



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

June 15, 2022

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING AS A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jake Wilson	Chair	Present	
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Vice Chair	Present	
Beatriz GomezMouakad	Ward Five City Councilor	Present	
Judy PinedaNeufeld	Ward Seven City Councilor	Present	
Charlotte Kelly	City Councilor At Large	Present	
Lance L. Davis	Ward Six City Councilor	Present	
Willie BurnleyJr.	City Councilor At Large	Present	
Kristen Strezo	City Councilor at Large	Present	
Jesse Clingan	Ward Four City Councilor	Present	
Ben Ewen-Campen	Ward Three City Councilor	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One City Councilor	Absent	

This meeting was held in hybrid session via GoToWebinar and was called to order by Chair Wilson at 6:03 pm and adjourned at 11:55 pm. Councilor Burnley moved to adjourn, and the motion was passed by roll call vote. A recess was taken at 7:13 pm and ended at 7:18 pm. A second recess was taken at 11:11 pm and ended at 11:16 pm.

Councilor Davis joined late due to a prior engagement. Councilor Gomez Mouakad left at 11:20 pm.

Others present:

Hannah Carrillo - Mayor's Office, Charles Breen - Fire, Christopher Major - Fire, Justin Kates - Emergency Management, Patty Contente - COHR, Meredith Willis - SPD, Charles Femino - SPD, Christopher Ward - SPD, Rich Lavey - SPD, Richelle Embree - SPD, James Stanford - SPD, Stephanie Widzowski - Assistant Clerk of Committees.

1. Review of the FY 2023 Budget

Fire

Chief Breen said that the FY23 personal services line is up 4% due to CBA obligations, and the ordinary maintenance line is up 4% because of an increase in the cost of training software. Currently, Fire has an antiquated database to track training certifications and licenses, and this software would improve operations. Chief Breen also said that he and Dir.

Kates agreed that Fire should budget for some lines typically allocated under Emergency Services.

The discussion focused on heightened overtime levels relating to COVID, staffing, and the Chief's salary. Councilors Clingan and Pineda Neufeld asked about staffing at the new Square Station. Chief Breen said that the station is not expected to open until the next fiscal year, so they did not budget for staff at that station. Councilor Scott said he felt it was a mistake not to allocate more for staffing. Councilor Scott requested a copy of the completed matrix study, and Councilor Kelly asked about grant revenue sources. Councilor Scott also requested a memo explaining how Chief Breen's salary became decoupled from the ordinance that dictates salary.

Fire Alarm

Chief Breen said that a more accurate name for the department is Fire Dispatch. The projected budget is up due to a CBA. Councilor Burnley asked about the longevity stipend, to which Chief Breen explained that staff are paid a stipend depending on how long they have worked in their position.

Emergency Management

Dir. Kates laid out three primary goals for Emergency Management: to build out emergency operations and ensure readiness at any time, in-person or not; to be ready to activate shelters; and to get the warning system to full capacity. Emergency Management is also budgeting for a project manager position. Councilor Kelly asked about the 911 study and how the department plans to operate once ARPA funding ends. Dir. Kates said that the goal for the 911 study is to finish by the end of June, and they are still investigating how an integrated 911 system would look in the new building. He also said that ARPA is likely to give 90% reimbursements after June 30.

Councilor Burnley asked about accessible accommodations for people displaced in an emergency. Dir. Kates explained that they would move people immediately to a temporary shelter such as a gymnasium, but long-term solutions would involve connecting them to housing opportunities through the city or nonprofits.

Police

Chief Femino gave a presentation on the SPD proposed budget, highlighting an overall 8.2% increase from FY22. Personal services has added RSJ courses, professional development, body-worn camera implementation, and salary increases, and ordinary maintenance allocates for website redesign, public safety supplies, and body-worn cameras. Chief Femino highlighted SPD's focus on compassionate policing that includes anti-bias training, de-prioritization for drug arrests, and enforcement of federal immigration law. He also explained the role of COHR, a civilian response unit working towards integrated health and public safety.

Chair Wilson spoke to morale issues that can come with forced holdovers, and Deputy Chief Stanford responded that SPD plans to cut down on forced holdovers this year. There were also discussions about COHR and its relationship with SPD, overtime heightened from

trainings and investigations, and allocations for crossing guards. A major focus of the discussion was about body-worn cameras. Multiple councilors asserted that evidence points to the cameras having potential use, but that policy and implementation matter. Councilor Kelly asked for a list of trainings and which officers had taken them. Councilor Clingan expressed support for raising pay for social workers.

Motions

Councilor Ewen-Campen said he wanted to give colleagues time to think about motions, but that he would be comfortable voting on motions tonight. He moved to cut funding associated with body-worn cameras.

Councilor Pineda Neufeld made a motion for a resolution to add \$200,000 to COHR, which covers \$180,000 for 2 clinical social workers and a \$20,000 raise for the director. She then accepted amendments to raise the amount given to COHR to \$404,833 with the creation of 4.5 clinical social worker positions. However, there were concerns with the amended resolution, so Councilor Pineda Neufeld withdrew the motion and made another motion with the same text as the original - adding \$200,000 to COHR. The motion was not passed by roll call vote: 5 Yes (Councilor Clingan, Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Chair Wilson, Councilor Strezo, Councilor Gomez Mouakad), 5 No (Councilor Kelly, Councilor Scott, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Davis, Councilor Burnley), and 1 recused (Councilor McLaughlin).

Councilor Burnley asked Mr. Mastrobuoni if a department is able to move funds freely between lines without approval from the Council - the answer was yes. This discussion raised concerns from multiple councilors about adding funding to COHR. Councilors Kelly and Burnley expressed support for allocating funds to HHS instead. Councilor Gomez Mouakad emphasized listening to experts on mental illness to inform their stance on emergency care, and stated that Dir. Contente runs an effective system in COHR.

Councilor Scott moved to cut \$127,833 from the AV supplies line in ordinary maintenance for body-worn cameras. The motion was passed by roll call vote: 9 Yes, 1 No (Councilor Strezo), and 1 Recused (Councilor McLaughlin).

Councilor Scott moved to cut \$348,000 from the salaries line of the personal services SPD budget. The motion was amended to cut \$277,000 instead, and that amended motion was approved by roll call vote: 10 Yes and 1 Recused (Councilor McLaughlin).

Councilor Scott moved to cut \$27,330 to the SPD personal services line for 6 vacant positions funded for 1 month. The motion was passed by roll call vote: 6 Yes (Councilor Burnley, Councilor Kelly, Councilor Scott, Councilor Davis, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Chair Wilson), 3 No (Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Strezo), 1 Absent (Councilor Gomez Mouakad) and 1 Recused (Councilor McLaughlin).

Councilor Burnley moved to add at least \$200,000 to an unarmed alternative emergency response program to be housed in HHS. The motion was passed by roll call vote: 9 Yes, 1 Absent (Councilor Gomez Mouakad) and 1 Recused (Councilor McLaughlin)

Animal Control

Dir. Embree said that personal services are increasing 1.3% due to salary increases, but ordinary maintenance remains level. Councilor Scott asked why the kennel line remained

unspent in FY22. Deputy Chief Stanford said that line was originally created for outside vendors to kennel animals, but when the city opened up its own kennel that line became obsolete. Animal Control needs to determine if the line can be spent for this purpose, though. Councilor Burnley suggested creating a new line. Councilor Davis expressed support for increasing funding for animal control if needed.

E-911

Dir. Embree said that personal services is about level, and there is no ordinary maintenance associated with 911. Councilor Kelly asked for a memo about the overtime line along with the previously requested SPD update. Councilor Burnley asked about the decreased holiday line, which is based on new contract terms.

Reference Material:

- FY23 SPD Budget Presentation Final_06.15.22