



# City of Somerville, Massachusetts

## City Council Finance Committee

### Meeting Minutes

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**Tuesday, June 3, 2025**

**6:00 PM**

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#### **Committee of the Whole**

The meeting took place virtually via Zoom and was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chair Wilson and adjourned at 6:55 PM on a roll call vote of 10 in favor (Councilors Mbah, Wilson, Ewen-Campen, Scott, McLaughlin, Sait, Strezo, Clingan, Davis and Pineda Neufeld), none against and 1 absent (Councilor Burnley).

Others present: Delaney Fisher-Cassiol – Clerk of Committees

#### **Roll Call**

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|-----------------|--|
| <b>Present:</b> | City Councilor At Large Jake Wilson, Ward Two City Councilor Jefferson Thomas (J.T.) Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Jesse Clingan, City Councilor At Large Willie Burnley Jr., City Councilor At Large Wilfred N. Mbah, Lance L. Davis, Ben Ewen-Campen, Judy Pineda Neufeld, Matthew McLaughlin and Kristen Strezo |
| <b>Absent:</b>  | Naima Sait   |

#### **1. Public Hearing**

- 1.1 Mayor's Request (ID # [25-1042](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$362,915,509 to fund the FY 2026 General Fund Operating Budget.

Chair Wilson laid out the format for the public hearing and stated that each speaker would be given two minutes. The public hearing was opened at 6:09 PM.

27 residents spoke on the city's proposed budget. The dominant concern, raised by over 60 percent of speakers, was opposition to the \$3 million increase in police funding. Many expressed frustration that the city continues to increase policing funding despite years of community pushback. Several said this budget increase ignores repeated community calls for alternative approaches to public safety. While the city has mentioned exploring alternative policing models, speakers noted little progress has been made.

About 10 speakers called for more investment in public education, urging better pay and job stability for teachers, stronger support for immigrant students and efforts to retain experienced educators.

Six speakers addressed the need to tackle air pollution through the air filtration pilot program. They cited high pollution levels near highways and the resulting health impacts on low-income residents and communities of

color, framing air filtration as a public health and environmental justice priority.

A few speakers advocated for replacing police officers in traffic enforcement with civilian flaggers, to reduce costs and better meet community safety needs.

Several residents raised concerns about deferred capital projects and building maintenance, pointing out that the city continues making small, temporary repairs instead of undertaking major construction projects.

Chair Wilson closed the public hearing at 6:55 PM.

**RESULT:     KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

Referenced Documents:

- Finance - 2025-06-03 Public Comments (with 25-1042)