



## CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

June 14, 2017  
REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Tony Lafuente	Chair	Absent	
Maryann M. Heuston	Vice Chair	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One Alderman	Present	
William A. White Jr.	Alderman At Large	Present	
Robert J. McWatters	Ward Three Alderman	Present	
Mark Niedergang	Ward Five Alderman	Present	
Lance L. Davis	Ward Six Alderman	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	Alderman at Large	Present	
John M. Connolly	Alderman At Large	Absent	
Dennis M. Sullivan	Alderman At Large	Present	

Others present: Greg Jenkins - Arts Council, Ed Bean - Finance, Kate Hartke - Grants, Ed Bean - Auditing, Michael Bertino - Treasury, Angela Allen - Purchasing, Mark Levy - Assessors, John Long - City Clerk, Frank Wright - Law, Candace Cooper - Personnel, Bruce Desmond - IT, Michael Mastrobuoni - Budget Director, Annie Connor - Legislative Liaison, Peter Forcellese - Legislative Clerk.

The meeting took place in the Aldermen's Chamber and was called to order at 6:14 PM by Vice Chair Alderman Heuston and adjourned at 9:45 PM.

### **FY-18 Departmental Budget Review and any and all associated departmental financial matters**

The meeting began with questions being asked about the revenue table in the budget book. Alderman Rossetti asked Mr. Mastrobuoni why there is a \$25,000 request from the School Department under Capital Items, since this amount was already included within the School Department's budget. Mr. Mastrobuoni will correct this error. Alderman Rossetti also questioned line 432016 "Police Cruiser Fees", line 432047 "CS Application Fee", line 437006 "E-Rate Reimbursement" and the "Free Cash" line.

The following departments presented their FY-18 budget requests:

## **Arts Council**

Mr. Jenkins reviewed his department's FY-17 activities and responded to questions from the committee. There is essentially no change to the budget request. Alderman Rossetti asked that grant funding data be included for each department in future budget books.

## **Finance - Grants Development**

Ms. Hartke reviewed her department's FY-17 activities and responded to questions from the committee. Alderman Rossetti asked Ms. Hartke to contact the HHS Department to determine if the Grants Department might be able to assist with SomerPromise grants.

## **Finance – Treasury**

Mr. Bertino reviewed his department's FY-17 activities and responded to questions from the committee. Alderman Ballantyne pointed out that advertising revenue is down. Mr. Bertino said that his department handles advertising at fields and rinks but other revenue is handled by OSPCD. Alderman Ballantyne also asked about methods of payments accepted from the public. Mr. Bertino replied that the Clerk's Office and the DPW have credit card readers, which pass on a 3% convenience fee to the person making the payment. Payments may also be made online. Alderman Heuston asked when the 3% fee was last negotiated and Mr. Bertino will research this. He pointed out that there are other ways of making payments to avoid the fee. Alderman Niedergang asked for information about an outreach person to make homeowners aware of various abatements and/or available financial assistance. Alderman Rossetti asked why the postage line is increasing.

## **Finance - Debt Service**

Mr. Bertino reviewed the city's debt service and said that the city is trying to reduce the number of times it goes to market.

## **Finance - Building Insurance**

Mr. Bertino told the committee that a new insurance bid should be received by the city tomorrow.

## **Finance – Auditing**

Mr. Bean presented his department's budget request for FY-18 and responded to questions from the committee. Mr. Bean spoke about a new Capital Projects list and his department's work to develop projections relative to new growth. Alderman Niedergang asked that Mr. Bean provide the data (regarding the items he spoke about tonight) in written form and Alderman Ballantyne asked that the data be provided by tomorrow to give aldermen time to review it over the weekend. Mr. Bean said the city has been working with a consultant regarding a DIF for Union Square. Alderman Heuston said that she would like to know the timeline for when the BOA will be weighing in on this. Alderman White responded by saying that things should be ready for discussion in the fall. Alderman Niedergang

requested better information for streetscape expenditures and Alderman Rossetti asked for a summary of year end transfers that need to be made.

### **Finance – Purchasing**

Ms. Allen reviewed her department's FY-17 activities and responded to questions from the committee.

### **Finance - Board of Assessors**

Mr. Levy presented his department's budget request for FY-18 and responded to questions from the committee. Alderman Ballantyne inquired about the percentages for commercial and residential property tax revenues and was told that residential pays 75% vs. 25% from commercial properties. Mr. Levy said that it will take some time to attain a 60% residential / 40% commercial split and estimated that in 2027, the commercial portion would be 37%. [Alderman Hesuton recused herself from a discussion of PILOT payments from Cambridge Health Alliance.]

### **City Clerk - John Long**

Mr. Long presented his department's budget request for FY-18 and responded to questions from the committee.

### **Licensing Commission - John Long**

### **Law - Frank Wright**

Mr. Wright presented his department's budget request for FY-18 and responded to questions from the committee. He said that the Legal Services line item was high during FY-16 and FY-17 due to several unusual cases and the Wynne casino litigation.

### **Judgements/Settlements - Frank Wright**

Alderman Ballantyne requested the current amount expended in line 576000.

### **Personnel - Candace Cooper**

Ms. Cooper reviewed her department's FY-17 activities and responded to questions from the committee. Alderman Rossetti asked Ms. Cooper to work with Mr. Mastrobuoni relative to other departments that have utilized MUNIS.

### **Information Technology - Bruce Desmond**

Mr. Desmond reviewed his department's FY-17 activities and responded to questions from the committee.

**203522: Requesting the transfer of \$35,000 from various Workers Comp Ordinary Maintenance Accounts to the Workers Comp Salaries Account to cover salaries.**

Ms. Cooper spoke on this item.

**RESULT:**

**APPROVED**

**Handouts:**

- Professional & Technical Services Breakdown - 6-14-17
- Grants Development Office - FY17 Awards