



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 23, 2025

7:00 PM

NOTICE: This is NOT the official version of the City Council'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.

1. OPENING CEREMONIES

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Ward Seven City Councilor Judy Pineda Neufeld. The City Council entered Executive Session at 7:40 PM and returned at 8:06 PM.

- 1.1. Roll Call Call of the Roll.
(ID # [25-0144](#))

Councilor Sait arrived at 7:02 PM.

Councilor Mbah arrived at 7:02 PM.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

Present: Ward One City Councilor Matthew McLaughlin
 Ward Six City Councilor Lance L. Davis
 City Councilor At Large Jake Wilson
 Ward Five City Councilor Naima Sait
 City Councilor At Large Wilfred N. Mbah
 City Councilor At Large Willie Burnley Jr.
 Ward Four City Councilor Jesse Clingan
 City Councilor At Large Kristen Strezo
 Ward Seven City Councilor Judy Pineda Neufeld
 Ward Three City Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen

Absent: Ward Two City Councilor Jefferson Thomas (J.T.) Scott

- 1.2. Remembrances Remembrances.
(ID # [25-0145](#))

Councilor Davis requested a moment of silence in memory of Charles Sapochetti.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 1.3. Minutes Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 12, 2024.
(ID # [25-0146](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

2. CITATIONS

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 3.1. Grant of Location (ID # [25-0106](#)) Eversource applying for a Grant of Location to install approximately 436 feet of conduit in Highland Avenue, from existing Manhole 15224 to a point of pickup at existing Manhole 15222.

Jacqui Duffy, representing Eversource, spoke in favor of the item and explained the purpose of the request. There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 3.2. Grant of Location (ID # [25-0107](#)) Eversource applying for a Grant of Location to install approximately 86 feet of conduit in Somerville Avenue, from existing Manhole 8655 to an existing Handhole at 52 McGrath Highway.

Jacqui Duffy, representing Eversource, spoke in favor of the item and explained the purpose of the request. There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 3.3. Grant of Location (ID # [25-0108](#)) Eversource applying for a Grant of Location to install approximately 61 feet of conduit in Lowell Street, from Utility Pole 215/35 to a point of pickup at 326 Lowell Street.

Jacqui Duffy, representing Eversource, spoke in favor of the item and explained the purpose of the request. There being no further speakers, the Public Hearing was closed.

RESULT: APPROVED

4. ORDERS, ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS OF MEMBERS

- 4.1. Order (ID # [25-0117](#)) By Councilor Strezo, Councilor Burnley Jr., Councilor Clingan, Councilor Davis, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Mbah, Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor Sait and Councilor Wilson That the Director of Parks and Recreation discuss in the Committee on Equity, Gender, Seniors, Families and Vulnerable Populations, the introduction of an ongoing middle school girls intramural hockey program.

Councilor Strezo sponsored Annette McKee and Natalie Zelinski to speak. Annette McKee advocated for the growth of girls' hockey, highlighting equity issues and barriers such as cost and lack of opportunities for them to play. She noted that SHS does not have a girls' hockey team. Natalie Zelinski, a freshman at SHS, plays on a Medford team and emphasized the need for girls' specific spaces. Councilor Davis mentioned that SHS is part of a co-op girls' hockey team with other schools and he commented on the challenges of involving Somerville Youth Hockey to support girls' hockey. Ms. McKee stated that she had nothing negative to say about SYH and

stressed the need for city involvement to overcome barriers.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Equity, Gender, Seniors, Families and Vulnerable Populations Committee

- 4.2. Order
(ID # [25-0118](#))

By Councilor Strezo and Councilor Pineda Neufeld

That the Director of Health and Human Services discuss the findings from the recent U.S. Surgeon General Advisory on the Mental Health and Well-Being of Parents and its recommendations to better support parents and caregivers.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Equity, Gender, Seniors, Families and Vulnerable Populations Committee

- 4.3. Resolution
(ID # [25-0116](#))

By Councilor Strezo and Councilor Mbah

That the Superintendent of Schools consider opening the Highlander Cafe within Somerville High School to the public for regular lunch hours while school is in session and that the Administration address any barriers to this request.

Councilor Strezo noted that the Cafe used to be open to the public and provided an opportunity to meet people from various parts of city, however since COVID it has not been opened to the public. The school's Culinary Department expressed a desire to open the café Monday through Friday. Councilor Mbah questioned how the café is presently used and if and how students are paid. He also questioned the impact on student schedules. Councilor Strezo noted that those questions should be addressed to the school's Vocational Director.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: School Building Facilities and Maintenance Special Committee

- 4.4. Order
(ID # [25-0121](#))

By Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Strezo, Councilor Wilson, Councilor Burnley Jr. and Councilor Sait

That the Director of Water and Sewer appear before this Council to address resident claims that newly installed water meters are falsely registering air pockets in residential cold water lines as leaks, leading to significantly inaccurate bills.

Councilor Ewen-Campen spoke about a constituent claiming that his water meter is falsely measuring a leak that does not exist. The constituent believes that a software upgrade would fix the problem. Councilor Ewen-Campen commented that perhaps 10% of the meters in the city have this issue and that the city needs to determine if this is an actual problem. The constituent will be meeting with the meter manufacturer about this.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Public Utilities and Public Works Committee

- 4.5. Order
(ID # [25-0123](#))
- By Councilor Ewen-Campen and Councilor Mbah
That the Director of Capital Projects update this Council on installing a water fountain at Nunziato Dog Park.
- Councilor Ewen-Campen noted that this is the only dog park in the city without a water fountain. He shared that the good news is that funding has been allocated, and he is interested in the timeline for addressing this.
- RESULT: APPROVED**
- 4.6. Order
(ID # [25-0124](#))
- By Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Wilson, Councilor Burnley Jr. and Councilor Strezo
That the Commissioner of Public Works construct an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant sidewalk path around the large tree at the corner of Walnut Street and Summit Avenue.
- Councilor Ewen-Campen noted that he has put requests in to the Engineering Department to make this change and has had no success, so he's asking the Public Works department to address this, instead.
- RESULT: APPROVED**
- 4.7. Order
(ID # [25-0125](#))
- By Councilor Ewen-Campen
That the Director of Mobility discuss with this Council the feasibility of signal priority for Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) busses in Union Square.
- Councilor Ewen-Campen noted that signalization is complicated and he wants to know what can and can't be done regarding this matter.
- RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION**
FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee
- 4.8. Order
(ID # [25-0126](#))
- By Councilor Ewen-Campen and Councilor Mbah
That the Director of Mobility develop plans for a safe pedestrian crossing of Lowell Street, at Bailey Park, and additional traffic calming measures between Summer Street and Highland Avenue.
- Councilor Sait commented that she has heard from constituents about this matter and she has been in contact with the Administration for months about this.
- RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION**
FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee
- 4.9. Order
(ID # [25-0122](#))
- By Councilor Ewen-Campen and Councilor Mbah
That the Director of Inspectional Services report to this Council, in writing, what types of demolition permits are granted without requiring an on-site fire detail.

Councilor Ewen-Campen submitted this item as a result of a group of residents witnessing a demolition without a fire detail being present. After making inquiries, the councilor was informed that fire details are required, however, if it's determined that there are no flammable materials present, the detail may leave the site.

RESULT: APPROVED

4.10. Order
(ID # [25-0127](#))

By Councilor Mbah

That the Director of Veterans Services report to this Council on any plans to honor the memory of Airman Staff Sergeant Loring E. Lord, a Somerville resident and high school graduate who was shot down over Germany in the spring of 1945.

Councilor Mbah noted that Airman Lord's remains were recently identified and Councilor Burnley commented that this item is a timely request, given the political climate, and an opportune time to reflect on what brought the United States into WWII, besides the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

RESULT: APPROVED

4.11. Order
(ID # [25-0130](#))

By Councilor Wilson, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Strezo, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Davis, Councilor Burnley Jr., Councilor Mbah and Councilor Sait

That the Environmental Health Manager update this Council on the current policy regarding usage of Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs) and any plans to remove SGARs currently deployed in bait boxes in light of multiple recent birds of prey deaths apparently related to ingesting rat poison.

Councilor Wilson commented that raptors have been killed by ingesting this poison and he noted that previously, Council members were told that the city moving away from the use of SGARs. He would like an update on those plans and wants to know the number of SGARs currently deployed in the city. Councilor Burnley commented about proposed legislation in the city of Newton and Councilor Wilson clarified that the legislation is a Home Rule Petition currently at the state house awaiting action.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Rodent Issues Special Committee

4.12. Order
(ID # [25-0132](#))

By Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Pineda Neufeld and Councilor Clingan

That the Director of SomerViva update the Committee on Public Health and Public Safety on efforts to address immigrant rights.

Councilor McLaughlin spoke about threats made by the Trump administration, saying that there is real fear in the community and he wants to address those fear. He spoke about talk of ICE agents going to supermarkets and churches. He said that the rules have changed and he's not

sure if the president can do what he said he would do. Councilor McLaughlin wants to get a conversation started to bring people together to find out what can be done. President Pineda Neufeld said that the fear is out there and she pointed out that the city's schools do not share info with ICE. Councilor Wilson encouraged people to know their rights.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Public Health and Public Safety Committee

4.13. Order
(ID # [25-0133](#))

By Councilor McLaughlin

That the Director of Housing Stability update this Council on recent changes to condominium conversion and tenant protection laws as a result of the 2024 Housing Bond Bill and how Somerville may strengthen its protections.

Councilor McLaughlin reported that the state housing bond bill is addressing condo conversions and that its language was based on Somerville's ordinance. He would like to revisit the matter to find out what Somerville might do to strengthen its ordinance.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Housing and Community Development Committee

4.14. Order
(ID # [25-0134](#))

By Councilor McLaughlin

That the Director of Housing Stability update this Council on efforts to raise awareness for eviction sealing assistance in light of recent state legislation enabling the sealing of evictions.

Councilor McLaughlin said he submitted this item to get a conversation started.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Housing and Community Development Committee

4.15. Order
(ID # [25-0135](#))

By Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Wilson and Councilor Strezio

That the Director of Economic Development and the Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management update this Council on the potential impacts of the proposed soccer stadium in Everett.

Councilor McLaughlin commented about traffic congestion concerns and wants to know if Somerville is thinking about how to mitigate them. Councilors Wilson and Strezio spoke about the width of the connecting pedestrian bridge and Councilor Strezio said that she wants to have a discussion about neighboring community benefits. Councilor McLaughlin noted that this will have an impact on more than just traffic and he's wondering who is going to pay for the footbridge and mitigation efforts.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Housing and Community Development Committee

- 4.16. Order
(ID # [25-0136](#))
- By Councilor McLaughlin
That the Director of Health and Human Services and the Chief Fire Engineer update this Council on potential impacts of a proposed lithium battery complex in Everett.
- Councilor McLaughlin stated that he has safety concerns about this.
- RESULT:** APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Public Health and Public Safety Committee
- 4.17. Order
(ID # [25-0137](#))
- By Councilor McLaughlin
That the Director of Mobility work with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) to increase flex post usage and other pedestrian safety measures on crosswalks along McGrath Highway.
- RESULT:** APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee
- 4.18. Order
(ID # [25-0138](#))
- By Councilor McLaughlin
That the Director of Mobility address the increased traffic along Lombardi Street, Mystic Avenue and Grand Union Boulevard due to signal changes.
- RESULT:** APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee
- 4.19. Order
(ID # [25-0139](#))
- By Councilor McLaughlin
That the Director of Parking place NO IDLING signs on New Washington Street, behind the Cobble Hill complex, to discourage large truck idling by the senior homes.
- Councilor McLaughlin noted that there is a lot of truck traffic moving through this neighborhood and that trucks are sometimes parked there overnight with their engines idling, disturbing neighbors.
- RESULT:** APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee
- 4.20. Resolution
(ID # [25-0140](#))
- By Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Clingan and Councilor Davis
That the Memorialization Committee dedicate a memorial to Kenneth Lonergan.
- Councilor Clingan commented that a petition has been initiated to have a memorial placed to honor Mr. Lonergan in recognition of the impact he had on many here in the city. Councilor Clingan sponsored Sean Zubricki to speak on the item. Mr. Zubricki spoke about Mr. Lonergan's impact on students, saying that he was a man of service. He commented that the petition was to have a plaque or some other recognition somewhere to honor Mr. Lonergan. Councilor Clingan would like something placed in SHS and Councilor McLaughlin stated his preference for a plaque to be placed next to the in-house detention room at SHS. Councilor Clingan noted that there was

some confusion about the correct place to send this and City Clerk Wells commented that the Memorialization Committee is the body responsible for naming rooms at SHS. Intergovernmental Affairs Director Singh pointed out that assets (rooms, etc.) may only be memorialized when first built. She also stated that there are no available assets in SHS as they have all been memorialized.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Housing and Community Development Committee

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

6.A. FINANCE COMMITTEE

- 6.A.1. Committee Report Report of the Committee on Finance, meeting on January 21, 2025.
(ID # [25-0119](#))

Councilor Wilson summarized the actions taken by the committee and reported that the committee recommended for approval, payment of four prior year invoices, acceptance and expenditure of eight grants, one authorization to borrow funds, one appropriation of funds, and one transfer of funds. The committee also received updates on a draft Armory Master Plan and plans for the Founders Memorial skating rink. One item (24-1659) was discharged from the committee without a recommendation. That item was subsequently laid on the table by the City Council.

Rachel Nadkarni, Director of Economic Development, was sponsored to speak on the item. She reviewed the Armory presentation given to the Finance Committee at its most recent meeting and spoke about adding a new section dealing with tenant selection criteria. She noted that a big change involved narrowing the scope of the advisory board to tenants and financial investments. Director Nadkarni also noted that there were some by-law and textual changes as well as requests for more timeline information and for the incorporation of city programming. The next steps will include finalizing the master plan, forming and recruiting members for the Armory Advisory Board, and launching an RFP for long term leases.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.A.2. Mayor's Request Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$1,725.65 using available funds in the Department of Public Works Administration In State Travel Account for EZ pass.
(ID # [24-1642](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.A.3. Mayor's Request Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$2,063.40 using available funds in the Department of Public Works Buildings Fire Alarm R&M Account for fire alarm equipment programming.
(ID # [24-1643](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.4. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1659](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$60,000 grant with no new match required, from Executive Office of Public Safety and Security to the Police Department for traffic safety enforcement.

RESULT: LAI D ON THE TABLE

6.A.5. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1660](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$40,021 grant with no new match required, from Department of Mental Health to the Police Department for the continuation of partial funding for the Jail Diversion Coordinator position.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.6. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1694](#)) Requesting authorization to borrow \$4,757,000 in a bond, and to appropriate the same amount for the recurring FY 2025 Sewer Improvements program.

RESULT: APPROVED

AYE: Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Mbah, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, City Councilor At Large Strezo, Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld, and Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen

ABSENT: Ward Two City Councilor Scott

6.A.7. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1713](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$110,000 from the Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the 90 Washington Demonstration Project Account for ongoing litigation costs.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.8. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1718](#)) Requesting approval of a transfer of \$60,159 from the Public Space and Urban Forestry Capital Account to the Public Space and Urban Forestry Ordinary Maintenance Account for Tree Keeper/311 Integration expenses.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.9. Mayor's Request (ID # [24-1725](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$545.03 using available funds in the Human Resources Professional & Technical Services for reimbursement of expenses relating to the Chief of Police interview process.

RESULT: APPROVED

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- 6.A.10. Mayor's Request
(ID # [24-1727](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$295,463 grant with no new match required, from Executive Office of Public Safety and Security to the Police Department for 911 personnel costs.
- RESULT: APPROVED**
- 6.A.11. Mayor's Request
(ID # [24-1728](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$133,427.11 grant with no new match required, from Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security to the Police Department for training and recertification and additional staffing support.
- RESULT: APPROVED**
- 6.A.12. Mayor's Request
(ID # [24-1729](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$24,500 grant with no new match required, from Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security to the Police Department for ambulance service.
- RESULT: APPROVED**
- 6.A.13. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-0016](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$109,296 grant with no new match required, from the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security to the Fire Department for staffing costs.
- RESULT: APPROVED**
- 6.A.14. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-0017](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$15,764.40 using available funds in the Information Technology Maintenance Software Account for voice maintenance, and in the Information Technology Computer Hardware Account for laptop accessories.
- RESULT: WITHDRAWN**
- 6.A.15. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-0018](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$100,000 grant with no new match required, from the Barr Foundation to the Office of Sustainability and Environment for a Community Heat Resilience Pilot Grant Program.
- RESULT: APPROVED**
- 6.A.16. Officer's
Communication
(ID # [25-0019](#)) Director of Economic Development and Director of the Arts Council conveying an updated draft Armory Master Plan.
- RESULT: WORK COMPLETED**
- 6.A.17. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-0020](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$100,000 grant with no new match required, from the Executive Office of Economic Development to the Economic Development Division for a Small Business Success Technical Assistance program.
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RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.A.18. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0021](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$100,000 grant with no new match required, from Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities to the Office of Housing Stability for a Senior Housing Bridge pilot program.

RESULT: APPROVED

7. COMMUNICATIONS OF THE MAYOR

- 7.1. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0101](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$186,343 from the Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the Building Insurance Account to insure additional properties.

City Treasurer/Collector Linda Dubuque explained the reason for this request, saying that the funds will be used to insure two vacant buildings.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 7.2. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0053](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$1,475,428 from the Community Preservation Act Affordable Housing Reserve to the Affordable Housing Trust.

Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION

FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

- 7.3. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0049](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$365,000 from the Community Preservation Act Fund to the Somerville Community Land Trust for restoration of 12 Pleasant Avenue.

Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION

FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

- 7.4. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0057](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$300,000 from the Community Preservation Act (CPA) Fund to the CPA Open Space Land Acquisition Fund.

Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION

FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

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- 7.5. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0056](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$200,000 from the Community Preservation Act Fund Open Space Reserve for the installation of water fountains at Nunziato Park.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.6. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0055](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$172,000 from the Community Preservation Act Fund Historic Preservation Reserve to the Elizabeth Peabody House for exterior restoration of 277 Broadway.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.7. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0058](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$114,259 from the Community Preservation Act Fund Historic Preservation Reserve to the Somerville Museum for preservation of artifacts in its collection.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.8. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0059](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$18,500 from the Community Preservation Act Fund Historic Preservation Reserve for a condition assessment of the Veterans Cemetery and other historic monuments.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.9. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0051](#)) Requesting the transfer of \$346,492 from the Community Preservation Act (CPA) Undesignated Fund Balance to the CPA Community Housing Reserve.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
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- 7.10. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0078](#)) Requesting approval of a time-only contract extension until 12/31/2025 for Crowley Cottrell LLC to complete additional services for re-design and construction administrations fees.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
- FOLLOWUP:** Finance Committee
- 7.11. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0096](#)) Requesting approval of a time-only contract extension of three years for Stantec Consulting Services Inc. for Poplar Street Pump Station Design Services.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
- FOLLOWUP:** Finance Committee
- 7.12. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0097](#)) Requesting approval of a time-only contract extension of three years for PMA LLC for owners project manager services on the Poplar Street Pump Station project.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
- FOLLOWUP:** Finance Committee
- 7.13. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0098](#)) Requesting approval of a time-only contract extension of three years for MWH Contractors Inc. for construction manager at risk services on the Poplar Street Pump Station project.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
- FOLLOWUP:** Finance Committee
- 7.14. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0099](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$2,500,000 grant that requires a 20% match, from the Environmental Protection Agency to the Infrastructure and Asset Management Engineering Division for the Poplar Street Pump Station.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
- FOLLOWUP:** Finance Committee

- 7.15. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0100](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$2,400,000 grant with no new match required, from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development for infrastructure and open space improvements on the Clarendon Phase II project.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
- FOLLOWUP:** Finance Committee
- 7.16. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0102](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$33,550 grant with no new match required, from the Department of Fire Services to the Fire Department for the purchase of firefighter safety equipment.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
- FOLLOWUP:** Finance Committee
- 7.17. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0079](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$4,400 using available funds in the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development Economic Development Division account for 9 Aldersey Street appraisal report.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
- FOLLOWUP:** Finance Committee
- 7.18. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0103](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$486 using available funds in the City Clerk Advertising account for legal hearing notices.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.2 through 7.18 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
- FOLLOWUP:** Finance Committee
- 7.19. Mayor's Communication (ID # [25-0115](#)) Conveying an update on the Non-Union Employee Classification and Compensation Study.
- Councilor Wilson stated that this item will be discussed at the January 30th meeting of the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: PLACED ON FILE AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION**
- FOLLOWUP:** Finance Committee

- 7.20. Mayor's Communication (ID # [25-0142](#)) Conveying the 2024 Surveillance Technology Annual Report.

Councilor Burnley spoke about safety sticks being highlighted in the Technology Report to capture illegal parking and he would like to have enforcement in bike lanes, as well. He also commented on the section dealing with Shot Spotter, saying that there are discrepancies in the report, as it references both 14 and 22 Shot Spotter alerts. He would like to know if the 8 alert differential were not confirmed as gun fire.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Legislative Matters Committee

8. COMMUNICATIONS OF CITY OFFICERS

- 8.1. Officer's Communication (ID # [25-0120](#)) Planning Board conveying recommendations for items #24-1447 and #24-1448.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Land Use Committee

9. NEW BUSINESS

- 9.1. License (ID # [25-0109](#)) New Livery License, Med Transportation LLC, 34 Grant Street, operating 1 vehicle.

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.4 and 10.7 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.2. License (ID # [25-0110](#)) New Sign/Awning License, Gauchao Brazilian Cuisine, 104 Broadway, 2 signs.

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.4 and 10.7 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.3. License (ID # [25-0111](#)) Renewing Used Car Dealer Class 2 License, 28 Motorsports Inc., 486R Columbia Street.

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.4 and 10.7 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.4. License (ID # [25-0143](#)) Renewing Used Car Dealer Class 2 License, Sam's Auto Sales, 166 Boston Avenue.

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.4 and 10.7 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.5. Public
Communication
(ID # [25-0105](#))

Laura Ortiz submitting an Open Meeting Law complaint against this City Council. Note that the Council may enter executive session pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(1) to discuss.

The Council voted to enter into Executive Session at 7:40 PM to discuss this item on a roll call vote of 8 in favor (Mbah, Wilson, Ewen-Campen, McLaughlin, Burnley, Sait, Clingan, Pineda Neufeld), 0 opposed, 3 absent (Scott, Strezo, Davis).

The Council reconvened the regular meeting at 8:06 PM. President Pineda Neufeld reported that one vote was taken in Executive Session in addition to the vote to adjourn. A vote on the following motion,

That the City Solicitor's Office is authorized to respond to the Open Meeting Law complaint by Laura Ortiz on behalf of the City Council, was then taken in open session and approved.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 9.6. Public
Communication
(ID # [25-0112](#))

3 individuals submitting comments re: ceasefire.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 9.7. Public
Communication
(ID # [25-0113](#))

Ami Bennett submitting comments re: #24-1580, draft Armory Master Plan.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 9.8. Public
Communication
(ID # [25-0114](#))

Prajakta Waditwar submitting comments re: COVID-19 response.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

10. SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS

- 10.1. Resolution
(ID # [25-0141](#))

By Councilor Strezo

That the Administration create an annual survey of Somerville parents and guardians, similar to but unrelated to the Happiness Survey and unrelated to Somerville Public Schools, and distribute it through various channels in print and online.

Councilor Strezo spoke about the need to talk about guardianship and parenting saying that some child related work is done in the schools,

however, not all children are in the school system. She would like to have a discussion on this to find out where gaps may exist.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Equity, Gender, Seniors, Families and Vulnerable Populations Committee

10.2. Order
(ID # [25-0147](#))

By Councilor Wilson

That this City Council hold a public hearing in the Committee on Finance on the community's Fiscal Year 2026 budget priorities.

Councilor Wilson noted that this would be required by February 15th under the revised charter, should it be approved. In that spirit, he has scheduled the public hearing for January 30th during the Finance Committee of the Whole meeting.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

10.3. Order
(ID # [25-0153](#))

By Councilor Burnley Jr.

That the Director of Economic Development work with the Licensing Commission to ensure the creation of on-site social consumption licenses are discussed at upcoming meetings.

This item was discussed with item #25-0152.

Councilor Burnley commented that these licenses have never been allowed and that the policy framework has not been developed. He spoke about the three types of supplemental licenses and said that it's important that the city to do its homework early to be at the front of the line for these licenses. City Clerk Wells informed the Council that the City Clerk's Office is working on this with a multi-departmental team and should have some language prepared shortly after the Cannabis Control Commission's final regulations are released, which is anticipated for June.

RESULT: APPROVED

10.4. Order
(ID # [25-0154](#))

By Councilor Burnley Jr.

That the Director of Economic Development present to this Council a plan to ensure compliance with Section 8-18 of the Code of Ordinances.

Councilor Burnley commented that some city ordinances are not being enforced and he would like to have this one, regarding closed captioning, to be enforced.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Legislative Matters Committee

10.5. Resolution
(ID # [25-0152](#))

By Councilor Burnley Jr.

Urging the creation of supplemental, hospitality, and event organizer licenses for on-site cannabis consumption.

See item #25-0153.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 10.6. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-0150](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$13,730 using available funds in the Information Technology Maintenance Software Account for voice maintenance, and the Information Technology Computer Hardware Account for laptop accessories.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 10.7. Public Event
(ID # [25-0155](#)) Somerville Community Growing Center applying for a Public Event License for Maple Project and Boil Down on February 28 and March 1 from 8am to 8pm (raindate March 7 and 8).

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.4 and 10.7 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 10.8. Public
Communication
(ID # [25-0148](#)) Erica Gennaro submitting comments re: speed bumps.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 10.9. Public
Communication
(ID # [25-0149](#)) Sravana Reddy submitting comments re: snow removal.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

11. LATE ITEMS

- 11.1. Order
(ID # [25-0156](#)) By Councilor Ewen-Campen
That the City Solicitor's Office is authorized to respond to the Open Meeting Law complaint by Laura Ortiz on behalf of the City Council.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 11.2. Resolution
(ID # [25-0157](#)) By Councilor Davis and Councilor Strezo
That the Administration immediately withdraw the School Building Community Feedback Survey, released this morning, regarding the replacement of the Winter Hill and, potentially, Brown School.

Councilor Strezo shared background on the Construction Advisory Group (CAG) and its composition. She explained that the city's consultants meet with the CAG once per month to discuss feedback, etc. She pointed out that the Administration has said that this is a community process, however early on, the consultants presented a survey for the community and then released the survey to the public without the knowledge of the CAG and without

getting feedback from them. Councilor Strezo explained that the survey is designed to provide the answers the consultant wants. Councilor Davis commented that the poll is a joke, noting that some of the questions are absurd and slanted to reach only one conclusion. He spoke about hearing frustration from constituents regarding many city processes being shams. He wants the Administration to pull the poll and listen to the community. Councilor Davis noted a recent magazine article that ranked the Brown School as the 5th best in the state and he feels that is due to its size. He thinks that the Brown School model should be replicated across the city rather than closing it. Councilor Clingan commented that the survey seems like over-processing on the matter and said it's insulting to the CAG. He also stated that things are moving slowly with the consultant and Councilor Strezo said that the consultants don't have to lead this process. She commented that large schools are devastating for students with sensory issues and she hasn't seen any reference to that in the survey. Director Singh addressed the Council saying that she will work with staff to prepare an update.

RESULT: **APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION**

FOLLOWUP: School Building Facilities and Maintenance Special Committee

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was Adjourned at 9:35 PM.