



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

March 14, 2016
REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Tony Lafuente	Chair	Present	
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	

Others present: Rob King - Capital Projects, Doug Kress - HHS, Peter Forcellese Jr. - Treasurer, Stan Koty - DPW, Tim Snyder - Mayor's Office, Charles Sillari - Clerk of Committees

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:00 PM by Alderman Lafuente and adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Document List:

- Contract - OPMS odd # pages (with 200796)
- Contract - OPMS even # pages (with 200796)
- Outstanding Debt Summary (with 200796)

Approval of the February 22, 2016 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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200661: Requesting the acceptance of a grant of \$6,300 from the MA Assn. Health Board/MA Dept. of Public Health, for the Health and Human Services Dept.'s Mass in Motion program to activate the parks for our aging population.

Mr. Kress explained that the grant would be used to allow people of all ages to utilize the parks.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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200685: Requesting the acceptance of a \$9,685 grant from the MA Urban Area Security Initiative for the Dept. of Public Works to install a security fence at the storage yard.

RESULT:

APPROVED

200751: That the Chief Assessor provide this Board with the final breakdown of residential exemptions for the current fiscal year, by property type, with comparisons to prior fiscal years.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

200752: That the Administration provide assistance, including financial where appropriate, to resident homeowners whose property is damaged from the roots of trees planted by the City.

Mr. Snyder explained how claims are assessed and said that liability must be established. Three claims have been filed during the past five years.

Alderman White would like to make home owners aware that they may file a claim.

Alderman Heuston referenced some trees that need to be taken down, and said that the Tree Ordinance might need to be revisited. She would like the Communications Department's 311 call center to inform people that claims may be filed. Alderman Ballantyne spoke about ADA requirements that might prohibit tree planting.

Chairman Lafuente asked for clarification as to what types of pipe damage would constitute a valid claim being filed and said that he would like to make sure that homeowners' concerns are being addressed.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

200754: Requesting an appropriation of \$100,000 from Unreserved Fund Balance ("Free Cash") to the Health and Human Services Professional and Technical Services Account to fund enhanced youth services/youth development programming.

Alderman McLaughlin recused himself from all discussion and action on this item. Mr. Kress discussed youth ambassadors, mental wellness and community conversations with police. Alderman asked why this request was not included in the budget and said that he would like to eliminate mid-year free cash transfers.

RESULT:

APPROVED

200796: Requesting authorization to borrow \$130,000 in a bond, and appropriate the same amount, to fund an Owners Project Manager for City Hall renovation work.

Mr. King said that the project would be done in phases and that the total cost would be about \$4 - 4.5 million and maybe even higher. A copy of the project manager contract was distributed to the committee members.

Alderman Heuston questioned if it was worth spending the funds now, if a new city hall is needed, and expressed concern about BOA access to certain rooms. She also suggested that improved functionality be considered. Alderman Heuston questioned the sense of urgency of this project and asked if it was really needed or not. Mr. King stated that there are no plans to move city hall and added that the work would be completed prior to the new high school project in 2018. Alderman McLaughlin asked if prison labor would be used.

Alderman White expressed concern about the burden these projects would place on the city's taxpayers, adding that they might not like the increased property taxes needed to pay for them. He said that the city has school debt plus the overall debt, which is increasing drastically. He also discussed how Proposition 2 1/2 limited the city's spending in the past and how new growth has allowed the city to inflate its budget.

Mr. Snyder said that he would speak with the mayor and Mr. Bean about providing the BOA with a capital plan. Mr. Forcellese distributed copies of the city's outstanding debt summary report and pointed out that the city's debt has been over \$100 million for the last five years. Alderman White asked about refinancing the debt at a lower rate. Alderman Ballantyne would like to see the whole picture before acting on this item. Chairman Lafuente stressed the need to prioritize.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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200799: Requesting approval to transfer \$20,000 in the DPW Engineering Division, from its Salary Account to its Professional and Technical Services Account, to fund its on-call contract.

Mr. King reported that the positions are about to be filled.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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200800: Requesting the acceptance of a grant of \$10,000 from Mount Auburn Hospital for the Health & Human Services Department to help families impacted by the opioid epidemic and anti-stigma campaign.

Mr. Kress discussed working with families and said that no additional staff would be hired.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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200801: Requesting approval to extend two MA DOT contracts for the East Broadway Streetscape project to February 29, 2018.

This contract extension goes along with over \$250,000 in unpaid invoices. Chairman Lafuente asked to see those invoices.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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200847: Requesting the expenditure of FY16 funds totaling \$140 to pay a prior year invoice in the Police Dept.

RESULT:

APPROVED

200848: Requesting approval for a time-only extension for the Marchese contract for road construction, to November 30, 2016.

Mr. Koty explained the reason for the request.

RESULT:

APPROVED