



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 10, 2025

6:00 PM

This meeting was held virtually via Zoom and was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chair Wilson and adjourned at 6:55 pm with a roll call vote of 4 in favor (Councilors Mbah, Clingan, Scott and Wilson), none opposed, and 1 absent (Councilor Burnley).

Councilor Burnley arrived at 6:22 pm.

Others present: Jill Lathan - Commissioner, Department of Public Works, Ashley Speliotis - Director, Council on Aging, Alan Inacio - Director, Finance and Community Development, Ed Bean - Finance Director, Tom Galligani - Executive Director, Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, Neha Singh - Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Ellen Shachter - Director of Housing Stability, Delaney Fisher-Cassiol - Clerk of Committees

Roll Call

Present:	City Councilor At Large Jake Wilson, Ward Two City Councilor Jefferson Thomas (J.T.) Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Jesse Clingan and City Councilor At Large Wilfred N. Mbah
Absent:	City Councilor At Large Willie Burnley Jr.

1. Committee Minutes (ID # [25-1612](#)) Approval of the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of October 21, 2025.

RESULT:	<u>ACCEPTED</u>
AYE:	City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr. and City Councilor At Large Mbah

Communications and Discussions

2. Officer's Communication (ID # [25-1451](#)) Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management conveying the draft Combined Sewer Overflow Plan.

Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management, Rich Raiche was not present to discuss this item.

RESULT:	<u>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</u>
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Prior Year Invoices

3. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-1585](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$23,109.33 using available funds in various Department of Public Works Accounts for various services.

Commissioner Jill Lathan of the Department of Public Works noted that the first outstanding bill is from Primo Brands, which recently changed ownership. The second bill is from Impact Fire Alarm; the department had reached out to the company multiple times and just recently heard back. The third item covers utility and gas bills, which the department estimates throughout the year and then reconciles at year's end to reflect the actual charges.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED

AYE: City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr. and City Councilor At Large Mbah

Grant and Gift Acceptances

4. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-1584](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$3,000 grant with no new match required, from Somerville Cambridge Elder Services to the Council on Aging for senior transportation.

Ashley Speliotis, Director of the Council on Aging, presented the annual grant from Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services to support emergency transportation needs for seniors. She explained that the funding helps provide transportation for situations such as visits from social workers, access to food, or other essential services when no alternative is available. Chair Wilson clarified that this funding is separate from the Senior Taxi Program. Councilor Mbah expressed support for the item.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED

AYE: City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr. and City Councilor At Large Mbah

5. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-1600](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$1,110,000 grant with no new match required, from the Massachusetts Gaming Commission to the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development and Police Department for the development of the Union Square Plaza and Streetscape Phase 1.

Alan Inacio, Director of Finance and Community Development, explained that this was a minor clerical correction. The original order omitted \$10,000, which has been added in the revised version. Councilor Scott expressed disappointment that a significant portion of the funds would go toward police overtime, but moved to approve the corrected order.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED

AYE: City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr. and City Councilor At Large Mbah

Funds and Accounts6. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-1560](#))

Requesting approval to create the Community Benefits Stabilization fund and accept a payment to the fund of \$3,946,742.98 from the community benefit contributions outlined in project development covenants.

Alan Inacio, Director of Finance and Community Development, explained that funds from master plan projects must be moved into a generalized Community Benefits Stabilization Fund to align with the Community Benefits Ordinance. Director Inacio noted that funds earmarked for specific areas remain in separate accounts, while this fund will support larger, general projects. Ed Bean, Finance Director, added that the ordinance language is intentionally broad to accommodate a variety of projects.

Councilor Scott asked about the source and amounts of the funds. Director Inacio explained that money will be repurposed from the Union Square Community Benefits Fund, with contributions from multiple development projects. Tom Galligani, Executive Director, Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development, noted that six large development projects have contributed. All previous Union Square payments have already been allocated by the Council for programs such as job training and small business support.

Director Inacio reviewed the attachment *Finance - 2025-11-10 Community Benefits Summary (with 25-1560)* and indicated that the items highlighted in green are the amounts to be moved under this order. Councilor Scott asked why the order amount does not match the total minus deductions. Finance Director Bean explained that the new fund will serve as a permanent, broadly applicable account, which would have received these payments if it had existed earlier. He also clarified that \$360,000 in the transfer represents accrued interest. Director Inacio will verify and provide a revised spreadsheet.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE DISCHARGED WITH NO RECOMMENDATION

7. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-1599](#))

Requesting approval to create a Housing Assistance Stabilization fund under the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40, Section 5B.

Ed Bean, Finance Director, highlighted the importance of housing assistance and said that creating this fund is the right step to support those efforts. No money will be appropriated at this time. He noted that because the general fund closes out at the end of the fiscal year, this fund provides greater flexibility and can also accrue interest.

Ellen Shachter, Director of the Office of Housing Stability, explained that many rental assistance programs operate on contracts that end in June, but they make monthly payments to landlords throughout the year, creating challenges in maintaining continuity across fiscal years. She stated that a

stabilization fund would help address this issue.

Councilor Mbah asked how this fund would interact with the Affordable Housing Trust. Director Shachter clarified that the fund allows the department to explore other revenue sources. Funds in the Affordable Housing Trust are likely to be fully expended by the end of the fiscal year, and additional sources are needed to continue the programs.

Director Bean noted the potential to repurpose dormant stabilization funds. Councilor Scott expressed support for the initiative, stating that it would increase transparency regarding the funding of these programs.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED

AYE: City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr. and City Councilor At Large Mbah

Referenced Documents:

- Finance - 2025-11-10 Community Benefits Summary (with 25-1560)