



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

October 13, 2016

REPORT OF THE CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENTS AND PERSONNEL MATTERS COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Maryann M. Heuston	Chair	Present	
Robert J. McWatters	Vice Chair	Present	
Dennis M. Sullivan	Alderman At Large	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	Alderman at Large	Absent	
Lance L. Davis	Ward Six Alderman	Present	

Others present: Alderman Mark Niedergang, Alderman Katjana Ballantyne, Chief Dave Fallon - SPD, Capt. Cotter - SPD, Candace Cooper - Personnel, Tim Snyder - Mayor's Office, Charles Sillari - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:04 PM by Alderman Heuston and adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Approval of the September 12, 2016 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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200613: Conveying, with President White, a request to jointly analyze the Board's and Administration's administrative needs.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201125: That the Director of Personnel update this Board on city-wide vacancies and dates of hires since the last report.

Ms. Cooper distributed a spreadsheet on the vacancies and Alderman Ballantyne asked why the recreation department position had to be re-advertised and where it was placed.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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201344: Deputy Director of Personnel responding to #201125 and #201152 re: update on vacant positions.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

201934: Requesting the appointment of Michael Lapiana to the position of Animal Control Officer in the Police Department.

Chairman Heuston explained that the candidate already came before the committee and was vetted. The reason this item is being discussed is because it was recently discovered that the 2 positions have different pay rates. Ms. Cooper discussed why there is a pay rate discrepancy. The collective bargaining agreement was looked. The person in the current position started as a part-time hourly employee. The pay rate was corrected and back pay is being paid retroactively. Chief Fallon told the members that both Animal Control Officers (ACO) report to Captain Cotter and are on the same level. Chairman Heuston explained her concern over the new position, which is a day position, and there being no night time differential.

Alderman Niedergang stated he feels there is no animal experience on the candidate's resume and asked how this person is qualified. Alderman Davis stated he sees nothing related to animal care and control and asked how the appointment decision was made and if the position is posted publicly. Chief Fallon explained that Mr. LaPiana completed training and certifications for the job and has all of the training to complete his job. He is going to the Animal Control Academy. Capt. Cotter explained that the candidate is doing a great job and is passionate about the job. He is enthusiastic and cares about animals. Ms. Cooper explained that this is an appointed position and is unique. The candidate has worked for the city for quite some time. Alderman Davis asked if any others were considered for this position and was told that this was the only person interviewed. Chairman Heuston asked if this position was posted and Ms. Cooper stated it was not. Alderman Sullivan asked if there was an internal posting and was told that there was no posting.

Alderman Davis feels there is a requirement needed beyond what he sees in the resume. He can't speak for the qualifications, but is speaking based on what he is reading. Alderman Niedergang feels this hire is a disservice to the city and believes that a more qualified person should have been hired, adding that he would not vote to approve this appointment if he was a member of this committee.

Chief Fallon stated the SPD is confident in the candidate's ability and Capt. Cotter stated the candidate is doing the job well. He is learning and developing rapidly. If he can't do the job it will be dealt with. Alderman Davis asked about the oversight process of the candidate and how the union could impact the discipline of this position and if there is substantive standard to maintain. Capt. Cotter explained how the ACO are supervised. They are located at the police station and report to the SPD. The positions fall within the SPD chain of command. Chief Fallon explained how the candidate would be held accountable by the SPD

Chairman Heuston asked if both ACO positions are mayoral appointments and Ms. Cooper answered that they are. Chairman Heuston is comfortable approving this appointment after hearing that the SPD oversees the position and said that she will be weighing in on the performance. Chairman Heuston requested a list of all appointments that come before this committee. Alderman Davis does not want to be a “rubber stamp” and cannot support this appointment at this time. He would like to know more about the training and how it qualifies the candidate, if there are grades or if it is pass/fail. He wants more information on the certifications and classes that are being relied upon. Alderman McWatters would like the candidate back before the committee, adding that he feels the Administration picks good candidates. Alderman Sullivan is inclined to support the candidate but is happy to wait for more information. He would like to see the curriculum and make sure that the candidate passed the course.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

202134: Requesting the appointment of Candace Cooper to the position of Director of Personnel.

Chairman Heuston spoke about the need for job descriptions going forward.

Ms. Cooper stated she has been with the city for 8 ½ years and has been involved in negotiations, operations, and is now the Acting Director of Personnel. She works closely with the city’s unions to maintain harmonious relationships. She spoke about her plans for the future and upcoming programs.

Alderman Sullivan is pleased with the candidate, based on her experience and Alderman McWatters is happy to promote from within, adding that this would be an easy transition for the city. Alderman Niedergang queried relationships with the unions, saying that he feels the city has more conflict with unions compared to the school department. He asked why the unions have had so many complaints with the city. Ms. Cooper said the city tries to talk to the unions and many times they file complaints even when the city is working. She feels she has a good relationship with Mr. Halloran (SMEA). Alderman Niedergang stated that a study shows union employees are underpaid and he asked where raises stand with city employees. Ms. Cooper is reviewing the SMEA study and there are questions, as some information is missing that must be verified. The last of the data was just received last week. Chairman Heuston asked if the union wage study could be shared with the BOA and Ms. Cooper will find out and report back to the committee.

Chairman Heuston asked if the applicant had a degree in this field, to which Ms. Cooper replied that she does not have a degree but is working on her bachelors. Alderman Davis asked if the qualifications are being met with this applicant.

Handouts:

- Vacancies (with 201125)
- Resume - M Lapiana (with 201934)
- Resume - C Cooper (with 202134)