



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council Sustainability and Infrastructure Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 29, 2026

6:00 PM

This meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order by Chair Clingan at 6:00 p.m. and adjourned at 8:22 p.m. on a Roll Call Vote of 3 in favor (Councilors Scott, Hardt, and Clingan), 0 opposed.

Others present: Yasmine Raddassi - Legislative Liaison, Eric Weisman - Department of Public Works Commissioner, Brian Postlewaite - Director of Engineering, Kevin Klein - Interim Superintendent of Inspectional Services, Suzanne Rinfret - Director of Parking, Steve Craig - Director of Constituent Services, Michael Potere - Assistant City Clerk

Roll Call

Present: Ward Two City Councilor Jefferson Thomas (J.T.) Scott, Ward Seven City Councilor Emily Hardt and Ward Four City Councilor Jesse Clingan

1. Committee Minutes (ID # [26-0501](#)) Approval of the Minutes of the Sustainability and Infrastructure Committee Meeting of March 18, 2026.

RESULT: ACCEPTED

AYE: Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Seven City Councilor Hardt and Ward Four City Councilor Clingan

DPW

2. Resolution (ID # [26-0337](#)) By Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Davis, Councilor Hardt, Councilor Link, Councilor Mbah, Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Sait, Councilor Scott, Councilor Strezo and Councilor Wheeler That the Commissioner of Public Works discuss with this Council how to ensure that handicapped parking spaces are not used for snow storage and are cleared at the same time as other spaces.

Chair Clingan asked Commissioner Weisman if removing snow from handicapped parking spaces can be systemized during snowstorms, who replied that city staff are tasked with clearing public lots, and that several instances of snow left in handicapped spots might have been the result of a staff training issue, or from a person clearing snow off of their vehicle in an adjacent parking space and it landing in a handicapped spot. Commissioner Weisman continued that he spoke with Constituent Services about establishing a special service request type for handicapped parking space snow removal before next winter, and that such requests would be prioritized. He added that, for street parking, a list of handicapped spot locations has been created and shared with staff and contractors in order to avoid missing them during the snow removal process, and Director Rinfret

confirmed that this list of street spaces is updated every two years. Chair Clingan sponsored Holly Simione to speak. Ms. Simione expressed support for the proposed dedicated request line for handicapped space snow removal, as well as for training staff on the existing list of spaces throughout the city, and added that wheelchair aisles next to spaces that have them should also be noted to be cleared. Commissioner Weisman stated that city staff receive annual training for snow removal in November, and that clearing handicapped spaces would be emphasized as a priority for this year's training.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

3. Resolution
(ID # [26-0338](#))

By Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Davis, Councilor Hardt, Councilor Link, Councilor Mbah, Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Sait, Councilor Scott, Councilor Strezio and Councilor Wheeler That the Commissioner of Public Works discuss with this Council how to ensure that accessible sidewalk ramps are cleared following snowstorms, and ensure that 311 reports on this issue are promptly responded to.

Chair Clingan introduced this item by explaining that most city sidewalk ramps must be cleared by abutting residents and businesses, that there is only so much the Department of Public Works can do regarding this issue, and that enforcement of snow removal is the most likely solution for this. Liaison Raddassi stated that the Mayor's Office is working on a program to address snow removal for sidewalk ramps, and that details would be released in the future. Commissioner Weisman noted that the city is responsible for clearing curb cuts near city and school buildings, public parks, and all bus stops.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

4. Order
(ID # [26-0353](#))

By Councilor Hardt That the Commissioner of Public Works discuss with this Council the frequency of street sweeping throughout the period of April through November.

Councilor Hardt stated that this item is intended to understand the reason for the scheduling of street sweeping throughout the city, and noted that residents have asked about why certain sides of the street are closed so frequently for street sweeping. Director Postlewaite stated that consistency in street sweeping is important, not only for removing debris so that vehicles can safely navigate the roadways, but also because street sweeping helps prevent debris and chemicals like salt, gas, and oil from entering public waterways, improving water quality. Director Postlewaite also stated that Somerville sweeps more frequently than other communities specifically to ensure higher water quality.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

- 5. Resolution (ID # [26-0490](#)) By Councilor Link
That the Commissioner of Public Works conduct a citywide sweep to remove large debris from the Community Path and bike lanes now that snow season has concluded.

Commissioner Weisman stated that the Community Path has now been cleared of debris from last season’s snowstorms.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

AYE: Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Seven City Councilor Hardt and Ward Four City Councilor Clingan

ISD

- 6. Order (ID # [26-0336](#)) By Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Davis, Councilor Hardt, Councilor Link, Councilor Mbah, Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Sait, Councilor Scott, Councilor Strezo and Councilor Wheeler
That the Director of Inspectional Services discuss with this Council how to ensure that temporary dumpster permits do not conflict with handicapped parking spaces, or that temporary handicapped parking spaces are relocated for the duration of the dumpster permit.

Director Rinfret stated that when an applicant for a dumpster license submits for a permit, they are asked if they are locating the dumpster in a legal spot, which would not include a handicapped parking spot, but that they rely on the applicant telling the truth, because the clerks in the Parking Department do not know every possible placement of dumpsters throughout the city. Director Rinfret continued to share that dumpsters cannot be ticketed like motor vehicles because they do not have license plates, so ticketing enforcement is directed to the Inspectional Services Department (ISD). ISD Director Klein stated that, when a dumpster is located improperly, the permit holder is directed to remove it, and that for violations, first a warning is issued, then a \$100 fine, and then a \$300 fine for each subsequent violation, and added that he would support a larger fine for violations in handicapped parking space, as well as possible stop work orders. He also added that a stop work order for these violations could be implemented as an ISD policy and condition of issuing the permit itself. Chair Clingan sponsored Holly Simione to speak. Ms. Simione expressed support for increased enforcement of violations, higher fines, and increased awareness of proper dumpster placement.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

Constituent Services (311 System)

7. Order
(ID # [26-0468](#))
- By Councilor Wheeler
That the Director of Constituent Services update this Council on the 311 system, recent and upcoming improvements, open roles, and the approach being taken to directing the wide variety of resident needs to provide answers, solutions, and follow-through.

This item was discussed with item # 26-0481.

Director Craig introduced 311 services as a gateway to communicate with city staff, and highlighted several ways for constituents to request services: voice or telephone; the main desk in City Hall; and email, live chat, and social media. For telephone services, city staff work 50 hours a week to cover phone service 365 days a year, and have access to multiple languages, both by staff themselves, as well as through translation services. Online access is important for younger residents who do not prefer using the phone, and in 2025, the city received 118,000 unique requests. Director Craig continued that there are several ways a request can be disposed. The first is the responder is able to resolve the issue right away, such as answering a question about City Hall hours. The second is when a request is submitted to 311 and staff direct it to the appropriate department for resolution, and there is a process map in place to coordinate this workflow. The third is a referral, or an issue that cannot be resolved by the city, such as an issue with something on state property, or a private dispute between neighbors, and staff direct the constituent to the proper channels. Councilor Scott asked about vacancies in the department, and Director Craig replied that there is currently one vacancy, with another having been filled within the past month.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

8. Resolution
(ID # [26-0481](#))
- By Councilor Clingan and Councilor Sait
That the Director of Constituent Services appear before the Committee on Sustainability and Infrastructure to discuss the process by which 311 tickets are routed or closed after re-routing.

This item was discussed with item # 26-0468.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

Water and Sewer / IAM

9. Resolution
(ID # [26-0482](#))
- By Councilor Clingan
That the Director of Water and Sewer appear before the Committee on Sustainability and Infrastructure to discuss the process by which it is determined whether a residential unit requires a 1-inch water meter or a 5/8-inch water meter.

Chair Clingan stated that this item will be kept in committee to allow staff additional time to prepare for the discussion.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

10. Resolution
(ID # [26-0626](#))
- By Councilor Clingan
That the Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management appear before this Council to discuss the decision to implement a tiered residential base rate structure that differentiates between properties served by 5/8-inch pipes and those served by 1-inch pipes.

Chair Clingan stated that this item will be kept in committee to allow staff additional time to prepare for the discussion.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

Administration / Sustainability

11. Resolution
(ID # [26-0473](#))
- By Councilor Strezo, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Scott and Councilor Mbah
That the Administration discuss the process of disposal of city surplus items, and whether those items may be offered to employees or the public through the creation of a Freecycle style system.

Chair Clingan introduced this item by noting that the Law Department provided a memorandum detailing the legal explanation as to why items cannot be readily given away to city staff or the general public. Chair Clingan continued that the specific reason city employees cannot receive the items is due to ethics and anti-aid rules, if the item is valued above \$50. Chair Clingan also stated that the city found a way to donate abandoned bicycles recovered by police to a non-profit organization that repaired them and subsequently donated them.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

12. Resolution
(ID # [26-0067](#))
- By Councilor Link
That the Administration explore the feasibility of a year with no swag, as detailed within.

Liaison Raddassi stated that the Mayor's Office is working on determining a figure for how much is spent on these items, but have not yet been able to quantify it. Chair Clingan noted it would be useful to know how, specifically, "swag" is defined.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

Housekeeping

13. Public
Communication
(ID # [26-0259](#))
- Christopher Beland submitting comments re: items #26-0175, #26-0176, #26-0177, #26-0178, #26-0179, #26-0180, #26-0181, #26-0182, #26-0183, #26-0184, #26-0185, #26-0186, and #26-0187, Eversource applying for Grants of Location.

Chair Clingan stated that the request in this item has been addressed.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

Referenced Documents:

- S&I - 2026-04-29 Memo Response (with 26-0473)
- S&I - 2026-04-29 Handicap_snow (with 26-0337, 26-0338)
- S&I - 2026-04-29 Photos (with 26-0337, 26-0338)