



## CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

June 6, 2019

### REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING AS A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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

Others present: Mike Mastrobuoni - SomerStat, Skye Stewart - Chief of Staff, Emily Monea - SomerStat, Greg Jenkins - Arts Council, Oliver Sellars-Garcia - OSE, Nick Salerno - Elections, Denise Taylor - Communications, Steve Craig - 311, Peter Forcellese - Legislative Clerk.

The meeting took place in the Council Chamber and was called to order at 6:11 PM by Chairman White and adjourned at 9:47 PM.

Councilors Ewen-Campen and McLaughlin were absent due to their attendance at a Planning Board meeting.

### **FY-20 Departmental Budget Review and any associated departmental financial matters.**

#### **Executive Administration**

Ms. Stewart advised the committee that the position of Legislative Liaison will be vacant as of July 1<sup>st</sup> and that the position was reclassified, resulting in a salary increase. Councilor Rossetti asked about the validity of encumbered expenses and Ms. Stewart will verify the numbers. Councilor Rossetti asked why line 530000 is listed at \$13,000 for FY-19 when it was cut to \$10,000 during last year's budget process. Councilor Ballantyne concurred with Councilor Rossetti's recollection.

#### **SomerStat**

Councilor Hirsch asked about the Chief Information Officer position and what the future of

information technology is in Somerville with regard to linking various sets. Ms. Monea replied that the priority focus needs to be around infrastructure and security but agrees that the integration of data is needed.

Councilor Rossetti commented that the city was able to do a Happiness survey mailing, at a cost of \$16,000, but was unwilling to do a mailing for several important issues that were before the council.

### **Arts Council**

Mr. Jenkins spoke about the various programs connected with the Arts Council, e.g., Art Farm, murals, Nibble Kitchen, cultural exchanges, etc., adding that the Art Farm proposal should go out to the public again for input in 1-2 months. Following that, it would need to be funded

### **Sustainability & Environment**

Mr. Sellars-Garcia, asked to explain the actual focus/scope of the new Energy Manager position, replied that the job is to manage and conserve energy consumption in existing and future city buildings. He also told the committee that his department is seeking to do more with waste management consumption and reducing the city's carbon footprint. He noted that, in Somerville, it's easy to get other departments and groups to get on board with the program by making sure that the big picture is clear and by setting strategic goals in conjunction with other city departments. Councilor Ballantyne, noting that OSE was awarded \$580,000 in grants, asked about future grant funding. Mr. Sellars-Garcia replied that although the department had a great year, he doesn't think it will always be that way as competition is growing. He explained that the sources of funding are stable, but the trend is moving towards funding new initiatives vs. supporting ongoing programs.

### **Elections**

Mr. Salerno was asked about including a sign-up form with the census when it's sent out and he replied that the Communications Department has been working on this and is waiting for the next census mailing. Councilor Scott asked why none of the recommendations of the Clean Elections Task Force were noted in the Election Department's section of the budget book and Mr. Salerno said that the voter guide recommendation will be rolled out in the near future.

### **Communications & Community Engagement**

Councilor Rossetti recused herself from all discussion of this department.

Ms. Taylor spoke about two new positions in the department. Councilor McLaughlin prefers that the new part time positions be for more hours or even full time. Ms. Taylor explained that she would rather start small to verify the effectiveness of the positions and then request additional funds to expand the hours.

### **PEG Access**

Councilor Rossetti recused herself from all discussion of this department.

Ms. Taylor reported that the city received \$298,000 and that those funds were put into the city's general fund

### **Constituent Services**

Councilor Rossetti recused herself from all discussion of this department.

Mr. Craig spoke about a new position, Customer Experience Manager, being added to the department. He also pointed out that a '960' position is missing from the Personnel List but that the bottom line is not affected. The '960' position funds are included in the 512000 line item