



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

May 16, 2018

REPORT OF THE YOUTH SERVICES COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Stephanie Hirsch	Chair	Present	
Jesse Clingan	Vice Chair	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	

Others present: Alderman Mark Niedergang, Alan Inacio - OSPCD, Doug Kress - HHS, Vithal Deshpande - OSE, Michael Bowler - DPW, Jeff Curley - School Department, Stanley Koty - DPW, Annie Connor - Legislative Liaison, Peter Forcellese - Legislative Clerk.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 5:00 PM by Chairman Hirsch and adjourned at 5:55 PM.

Approval of the April 23, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:

ACCEPTED

205289: That the Director of Purchasing share the process for procuring food, food packaging and flatware for the school cafeterias.

Chairman Hirsch displayed a collection of food related items, e.g., flatware, cups, containers, used by a typical student during a school day and noted that it's more expensive for the city to recycle than to dispose of this waste. Chairman Hirsch asked why the city's schools don't recycle and how that policy may be changed.

Mr. Koty told the committee that the actual cost varies each month but acknowledged that the recycling cost is in fact higher than the disposal cost. He said that there is recycling in the schools, but not in their cafeterias. He met with the administration to discuss possible steps and attempted to institute a recycling program in the school cafeterias but encountered problems with recycling plants. Now, the administration is considering hiring someone to oversee recycling in the cafeterias. Mr. Koty told the committee that the state is masking the recycling problems being encountered. He stated that when the recycling areas are full, the state disposes the excess material in dumps, so essentially, the city pays to haul recyclable materials from the city, (at a higher cost than rubbish removal), and then the state throws it away.

Mr. Deshpande provided some background on the problems that were and are being encountered. One of the larger problems involved milk cartons, i.e., recyclable materials are supposed to be clean

before being deposited in the recycling bin, to minimize contamination. Somebody needs to be present during lunch periods to ensure that materials are sorted properly, e.g., flatware is not recyclable, a plastic bottle is recyclable but only if there is a lid on it and lunch trays are compostable, not recyclable. Mr. Deshpande said that there is no solution to solve all the problems in one step and noted that the city is trying to come up with ways help the situation by utilizing DEP grant funds secured by the city.

Alderman Ballantyne asked 1) how long does city intend to wait to develop a strategy, 2) is there a bulk possibility to reduce waste, 3) is there the option of going back to using dishwashers? She noted that the cost of recycling might aid in the discussion of moving back to dishwashers. Mr. Curley will take the dishwasher option back to the Superintendent of Schools and to the School Department's Procurement Office for consideration. He said that, from the School Department's perspective, there's a challenge of teaching everyone to clean items before recycling them and to understand why this is necessary and then to ensure that recyclable materials are deposited in the correct receptacles. Mr. Bowler explained that much of the trash is from the lunch trays and that using dishwashers would reduce that amount, however, the city would need to hire more people.

Chairman Hirsch commented that the situation is also about reducing waste and she wants to see a plan for recycling in the schools by the fall so students may follow the law. She requested that when OSE, DPW and the School Department appear before the BOA to present their FY-19 budget requests, they have a plan to solve this problem.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205290: That the Commissioner of Public Works share the process of handling different types of cafeteria waste, including recyclables and food waste.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205284: That the Administration consider hiring a software engineer in the FY19 budget cycle to design and maintain information management systems to link data, such as information related to properties.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205358: That the Director of Health and Human Services share a draft plan, organizational chart and budget for the formation of an Out-of-School-Time Division, to coordinate across city departments and nonprofit and volunteer-run organizations.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205359: That the Director of SPCD share a report on the CDBG program as it relates to inter-division cooperation and the city's larger Health and Human Service goals.

Mr. Inacio told the committee that there many criteria and federal guidelines that must be met when distributing CDBG funds. The availability of funds is announced in the newspapers and at public meetings and OSPCD will make use of additional communication options to reach a wider audience. Mr. Kress noted that there is a targeted population and that information is also sent to the School Department. Proposals are submitted by various groups, with the same groups

usually reapplying, and then evaluated by a committee. Mr. Kress said that HHS did evaluations of the recipients of the funding and is attempting to bring them into alignment with the city's goals. The RFP for available funds is already out.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

205360: That the Administration share plans for this summer's youth jobs program, including the cost to nonprofits for hiring youths and any opportunity to create stipend work for younger teens in local nonprofits.

Ms. Connor told the committee that the Anti-Aid amendment prohibits the city from supporting entities that are not non-profit. She will follow up to see if there might be a contractual arrangement that could be made for other organizations. Mr. Kress said that funds for summer jobs are only distributed to city departments and that stipends are only available for those who work for a city department. Alderman Clingan asked for the administration's plans for the jobs programs. Mr. Kress said that young people are recruited from the high school to work summer jobs in various city departments, noting that the application and interview process has been completed. The next steps will be conducting background checks and orientation. The employment age starts at 16 and the pay is \$11/hour. There is also a contract between HHS and Teen Empowerment for summer employment, however hiring under that arrangement is done by Teen Empowerment. Chairman Hirsch asked about how space is made available to non-profits in the summer in schools during the summer, given the Anti-Aid amendment. She said she would like to develop a partnership with private entities, e.g., the YMCA, to provide space for youths who have the most need. Ms. Connor was not familiar with how the School Department makes space available for the city's youth in the summer.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

205442: That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of Health and Human Services share an update on options and plans for municipal and school building usage for summer youth programs, including any capacity challenges for this summer.

See item #205360.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

204870: That the Administration report to this Board, by the next Youth Services Committee meeting, on ways to expand open swimming hours at the Kennedy School pool, such as Sundays, Friday/Saturday evenings, school holidays and half-day Wednesdays.

Mr. Bowler reported that a new pool director has been hired and Mr. Curley explained that the position reports up to the Superintendent of Schools. The pool is open until 6:00 PM on Fridays and is also open on Saturdays. When the pool is open during a weekend, a custodian is paid (with the cost being split between the city and School Department). Mr. Koty commented that this pool has been more self-supportive than those in other communities. Chairman Hirsch asked what it would take to expand the open swimming hours at the pool and requested that Mr. Curley and Mr. Koty meet together and return to the committee with a proposal to expand the hours and manage costs.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

204871: That the Administration report to this Board, by the next Youth Services Committee meeting, on ways to keep the Kennedy School playground open for public use during non-school day daytime hours.

Chairman Hirsch reported that the Police Chief is amenable to keeping the playground open, however, Mr. Curley was under the impression that it was a safety concern and he will take request back to the School Department. He specifically asked if the request included keeping the playground unlocked and the committee indicated that it should be kept open at all times during an initial trial period. Mr. Koty believes that it can be worked out and Mr. Bowler has no problem opening the yard if the pool is also open and then locking it when the pool closes. Alderman Ballantyne thinks that it should be unlocked and monitored by police and Alderman Niedergang said that he has received only a few complaints and is agreeable to giving it a try.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE