



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

February 11, 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: Councilor Jess Clingan, Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen, Ann Connor-Mayor's office, Jill Lathan-Parks and Recreation, Ed Bean-Auditor, David Goodrich-IT, Hannah Pappenheim-City Solicitor, Councilor Lance Davis, Luisa Oliveira-OSPCD, Police Captain Richard Levey, Fire Chief Charles Breen, Ben Sommer-OSPCD, Michael Mastrobuoni-SomerStat, and Lauren Drago-OSPCD

The meeting was held in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Chairperson Scott and adjourned at 10:01 p.m.

Approval of the January 21, 2020 Minutes

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

FUNDING REQUESTS

209311: Requesting the appropriation of \$250,000 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the Conway Park Construction Special Revenue Account in order to fund Conway Park fields design services.

This item was requested by the City Administration and item 19 requesting to enter into Executive Session to discuss certain aspects of the EPA negotiations relative to Conway Park.

Ms. Oliveira presented slides on Conway Park. It was stated that Conway Park is the third hardest working field in Somerville and a citywide resource. Extensive discussion followed on many points of field use, safety, and implications of field design and installation.

Conway Park averaged 1,400 hours. The city's baseline is 500 hours for rectangular grass fields and 800 hours for diamond grass fields. This new policy will go into effect with the new grass fields. Synthetic turf fields can be permitted March 1-December 1, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m. Peak hours

are Monday-Friday 3 p.m. - 10 p.m. Spring and Fall with 910 hours and weekend hours = 1,638 total peak hours. There were discussions about the Healey School and Dilboy coming online in 2021. With the closure of Conway Park, many teams had to double up on other fields. There were discussions about removing contaminants and backfilling with soils. Additionally, it was stated that DEP/EPA have not expressed an opinion on whether the field should be turf or national grass. EPA will only pay for remediation of materials contaminated >50ppm of PCBs, and will be splitting costs for remediation with the city. Anything more than that will be paid by the City. There were discussions about natural grass fields needing two seasons to rest. The remediation process will require 15-17 months. Work can start in the winter 2021 and completion in 2022. Councilor-at-Large White asked if anyone had looked into best practices of playing on turf fields during the hot days and are there reduction in hours. Ms. Lathan stated that usually youth programs are done by June and start up again in September.

The EPA wants to know which solution the city will go with: 18” or 36”, grass or artificial turf.

Ms. Oliveira will be at Thursday’s City Council meeting and will need six (6) votes since this is not a request for a bond.

RESULT:	NOT APPROVED. [2 TO 3]
AYES:	White Jr., Mbah
NAYS:	Scott, Ballantyne, Rossetti

209520: Assistant City Solicitor seeking approval to appear before this Council to discuss approval of the settlement of a pending claim in connection with the flood occurring at City Hall on 11/23/2018.

Ms. Pappenheim discussed the flood in IT in 2018 and stated that the claim has been paid in full.

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

209583: Requesting the appropriation of \$85,000 from the Capitol Stabilization Fund for the purchase of firefighter bunker gear.

Fire Chief Breen stated that previously they had received \$150,000 for second bunker gear for 2/3 of the department. This \$85,000 will complete the second set of gear, allowing firefighters to wash one set and have the second set.

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

209584: Requesting a transfer of \$3,000 from the Economic Development Division's Salaries Account to the School Department Salaries Account to fund a Fab Lab door monitor.

Mr. Sommer stated this request is for a door monitor at the Healey School to extend the time from 6-8 p.m. It was stated by Mr. Bean that the fund is lag money. Mr. White asked for more information on which position for the lag money and why it’s vacant. This information will be sent to the committee.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

209589: Requesting the acceptance of a grant of \$74,400 from the MA Office of Public Safety for Police Department staffing.

Police Captain Levey stated this is a request for a non-matching grant from MA Public Safety and will help staffing. This is a traditional non-matching grant that the Somerville Police Department receives every year.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

ITEMS TO PLACE ON FILE

206737: SMEA President Ed Halloran submitting comments re: #205501, an Administrative Order for the appointment of school physicians and nurses by the School Committee.

RESULT: **PLACED ON FILE**

207080: That the Administration present this Board's Committee on Finance with the preliminary test results for the ballfield at Conway Park, and, if existent, the remaining unopened portions of Conway Playground.

RESULT: **WORK COMPLETED**

207172: That the Director of SPCD work with this Board to create overlay districts or other policies for "Opportunity Zones" in order to maximize community benefits generated by developments in these areas.

The Committee believes that this item should be referred to the Land User Committee.

RESULT: **DISCHARGED W/NO RECOMMENDATION**

207650: That the Director of Water and Sewer take the steps described within regarding lead service lines.

RESULT: **WORK COMPLETED**

PREVIOUSLY HELD ITEMS

209433: Requesting approval of a transfer of \$21,000 from the Police Holidays Account to the Animal Control Kennel Account, to cover FY20 costs.

Police Captain Levey stated this is result of an animal cruelty case. Last year May 2018, the police department was required to maintain 8 cats and 1 dog. Some of the animals needed medicine and procedures. The previous owner is no longer able to own animals again.

RESULT:

APPROVED

209434: Requesting approval of a transfer of \$11,900 in the Police Animal Control Division, from the Personal Services Salary Account to the Kennel Account, to cover FY20 costs.

Police Captain Levey discussed items and 11 and 12 together. The requested funds will complete the payments to the contractor.

RESULT:

APPROVED

209490: Requesting approval of an annual Vacant Property Registration Fee of \$500.

Ms. Drago discussed that property vacant for 90 days' would pay \$500. Vacant properties require more oversight. This fee would allow for light inspection and recoup city's costs. Councilor-at-Large Rossetti requested that the city's ordinance be attached to this item for future discussions. Ms. Drago stated this issue had previously been discussed in Legislative Matters committee. Chair Scott has spoken with Dir Antanavica about increasing the frequency of inspection for vacant properties in the interests of public safety and public health, which would increase the nexus and fee associated with the ordinance. The item was held pending further discussion with Dir Antanavica and his presence at a future meeting of the committee.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

INFORMATION REQUESTS

207664: That the Director of Purchasing report to this Council's Committee on Finance on the City's ability to separate out bid items to detail labor and material costs.

Ms. Connor met with Mr. Raiche and according to procurement law, it is nearly impossible to breakout labor and materials. Usually bids come in lump sum. Councilor-at-Large Rossetti will speak with the Purchasing Director separately.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

207746: That the Director of Finance provide a financial update on all funds that FRIT paid to the City pursuant to the covenant, any funds expended by the City from those payments and the amount remaining and the accounts in which these funds remain.

Ms. Connor provided a document with all payments received to date from FRIT. Councilor-at-Large White asked Ms. Connor to review the payments from FRIT with the law office, to review the scope of obligation, any future payments, items not provided payment yet and compare to what's been received to date. Chair Scott recommended the item be held pending a ledger of amounts expected anticipated to be paid under the covenant.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

207902: That the Director of Finance discuss with this Council's Finance Committee the

monetary split with the State for the City's traffic enforcement citations.

Police Captain Levey distributed a document with screenshot of payments made to the city since 2015. Captain Levey stated not every citation is a 50/50 split with the state. The funds come in from the state once paid by the person who committed the violation and the funds go to the city's general fund, paid quarterly by the state. Councilor-at-Large Rossetti requested a breakdown of what the numbers represent from the document that was distributed tonight.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
----------------	-----------------------

208049: That the Finance Committee be made aware of the punch list associated with Contract #MADoT-90025 for construction services for the Beacon Streetscape project, as it is updated.

Ms. Connor provided a punch list that was dated 12/19/19. This information is also available on the city's website at: somervillema.gov/beatconst.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
----------------	-----------------------

DISCUSSION ITEMS

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

Mr. Mastrobuoni and Mr. Bean stated they have a goal to have these meetings consistently over the next several months. These meetings will help with program improvement requests and to create an opportunity for the city council to provide feedback. Mr. Mastrobuoni works with the departments to have Personal Services key milestone merit reviews in March and Ordinary Maintenance key milestone in April. This new process will have more collaborative relationships with the city councilors, who will be able to review Program Improvement Requests and provide their own prioritization rankings to the administration.

Departments are asked to provide a 200 word summary identifying their requests. Councilor Ballantyne requested an easier way to match up the employee names, since last year the names were not put in the budget book. A secure line file was sent to the city councilors but the lines did not match up properly with the employee names.

The next budget session review will be at the first meeting in March.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
----------------	--------------------------

19. Administration requesting to enter into Executive Session to discuss certain aspects of the EPA negotiations relative to Conway Park.

No votes were taken in Executive Session.

Handouts:

- Conway Park FEB 11, 2020-FCA (with 209311)

- NERO SOP Cap 2007 JF2-1 (with 209311)
- FRIT Summary (with 207746)
- Beacon St. Punchlist (with 208049)
- Feb11 budget presentation (with 201740)