



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council Legislative Matters Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 17, 2023

6:00 PM

This meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order by Chair Davis at 6:03 pm and adjourned at 7:18 pm with a roll call vote of 4 in favor (Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Burnley, Councilor Kelly and Chair Davis), none opposed, and 1 absent (Councilor Scott).

Others present: Neha Singh – Mayor’s Office, Brendan Salisbury – City Clerk’s Office, Bernabe Rodriguez – City Clerk’s Office, Rachel Nadkarni – Economic Development, Cindy Amara – Law Office, Sean Sheehan – SPD, Timothy Mitsakis – SPD, Mark Pulli – SPD, Stephanie Widzowski – Clerk of Committees.

Roll Call

Present: Chairperson Lance L. Davis, Vice Chair Charlotte Kelly, Willie Burnley Jr. and Matthew McLaughlin
Absent: Jefferson Thomas (J.T.) Scott

1. Committee Minutes (ID # [23-1505](#)) Approval of the Minutes of the Legislative Matters Committee Meeting of October 3, 2023.

RESULT: **ACCEPTED**
AYE: Chairperson Davis, Vice Chair Kelly, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr. and Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin
ABSENT: Ward Two City Councilor Scott

2. Mayor's Request (ID # [23-0234](#)) Requesting approval of the Surveillance Technology Impact Report for Camera Ticket Enforcement.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE WITHDRAWN**

3. Mayor's Request (ID # [23-1532](#)) Requesting approval of the Surveillance Technology Impact Report for Camera Ticket Enforcement.

Taken together with item 23-0234. Dir. Singh said that the Administration would like to withdraw item 23-0234 and have this item considered instead. Chair Davis explained how the enforcement process will work with the cameras and noted that people will never see the data on the vendor side; only city staff will access it. Councilor Burnley asked what would happen if the cameras find city vehicles in violation. Dir. Singh said she believed a ticket would still be issued, but wanted to double check with Dir. Rinfret. Chair Davis said he felt like that is a separate discussion from the item in

question.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: Chairperson Davis, Vice Chair Kelly, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr. and Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin

ABSENT: Ward Two City Councilor Scott

4. Mayor's Request (ID # [23-1354](#)) Requesting approval of the Surveillance Technology Impact Report for GrayKey Digital Forensics Analysis Tool.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE WITHDRAWN**

5. Mayor's Request (ID # [23-1531](#)) Requesting approval of the Surveillance Technology Impact Report for GrayKey Digital Forensics Analysis Tool.

Taken together with item 23-1354. Dir. Singh said that the Administration would like to withdraw item 23-1354 and have this item considered instead. Lt. Sheehan reviewed the changes from the previous impact report, highlighting detail in section 3A about security measures for storing and accessing the device.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: Chairperson Davis, Vice Chair Kelly, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr. and Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin

ABSENT: Ward Two City Councilor Scott

6. Ordinance (ID # [23-0076](#)) By Councilor Burnley Jr., Councilor Kelly, Councilor Wilson, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Gomez Mouakad and Councilor Scott Amending Chapter 8, Article I of the Code of Ordinances by adding a new section regarding Closed Captioning Accessibility.

Taken together with items 23-0078 and 23-1507. Clerk Rodriguez and Analyst Salisbury explained suggested changes to the amendment in the attachment to item 23-1507 titled "Closed Captioning Redlined 23-0076". Chair Davis asked about the proposed text in Sec. 8-18.c.2 allowing complaints filed from members of the Commission for Persons with Disabilities to suffice as an investigation to prompt action. Clerk Rodriguez explained that the language of that section allows for a complaint to come directly from the Commission and be taken up as quickly as possible. Chair Davis said he was comfortable with the suggested wording, but wants the intent to be clear.

Dir. Nadkarni requested that more engagement with businesses be done before passing the item, as the amended ordinance would affect a broad range of businesses. She said that her department has not been able to

allocate resources to an information campaign yet, but with more time could prepare a campaign. Staff had also recommended having the entire Commission for Persons with Disabilities discuss the proposed text. Chair Davis said that this specific ordinance does not feel like something the Committee needs to wait on. Councilor Kelly asked how the Administration would roll out implementation if the item was recommended for approval tonight. Dir. Nadkarni said the item is not in her department's work plan yet, but they will add it. She recommended an information campaign through various networks and added that her staff is already walking the block and keeping businesses updated every week.

Dir. Nadkarni also recommended allowing businesses to choose the language for closed captioning most appropriate for their patrons. Analyst Salisbury said that the ordinance does not require a specific language as-is and that they think it would be best leaving that text out. There was discussion about the potential for complaints that the language of closed captioning is different from that of the audio. The Committee also discussed the language of the ordinance, the Boston ordinance it was originally based on, and the text of the Licensing Commission's rules and regulations. Chair Davis said that the intent of the amendment is just to have closed captioning.

Chair Davis moved to replace the text of the proposed amendment with the text of the document "Closed Captioning Redlined 23-0076" attached to item 23-1507. The motion PASSED with 4 in favor (Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Burnley, Councilor Kelly and Chair Davis), 1 absent (Councilor Scott) and none opposed.

Councilor Burnley moved to recommend approval of the item as amended. The motion passed with 4 in favor (Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Burnley, Councilor Kelly and Chair Davis), 1 absent (Councilor Scott) and none opposed.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED AS AMENDED**

AYE: Chairperson Davis, Vice Chair Kelly, City Councilor At Large Burnley Jr. and Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin

ABSENT: Ward Two City Councilor Scott

7. Resolution
 (ID # [23-0078](#))

By Councilor Burnley Jr., Councilor Kelly, Councilor Wilson, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Gomez Mouakad and Councilor Scott
Supporting Closed Captioning Accessibility.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED**

8. Officer's Communication (ID # [23-1507](#)) City Clerk conveying information regarding item #23-0076, amending the Code of Ordinances by adding a new section regarding Closed Captioning Accessibility.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED

9. Order (ID # [22-1449](#)) By Councilor Burnley Jr. and Councilor Wilson
That the City Solicitor and the Director of Parking provide this Council with an opinion on whether the adoption of Chapter 90, Section 20A of the Massachusetts General Laws would allow the City to mail tickets for traffic violations, including those identified through 311 reports.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE MARKED WORK COMPLETED