



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

April 7, 2016

REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE MATTERS COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Mary Jo Rossetti	Chair	Present	
Mark Niedergang	Vice Chair	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven Alderman	Present	
John M. Connolly	Alderman At Large	Present	
William A. White Jr.	Alderman At Large	Present	

Others present: Alderman Maryann Heuston, Alderman Robert McWatters, David Shapiro - Law, Jason Grossfield - Law, Nick Salerno - Elections, Goran Smiljic - ISD, Tim Snyder - Mayor's Office, Rositha Durham - Clerk of Committees

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:15 PM by Alderman Rossetti and adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Document List:

- Draft of Home Rule Petition - (with 200779)
- Proposed Ordinance - (with 199918)
- Early Voting Summary - (with 200523)
- Early Voting Hours - (with 200523)
- Trash Pickup - (with 199064)

Approval of the February 18, 2016 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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200779: That the City Solicitor draft a Home Rule Petition to change the speed limit to 20 MPH in school zones and areas adjacent to senior housing, hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, etc.

Mr. Shapiro provided a draft for consideration. This home rule petition gives Somerville the ability to set speed limits that currently have to be approved by the state. This legislation would pertain to park, playground, senior citizen housing, hospital, places of worship, nursing home and assisted living zones.

Alderman Connolly asked about 20 mph vs. 25 mph being a stumbling block. Alderman Heuston asked if other cities/towns have been successful in obtaining the 20 mph speed limit and there was discussion about communities that already have this change, e.g., Quincy and Melrose. Alderman Ballantyne inquired about any existing ordinances relating to schools and the speed limit to make sure there are no conflicts with the draft and the current ordinance. Mr. Snyder commented that the Administration has been addressing this matter via the Metropolitan Mayors Association and will continue to do so.

RESULT:

APPROVED

199918: That the provisions of Ordinance 11-105, regarding the demolition of buildings, be amended as described within.

Mr. Smiljic provided an amended ordinance that addresses a change in the timeline for demolitions. The committee suggested that the word “initial” or “original” be added to describe the original proposed date of demolition vs. any changes to the demolition timeline. Another change requires that the aldermen, abutters and Inspectional Services Department should be notified at least 7 days, not 48 hours, prior to the revised date of demolition.

RESULT:

APPROVED AS AMENDED

200523: That the Election Commissioner report to this Board on implementing the new state early voting law, and respond to the recommendations of the MA Election Modernization Coalition Early Voting Challenge.

Mr. Salerno distributed a summary of the recent state draft of early voting new regulations. He additionally presented a list of the potential polling hours for early voting informing the committee that he has possible locations for voting, however, there may be a couple of ADA issues. He will continue to update the committee. Mr. Salerno will be recruiting regular poll workers along with security. Police details are factored into the cost for early voting. Currently, the state is not offering any financial support on this matter.

It was suggested that there be one early voting location each on the West and East sides of Somerville. Currently, early voting may be done in person or by mail. The early ballots will be treated the same way as absentee ballots however, a specific early voting envelope will be used. Absentee voting will not be affected. There may be a Saturday voting period on October 29th from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, but Mr. Snyder stated that the dates are not finalized and are open for discussion. He also said it's important to offer night hours. Mr. Snyder will work with the Communications Department to develop a plan to get the information out to the community on early voting hours and locations.

Alderman White asked if there was any consideration to offer early voting on Sundays to accommodate families who may have athletic activities on Saturdays and/or Sundays. Alderman Niedergang agreed that the city should offer a couple of evenings a week for early voting. Alderman Ballantyne inquired about an internet voting option and commented that she doesn't feel that the 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM schedule works for people who may work outside of

Somerville. Alderman Connolly said it's important to provide flexible hours for the community. Alderman McWatters suggested staggering some of times to accommodate the working community. Alderman Heuston suggested that the city be more strategic about staffing and consider when people might be available to vote.

The state's public comment period on its draft is expected to be open sometime this month. Mr. Salerno will take the committee's discussion into consideration as he prepares to come back to the committee next month.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

199064: That the Director of SPCD (ISD) and the Commissioner of Public Works inform this Board of enforcement of the trash ordinance for private trash pickup (barrels and dumpsters), when trash can be set out prior to pickup, and whether the current ordinance can be amended to address private trash pickups.

Alderman Heuston reminded the committee about overflowing private trash barrels and dumpsters noting that there is no local legislation in place to address this matter. Mr. Shapiro provided a copy of the state law pertaining to the removal or transportation of garbage. This document also states the noise level time and duration of sound. Alderman Heuston clarified her question about the commercial vs. residential private trash pickups who currently do not have any restricted hours for pickup and/or placement of containers. She gave an example of an overflowing trash barrel on the side area of Market Basket where there are quite a few private businesses. Mr. Snyder agreed private trash pickup should mirror that of residential trash pickup. Mr. Smiljic and Mr. Shapiro will work together to provide a draft ordinance at the next Legislative Matters meeting to address private trash pickup and potentially mirror that of residential pickup.

Mr. Snyder will work with Mr. Shapiro on the following:

- Hours for private trash pickup,
- Hours for noise level and street sweeping and
- Permitting for trash pickup.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

200620: That the City Solicitor provide this Board with information and a draft ordinance restricting the hours during which private parking lots may be swept or dumpsters emptied.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

198282: Requesting approval of an ordinance regulating certain campaign contributions to candidates for and incumbents in municipal elected office.

Alderman White asked that this item be placed on file and informed the members that he and the Administration would submit a compromised version at the next BOA meeting.

RESULT:

PLACED ON FILE

198344: Re-introducing for approval the Pay to Play Ordinance (#197438) as ordained by this Board on 9/11/14.

Alderman White asked that this item be placed on file and informed the members that he and the Administration would submit a compromised version at the next BOA meeting.

RESULT:

PLACED ON FILE
