



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

September 12, 2018
REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
William A. White Jr.	Chair	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	Vice Chair	Present	
Ben Ewen-Campen	Ward Three Alderman	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One Alderman	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Ward Two Alderman	Present	
Jesse Clingan	Ward Four Alderman	Present	
Mark Niedergang	Ward Five Alderman	Present	
Lance L. Davis	Ward Six Alderman	Present	
Wilfred N. Mbah	Alderman at Large	Present	
Stephanie Hirsch	Alderman At Large	Present	

Others present: Greg Jenkins - Arts Council, Rachel Strutt - Arts Council, Brad Rawson - OSPCD, Alan Inacio - OSPCD, Tom Galligani-OSPCD, Rob King - Engineering, Kristen Stelljes - Community Preservation, Michael Glavin - OSPCD, Eileen McGettigan - Law, Ed Bean - Finance, Jim Halloran - DPW, Doug Kress - HHS, Annie Connor - Legislative Liaison, Rositha Durham Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Aldermen's Chamber was called to order at 6:06 PM by Chairman White and adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Approval of the July 10, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the June 6, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the June 7, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the June 11, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the June 12, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the June 13, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the June 19, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the June 20, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the June 21, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the June 25, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the June 26, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the June 27, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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Approval of the June 28, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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204755: Requesting the transfer of a City-owned parcel (82-D-1) in the North Prospect Block to the Redevelopment Authority.

Mr. Glavin talked about the MEPA waiver being denied and had some concerns. The original plan requires the completion of the construction of the residential building on the D2 site to coincide with the opening of the T stop. Some of the facilities needed for the T stop were to be located in the residential building. Because of the delay that will be caused by the need for US2 to comply with that MEPA obligations, the construction of the residential building will be delayed. Ms. McGettigan told the committee that the land transfer as set in the current land disposition agreement will not close by 12/31/18 without the MEPA waiver. Without the closing, the City will not receive the purchase price of the parcel from US2 and the payment by US2 of the eminent domain case settlement that the City is required to pay by the end of this year. Ms. McGettigan said that she will give a status update to the judge on September 28th. If the land disposition does not take place and the City has to pay the eminent domain settlement, Mr. Bean recommended funding this program out of free cash. Chairman White asked about the possibility of bonding to fund the settlement. The City could issue a Bond Anticipation Note

(BAN) with a very small interest rate to pay the settlement. Then, when the land transfer takes place and the City receives the funds from US2 to pay the settlement, the notes could be paid. Questions were also asked about the project delay and how that might affect the GLX project. Ms. McGettigan stated that the city is moving ahead as planned. Chairman White scheduled a public hearing held during the Finance Committee of the Whole meeting, in the Aldermanic Chambers, for item #204755 and related items to be held on October 22, 2018.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

206245: Special Counsel submitting Notice of a Settlement in the matter of Prospect Iron v. the Somerville Redevelopment Authority.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

206003: Requesting approval of an Order of Taking for 90 Washington Street.

The property owners' attorney, Mr. McLaughlin, was present as was the appraiser for the owner of the property, Mr. Robert Coleman. Mr. Coleman told the committee that both parties should be knowledgeable and should consider the highest price and best use of the property to determine a fair market value prior to the property being taken. The property is just short of four acres of land, with 12,555 square feet of commercial retail space. This property was originally acquired from the Somerville Redevelopment Authority as part of a 121 B project in 1980. Mr. Coleman stated that previous discussions regarding the property involved building 359 units, in 2 phases, on the parcel for a total value of \$25,900,000. Attorney McLaughlin was asked why the property has been vacant for five years and he replied that the owner thought the project was going forward but was hampered due to disputes among the partners who have an interest in the property. Mr. Mullins, one of the owners, feels optimistic that the dispute will be resolved very soon. Ms. McGettigan stated that she has an existing appraisal and is prepared to discuss the matter in Executive Session. Alderman Niedergang asked for the Administration's detailed response regarding this property. Attorney McLaughlin will send a copy of the decision to the city through the City Clerk's office. Chairman White will schedule this item for the next Finance Committee meeting for discussion in Executive Session.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

206004: Requesting an appropriation and authorization to borrow \$8,745,000 in a bond to purchase land by eminent domain.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

206005: Requesting an appropriation and authorization to borrow \$1,860,000 in a bond for new Public Safety Building design, architectural, engineering, and owner's and contractual project management services.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

204582: Director of Parks & Recreation and City Solicitor responding to #204160, #203889,

and #203733 re: nonprofit soccer and football organizations' use of Dilboy Field.

The committee would like this item referred to the Youth Services Committee.

RESULT:	DISCHARGED W/NO RECOMMENDATION
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206154: Union Square Neighborhood Council Board submitting comments re: US2's proposed development of the D2 parcel in Union Square.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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206327: Requesting approval to appropriate \$150,000 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for tree planting.

Ms. Stelljes told the committee that traffic calming is not included in the Central Hill Campus plan. This request is being reduced from \$180,000 to \$154,000. Chairman White stated that if the administration wanted to reduce the request, it would have to submit a new appropriation request and withdraw the current one. The administration it would do so. Alderman Rossetti requested a report summarizing the plan along with costs, including the parking lot. The report should also include what's been asked for in the past and what has been used to date. At the September 25th community meeting, there will be 3 design concept options presented with a final report to be completed in December. Alderman Ballantyne asked who's looking at the overall plan which was directed to the City Auditor, Mr. Bean. The committee was told that this is a plan to inform the public where the city is investing in the future. Because the administration stated that it would submit a new appropriation request at the Board meeting, the committee discharged this item without a recommendation and at the next Board meeting, this item would be withdrawn and the new, reduced appropriation request could be approved.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206328: Requesting approval to appropriate \$35,000 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for Nibble kitchen equipment.

Mr. Jenkins submitted this request back in June and told the members that the equipment is basically a "plug and play" situation.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [8 TO 3]
AYES:	White Jr., Ewen-Campen, McLaughlin, Scott, Niedergang, Davis, Mbah, Hirsch
NAYS:	Rossetti, Ballantyne, Clingan

206372: Requesting approval to appropriate \$180,000 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for the Central Hill Campus Plan.

Ms. Stelljes told the committee that traffic calming is not included in the Central Hill Campus plan. This request is being reduced from \$180,000 to \$154,000. Alderman Rossetti requested a report summarizing the plan along with costs, including the parking lot. The report should also include what's been asked for in the past and what has been used to date. At the September 25th community meeting, there will be 3 design concept options presented with a final report to be

completed in December. Alderman Ballantyne asked who's looking at the overall plan which was directed to the City Auditor, Mr. Bean. The committee was told that this is a plan to inform the public where the city is investing in the future. The committee discharged this item without a recommendation and the matter will be revisited at a BOA meeting.

RESULT:	DISCHARGED W/NO RECOMMENDATION
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206502: Requesting appropriation of \$272,795.10 from the Receipts Reserved-Transportation Network Company Revenue Fund to the Transportation Network Company Special Revenue Fund, for Vision Zero road safety efforts.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206503: Requesting approval to appropriate \$241,390 from the Capital Stabilization Fund for the construction of the Nibble Kitchen.

Mr. Jenkins spoke about the cost for the build out of the kitchen and said that drawings were submitted and the project has been sent out for bid. If this request is approved, the project could start within the next 30 days and will take approximately 3 months. This program will help participants start their own catering business. Participants will pay \$100 to go through a series of workshops in the program. There are different stages of vetting the participants, including cooking classes. There is a business model, cleaning services and POS costs and the city will recoup the funds by leasing out the space. The program needed startup funding to get the model going. It was noted that the report from 4/10/18 did not mention anything about funding needed for the lease.

Alderman Rossetti requested to see the report for this program and said that she believes there was a grant that would contribute to the program, and she suggested waiting until the grant comes in. Mr. Jenkins talked about the urgency of the program since the contractor's quote would only last for 90 days and there is still the need to execute a contract. Mr. Jenkins is currently working with nine entrepreneurs in this program.

Alderman Scott supports this program and called it an incubator with huge investments for the city. The program is meant to be self-sustaining and will serve the immigrant community.

RESULT:	APPROVED. [8 TO 3]
AYES:	White Jr., Ewen-Campen, McLaughlin, Scott, Niedergang, Davis, Mbah, Hirsch
NAYS:	Rossetti, Ballantyne, Clingan

206504: Requesting a supplemental appropriation of \$61,691 to the SPCD Transportation & Infrastructure Salaries Account, to establish the Sr. Urban Forestry & Landscape Planner position.

Mr. Rawson discussed the job description that was previously submitted and Alderman Rossetti commented that it did not address the concerns from the community. Mr. Rawson stated that the job description was rewritten to require applicants to have technical certification, a holistic background regarding trees, and the ability to recognize trees as public assets. The committee inquired how that differs from the requirements of the arborist position filled two years ago. Mr.

Rawson explained that a different level of experience is being required, adding that this position would be above the arborist position and would coordinate efforts among departments, including DPW, 311 and ISD. Alderman Ballantyne recommended adding the language “*to restore the ecology*” in the description.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206505: Requesting a supplemental appropriation of \$47,175 to the Health & Human Services Salaries Account to establish the position of Environmental Health Liaison.

Ms. Connor and Mr. Kress spoke on the matter, saying that there was much excitement regarding this new position. The person filling this position will be the point person and strategist regarding rodent issues and will be responsible for meeting with neighbors who are struggling with rodent problems. There are currently in excess of 50 rodent ‘hot spots’ in Somerville. A suggestion was made that the selected applicant be bilingual or multi lingual to better serve the diverse stakeholders.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206506: Requesting approval to pay a prior year invoice of \$10,700 using available funds in the Planning and Zoning Professional Services Account for Central Hill Campus planning services.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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206507: Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$34,185 using available funds in the DPW Snow Account for snow removal services.

Mr. Halloran explained that one of the invoices was received after the close of the fiscal year and the other is from 2015.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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Handouts:

- Email from Atty McLaughlin re 90 Washington St. (with 206003)
- Analysis of Proposed Taking of 90 Washington Street somerville -9-10-18-1 (with 206003)