



PARTNERS

Interpreting

Captioning Provided by:

Partners Interpreting

www.partnersinterpreting.com

508-699-1477 (V)

508-809-4894 (VP)

* * * * *

City of Somerville – City Council

Thursday 3/26/2026

7:00 PM – 9:30 PM EST

* * * * *

This text, document, or file is based on live transcription. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), captioning and/or live transcription are provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings. This text, document, or file is not to be distributed or used in any way that may violate copyright law.

* * * * *

(Captions provided by a live Captioner.)

* * * * *

(Roll call taken)

>> Thank you. Please note video and audio of this will be recorded. On the City of Somerville Website and available for future review. Pursuant to 32 city council let us uphold and we begin our meeting with moment of silence.

>> Thank you, Mr. President. Madam -- friend and colleague journey reflected resilience devotion family and community. Born in humble communities west Virginia early life shaped by love, toughness. He went onto serve our country from for 20 years the United States Navy as the proud member of CB. Traveling the world something greater than himself. At the center of his life was beloved wife. The best decision he ever made. Let us remember him this evening. And then with your permission I have another moment of silence. We also want to remember a remarkable man defined by excellence, purpose and unwavering commitment to artists. An Olympian, you know, teacher, writer, musician. Accomplishment alone set him apart but what made him extra ordinary how deeply he gave of himself. He was mentor, guide, steady presence of lives so of many. True discipline compassion and that is related across generations. From Somerville communities across Asia especially in Mc. He uplifted many with his potential of orders. He didn't just teach. He transformed lives. We are reminded of his enduring legacy every time we pass by the high school soccer field that bears his name.

That field is more than just a spot than living, dedication for love of game and countless young people he inspired to strive for greatness on and off the field. Today as we honor his life we carry forward his legacy and the lessons he taught and the courage he instill and had the lives he changed. His spirit remains with us.

>> Thank you. I would like to sign onto that one as well. Counselor, any of those two, okay on that one go ahead?

>> Thank you Mr. President so I actually had not heard that he died his partner lives around the corner from me. And anyone that hasn't go look up the cover of sports illustrated he is on. The field the namesake that is the first thing that was memorized for a black person in Somerville and he is a major part of the history and just a class act. He was such a wonderful, wonderful, sweet person in addition to this remarkable life that he lived.

>> Counselor.

>> I have a moment of silence. Mr. President, I ask that we remember Joan G. she was lifelong Somerville resident. She was beloved wife of late Peter Gallo with whom she shared 63 years of -- Deborah -- all residing in Somerville. She was the cherished grandmother and Anthony Gallo and loving, great grandpa and survived by many nieces and nephews. Enjoyed many activities to visits dining at brown's restaurant playing bingo, playing to casino and playing cards. And above all she played -- and I had the pleasure of meeting her a number of times. E she was, you know, she would come to the meetings about gill man square potential projects or

whatnot, and her request was simple she said I don't care what you do over there I just want donuts nearby. And she was just such a firecracker really cracking jokes. She will be missed in that community and ask that we remember her this evening in our thoughts. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Would everyone in the chamber please rise as you're able for the momented individuals.

(Moment of silence)

>> Thank you.

Madam clerk. Next item.

>> Agenda item one .3 approval of memberships of which regular meeting.

>> Seeing no discussion that item is approved.

>> Agenda item 2.1 commending Somerville free healthy schools to ensure community more resilient to climate change.

>> (Indiscernible).

>> Thank you Mr. President I'm very excited to citation. Thanks to the members we're able to be here tonight and to the ones who couldn't make it especially parents and educators, it's a weeknight. We understand. The members I will be sponsoring

shortly will tell you more about their accomplishments, their goals, and what they would like to work on with us and with administration. Healthy and climate resilience school is something advocating for before I got on and when I was educator so this group means a lot to me and so much to the school community. I'm honored to be celebrating their work tonight. This group is incredible on so many levels. The work they are doing is especially important right now. As climate change is facing significant threats from the federal government. And carbon free school members school parents, educators, students, community climate activists. I remember clearly when the group started to come together after realizing it's more powerful when all the stakeholders have a unified message and when they all speak in one voice as they advocate for climate resilient schools. Personally I met and worked with many of the members way back when I was an educator at high school and union organizer with union. Today as preparing what to say to introduce the group I was trying to remember how this group came to be. Back in 2021 educators, myself, worked with a group of high school students on climate action schools climate justice work, climate education to resilient school building. Organizing alongside that small group of student was were very passionate and very knowledgeable and extremely inspiring to me. 2021 marked the beginning of climate action in some of the public schools. Really glad it was there for it.

Honestly some -- I've said before where I think that's when I think about what got me for office I always remember those students and what they wanted to see. So after that educators start integrating climate education through curriculum and educators contract that was ratified in 2022 in agreement to receive regular update from the city action that have been taken to make school buildings healthy was something

that was part of the contract, the very first city in the Commonwealth to have that as part of the educator contract. And little by little school parents and climate activists joined organizing around climate resilient schools. Some of the colleagues here on the council few years ago passed resolution on actions to promote student and community health and resilience around climate change so did our school committee both myself and the committee member worked with healthy schools to come up with that resolution. We have immense admiration to the group, dedication, and their mission and bold advocacy.

So I want to say thank you for continuing to serve the very strong message that healthy schools make healthy students. And that all students in Somerville regardless of where they live receive educational programming in building that use zero fossil fuels. I would like to sponsor two of the members. The first one Corey D. And also the student --

>> Council, sponsor seeing no objection, go ahead. If you wouldn't mind introduce yourself for the record. Thank you.

>> Hi, city council my name is Corey don hue I'm resident of ward two climate justice advocate, and a proud member of the Somerville carbon free, healthy schools coalition. I'm here to talk about the need for healthier and safer school builds in Somerville the work of our group and the city must do moving forward. Schools are Somerville a largest public consumers of energy. According to the city somewhere 50 to 60 percent of municipal carbon emission comes from school buildings.

Ne getting of the quality of school buildings like the winter hills school. We need to consider how this will affect other school buildings and the long-term consequences on environment, on the learning conditions for students and on our budget. Transitioning schools away from expensive a polluting fossil schools and the city finances and it was these goals and desire to improve winter hill schools and brought together the carbon free healthy schools coalition in the fall of 2023. I was involved due to the community organizing of another group, which was a collection of environmentally focused activists the mission perfectly overlapped with the coalition. The carbon free and healthy schools coalition was cross-cutting group that brought together parents Somerville public school students, SU teaches and climate and representative from advocacy groups.

2024 part of advocacy, the city council and the school committee passed resolutions urging the city commit creating timeline and plan. The April 2024 climate forward plan for the first time, members of group select today advise city on future winter hill school including size placement as well as building specification giving voice to advocate for carbon free healthy schools as farther of the work mayor concluded ballot initiative in November 2027 for Somerville residents for new winter hill school also to vote on second simultaneous debt conclusion that will fund ADA safety health improve building quality needs of all Somerville schools in order benefit families across district and minimize likelihood to displays children. The city is clearly prioritizing improvement of SBS schools and I'm proud to have been part of group and raise importance of issue in community and city leaders. You thank city council for recognizing our work. However much work remaining Somerville has lofty

environmental goals including negative carbon emissions by 2050 by 2050 which is not fast enough however there is still no concrete plan to decarbonize and make more efficient school buildings of Somerville. I'll say that again there is no plan and no timeline intentions commitments and goals and yet no clear plan for when or how it will happen Somerville must show leadership in the care taking and education of our students and the climate crisis by reducing emissions and protecting future of youth. The children of Somerville deserve ambitious action. Thank you.

>> Thank you.

>> [NAME] is going to speak.

>> Great. Thank you very much. Hi, everyone. My name is Bob and I'm ward resident and junior at Somerville high school and first start by expressing gratitude for Somerville carbon free healthy schools initiative given the citation and want to share perspective as high school student and why the work we do so meaningful to me. I was first able to connect with Alex who is amazing educator and initiatives surrounding a climate change and in just a few years I learned so much about the climate action work or occurring in Somerville and students get involve firsthand. Quite frankly some things that I do not understand as well, it was just such amazing experience to be involved and learn about so many different things and the coalition welcomed me so kindly and I'll forever be grateful for that and identify been able to connect through so organizations and support and mentor students younger than myself and climate action initiatives and that's why I strive to do this work in the first place. Somerville is amazing vibrant community and then sure all of our students here are able to thrive in the city and

especially I'm able to run action clubs educating students and encouraging them at very schools facing difficult and challenging conditions exacerbated by climate change. And seen firsthand impact one school building and every student deserves to learn in healthy environments. And our coalition doesn't just believe having climate resilience school builds is important and curriculum that is reflect importance of climate educations and I want to mention I feel honored to be involved in such amazing climate action initiatives and yeah, I just wanted to say thank you so much once again. I can't wait to see the work that we do in this coalition in the future and the work we can do in partnership with the city council. Thank you very much!

>> Thank you.

>> Council, do you want to read the citation?

>> Again, hereby known to all that the city Somerville mayor offer sincerest accommodation to Somerville carbon free and healthy schools for their tireless advocacy as highest environmental standards for new school buildings and clear timeline for comprehensive of all schools and council is grateful for commitment to making Somerville a leader in resiliency.

Thank you.

>> Thank you. Do you want to take a quick picture? Is we'll have a brief recess while we take a picture.

(Recess taken)

>> Call this meeting back to order. Madam clerk, next item. We're all here.

Next agenda item 4.1 communication counselor Davis. Agenda item four .2 the director update counselor resubmit upcoming improvements and approach taken to provide answers solutions and follow through.

>> Counselor Wheeler.

>> Through the chair I have had the pleasure seeing not only the hard work that the team does on daily basis and the planning coordination happening behind the scenes. I would love to invite director to present to the continually council on ongoing in particular committee perhaps (indiscernible) infrastructure or in the general council.

>> Counselor.

>> Thank you Mr. President I have a 311 relate ticket also I planned on.

>> Sounds good. Seeing no further discussion that item is approved next item.

>> City council supports state legislation provide flexibility in setting fees reduce alliance on home -- enabling more efficient municipal operations.

>> Through the chair this resolution supports the act. Let me say that again. The municipal empowerment act. To give more practical control over how we operate. We are constrain you had by state rules and adjust fees to meet cost levels and shift balance short term rental taxes as the case may be we can't streamline routine purchasing without jumping through hoops. It reduces reliance on home rule and procurement through tools when you can use existing competitively bid public contracts instead of duplicating the entire bidding process ourselves. This effort did not pass the legislature last session last year but it has been refiled and renewed momentum to move forward this year. I will add that in February this counselor was one of the first in the state to pass a resolution of the protect act a push for equal protection of all and that bill passed the Mass statehouse yesterday and legislature involved in that commented Somerville earlier support made a difference and I know sometimes it may feel like we're just talking here but we are part of a growing chorus. Thank you.

>> All right. Counselor.

>> Through you chair I would like to thank my colleague for bringing this forward and I would like to sign on and I want to add another aspect that's concluded in the act which is as the chair of license and permanents I've been getting educated about the years long effort of city staff and counselors to deal with double policy these are double utilize policy that are prohibited by law in Massachusetts but no enforcement mechanism this bill does include that mechanism allow us to be able to make some real progress on that issue wanted to highlight that, but I appreciate all of the things in the act. I'm glad to sign on. Thank you.

>> All right. Sounds good. Seeing entire council would like to sign onto that. No question send with gold plating up to counselor.

>> Through you Mr. Preponderate I want to thank you for making me aware of that. Let the world know any rep who does not vote for this supports double polls. Scream it if from rooftops this the election year issue so thank you.

>> Counselor.

>> Mr. President I thought expanded for seniors favorite, but I got a new one.

>> All right. Very well. That item is approved next item.

>> Agenda item four .four resolution requesting Somerville public schools Chief Financial Officer submit detailed line by line FY '27 to this city could your Honor in the same format as city operating budget for considering the current deficit going into this budget cycle.

>> Counselor.

>> Thank you, Mr. President and yes that is a resolution agenda item with a lot of syllables and there's a reason for that. I wanted this agenda item and resolution written exactly as to be as clear as possible the intentions now full disclosure city council does not have the ability or any able to tell the school committee or the SPS what to do that is the school committee jurisdiction however that is why this is a

resolution however I and some of colleagues numerous budget cycles when we are presented with the Somerville public schools budget it is simply in a lot of times a PowerPoint presentation. Of, you know, millions of dollars and we aren't really presented the down and dirty line by line budget items. Now, I've been in the council since 2020 and okay fine we were going through a pandemic and everything was -- everything was up in the air and what everything is going to be but we stabilized since then and opportunity to get back in line with past procedures through transparent budget presentations. And books and no reason that I can think we should not. The we now, of course, have a CFO that is in the rhythm of the budget and has been for a while now, and we don't have an excuse why we can't. And I heard from a lot of parents in the district who've requested salaries or information on departments and have not received really clear information on that. I don't think that's very fair either. So we need deserve department breakdowns and deserve and constituents deserve, our teachers, our students and parents deserve how many employees each department has and salary line items are and, of course, names extracted and expenditures for (indiscernible) colleagues here we are in the start of budgeting cycle enough time to make this possible. There isn't a reason why we should not have this at the end of the day. We're upper down vote and there aren't -- so a lot of in between but we should have this information. Thank you.

>> All right. That item is approved. Next item.

>> The administration discuss the process of disposal of city surplus items and whether those items may be offered to employees or the public for creation of free cycle style system.

>> Counselor.

>> Thank you. Simply to be green and recycle free cycle what we have in front of us city hall items no longer used or upgrade re or not necessarily city hall or city departments, printers, computer computers, what have you, I think we should find ways to simple sustainability through making this available I mean the order of course speaks -- resolution all right. Resolution speaks for itself however I think we should really be going here and get really creative about being green yeah of course (indiscernible) of being green and also in our simple routines of how we choose to consume or not and it's also really valuable and has an impact on being green so I think we should start simple like this and really I'm employing imploring the administration to take this not only into consideration but implementation.

>> Okay. Counselor.

>> Thank you Mr. President I'd like to sign on and happy to take this into sustainability and infrastructure to have this discussion. I know I work for the state of Massachusetts and I know what they, you know, every piece of equipment every piece of furniture has sort of lifespan and, you know, they -- they wear everything out until it's final and so I'm curious to see what the city does for process in terms of inventory and getting rid of items so happy to have that in my discussion.

>> Okay. I have counselors you and Scott [NAME] sign on. Next item.

>> Agenda item four .6 communication conveying report job retention.

>> Thank you Mr. President. We met on March 19th to review its ongoing programs and plan for the next round of grants that will be offered by the RP to workforce training providers in the fall. Currently the trust is funding thirteen projects three of which received their grants in November 2025 and will be starting in the spring and summer. These are the pathway to employment Somerville program conducted (indiscernible) with the program of training for building trades conducted by Asian Americans association and the next class of the scholar English language for job training that starts in April. In addition to this new program the trust has committed one thousand program development expensive of new small business entrepreneur training specialists who work with OS and facility processes. The city will pay salary of new hire. Looking forward to trust expects to put out RFP for about a million dollars funding in the fall. Because construction pipelines in the pipeline trusts during this year, (indiscernible) ask that the convocation be accepted as submitted.

>> Okay. Thank you, that item is placed on file. Next item.

>> Agenda item four .7 resolution the administration explore creation of neighborhood clean-up assistance program as detailed within.

>> Counselor.

>> Thank you Mr. President this isn't flushed out program it's more or less floating idea I think makes sense we encourage block parties certain times of year when block party season and in my mind this would be something where there would be sort of public facing calendar where say a resident could essentially initiate cleanup for the area and I know this is happening with zits already and group cleans in between routes and clean up happening in Davis square and I think help facility as far as like the city's portion would be coordinate and pick up bags and drop off bags and gloves city could provide for anybody that wants to take the initiative and get clean up going. Happy to discuss figure out what the details might be but this is really on, you know, the administration to take this idea and run with it and hopefully come up with something that could really encourage clean ups which I know the administration is excited about this round of clean ups that are happening this spring in the ward.

I guess just place it on file.

>> I would say you can place it on file if you want follow-up conversation about the resources would probably be the place.

>> Yeah, we'll send it to committee. I know that's going to take bandwidth and time to try to figure out what this would look like but happy to --

>> Housing and community development we'll send it to. They can have a conversation.

>> So before we get to that then I guess counselor sign on I have counselor Scott and Counselor Wheeler.

>> Thank you Mr. President I'm excited about this and give shout out to very nice folks hosted ward two clean up not too long ago and other folks. This is something that absolutely in the same way we have our block party kids now city clerk providers help folks getting it going, you know, hey, here's basic kit full of stuff full of gear go do it and honestly we do not need sponsored by Comcast we do not need to handout T-shirts and stuff folks need and come together take care of neighborhood and I can this is great and I would love to sign on too. Thank you.

>> Whole counselor wants to sign on.

>> Thank you, chair. I think this is a great idea I was speaking about this item with some residents who give me thoughtful feedback and they asked what else could we do also with? Where just as my colleague from ward two said a small amount of resources can help support and unlock a lot of community building. This is after all the year of the neighbor and this gets my gears turning in my head of what other kinds of neighborhood based and community activities could the city help do a small amount of coordination and support for.

>> Counselor heart. Sign on, okay, I love all the year of the neighbor ideas. The year after this is going to really stink. Cross that bridge when we get to it.
Counselor.

>> I just want to say one thing people can do right now kind of a PSA. Me and some neighbors did some stuff in prospect hill I guess a year ago, and 311 if you got a

bunch of trash bags that are full and you cannot deal with 311 is a great resource you can use them. They take away the next day.

>> Absolutely. Through the (indiscernible) the somebody organize clean up getting picking up bags. And just on one other on the point that Counselor Wheeler made I remember this constituent of mine who moved away he had an idea of almost local safety net like where, you know, and it would have been great if something like was in place when COVID where you talk to senior elderly neighbors and basically create sort of emergency response neighbor lead emergency response to be able to help people in times of need like that, so something like that.

>> Counselor Wheeler.

>> To the chair and I would be remis if I didn't mention the wonderful organization, one of many organizations that are doing that kind of work.

>> All right. H -- did I get it right? That is approved with the copy of the next item.

>> Next item, the director of constituent services peer before the committee on sustainability and infrastructure discuss by which 311 tickets --

>> Thank you Mr. President I know a lot of us see postings online and 311 ticket you'll open one up. It'll be closed. I don't fully understand. I heard different things at different times which is an auto close where when say the ticket is forwarded on to say ISD which then generates work order in citizen serve no kick back of information in the

comments in the 311, when they close it so a lot of people tickets are getting closed and so I just want to have a discussion about if there are what exactly is happening when we see that and if there is a way to, you know, a tweak system kick back auto generated comment that gives some information so people aren't in the dark about what's happening with the incompetent.

>> I think we should mark this item more completed and make them file it again next week.

>> Too shay. Counselor.

>> Thank you Mr. President. I just want to thank counselor for putting this in. I hear about this all the time not understanding what happened to the ticket. The other one is also when they call about the same issue, they call a few times a week, and then they -- it's just like the one ticket instead of creating a new one when the situation usually just gets worse so would love for yeah like this to be entered in that committee where what happen with these tickets. I know procedures change and just getting those updates as a counselor would be great so we can better help our constituents.

>> Did I say you said you wanted to sign on? Okay any further discussion? So that item is approved. Sustainability and infrastructure as well. Next item.

>> A resolution by counselor director of water and sewer appear before the committee on sustainability and infrastructure to discuss the process determined residential unit requires one inch or five eighths inch water meter.

>> Counselor.

>> Thank you, Mr. President through you to colleagues this might be a little bit in the weeds I'll try to explain real quick what the situation is. As the last water rate increase billing cycle what have you, they tiered the base rate. The base rate used to be \$40 for residential home say that had a five -- they didn't even have a differentiation between the different sizes of the meters. So now that we have this tiered system I'll give you an example of how this came up and why is that, you know, my thought maybe or what I heard is that we haven't gone up in base rates if in a long time and this is sort of we're moving in direction that is in line with other cities towns. The problem is that I think what it assumes is that one inch pipe is needs to deliver water say if you have I don't know three floors or so on again I don't know too much about this needs of what pipe it requires for what, I'll just explain it this way. There's a six unit complex over by me. Each one is individually metered. It's not they are splitting the base fee. In other words, when the installations were happening the six units, some of the people were asked, oh, do you want you do not need -- all the pipes going to unit for one inch, why? I don't know. You do not want to lose pressure say if you have a sprinkler you do not want shower to lose pressure. Now, the point is this person on fixed income that wasn't afforded that information, you know, the installer would put in five eights on one inch pipe so paying over three hundred dollars a year for base rates versus, you know, they used to pay 48 now paying 100 and something per quarter. I just want to know how or why the installer in some cases asked or just maybe on their own install the five eights versus another unit they installed a one inch pipe because I don't know our intention was to hit a one or two berm condo unit that's individually metered like if this was -- why

we tiered the residential the first place I'm not sure the water using the water using so it definitely feels a little I don't want to say punitive it sounds like we're trying to make more money and so I just want to understand when the installation happens that in situations like this person's how we could have avoided this. We're pretty much done with the installation program but it will happen again in the future and I think some households like this. If somebody is on fixed income and you're talking over \$350 more than they would have been paying if they had just been opted to have the right -- right now he's getting a new meter. The city has -- he has to pay but worth going to save him \$3,250 every year this is something one of the things come up that's again, you know, I think if people were educated they would most likely if you do not need an entire one inch pipe if you are not running irrigation system or you certainly do not need to be paying extra \$350 especially if you are on fixed income so I just want to have that conversation in sustainability and infrastructure as to what lead the contractor to in some case, you know, I already said it in some cases asked the person oh you do not need this one or whatever or if they were doing on their own but little inconsistent in the protocol I want to address. Thank you.

>> All right. That item is approved with copy of sustainability and infrastructure. All right. So barring any objection we're going to take legislative matters out of order and item recommended out of that committee relating to special education reserve fund that has to happen first before finance committee recommend I need recuse myself from that topic from both of items and pass gavel to good vice president, I'll see you when we get back.

>> Next item.

>> Meeting on March 17th, 2026.

>> Thank you Mr. Vice president. We met on February 17th brief meeting only half hour and some pretty detailed stuff. All right. Thank you Mr. President. There were two items three in total. I'll take the first one acceptance of Chapter 59 Section 5 clause 22 J etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. This is a tough read own for state law which is a lot. But functionally what this is enabling legislation that was passed by the state to allow us to increase the amount of realize tax exemptions that we offer to certain class of people. We are not allowed as a city to say we're going to give a tax break to -- I don't know folks who show up to community clean up days, right? Or any other class of person we want to incentivize. That's governed by state law and the amount of exemption and city and towns can offer is governed by state law but rather set across Commonwealth they make option city and towns adopt. For some reason rather simply increase limit of the deductions that can be offered for these categories they added more clauses that allow us to double the current levels of exemption. In this case these are exemption for disabled Veterans injuries in line of service and also surviving spouses of military Veterans who died in the line in action. So this is pretty straightforward for those wondering why this whole mouthful of two items on agenda that's what it is and hopefully adopted these we'll be able to provide greater tax break for folks injured in our military services.

Going on from there, our other large item is also acceptance of Mass general law establishing a special education reserve fund, so when money is that finance is very complicated. Schools budgets is separate from general fund budget although it is certainly approved by the city counselor it's not something we get in the weeds on but very fixed. We can't necessarily slide money from, say, DBW in the schools as easily and one of the hardest forecast in the school budget is outside placement of special education students special education students who has needs not getting met by school district and placement of the districts and costs our district money. And it's impossible to tell in any given year how many cases come up and makes for lumpy process and one sometimes puts bunch of school budget and allows us to create separate fund like stabilization fund for the schools that have a pool of money that can only be used with appropriation from school community and the city counselor to absorb those kind of impact if we have extra students who need extra help this is way we can make sure you goes in there without having to cut the whiteboard budget. And the other nice thing about it is allows for money that goes into it and appropriated for any given year to stay and build up rainy day account for special education placements again without creation of this particular vehicle, this special education reserve fund, we wouldn't be able to do that. It would just roll back into the general fund every year and we face similar situation every year. This item is adopting general laws enabling legislation to create the fund and then hopefully in next finance committee report having been created we will be able to deposit money and get started. Thank you for allowing me a few minutes to explain the very, very dry nature of legislative matters, but I ask that the committee report be accepted as submitted.

>> Any discussion on? Seeing none, the report is approved. I believe that three roll call votes, madam clerk.

>> Correct. That put three items in front of us, request of mayor requesting acceptance of Massachusetts general law Chapter 59 Section 5 clause 22. I authorize annual in amount granted Section 5 clauses 22 -- 2000 A 2000 -- F.

[Reading agenda item]

Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor recused, counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor Davis is recused with eight counselors in favor that is approved.

Next agenda item request acceptance of Massachusetts general law Chapter 59
Section 5 clause 22 J authorize increase exemption granted Chapter 259 Section 5
clauses 22 A, B, 22 C, if you E and 22 F.

[Reading agenda item]

Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor is recuse eight counselors in favor that is approved. Agenda item C four Massachusetts general laws Chapter 40 thirteen E establish special education reserve fund.

[Reading agenda item]

Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor is recused. Counselor. Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> With eight counselors that item is approved.

>> Now, we can take finance item since recused before we can bring back. Is that okay?

>> I think that's right. I think there's related item to the same issue why recused in the finance.

>> So next item madam clerk.

>> Brings back item six report of the committee on finance committee of whole on March.

>> May reflect both counselor Davis and assume counselor recused item both counselors recused. Counselor Wheeler.

>> Through the chair the finance committee met on Tuesday March 2026 in-person in this chambers and committee as whole with all counselors participating with the help of clerk and number of city staff we took up 18 item agenda approved minutes of March tenth meeting and recommended approval internal transfer to establish grant match account for relevance Veterans. -- we recommended approval of 75,000 bike share for blue bike station at 1620 city plaza with funds city by developer and the city by equipment and bikes. Approximately 431,000 appropriation newly created special education reserve fund. This action restores earlier earmark that this funding is intended for special education and places fund designed to constitution special education costs as has been discussed. We then recommended approval these include at Somerville museum open space acquisition support for affordable housing trust and transfer to community housing reserve and mystic river and homes these items reflect and adjustments for prior year revenues. Finally we held committee of discussion for fits CAL year 2027. This is not voting session but opportunity framing choices ahead of constrained fiscal year. Across the discussion broad alignment on the need to protect core alliances. Counselor prioritized many not limiting housing stabilization public school funding including special education after school programs reduce disparities immigrant legal services and transportation infrastructure lively discussion and I encourage all members of public to take a watch. These communications were recommended to be marked work completed. Chair, I ask this committee report be accepted as submitted.

>> Discussion on the committee report? Seeing none the report is approved.

>> Consideration of two items of legislative matters from just two counselors are not in fact recused and we'll revote those.

>> Got you.

>> You are good.

>> Right. That's fine.

>> Thank you Mr. Vice president we have two items before us from the finance committee report. Roll call. Is that correct? One item. One item. So we have one item from finance and revote on two items for which did not relate to special-ed because counselor and I did not be recused so city clerk advise we take that vote so we're going to do what she say.

>> Item in front of us for roll call vote requesting approval from bike share for installation blue bike station at 1620 med Ford street development site.

[Reading agenda item]

Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> With ten counselors in favor item is approved.

>> Mr. President, I'm happy to reconsider on the items on the finance anterior from legislative matters report so you all can vote on them.

>> I'm inclined to accept that motion to refer consideration because to my mind sounds like the right thing to do so let's do that, I'm seeing nod counselor Scott move to reconsider, and does anyone objections reconsideration any discussion? Seeing none those two items are now back before us. We can do them together in a single roll call vote and these are items 26-0144 and it have 26-0145. Anyone need items reread again? I'm seeing shaking heads. Madam clerk.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> Counselor.

>> Yes.

>> With ten counselors in favor those items are approved.

>> Very good thank you with patience with that. Next item madam clerk.

>> Brings to agenda item six B one report on committee land use March 19th,
2026.

[Reading agenda item]

>> Counselor.

>> Thank you Mr. President land use committee held public hearings on two proposed amendments the first one is series of changes to affordable housing combinations input having to do with allowing affordable build to go to -- as well as recommendation from the administration based on their work with non-profit partners. These changes are described in the attached materials the video and they will be discussed at next land use meeting. The other item was series of proposed changed to backyard cottages otherwise known as accessory dwelling ADU submitted by counselor so this one we're not put on agenda until may at question and taken up alongside other proposed ADU related ideas from we have number of proposed amendment from members public as well as city staff so stay tuned and then we had a long and very detailed presentation about potential conflict between our local regulations of backyard cottages and the state law which passed more recently that requires cities to allow ADU and the state law just to speak frankly has created incredibly dumb conflicts that no one supports or intended. And that we're still working out how we're going to get through this. ISD and planning but to give one specific example the state law says ADU can only be nine hundred square root so it's a small building but you cannot have special standards just for the backyard cottage whatever the standards for that zoning have to apply to this and way of finger wagging restrictive communities you can't allow them but not really allow them by having all these impossible standards what that means

restricted allows triple-deckers so, you know, at face value developer I think the fear I can build three story ADU so it's like this big but and that's not the outcome that was intended. It's quite frustrating to be honest and I think we're going to have to spend some time working it out and staff is working on a set of recommendations but that's where we are not tend of the world and frustrating situation and I ask the report accepted.

>> Yes, quick addition to that and as stated numerous times want to make sure conflating between what some ADU lawsuit are putting forward and the actual intentions by what my draft ordinance and what is before the good intentions in the hope this expands affordability within the city and I want to make sure we do it right and make sure that of course best for Somerville. And residential here in the preservation of Somerville residential here. Very much looking forward to that discussion, and all the things that go from that. Thank you.

>> Counselor Scott.

>> Thank you Mr. President want express appreciation for the chair for that explain. I will say not common site and I get fair number of constituent questions why behind the triple decker there is another triple decker so this is great explanation so thank you for that. Also I kind of miss land use committees all the time. Not for nothing.

>> You might be the only one.

>> Any further discussions all right. Seeing none the report is accepted. Next item.

>> Agenda item 61 report of committee on license permanents meeting

March 25th, 2026.

>> Counselor.

>> Thank you. I believe that first, I called like to sever 63 from the committee report.

>> Seeing no objection, all right.

>> Thank you. I'll give committee report first and then come back to that item. So we have short meeting yesterday and approved you'll hear about the severed item shortly but we also approved recommended to be approved with grant location heath street at Edgar avenue and the condition that Ms. Duffy that would be acceptable was to have work start after 9:00 a.m. which was condition because it's a major route to school to the Healy School. And I would like this committee report be accepted.

>> Any discussion on the committee report.

>> ? Seeing none that is approved that leaves item before us. Counselor heart.

>> Thank you. Okay, I would like to amend the condition -- do I need to read it first or does it need to be read? Or --

>> Yeah, go ahead you can read in give some context.

>> This is every source applying for grant of to install from utilize bolt 11 over seven to point of pick up 62 line street. We had discussed the possibility conditioning

this on the fixing of a double pole utilize pole 211 over six, but I called like to amend that condition by striking it in full. And then --

>> Counselor heart moves amend -- we voted to add the condition so the item before us has condition with it. Counselor heart amend item any discussion, questions?

>> I believe I'm amending the condition.

>> I think you're amending the item to -- the item before us. Very good. All right. Counselor Scott question.

>> On the motion, I'm sorry. Hit me again so we're removing the conditions on it with the intention of approving the item tonight?

>> That's correct. Yes. After consulting with the law department. I believe that it's being that it's a separate utilize poll that would not be a wise use of a condition.

>> Okay got it. Well, I guess I'll have --

>> Do you want to note the conversation we did have regarding the second poll and the promises that were --

>> Yes. Thank you President Davis. I did have a lot of back and forth with Jackie Duffy and RCN they moved their wires so it's back to ever source and Ms. Duffy say that she would work on getting it fixed immediately. It just won't be a condition of the --

>> Scott.

>> I don't know want to muck up the works here my inclination would be to condition this on the completion of that ever source of the lines but you know what? Let's extended a little grace tonight and we'll see.

>> My recollection and counselor heart correct me if I am wrong my recollection was Ms. Duffy believed different third party utilize next in line to remove their stuff and so on and so forth the list as, you know, an order of operations. I believe that's what she told us regarding that poll. Counselor Scott on that?

>> Have we confirmed the poll in question is in engine's state database? Counselor heart on that?

>> I believe -- I believe my memory is she said it was.

>> Okay great.

>> Counselor heart do you want to recount the request that you made regarding the engine database.

>> So Ms. Duffy is looking into if we have access as a city to the engine's database as well.

>> Let us take a look so maybe we can answer some of the questions ourselves so we're working on that.

(Simultaneous talking).

>> Any further discussion questions? All right counselor heart moves approved item as amended. Discuss motion. Seeing none. That item is approved next item.

>> Agenda sum six E one maintenance meeting on March 23, 2026.

>> All right. Thank you Mr. President. On Monday night the school building and maintenance committee held committee with school counterpart for one hours 30 minutes very collaborative meeting we covered eight items the highlights being we got a custodial staffing report from DPW and raised our concerns about coverage particularly at largest school east Somerville and at that time Commissioner Wise man let us know that he doesn't think we need more staff but we did talk about different ways we might potentially spread out the staff.

We also talked about building maintenance. We got updates on east Somerville schools and the great new that is the cap wan school after what was described as a game of Wac a mole they got hot water restore today all the classrooms which is pretty amazing and environments in schools we had counselor order which got us report on decarbonization climate goals while we're happy to have that initial data we also did discuss we needed somber data and some more specific data. And then the last was the lasting few was the MSCPA process for winter hill brown schools where we learned the next big milestone the report due in August, and then we got a look at the asset management plans and learned that open IM is going to be using open GOV which is very exciting for me because it finally opens up the potential for us to have a public facing dashboard for objects that are ongoing in the city and that I think is huge so I keep banging a drum for this one and finally the Kennedy Inclusive schoolyard

renovation which everyone was really excited about. School committee chair baton had a great slogan kind of encapsulated about how things went which was nothing about us without us which obviously he didn't say it was his but he shared it with us and I think really great way to express how this was done and the community input that was involved. And that's my report. I request that be accepted.

>> Any discussion? Seeing none. The item is approved next item.

>> Agenda six F one report committee sustainability infrastructure meeting on March 18, 2026.

>> Counselor.

>> Mr. President before I go with my report sever sum items five and six and send back to committee. So that would be (indiscernible) 26 zero 338.

>> Yes.

>> Okay. Counselor moves sever those two items any question? Counselor.

>> Thank you Mr. President before that meeting I had mentioned at the last counselor meeting we were going to have a big sort of snow discussion and DPW now Commissioner Eric wise man did not disappoint. He came with a great presentation. We essentially took up all the items together and we covered what was essentially postmortem item number four Commissioner Public works discuss lessons learned about resources politicians needed to approve snow clearance including bus, parking ways dead ends, accessible ramps and like lanes. And, you know, it was a really great

discussion. The Commissioner Mention that had they made some mistakes and they are long and they recognize some of the shortfalls and some of the things that didn't happen obviously a unique situation where we had two major storms back to back so little bit unique situation but nonetheless he is working on plans for next year hopefully we do not get any snow but yeah so a discussion that pretty much covered all of the snow related items and it was a two hour conversation and I left that meeting feeling like we fell short a little bit on the ADA accessible ramps and the handicap spots I felt like it got to end of road and we had little bit rush conversation about it but really didn't do justice and before we can kick it down the can the road before you know it next winter and I just think I know there's no easy solution we're talking about serious, you know, we're talking about labor, a serious amount of labor that would take place or enforcing which was my, you know, the whole discussion we had last year about --

>> Counselor let me interrupt this is now on two items severed.

>> No, I thought I was giving my report.

>> Handicap ramp.

>> I thought that was settled I send back to committee.

>> If we're done with that we can accept report and talk about two items before us and send those back.

>> This is just the report.

>> Okay carry on.

>> You broke my rhythm. Anyway, that's pretty much it. The video you can go watch the video. There's a presentation attached to the agenda item that the Commissioner Gave. You know, I really do appreciate and respect staff time when they come and give two hours and give a presentation, but I feel strongly there needs to be more discussion about how we come up with a plan to better serve our most vulnerable folks in the community I've seen picture since then of different areas where, you know, it's clear that we can do better. Again, I know no easy solution. But I think it deserve further discussion. With that, I ask that you y'all accept the report as submitted.

>> Any discussion on the report? Seeing none the report is approved and two items before us. Any further discussion on those items.

>> -- I guess I kind of covered I kind of jumped the gun on that one but essentially feelings have been noted we're sending those back.

>> Dually noted see above so items conferred copies sent back to committee. Okay back to sustainability and infrastructure. Next item.

>> Brings to agenda item 7.1. A request of the --

>> I think we have one more committee.

>> Oh my fault sorry. Agenda item six G one. March 16, 2026.

>> Counselor.

>> Thank you, Mr. President. The traffic parking committee met with all members present. Counselor Wheeler (indiscernible) first meeting all items were marked as completed. We had a really great meeting regarding the item on installing no turn on red sign at the intersection the street and Warren improve pedestrian cyclist safety. Director reported the team has reviewed the order and completed the technical evaluation and determining that a new sign should be installed. He added the installation being scheduled in the spring when weather improves we had recommendation of -- regarding the 25% design document of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (indiscernible) project director rosin shared enthusiasm for progress of the project noting that it reflects more than 20 years of work director stated he feels confident in the current direction and appreciates input from committee members and advisory groups mass meet regularly with virus and the commission. And the project approaching milestone take approximately four years with the goal of improving neighborhood connectivity and then answering the pedestrian and commuter safety. And project advances the next phase will focus on advancing utilize coordination and the drainage design building on the framework in which street connections and crosswalk locations have generally been identified. Mass (indiscernible) expects to begin construction in 2027 with projected annual expenditures of 20 to 30 million. Director rosin noted the next design milestone is anticipated in one year and meaningful opportunities for community engagement and shared the project team meets regularly including weekly and biweekly meetings and design sessions and city staff have been invited into the process as collaborative partners describing this as the most collaborative approach he has experienced. So that was really great to hear

that. And committee members and director rosin expressed appreciation for the contributions of advocacy groups and the broader community. He also noted the city has not completed the technical review yet so this is the last item of the proposed Aldridge Virginia Street intersection change and suggest we see approach after the bridge is implemented. We took up items together so this is, yeah, something that's still will wait. And see. And submit this report as (indiscernible).

>> Counselor moves to --

(Simultaneous talking).

>> Submitted. Any discussion on the report. Counselor.

>> I just want to -- I was in the audience and I there was a very great conversation about the hawks and I just want to continue beating on that drum. Just today I was going into assembly square and I was nearly hit by a car running the solid red light at the hawk (indiscernible) so it's, yeah.

>> Yeah, thank you. I highly recommend watching the meeting. It was very informative meeting. Very briefly. It was long but again informative meeting. We discussed automatic the concerns that were raised by PTAC rein-stating the full (indiscernible) reconsidering the target speed continuing to work shorten the distance across street consider further reduction immediate support -- north south bus service if

you are interested in any of these things I highly recommend watching the meetings because we definitely learned a lot from that discussion.

>> Very good. Seeing no further discussion that item is approved. Counselor Wheeler.

>> Oh, sorry.

>> Next item seven dot one.

>> Yes. Thank you, chair. Hi, move to waive readings of 7.1 and through 7.5 and --

>> Seeing no objection.

>> No, not on that motion.

>> Seeing no objection those items are referred to finance. Next item.

>> On 7.6 and 7.7 Sir I waif.

>> (Indiscernible).

>> We left-hand turn be having meeting this coming Tuesday, the major items are ready for it but these items going into committee I anticipate pulling up for the committee in the later meeting in April. And I will be giving members of the committee heads up when they are on the objection. Asked and answered. I encourage nickle league to submit questions or concerns in advance of that meeting and make sure

everybody two weeks to get those any know we're getting great constituents communication about these items and ensure colleagues and -- throw roar discussion.

>> Very good those items are referred he.

>> Agenda item 7.8 appointment of Eric Wiseman of Commissioner Public works.

>> A little bit of gray area here. Our practice with regard director positions that were in place prior to our new charter we didn't send folks who were already doing the job into committee and folks newly appointed we did. Technically this is new appointment even though we all know acting Commissioner Wise man quite well I'm inclined to send this committee to stay consistent with that approach however I would not object at all if folks want to take up this evening for approved counselor.

>> I just have a question on the item. Are we still calling this Commissioner Or have we officially changed it in the charter or elsewhere that director DPWR.

>> That's an excellent question and I don't remember the answer I'm looking at acting city clerk approaching the microphone.

>> Thanks Mr. President. The titles are mostly not spelled out in the charter and according to the city budget, dictates that it is still the Commissioner Of public works.

>> Other suggestion counselor?

>> No, no, but just another on the item thing. I mean I'm fine with moving forward this evening.

>> Any discussion I don't see well, I see our chair of -- confirmation but not in the room. Any discussion, any opinions on that? Counselor do you want to make a motion?

>> No, we'll go through the process send to committee I'm not going to make motion.

>> Very well. That item is referred to confirmation and personal matters. Next item.

>> Agenda item 7.9 communication from the mayor conveying the appointment of clause Schultz to rank voting committee.

>> Placed on --

>> Rank choice voting committee.

>> That item is placed on file.

>> Agenda item 7.11 conveying the appointment --

>> That item is placed on file.

>> Agenda item nine .one.

>> Counselor.

>> Thank you, Mr. President I would like to move waive readings. Nine .74.
And approved this evening.

>> Counselor that doesn't align with the list I have so I want to make sure we're on the same page here. I got nine dot one through nine 38 with nine 31 going to committee. Is that not your intent? Okay did you get those numbers? Go right ahead.

>> Just repeating to confirm with you counselor. Nine .one through nine .65 nine .67 through and -- and you would like to waive the readings and approve that's correct.

>> Any discussion on the motion. Seeing none those items are approved counselor.

>> Then I would like to move the reading of item nine .73 and refer that to licenses and permits.

>> Seeing no objection that item is referred to license and permanent and then --

>> Counselor.

>> Well, first can I then I'll note for the record I'm recuse from item nine .6.

>> Very well.

>> I move that we waive the reading of nine .66 and refer it to committee. No to approve it immediately.

>> Counselor Wheeler would like to move --

>> I wasn't sure which one I would like to do. I approve immediately.

>> Considering and making up mind. Seeing no objection 966 is approved.

Next item.

>> Okay. And that brings us to agenda item nine .75 public communication submitting comments about surveillance annual report.

>> That placed on file with copy of legislative matters.

>> Agenda nine .76.

>> That item is placed on file with copy to --

>> Agenda item submitting comments about YMCA redevelopment an agenda nine .78 urban forestry committee submitting comments about anticoagulant rodent sides.

>> Let's place on file with a copy to legislative matters just in case there's something there he wants to talk about. If not we'll dispense in that committee.

>> Agenda commission of public works remove large debris now snow season has concluded.

>> That item on lay on table for next meeting?

>> So just as reminder these are supplemental items so we won't deliberate on them this evening. We can send to committee where they will be properly noticed.

>> Send to committee.

>> Which committee on that one?

>> --

>> That item is referred to, counselor, no deliberation.

>> Question Mr. President am I allowed to mention something I hope is discussed at ma meeting or no?

>> I think let's keep all deliberation until properly noticed.

>> Commissioner Public works discuss practical solutions from without damaging to allow students access outdoor play areas. Ten .three. Administration update this counselor for gym and cafeteria.

>> Those referred to school and maintenance. Next item.

>> Agenda item ten .four.

>> Given the date there is time and nature of this item. Any discussion all right. Seeing none that item is approved.

>> Agenda item ten .five.

>> That item is laid on the table.

>> Ten .six from Hala.

>> That item referred to legislative matters.

>> Agenda item ten item 26 zero four for --

>> We will refer that item to legislative matters as well.

Any additional items any late items?

>> That brings us to the end of the agenda. There are no further items before --

>> All right. Counselor.

>> The Mc-Garth highway item could I have that referred to public health and safety.

>> Yeah, okay the one we laid on the table that's item ten dot five we'll send that to public health and public safety dually noticed and deliberated at that time. Got that Madam Clerk. Excellent. With that, counselor move to adjourn. We are adjourned. Thanks, everyone.

[Session concluded.]