



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 22, 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 7:02 PM by Ward Seven City Councilor Judy Pineda Neufeld. The City Council entered recess at 8:19 PM and returned at 8:31 PM.

- 1.1. Roll Call Call of the Roll.
(ID # [25-0997](#))

RESULT: **PLACED ON FILE**

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

- 1.2. Remembrances Remembrances.
(ID # [25-0998](#))

Councilor McLaughlin requested a moment of silence in memory of those who died in service of our country, especially Dan Hovanesian, who served as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Marine Corps and was awarded the Silver Star, two Purple Hearts, and the Bronze Star for his bravery and who played a pivotal role in the creation of the New England Center and Home for Veterans in Boston.

Councilor Davis requested a moment of silence in memory of Marie Gillis. Councilor Clingan requested a moment of silence in memory of Christine Lyons.

Councilor Ewen-Campen requested a moment of silence in memory of Liza Kitchell.

Councilor Strezo requested a moment of silence in memory of Dr. William "Smitty" Smith.

Councilor Strezo requested a moment of silence in memory of Yaron

Lischinsky and Sarah Milgrim.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 1.3. Minutes
(ID # [25-0999](#))

Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 24, 2025.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 1.4. Minutes
(ID # [25-1000](#))

Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 16, 2025.

RESULT: APPROVED

2. CITATIONS

- 2.1. Citation
(ID # [25-0990](#))

By Councilor Pineda Neufeld
Commending Tom Lamar for six years of service as Chair of the Bicycle Advisory Committee.

President Pineda Neufeld read the citation into the record and Mayor Ballantyne thanked Mr. Lamar for his work with the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) and acknowledged his 10 years of service. She commented on the various initiatives led by Mr. Lamar on behalf of the BAC and the city. Mr. Lamar thanked the Mayor and the Council for the recognition and spoke about Safe Streets and the changing roles of advocacy groups. Councilors Clingan, Burnley, Ewen-Campen, Wilson, and Mbah thanked Mr. Lamar for his service and expertise with the BAC.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 2.2. Citation
(ID # [25-0991](#))

By Councilor Pineda Neufeld
Commending the Kiwanis Club on the auspicious occasion of its 100th anniversary of support to the community.

RESULT: LAI D ON THE TABLE

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 3.1. Grant of Location
(ID # [25-0951](#))
- Eversource applying for a Grant of Location to install approximately 38 feet of conduit in Corinthian Road from Utility Pole 261/2 to an approximate point of pickup at 1006 Broadway.

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 # [25-0954](#)) Eversource applying for a Grant of Location to install approximately 54 feet of conduit in Albion Street, from Utility Pole 3/22 to an approximate point of pickup at 156 Albion 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**
- 3.3. Grant of Location (ID # [25-0952](#)) Eversource applying for a Grant of Location to install approximately 67 feet of conduit in Stickney Avenue, from Utility Pole 322/2 to an approximate point of pickup at 15 Stickney Avenue.
- 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**
- 3.4. Grant of Location (ID # [25-0953](#)) Eversource applying for a Grant of Location to install approximately 80 feet of conduit in Glenwood Road, from Manhole 7417 to an approximate point of pickup at 72 Glenwood Road.
- 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**
- 3.5. Grant of Location (ID # [25-0955](#)) Eversource applying for a Grant of Location to install approximately 160 feet of conduit in Broadway, from Manhole 1922 to an approximate point of pickup at 356 Broadway.
- 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**
- 3.6. Grant of Location (ID # [25-0956](#)) FirstLight Fiber, Inc. applying for a Grant of Location to install approximately 168 feet of conduit in Inner Belt Road and 1 new Manhole to a point of pickup at 30 Inner Belt Road.
- Bill Conway, representing FirstLight Fiber, Inc, 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. Resolution
(ID # [25-0984](#))

By Councilor Mbah, Councilor Strezo and Councilor Wilson
That the Administration create a Senior Liaison position in the Mayor's Office.

This item was discussed with item #25-0985.

Councilor Mbah explained the reasoning for putting these items forward to strengthen the city's capacity to engage with its senior residents. He sponsored Greg Hill to speak on the matter. Mr. Hill commented that he feels that the voices of seniors are not being heard and he pointed out that there isn't a senior advisory committee in the city. He believes that such a committee should be within the City Council and he asked that the resolution be re-written to comply with his request.

Councilor Strezo spoke about caring for her grandmother and the challenges she faced. She commented that Somerville isn't planning for residents to age in place, even after years of talking about it. She sponsored Fred Berman to speak on the matter. Mr. Berman stated that it's within the Council's power to establish a Council committee to deal with senior issues. He also asked that the language be broadened to encompass additional areas of concern. Councilor Wilson sponsored George Teshu to speak. Mr. Teshu stated that he thinks having the proposed committee would be a valuable asset.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

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

4.2. Resolution
(ID # [25-0985](#))

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

That the Administration create a Senior Advisory Group to advise on policies impacting seniors in the city.

This item was discussed with item #25-0984.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

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

4.3. Communication
(ID # [25-0979](#))

By Councilor Mbah
Conveying a report of the Job Creation and Retention Trust Fund.

Councilor Mbah reported that members of the trust fund discussed current linkage fee, noting that the current balance stands at \$2.2 million, other funding options, concerns about the impacts of cuts in federal funding, strategies for the effective use of funds and future grant applications, two RFPs and a contract extension.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 4.4. Communication (ID # [25-0980](#)) By Councilor Mbah
Conveying a report of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.
Councilor Mbah reported that members of the trust fund approved a funding motion for 24 Webster Avenue (\$260,000) and another for a Somerville Community Corporation property at 31-33 Cross Street East. Councilor Mbah reported that the trust received \$5.8 million in linkage fees from recent projects and approved an extension and expansion of the flex renter assistance program.
RESULT: PLACED ON FILE
- 4.5. Order (ID # [25-0987](#)) By Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor Wilson, Councilor Clingan and Councilor Mbah
That the Commissioner of Public Works provide an update on preventative maintenance plans for all school buildings, and progress on providing the public with tools to view preventative maintenance plans and actions.
RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: School Building Facilities and Maintenance Special Committee
- 4.6. Resolution (ID # [25-0986](#)) By Councilor Pineda Neufeld and Councilor Davis
That the Administration update this Council on the report and recommendations of the Davis Square Public Safety Working Group.
RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Public Health and Public Safety Committee
- 4.7. Order (ID # [25-0988](#)) By Councilor Clingan
That the Director of Mobility install STOP signs on Ten Hills Road at Governor Winthrop Road, making the intersection a four-way stop.
RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee
- 4.8. Order (ID # [25-0989](#)) By Councilor Clingan, Councilor Wilson, Councilor Burnley Jr., Councilor Davis, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Mbah, Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor Sait, Councilor Scott and Councilor Strezo
That the Commissioner of Public Works appear before the Special Committee on School Building Facilities and Maintenance to discuss the recent break-in at the Winter Hill School building and the measures being taken to secure the building.
Councilor Clingan commented that the building's motion sensors were inoperable the night the building was broken into.
RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: School Building Facilities and Maintenance Special Committee

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- 5.1. Resolution (ID # [25-0908](#)) By Councilor Burnley Jr., Councilor Clingan, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Mbah, Councilor Scott and Councilor Wilson
In support of Head Start.

Councilor Burnley commented that this national program serves over 800,000 children in the nation and noted that five offices have been closed in last month, including the regional office in Boston. He stated that it's important to support the children who need this program.

RESULT: APPROVED

6. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

6.A. FINANCE COMMITTEE

- 6.A.1. Committee Report (ID # [25-0982](#)) Report of the Committee on Finance, meeting on May 20, 2025.

Councilor Wilson summarized the actions taken by the committee and reported that the committee recommended for approval 7 grant acceptances, payment of 6 prior year invoices, 5 funding transfers, 6 appropriations, an amendment to the tree stabilization fund, and acceptance of Chapter 329 of the Acts of 1987.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.A.2. Order (ID # [24-1686](#)) By Councilor Burnley Jr. and Councilor Scott
That the City Solicitor confirm whether an LGBTQ Legal Services Stabilization Fund can be created to pay fees associated with gendered document changes and potential court sealing of records associated with such documents.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

- 6.A.3. Communication (ID # [25-0270](#)) By Councilor Burnley Jr.
Conveying the cost of changes to identity documents, in support of item #24-1686.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

- 6.A.4. Public Communication (ID # [25-0336](#)) Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition submitting comments re: item #24-1686, creation of an LGBTQ Legal Services Stabilization Fund.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

- 6.A.5. Order
(ID # [25-0510](#))
- By Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Burnley Jr., Councilor Clingan, Councilor Davis, Councilor Mbah, Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Sait, Councilor Scott, Councilor Strezo and Councilor Wilson
- That the Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management discuss with this Council what strategies and resources are being utilized to bring Somerville's Tannery Brook Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) into compliance with the current and future long-term CSO control plans.
- RESULT: WORK COMPLETED**
- 6.A.6. Order
(ID # [25-0568](#))
- By Councilor Mbah
- That the Director of Housing include a line item contribution to the Affordable Housing Trust's FY 2026 ordinary maintenance budget in order to sustain its funding for affordable housing development and assistance to households facing rent or mortgage arrears.
- RESULT: WORK COMPLETED**
- 6.A.7. Order
(ID # [25-0569](#))
- By Councilor Mbah
- That the Director of Housing Stability calculate and present a budget proposal for sufficient funding that will enable it to continue its programs of municipal flex funding, legal assistance and related housing search services for residents facing displacement and homeless families and individuals in FY 2026.
- RESULT: WORK COMPLETED**
- 6.A.8. Order
(ID # [25-0570](#))
- By Councilor Mbah
- That the Director of the Office of Sustainability and Environment clarify the situation regarding the federal grant application for composting and, depending on its likely fulfillment, calculate a budget line item to insure that the small-scale pilot program can continue into FY 2026 and expand to more households.
- RESULT: WORK COMPLETED**
- 6.A.9. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-0662](#))
- Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$583.03 using available funds in the Department of Public Works Fleet Motor Parts and Accessories Account for the purchase of vehicle parts.
- RESULT: APPROVED**
- 6.A.10. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-0663](#))
- Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$270 using available funds in the Department of Public Works R&M Vehicles Account for vehicle inspections.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.A.11.Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0664](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$1,137.70 using available funds in the Department of Public Works R&M Parks and Playgrounds Account for irrigation services.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.A.12.Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0665](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$504 using available funds in the Department of Public Works Administration Police Details Account for police detail services.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.A.13.Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0666](#)) Requesting approval of a transfer of \$5,777 from the Police Overtime Account to the Police Grant Match Account for the FY 2025 Shannon Grant match requirement.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.A.14.Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0813](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$122,681.25 grant with no new match required, from the Massachusetts Community First Partnership to the Office of Sustainability and Environment for an Energy Advisor and outreach materials.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.A.15.Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0836](#)) Requesting approval to appropriate \$45,000 from the Street Tree Stabilization Fund for FY 2025 Ash tree treatments.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

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

6.A.16.Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0846](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$274,000 grant with no new match required, from the Boston Office of Emergency Management to the Police Department for Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response (ASHER) training.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.A.17.Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0850](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$90 using available funds in the Police Department Professional and Technical Services Account for case management for workers' compensation.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.18.Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0852](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$30,000 grant that requires a match, from the RIZE Massachusetts Foundation to the Health and Human Services Department for public health vending machines.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.19.Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0854](#)) Requesting the transfer of \$200,000 from the Community Preservation Act Undesignated Fund Balance to the Open Space Reserve.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.20.Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0855](#)) Requesting the appropriation of \$200,000 from the Community Preservation Act Fund Open Space Reserve for the design of the Kennedy Schoolyard.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.21.Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0857](#)) Requesting approval to appropriate \$228,000 from the Medicinal Marijuana Stabilization Fund for the salary and fringe of three positions related to youth-serving staff in FY 2026.

RESULT: APPROVED

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

6.A.22.Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0860](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$36,000 grant with no new match required, from Department of Environmental Protection to the Department of Public Works for the Sustainable Materials Recovery Program.

RESULT: APPROVED

6.A.23.Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0861](#)) Requesting approval of a transfer of \$400,000 from the Department of Public Works Highway Wages Account to the Snow Removal Account.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.A.24. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0862](#)) Requesting approval of a transfer of \$600,000 from various Department of Public Works Personal Services Accounts to various Department of Public Works Ordinary Maintenance Accounts to fund projected budget shortfalls.
- RESULT:** APPROVED
- 6.A.25. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0863](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$8.87 using available funds in the Police Department Professional and Technical Services Account for managed care services for workers' compensation.
- RESULT:** APPROVED
- 6.A.26. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0873](#)) Requesting approval of a transfer of \$363,000 from the Department of Public Works Grounds Wages Account to the Snow Removal Account.
- RESULT:** APPROVED
- 6.A.27. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0874](#)) Requesting approval to appropriate \$450,000 from the Facility Renovation Stabilization Fund for the replacement of the Brown School Boiler.
- RESULT:** APPROVED
- AYE:** City Councilor At Large Mbah, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Strezo, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld
- 6.A.28. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0875](#)) Requesting approval to appropriate \$350,000 from the Facility Renovation Stabilization Fund to replace the Department of Public Works Water Department Boiler System.
- RESULT:** APPROVED
- AYE:** City Councilor At Large Mbah, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Strezo, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld
- 6.A.29. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0892](#)) Requesting approval to amend the purpose of the Street Tree Stabilization Fund to align with the Tree Preservation Ordinance.
- RESULT:** APPROVED

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

6.A.30. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-0902](#))

Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$11,400 grant with no new match required, from the Department of Fire Services to the Fire Department for fire education for school students and senior residents.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.A.31. Order
(ID # [25-0905](#))

By Councilor Pineda Neufeld
That the city hereby adopts Chapter 329 of the Acts of 1987, An Act Increasing Local Control Over The Annual School Budget.

Councilor Sait spoke on this item saying that she was outraged that the budget does not meet the needs of students in the city's public schools. She mentioned untenable caseloads, IEPs, educators experiencing burn out and taking sabbaticals. She suggested that the mayor should spend time in classrooms to experience what teachers are dealing with. Councilor Sait commented that increased funds have been requested for various needs and that those requests are being rejected by the mayor, adding that telling educators to do more with less is insulting.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

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

RECUSED: Ward Four City Councilor Clingan

6.A.32. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-0919](#))

Requesting approval of a lease agreement at 50 Tufts Street.

RESULT: **WITHDRAWN**

6.A.33. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-0922](#))

Requesting the appropriation of \$151,502 from the Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the Law Department, Legal Services Account for additional outside legal counsel services.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.B. LAND USE COMMITTEE

- 6.B.1. Committee Report Report of the Committee on Land Use, meeting in Joint Session with the
(ID # [25-0969](#)) Planning Board on May 15, 2025.

Councilor McLaughlin summarized the actions taken by the committee and reported that a public hearing was held regarding the height and width of trees. The committee also received a visual presentation of the SomerNova proposal, including its lack of a traffic plan. The Land Use committee has two meetings scheduled in June and Councilor McLaughlin intends to have these items voted on then. A zoning change for a project at Horace and Ward Streets was approved in light of the Memorandum of Understanding negotiated with the neighborhood.

Councilor Scott noted that the Union Square Neighborhood Council will hold a meeting on May 28 to discuss the Community Benefits Agreement reached with SomerNova. He commented that the Horace and Ward project has some stunning benefits in the agreement, including funds for relocation, contributions to the Land Trust, mandatory arts space, and guaranteed free parking for neighbors during snow emergencies.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.B.2. Public Communication
(ID # [24-1584](#))

Horace-Ward LLC, Bealm Realty, LLC, Delhi Properties, LLC, and Delhi Properties II, LLC requesting a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning district of 11 Horace Street, 5-7, 9, 13, and 15 Ward Street, and 15 and 21 South Street from Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) to Mid-Rise 6 (MR6).

RESULT: ORDINANCE ORDAINED

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

6.C. LEGISLATIVE MATTERS COMMITTEE

- 6.C.1. Committee Report Report of the Committee on Legislative Matters, meeting on May 13, 2025.
(ID # [25-0949](#))

Councilor Davis summarized the actions taken by the committee and reported that the Surveillance Technology Impact Report for Pole Cameras was approved as was an amended version of amendments to Sections 9.31 through 9.44 of the Code of Ordinances to support the end of wage theft.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.C.2. Ordinance
(ID # [24-1754](#))
- By Councilor Burnley Jr.
Amending Sections 9-31 through 9-44 of the Code of Ordinances to support the end of wage theft.
- RESULT: ORDINANCE ORDAINED**
- AYE:** City Councilor At Large Mbah, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Strezo, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld
- 6.C.3. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-0864](#))
- Requesting approval of the Surveillance Technology Impact Report for Pole Cameras.
- RESULT: APPROVED**
- 6.C.4. Mayor's
Communication
(ID # [25-0837](#))
- Conveying the updated 2024 Surveillance Technology Annual Report.
- RESULT: WORK COMPLETED**
- 6.D. TRAFFIC AND PARKING COMMITTEE
- 6.D.1. Committee Report
(ID # [25-0981](#))
- Report of the Committee on Traffic and Parking, meeting on May 19, 2025.
- Councilor Sait summarized the actions taken by the committee and reported that the committee discussed adding additional handicapped parking spots by the Cobble Hill senior center, the 2025 annual report regarding the Safe Streets Ordinance, traffic signalization at Rogers and Boston Avenues and at the East Somerville Community School.
- RESULT: APPROVED**
- 6.D.2. Order
(ID # [25-0647](#))
- By Councilor Burnley Jr.
That the Director of Mobility speak with this Council regarding the Safe Streets Ordinance 2025 annual report.
- RESULT: WORK COMPLETED**
- 6.D.3. Order
(ID # [25-0927](#))
- By Councilor McLaughlin and Councilor Strezo
That the Director of Parking consider adding additional handicapped parking spots on Washington Street by the Cobble Hill senior center.
- RESULT: WORK COMPLETED**

7. COMMUNICATIONS OF THE MAYOR

- 7.1. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0967](#)) Requesting approval of a Substation Easement near 51 Prospect Street for NStar Electric Company.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.1 through 7.5 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.2. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0948](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$257,540 grant with no new match required, from Eversource Energy to the Engineering Division for permanent resurfacing and restoration of various streets.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.1 through 7.5 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.3. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0971](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend an \$82,357.50 grant with no new match required, from the Executive Office of Aging and Independence to the Council on Aging for social, educational, and physical wellness programming.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.1 through 7.5 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.4. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0903](#)) Requesting approval to accept and use a gift with an approximate value of \$5,399 from the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) to the Fire Department for improving rescue capabilities during a rail incident.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.1 through 7.5 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.5. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0785](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$575.16 using available funds in the Parks & Recreation Department Office Supplies Account for cork boards.
- Councilor Wilson moved to waive the readings of items 7.1 through 7.5 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
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- 7.6. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0983](#)) Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Michael Sullivan to the position of Firefighter.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 7.7. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0992](#)) Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Ayerim Decena to the Commission for Women.
Councilor Ewen-Campen moved to waive the readings of items 7.7 through 7.11 and approve them this evening.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 7.8. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0993](#)) Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Ashley Guevara to the Commission for Women.
Councilor Ewen-Campen moved to waive the readings of items 7.7 through 7.11 and approve them this evening.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 7.9. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0994](#)) Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Bobbi Van Gilder to the Commission for Women.
Councilor Ewen-Campen moved to waive the readings of items 7.7 through 7.11 and approve them this evening.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 7.10. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0995](#)) Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Danielle Dees to the Commission for Women.
Councilor Ewen-Campen moved to waive the readings of items 7.7 through 7.11 and approve them this evening.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 7.11. Mayor's Request (ID # [25-0996](#)) Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Patty Thistle to the Commission for Women.
Councilor Ewen-Campen moved to waive the readings of items 7.7 through 7.11 and approve them this evening.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 7.12. Mayor's Communication (ID # [25-0972](#)) Proclaiming May 2025 to be Jewish American Heritage Month.
City Clerk Wells read the Proclamation into the record. Mayor Ballantyne spoke about the contributions of the city's Jewish residents and noted that antisemitism still exists and must be stopped. She commented that last month, she recognized those of Arab heritage and acknowledged feelings of hate shown to them by those who oppose them, saying that hate has no place
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in this city.

President Pineda Neufeld sponsored Elisha Gechter to speak. Ms. Gechter spoke about the recent killing of 2 Israeli embassy workers and the long story of persecution and survival of the Jewish people. She related some personal experiences and stated her appreciation of living in Somerville. President Pineda Neufeld spoke about seeing a swastika drawn on a flag inside city hall and how it made her feel. She noted that signs and words matter and that being inclusive means that signs and words should match people's actions.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

7.13. Withdrawn
(ID # [25-0897](#))

Withdrawn.

RESULT: WITHDRAWN

7.14. Withdrawn
(ID # [25-0932](#))

Withdrawn.

RESULT: WITHDRAWN

8. COMMUNICATIONS OF CITY OFFICERS

8.1. Officer's
Communication
(ID # [25-0966](#))

Director of Infrastructure & Asset Management conveying progress on the Combined Sewer Overflow Long Term Control Plan, related Water & Sewer capital investments, and Stormwater fee strategies.

Director Raiche gave an overview of the project and explained the differences between combined vs. separate sewer systems, the creation of the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA), and the long-term control plan and told the Council that Somerville is the first community in the nation to adopt climate change in looking at the models and designs, using updated climate change projections. Most of Somerville has combined sewers and of the eight consolidated sites in the city, six have been closed and two remain.

The Mystic River Sewer Separation would need two outfalls and storage tanks to get around the hydraulic limitations of the landscape and Alewife would need a new outfall that would have to pass through Cambridge and require storage tanks as well. The alternative would be the utilization of storage tunnels. The next stage is to develop cost estimates for alternatives to narrow things down and two projects (Morrison Avenue and MROSS) have completed preliminary designs. The city has been investing large sums of money in anticipation of fulfilling the mandated requirements.

Director Raiche spoke about the Financial Capability Assessment process which helps communities to understand their ability to implement mandated plans and shows the financial impacts of Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) controls. He also spoke about the Residential Indicator, which is a

community's average cost per household for wastewater treatment and controls needed to meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act. The income in Somerville puts the city in the low impact group, making it impossible to make an argument for delaying the project. In order for the city to make such an argument, the sewer rates would have to double. Director Raiche stated that neighborhood meetings about the impacts should begin in the fall.

Councilor Ewen-Campen asked about the Alewife separation and Director Raiche said the problem is more than a combined sewer overflow and stormwater overflow pollution and there needs to be a broader approach because there are other larger regional things that need to occur. Councilor Strezo commented that she wasn't encouraged about the cost effects on low-income residents and Director Raiche explained that a study concluded that a rate payer assistance program for lower income people would be illegal in MA, however some adjustments could be made for fairness. Councilor Burnley noted that many low-income residents have left the city already and he inquired about connecting green infrastructure. The director explained that there are limitations in some areas, so green infrastructure would have a larger role to play in those areas. Councilor Clingan noted that rising costs are making it harder for some people to live in Somerville. Councilor Mbah asked how current rates are impacting residents now and Director Raiche stated that there is no consideration of that in the mandated plan.

Currently, all operations and capital improvements to manage stormwater are paid from the Sewer Enterprise Fund. Director Raiche noted that the magnitude of the infrastructure is based on runoff, so there is a proposal to create a third enterprise fund and bill for impervious areas in addition to water use. AI was utilized to measure impervious areas, and residential properties represent 90% of parcel distribution but only 58% of impervious area distribution, so there needs to be some fairness in billing. Private property comprises 90-percent of total area and 70-percent of impervious areas in the city. The director spoke about a stormwater fee credit, saying it's an ongoing reduction in the fee charged to a qualifying property in return for qualifying stormwater management.

Councilor Wilson said that if on-site stormwater management is utilized, then the city has less revenue to work with and Director Raiche explained that it should be done this way because fixing the problem isn't on a linear scale. If the city is able to get people to do on-site stormwater management, then the things that need to be built into the system are less expensive. He noted that two and three family properties would be paying less and places with impervious spaces would be paying more. Councilor Ewen-Campen commented that people should be advised that the billing system is being shifted.

Councilor Davis asked if the technology exists to engineer streets with more pervious features and the director replied that there has been no success with pervious roadways in New England, however, it has been successful in cycle lanes. Councilor Davis asked about calculations of runoff from roofs and the

director said the assumption is that it's going to sidewalks but that the city still wants people to take advantage of any pervious areas they have. Responding to a question from Councilor Burnley, Director Raiche confirmed that the city is attempting to move in the direction of having pervious surfaces in parking lots. Councilor Wilson asked about the impact on the general fund from a staffing level and the director said positions will be funded by bills and that the engineering department will provide support, so additional staff should not be needed. Councilor Sait asked about incentives for landlords, so they won't pass increased costs onto tenants and the director said that not many residential properties fall into the large-scale shift. Councilor Sait asked about areas prone to flooding, saying that even if owners make improvements, flooding still happens and the director explained that it's about the volume of storage and where that storage is located. Councilor McLaughlin asked if there is anything the city can do to get developers to contribute to the infrastructure and Director Raiche noted that there is an infiltration and inflow fee that is set by engineering and that this fee would be increasing in the future. Additionally, agreements with developers come into play and need to be negotiated better.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 8.2. Officer's
Communication
(ID # [25-0968](#))

City Clerk conveying Block Party Licenses issued.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

9. NEW BUSINESS

- 9.1. License
(ID # [25-0957](#))

Renewing Drainlayer's License, Caruso & McGovern Construction Inc.

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.9 and 10.14 and 10.15 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.2. License
(ID # [25-0958](#))

Renewing Drainlayer's License, D'Allessandro Corp.

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.9 and 10.14 and 10.15 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.3. License
(ID # [25-0959](#))

Renewing Drainlayer's License, Environic Solutions Inc.

Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.9 and 10.14 and 10.15 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

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- 9.4. License
(ID # [25-0960](#))
- Renewing Drainlayer's License, Hercules C+G Drain Inc.
- Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.9 and 10.14 and 10.15 and approve them this evening.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.5. License
(ID # [25-0961](#))
- Renewing Extended Operating Hours License, Papa John's, 622 Somerville Avenue.
- Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.9 and 10.14 and 10.15 and approve them this evening.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.6. License
(ID # [25-0962](#))
- Renewing Garage License, MAC, 53 Russell Street.
- Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.9 and 10.14 and 10.15 and approve them this evening.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.7. License
(ID # [25-0963](#))
- Renewing Livery License, Mass Cab, 45 Endicott Avenue.
- Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.9 and 10.14 and 10.15 and approve them this evening.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.8. License
(ID # [25-0964](#))
- Renewing Taxi Medallion License, Early Bird Transportation, LLC, Med. #49.
- Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.9 and 10.14 and 10.15 and approve them this evening.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.9. License
(ID # [25-0965](#))
- Renewing Taxi Medallion License, V.I.N.L. Transportation, Inc., Med. #65.
- Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.9 and 10.14 and 10.15 and approve them this evening.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.10. Public
Communication
(ID # [25-0973](#))
- 8 individuals submitting comments re: Israel.
- RESULT: PLACED ON FILE**
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- 9.11. Public
Communication
(ID # [25-0974](#))

Rebecca Lopes-Filho submitting comments re: school budget.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 9.12. Public
Communication
(ID # [25-0975](#))

Sublime Systems submitting comments re: items #24-1460, #25-0128, #25-0129, and #25-0131, amendments to the Zoning Ordinance for laboratory, research and development, and arts uses.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Land Use Committee

- 9.13. Public
Communication
(ID # [25-0976](#))

Bill Valetta submitting comments re: item #25-0085, an Order regarding zoning for bonuses for additional affordable housing and other enumerated community benefits.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Land Use Committee

- 9.14. Public
Communication
(ID # [25-0977](#))

Pedestrian and Transit Advisory Committee submitting comments re: McGrath Boulevard.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

10. SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS

- 10.1. Communication
(ID # [25-1004](#))

By Councilor Clingan
Conveying the report and recommendations of the PILOT Advisory Task Force.

Councilor Clingan reported that regular meetings have been held over the past 18 months to discuss this matter. He sponsored the Chair of the task force, Marianne Walles, to speak. Ms. Walles said that many ideas were brought to the table and among the items discussed were ways of taxing relative to the type of building use. She noted that agreements have to benefit the residents of the city and that funds should be put into a separate fund to be used for the community. The task force also wants to make sure that none of the benefits would exploit workers. It was recommended that any agreement be required to include private labor agreements. Additionally, educational entities would be asked to provide educational services, e.g., tutoring, and medical entities would be asked to provide free health care services, etc. The asks of the task force were very specific, inclusive and transparent. Another recommendation was to limit agreements to five years to provide the opportunity to make changes. Councilor Clingan noted that payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) agreements are voluntary and that these

recommendations would help the city to get its fair share of revenue.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

10.2. Order
(ID # [25-1012](#))

By Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Wilson and Councilor Davis

That the Director of Mobility update this Council on recent changes to the #90 Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) bus route and the reasons for those changes.

Councilor McLaughlin spoke about the finger pointing happening between the city and state regarding the redirecting of this route and he would like to know why it's being changed.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee

10.3. Order
(ID # [25-1014](#))

By Councilor McLaughlin

That the Director of Mobility place a speed bump on Pinckney Street and consider the Neighborway potential of this street.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee

10.4. Order
(ID # [25-1013](#))

By Councilor McLaughlin

That the Commissioner of Public Works include East Broadway for city plantings and greenery.

RESULT: APPROVED

10.5. Order
(ID # [25-1015](#))

By Councilor McLaughlin

That the Commissioner of Public Works address the leaning electric poles on Alston Street.

RESULT: APPROVED

10.6. Order
(ID # [25-1017](#))

By Councilor Burnley Jr. and Councilor Scott

That the City Solicitor provide an opinion on whether this Council can restrict the use of autonomous driving testing within city limits, either through an outright ban or through requirement of a special permit.

This item was discussed with items #25-1018, #25-1019 and #25-1016. Councilor Burnley said that these vehicles are being tested in Boston and that people are concerned about driverless cars traversing Somerville's streets and he wants to know what city can do.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee

- 10.7. Order
(ID # [25-1018](#))
- By Councilor Burnley Jr. and Councilor Scott
That the City Solicitor provide an opinion on whether an individual within a vehicle or the autonomous vehicle company would be responsible if issued a citation during autonomous driving testing.
- This item was discussed with items #25-1017, #25-1019 and #25-1016.
- RESULT:** **APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION**
FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee
- 10.8. Resolution
(ID # [25-1019](#))
- By Councilor Burnley Jr.
That this Council consider whether to ban or restrict autonomous vehicle testing locally, if permitted by law.
- This item was discussed with items #25-1017, #25-1018, and #25-1016.
- RESULT:** **APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION**
FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee
- 10.9. Resolution
(ID # [25-1016](#))
- By Councilor Burnley Jr.
That the Mayor disclose to this Council any communication with Waymo or its parent company Google regarding autonomous driving tests within city limits.
- This item was discussed with items #25-1017, #25-1018, and #25-1019.
- RESULT:** **APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION**
FOLLOWUP: Traffic and Parking Committee
- 10.10. Resolution
(ID # [25-1020](#))
- By Councilor Burnley Jr.
Recognizing May 2025 as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.
- Councilor Burnley commented about a male activist who had been in Boston for 45 years being apprehended by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), saying that this person was being punished for no reason. He noted that a significant portion of our population is Asian and that we should celebrate them and rally around them.
- RESULT:** **APPROVED**
- 10.11. Mayor's Request
(ID # [25-1023](#))
- Requesting approval of a lease agreement at 50 Tufts Street.
- RESULT:** **APPROVED**
AYE: City Councilor At Large Mbah, City Councilor At Large Wilson, Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr., Ward Five City Councilor Sait, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, Ward Six City Councilor Davis, and Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld

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- ABSENT:** Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, and City Councilor At Large Strezo
- 10.12. Mayor's Communication (ID # [25-1022](#))
Conveying a memorandum regarding item #25-0905.
- RESULT:** PLACED ON FILE
- 10.13. License (ID # [25-1006](#))
New Garage License, 599 Somerville Ventures LLC, 599 Somerville Avenue, 33 vehicles inside, 0 vehicles outside, Mon-Fri: 8am-6pm, Sat: 8am-2pm, Sun: closed.
- RESULT:** REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Licenses and Permits Committee
- 10.14. Public Event (ID # [25-1008](#))
Communications and Community Engagement Department applying for a Public Event License for Slice of the City Extension on May 27 and June 17 from 4:30pm to 7:30pm.
- Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.9 and 10.14 and 10.15 and approve them this evening.
- RESULT:** APPROVED
- 10.15. Public Event (ID # [25-1007](#))
Republic Fitness applying for a Public Event License for Republic Fitness Summer Series on June 5, June 24, July 9 and July 22 from 4:30pm to 7pm.
- Councilor Burnley moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.9 and 10.14 and 10.15 and approve them this evening.
- RESULT:** APPROVED
- 10.16. Public Communication (ID # [25-1009](#))
Darci Hanna and Christopher Spicer Hankle submitting comments re: school budget.
- RESULT:** PLACED ON FILE
- 10.17. Public Communication (ID # [25-1010](#))
Somerville Alliance for Safe Streets submitting comments re: McGrath Boulevard.
- RESULT:** PLACED ON FILE
- 10.18. Public Communication (ID # [25-1011](#))
Ruth Stern submitting comments re: ceasefire.
- RESULT:** PLACED ON FILE
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11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was Adjourned at 10:39 PM.