD, Dave Goodridge - IT, Nick Antanavica - ISD, Ed Bean - Finance, Mike Mastrobuoni - SomerStat, Annie Connor - Chief of Staff, Khushbu Webber - Legislative Liaison, Rositha Durham - Clerk of Committees. Ki Wells - Assistant Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place virtually via GoToWebinar and was called to order at 6:03 PM by Chairman Scott and adjourned at 8:28 PM.

Approval of the March 10, 2020 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
----------------	-----------------

Development Payments

209831: Requesting acceptance of a \$250,000 annual payment from Wynn MA LLC in accordance with its Surrounding Community Agreement.

Mr. Galligani and Mr. Inacio stated this annual payment was negotiated as part of the arbitration process and will go into the General fund.

RESULT:	APPROVED
----------------	-----------------

209836: Requesting approval to create the Small Business Assistance Stabilization Fund and accept a payment to the Fund of \$150,000 from Wynn MA LLC to develop initiatives so local businesses can take advantage of the opportunities provided by the Encore Casino.

Mr. Galligani funding of \$150,000 per year would support small businesses do business with the Wynn Casio. The funds can be repurposed in various ways over several weeks and months. It was stated there's a lot of flexibility working with the city solicitor's office to ensure compliance local businesses have financial and other standards to work with Wynn Casino.

RESULT:	APPROVED
----------------	-----------------

209837: Requesting approval to create the Water Transportation/Riverway Public Safety Stabilization Fund and accept a payment to the Fund of \$150,000 from Wynn MA LLC for the purpose of funding improvements to facilitate water transportation.

Mr. Inacio stated as in the agreement to facilitate the water transportation Item 5.5., the annual payment will go into a newly created stabilization fund to expend out and require city council vote. Funds will be dedicated to the work with Somerville departments Police, Fire and Public Works.

RESULT:	APPROVED
----------------	-----------------

209834: Requesting approval to create the 259 McGrath Highway Stabilization Fund and accept a payment to the Fund of \$3,500 from Divine Signs for tree replacement and signage.

Mr. Inacio stated this is an old ZBA case for tree removal and he will work with Ms. Oliveira and the Urban Forestry team on this matter.

RESULT:	APPROVED
----------------	-----------------

209835: Requesting approval to create the 378 Highland Ave Stabilization Fund and accept a payment to the Fund of \$3,000 from C. Poutahidis for the establishment of a parklet.

Mr. Inacio stated this is an old ZBA case for the Davis Square area.

RESULT:	APPROVED
----------------	-----------------

Salary Transfers

209829: Requesting the transfer of \$60,000 within the Inspectional Services Department, from its Salaries Account to its Professional and Technical Services Account, to continue using contract health inspectors for required food service inspections.

Mr. Antanavica stated funds for the remainder of the year. He has been unable to fulfill the positions and will contract out the services as needed. He also talked about needing food/health inspectors to help reopen restaurants. Mr. Antanavica currently has two vacant health inspector positions. There were close to two dozen applicants for the open positions but they did not meet the qualifications required by the City of Somerville. He also stated the salaries for these positions are right in the middle as other communities for the same positions.

RESULT:	APPROVED
----------------	-----------------

Police Grants

209833: Requesting acceptance of a \$59,151.53 grant with no new match required, from the Boston Mayor's Office of Emergency Management to the Police Department for the purchase of a security camera system to enhance physical security at Police Headquarters.

Lt. Timothy Mitsakis stated the current system has been in place for 15 years and this request will be installed in the lobby and exterior of the building. He also stated that their servers has crashed numerous times and will replace existing cameras, 5 outside and 7 inside.

RESULT:

APPROVED

Schools Transfer Request

209918: Requesting a transfer of \$155,000 from the Public Schools Ordinary Maintenance Account to the city's Information Technology Ordinary Maintenance Account.

Mr. Goodridge stated this request is for PSTN-Usage and Cellular outbound calling. This is a recurring item that appears every year.

RESULT:

APPROVED

Equipment Purchases

209826: Requesting the appropriation of \$486,805 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for heavy equipment/vehicles for the Parks and Recreation Department to manage the city's athletic fields and facilities.

Ms. Lathan and Mr. Waldrup described needs for equipment and vehicles for Parks and Recreation. Some equipment/vehicle will be needed for moving tight areas around trees and basketball courts and infield maintenance for Dilboy and Hodgkin's Fields. Other equipment/vehicles will be used for snow removal and aerating fields. Ms. Lathan stated there is over 11 acres of land not including Conway Park to provide routine maintenance. There was discussion from the committee about the current COVID-19 situation and possible loss of revenue which makes it hard to justify expenses. Councilor Ballantyne inquired about the technology for the plow sander and asked if there is better option to buy new technology. Additionally, Mr. Bean was asked where this request is in the current CIP. It was stated there are four CIP's. Water and Sewer CIP was updated and sent out last December 2019. There may need to be changes to the CIP's given COVID-19. Councilor Ballantyne also suggested Parks and Recreation coordinate with DPW who has been testing newer technology and follow up before Thursday night City Council meeting. Ms. Lathan stated the requested equipment/vehicle may take 3-6 months to get in once the order has been placed. The committee also discussed cutting back on the request. This request was kept in committee for further input from the Mayor's office.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

209832: Requesting acceptance of a \$208,734 grant that requires a match, from MA DOT to SPCD's Mobility Division to expand the Blue Bike program.

Mr. Inacio stated this is to create four new bike stations to help decrease the city's carbon footprint. Eventually, will bring on electronic bikes. The city will match \$59,000.

RESULT:

APPROVED

Budgeting Discussions

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

Mr. Bean and Mr. Mastrobuoni sent an email dated March 23 with attachments relating to the program improvement requests for 2021 budget. Mr. Bean talked about the city may be facing catastrophic times and may be seeking reduction in the proposed budget. He also stated that everyone will stay on the payroll right now. He stated that Chapter 44 Section 21 that the state will allow charges on any account for COVID-19 expenses. Funds are being transferred. There are two emergency grants for \$200,000 with the possibility of using for overtime, cleaning buildings and other necessary expenses. Mr. Bean stated he asked all departments to identify all lag money and transfer into PSD accounts. Mr. Bean will review every requisition directly. There is a hiring freeze in place and a hold on most capital projects. He also stated the bond market has tanked given the current situation. Mr. Bean stated the city will need help from Beacon Hill and the Feds. Additionally, there were questions about anticipated meals, hotel/motel taxes and building permits. Mr. Bean should have funding from snow removal. He also stated that city has record Free Cash of around \$19M this year with over \$4M in the Rainy Day Stabilization fund. He will talk to ISD and OSPCD to get an assessment on where things are going for 2020 projects. Additionally, there will 0% wage increase during this time.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

209789: That this Council's Committee on Finance discuss the peoples' budget and priorities for FY21.

Mr. Chair talked about why he and Councilor McLaughlin started this initiative to engage constituents who may not attend meetings and get their thoughts on what's needed in the city.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

Handouts:

- PIR List FY21 for CC (with 201740)