

City of Somerville, Massachusetts
Matters of Business of the Board of Aldermen

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

June 6, 2018, 7:00 PM
Aldermanic Chambers, City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue

NOTICE: This is NOT the official version of the Board of Aldermen's minutes. While reasonable efforts have been made to assure the accuracy of the data provided, do not rely on this information without first checking with the City Clerk.

OPENING OF THE MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Ward Seven Alderman Katjana Ballantyne

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

1. Roll Call Call of the Roll.

206024
(ID:18812)

Ald. Rossetti sponsored a moment of silence for Frank Rinfret.
RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

CITATIONS

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ORDERS, ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS OF MEMBERS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

COMMUNICATIONS OF THE MAYOR

2. Mayor's Request 206025 (ID:18805)

Requesting an appropriation of \$225,971,887 to fund the General Fund Operating Budget for FY19.

The President sponsored Mayor Curtatone, who introduced the FY2019 municipal budget to the Board. He said that the budget is conservative, but supports an equitable economy, a healthy community of opportunity, and a just society. It includes \$800,000 in new investments to promote equity and move the city forward. New investments include:

- More out-of-school time coordination and programming.
- A new Office of Housing Stability, to preserve and expand affordable housing.
- Workforce development through the city's Nibble Culinary Entrepreneurship Program.
- A new public mural program to expand public art.
- Better personal protective equipment for the city's firefighters.
- Traffic enhancements to increase safety for all forms of transportation.
- More funding for school nurses, to relieve the current shortage.

Overall, the budget represents a 3.9% increase over FY2018. 80% of the increase is due to increased fixed costs. Local taxes and state aid account for almost 90% of revenue. The city has become more self-reliant, as state aid has dwindled by \$23,000,000 since 2001. The city benefits from investments, where income has doubled, as well as new growth, hotel and meal taxes, PILOT revenues, and building permit revenues. Use of free cash is reduced by \$250,000, which shows a reduction in any structural deficit. Finally, the Mayor pointed out that over the years, the city has saved over \$34,000,000 in stabilization funds, to be better prepared for the future. The budget proposes spending \$3,022 per capita, compared to Boston at \$4,802, and Cambridge at \$6,190.

Ald. White noted that overall real estate taxes are projected to increase by 8.1%. The Mayor responded that much of the increase is due to projected new growth.

Ald. Rossetti said that the budget leaves city revenue at \$100,000 below the levy limit, and asked what the amount was last year. The Mayor said last year it was \$1,500,000. She said she didn't like this year's amount, and asked for the figures over the last 5 years.

Ald. Ballantyne asked how much of the property tax was projected to come from residential vs. commercial purposes. The Mayor said the proportion was approximately 75% residential and 25% commercial, and exact numbers would be determined when the tax rate is set.

Ald. Hirsch praised the Mayor's staff on all the work that's been done to generate the budget. She pointed out that much spending isn't mandated, but has a major impact on residential life, such as traffic calming.

Ald. Mbah asked whether the budget must be balanced, and the Mayor responded that in only one account, snow removal, can the city close the year with a deficit.

Ald. Niedergang stressed that the budget must be posted online.

Ald. Scott asked how much the Salary Stabilization Fund increased, and the Mayor said a breakout of all stabilization funds would be forthcoming.

Ald. Ballantyne asked where revenue growth might occur over next 5 years. The Mayor responded that Assembly Row, Union Square, Boynton Yards, and the Green Line corridor will all see enhanced growth opportunities in the tourism, lifestyle, green tech, and clean tech sectors.

Ald. White asked the Mayor to provide detailed debt projections to the Finance Committee during its deliberations.

Ald. Hirsch said she wanted to be sure that if revenues came in at greater than projected levels, the Mayor would seek to address municipal needs that aren't met in the budget.

At the conclusion of the budget discussion, Ald. White moved to waive the reading of the remaining items on the agenda, and forward all items to this Board's Finance Committee for consideration. With no opposition, the motion was approved.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION

FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

3. Mayor's Request 206026 (ID:18810) Requesting an appropriation of \$1,750,000 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to reduce the FY19 Tax Levy.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION

FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

4. Mayor's Request 206027 (ID:18801) Requesting to appropriate or reserve \$1,986,473 in estimated FY19 CPA revenue for CPA projects and expenses.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION

FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

5. Mayor's Request 206028 (ID:18809) Requesting the appropriation of \$377,622 for the FY19 Cable Television PEG Access Fund Budget.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION

FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

6. Mayor's Request 206029 (ID:18811) Requesting an appropriation of \$865,346 to fund the FY19 Veterans Memorial & Founders Ice Rink Enterprise Fund Budget.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION

FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

7. Mayor's Request 206030 (ID:18813) Requesting an appropriation of \$41,000 from the Veterans Memorial Ice Rink Retained Earnings Account to subsidize the FY19 Veterans Memorial Ice Rink Enterprise Fund Budget.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION

FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

8. Mayor's Request 206031 (ID:18814) Requesting the appropriation of \$205,000 to fund the FY19 Dilboy Enterprise Fund Budget.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

9. Mayor's Request 206032 (ID:18816) Requesting the appropriation of \$17,000 from the Dilboy Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings Account to subsidize the FY19 Dilboy Enterprise Fund Budget.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

10. Mayor's Request 206033 (ID:18807) Requesting approval of an amendment to Ordinance 2-373 to include a Revolving Fund for Community Gardens.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

11. Mayor's Request 206034 (ID:18806) Requesting the approval of FY19 expenditure limitations for departmental Revolving Funds.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

COMMUNICATIONS OF CITY OFFICERS

12. Officer's Communication 206035 (ID:18794) Director of Water and Sewer submitting proposed FY19 Water and Sewer Rates, including updated fire suppression charges.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

NEW BUSINESS

SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS

13. Mayor's Request 206036 (ID:18820) Requesting an appropriation of \$22,847,863 to fund the FY19 Sewer Enterprise Fund Budget.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

14. Mayor's Request 206037 (ID:18817) Requesting an appropriation of \$14,521,861 to fund the FY19 Water Enterprise Fund Budget.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

15. Mayor's Request 206038 (ID:18819) Requesting the appropriation of \$736,041 from the Water Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings Account to subsidize the FY19 Water Enterprise Fund Budget.

RESULT:	REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP:	Finance Committee

LATE ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was Adjourned at 8:10 PM.