



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES**

November 14, 2018
REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
William A. White Jr.	Chair	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	Vice Chair	Present	
Ben Ewen-Campen	Ward Three Alderman	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One Alderman	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Ward Two Alderman	Present	
Jesse Clingan	Ward Four Alderman	Absent	
Mark Niedergang	Ward Five Alderman	Present	
Lance L. Davis	Ward Six Alderman	Absent	
Stephanie Hirsch	Alderman At Large	Present	
Wilfred N. Mbah	Alderman at Large	Present	

Others present: Eileen McGettigan - Law, Michael Glavin - OSPCD, Tom Galligani - OSPCD, Ellen Schachter - OSPCD, Brad Rawson - OSPCD, Kristen Stelljes - CPA, Annie Connor - Legislative Liaison, Peter Forcellese - Legislative Clerk.

The Committee met as a Committee of the Whole. The meeting took place in the Aldermen's Chamber and was called to order at 7:19 PM by Chairman White and adjourned at 10:07 PM.

1. Approval of the October 22, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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204982: That the Director of SPCD outline any financial incentives offered in the city's Amazon bid as well as plans for a Community Benefits Agreement in the possible development.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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205445: That the Administration establish a dedicated fund within the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to provide direct housing assistance for municipal employees struggling to remain in Somerville, which could be funded through revenue from a real estate transfer fee.

Mr. Bean suggested that this item be directed to the trustees of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Alderman Ewen-Campen's motion to re-submit this item and direct it to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund was approved.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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205446: That the Administration establish a dedicated fund within the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to support community land trusts in Somerville, which could be funded through revenue from a real estate transfer fee.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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205478: That the Director of Purchasing, with the Administration, provide this Board with an analysis of the cost of raising the living wage to \$15.00 per hour, and determine if a more appropriate inflation adjuster may be used.

Ms. Connor reported that Budget Director Michael Mastrobuoni is working on this and that she will advise the committee when it's ready. Alderman Rossetti commented that she understands that city staff is busy, but this item was submitted in April and the community wants the information.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205707: That the Administration report in writing on an Acquisition Fund to increase the City's ability to buy parcels for open space.

See item# 206706.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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205076: That the Administration appropriate funds to contract a community organization to provide free or low-cost legal services on immigration and naturalization issues to immigrants living in Somerville.

See item #206706

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205956: Requesting acceptance of a rapid deployment vehicle, ballistics helmets, and sunglasses from OEM, with no match required, for the Police Department's Special Response Team.

Ms. Connor informed the committee that Chief Fallon was unable to attend tonight's meeting and she requested that this item be placed on the committee's next meeting agenda.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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206003: Requesting approval of an Order of Taking for 90 Washington Street.

Items 206003, 206004, 206005, 206286 all pertain to the property located at 90 Washington Street and were discussed together.

Chairman White stated that the information previously requested by him and Alderman Niedergang has not been provided.

Chairman White's motion that the Administration provide an updated cost for the proposed public safety building at 90 Washington Street and include the cost of fire equipment, was approved.

Alderman Niedergang's motion that the Administration provide details of how the parcel at 90 Washington Street will be used and advise whether underground parking is possible, was approved.

Chairman White's motion that the Administration provide a realistic estimate of the value of the property at 90 Washington Street, was approved.

Ms. McGettigan requested go into Executive Session to discuss the city's options regarding this matter. She noted that 2 of the parcel's 3 owners had previously requested to speak with the mayor, however, she suggested that they speak to the BOA since the matter is before it.. Some owners are present. The committee decided to proceed to Executive Session at the end of this meeting.

At the end of the meeting, a Roll Call vote was taken to enter Executive Session with Aldermen Scott, Rossetti, Niedergang, Ewen-Campen, Hirsch, Ballantyne, McLaughlin and White voting YES and Aldermen Mbah, Clingan and Davis recorded as ABSENT. No votes were taken in the Executive Session.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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206005: Requesting an appropriation and authorization to borrow \$1,860,000 in a bond for new Public Safety Building design, architectural, engineering, and owner's and contractual project management services.

Items 206003, 206004, 206005, 206286 all pertain to the property located at 90 Washington Street and were discussed together.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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206004: Requesting an appropriation and authorization to borrow \$8,745,000 in a bond to purchase land by eminent domain.

Items 206003, 206004, 206005, 206286 all pertain to the property located at 90 Washington Street and were discussed together.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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206286: Director of Capital Projects and Planning submitting the Public Safety Feasibility Study/Programming and Site Evaluation Report (related to #s 206003, #206004, and #206005).

Items 206003, 206004, 206005, 206286 all pertain to the property located at 90 Washington Street and were discussed together.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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206706: That the Administration report, in writing, on the current status of an Acquisition Fund to increase the City's ability to buy parcels for open space. (2nd request)

Mr. Bean said that if the intent is to purchase property, then a Stabilization Fund could accomplish the goal, and a vote of the BOA could modify an existing Stabilization Fund to take care of this. The current balance in the Open Space fund is \$95,000. Alderman Scott stated that he is seeking a response from the Administration regarding funding of the account. Mr. Bean commented that this will have to be discussed for the future.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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206805: Requesting acceptance of a \$300,000 grant with no new match required, from the EPA to the SPCD Economic Development Division for citywide Brownfield site assessments.

Mr. Inacio told the committee that this is a 'no match' EPA grant for city-wide assessments of Brownfield sites.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206913: Requesting that the Director of SPCD and the Director of Housing Stability present to this Board the proposed business plan and budget of the Office of Housing Stability.

See item #207032.

Mr. Glavin spoke briefly about the effort put into the Office of Housing Stability by Ms. Schachter, who told the committee that she hopes to start hiring staff for the department in January. Ms. Schachter gave a presentation and covered the department's mission statement and objectives, housing instability, the engagement process, direct and contracted services, policy and programmatic initiatives, staffing plan and a supplemental budget request (for the Assistant Director position and Contractor Services).

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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206965: Requesting an appropriation of \$2,655,415 in Parking Meter Receipts to reduce the FY19 Tax Levy.

Mr. Bean said that this is one of the recap item used to reduce the tax levy. The requested amount is higher than the amount that was previously estimated amount. The overlay figures will be presented at a later time.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206966: Requesting the appropriation of \$2,010,673 from the Salary and Wage Stabilization Fund to the Police Other Lump Sum Benefits Account to fund the arbitration award for the Police Superior Officers Association for FY2013-FY2018.

Mr. Bean explained that the amount covers contracts over a 6-year span, from FY13 - FY18.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206967: Requesting the appropriation of \$556,906 from the Salary Contingency Salaries

Account to various Police Personal Services Accounts to fund the FY2019 arbitration award for Police Superior Officers Association.

Mr. Bean spoke on this item.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206968: Requesting the appropriation of \$450,000 from the Unreserved Fund Balance to the Law Department's Legal Services Account, to fund anticipated outside legal counsel invoices.

Ms. Connor requested that counsel appear before the BOA on November 20, 2018 and convene in Executive Session.

RESULT:	DISCHARGED W/NO RECOMMENDATION
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206969: Requesting approval to appropriate \$153,850 from the Capital Stabilization fund for ongoing environmental remediation work at Conway Park.

Mr. Rawson told the committee that a licensed site professional will continue risk assessment at Conway Park and that the city is not sure of the strategy to complete the work. Alderman Scott stated that he has some of the results from the consultants, but not for the ballfield and playground areas, and he asked why there was secrecy on those. Mr. Rawson said that the city responded to requests to re-open the park as soon as possible, noting that assessment is still underway for the ballpark and playground areas, and that the results will be made available to the public as soon as possible. Alderman Scott stated that the responsive records do exist but aren't being made public. Mr. Rawson replied that there is information available on the city's website and as soon as additional information is received, it will be posted. Alderman Scott stated that he is deeply concerned, saying that he received a letter from the Law Department stating that the BOA was not allowed to know what is going on at Conway Park. He told the committee that he will appeal this to the Supervisor of Public Records. Chairman White commented that a motion could be made to see the records, and if the response is that they are confidential, they could be discussed in Executive Session.

Alderman Scott's motion that the Administration present this Board's Finance Committee with the preliminary test results for the ballfield section of Conway Park, and (if existent) the preliminary test results for the remaining unopened portions of Conway Playground, was approved.

RESULT:	DISCHARGED W/NO RECOMMENDATION
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206970: Requesting approval to appropriate \$12,426.39 from the Trash Transfer Stabilization Fund for to pay for outstanding cleanup related expenses.

Alderman Ewen-Campen recused himself from all discussion and votes on this item.

Mr. Inacio told the committee that the invoices were delayed and that funds are available to pay them.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206971: Requesting approval for a time-only extension of a contract with OverUnder for the ArtFarm project.

Alderman Ewen-Campen recused himself from all discussion and votes on this item.

This item is for a time extension, only.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206972: Requesting acceptance of a \$92,888 grant with no new match required, from the HUD Healthy Homes/Tufts University/STEP Collaborative to SPCD for an air filtration study.

Mr. Inacio addressed this item and will send information on the plan to Alderman Rossetti, as requested.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206973: Requesting acceptance of a \$61,610 grant with no new match required, from the MA Housing and Economic Development Department to the Arts Council for the build-out of the Nibble Kitchen.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206974: Requesting acceptance of a \$17,216 grant with no new match required, from the Office of Justice Programs to the Police Department for Active Shooter Response Training in schools and public buildings.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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206975: Requesting acceptance of a \$12,500 grant with no new match required, from the MA Department of Energy Resources to the Office of Sustainability and the Environment, for assistance with clean energy procurement.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206976: Requesting acceptance of a \$8,700 Title III B grant with no new match required, from Somerville Cambridge Elder Services to the Council on Aging for transportation costs.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206977: Requesting acceptance of a \$7,816 Title III D grant with no new match required, from Somerville Cambridge Elder Services to the Council on Aging for health and wellness programs.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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207032: Requesting a supplemental appropriation of \$135,050 to the Office of Housing Stability Personal Services Accounts (\$45,000) and Ordinary Maintenance Accounts

(\$90,050), and approval to establish an OHS Assistant Director, to fund that office through FY19.

See item# 206913.

The correct amount of the request is \$135,050 as stated in the official text of the item. The incorrect amount was mistakenly entered into the agenda text. Alderman Hirsch spoke about data sharing and Ms. Schachter said that she wants to work towards compiling data with the hope on integrating it down the line. Responding to a question from Alderman Ballantyne, Ms. Schachter reported the salary breakdown, as follows: Assistant Director - \$81,600; Case Manager - \$61,200, and Intake/Admin - \$61,000. Alderman Ballantyne asked if there would be changes in the Housing Department and Ms. Schachter said that some frontline work will be shifted to her department and that the Council on Aging would retain some housing work as it's an appropriate place for seniors to get information.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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207033: Requesting a change in the rate of pay for the vacant Assistant Clerk of Committees position, from \$1462.91/month to \$1,667/month.

Alderman Ballantyne explained that the increase would raise the salary for this position to \$20,000 in FY-19. Alderman Rossetti commented that if a new employee is receiving an increase, then the current Clerk of Committees should also receive an increase. Alderman Scott agreed with Alderman Rossetti and said that the situation will only get harder if another clerk is lost over this. Alderman Ballantyne stated that a departmental restructuring is being considered and there are no plans to increase the salary for that position at this time.

Alderman Rossetti asked that a spreadsheet of the 3 clerk positions be prepared and that the Director of Personnel weigh in on the matter. Alderman Ballantyne stated that if this item is not approved, the job posing would need to be changed. She told the committee that there needs to be some flexibility to fill the position, since there have been no serious applicants since the summer. Alderman Niedergang supports the item and said that if an alderman wants to increase the salary for the Clerk of Committees position, a resolution could be submitted to that effect.

The item was approved on a voice vote with Aldermen Rossetti and Scott being recorded as voting No.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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207034: Requesting approval to extend the contract for the Somerville Museum's FY15 CPA grant for an additional three years.

Chairman White recused himself from all discussion and votes on this item and Alderman Rossetti assumed the Chair.

Ms. Stelljes stated that this is a time extension, only.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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Handouts:

OHS Presentation (with 206913, 207032)