



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

February 4, 2019

REPORT OF THE CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENTS AND PERSONNEL MATTERS COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Chair	Present	
Ben Ewen-Campen	Vice Chair	Present	
Jesse Clingan	Ward Four City Councilor	Present	
Wilfred N. Mbah	City Councilor at Large	Absent	
Mary Jo Rossetti	City Councilor at Large	Present	

Others present: Candace Cooper - Personnel, Sarah White - OSPCD, Bryant Gaspard - OSPCD, Tom Galligani - OSPCD, Dr. Vanessa Boukili - OSPCD, Kristen Stelljes - OSPCD, Annie Connor - Legislative Liaison, Rositha Durham - Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:11 PM by Chairman Scott and adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Approval of the January 14, 2019 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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206979: Requesting the appointment of Natasha Sierra to the Fair Housing Commission.

Bryant Gaspar introduced Ms. Sierra and the commission now has three people and need another two to have a full board. Ms. Sierra speaks Spanish which will be helpful for this commission. This candidate did not go through the selection committee. She has been working with very diverse community in the Somerville Housing and has found her niche there. She works with Section 8 families and may have some overlap with the fair housing commission.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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207212: Requesting the appointment of Patrice Faulkner to the Fair Housing Commission.

Mr. Gaspar introduced this candidate who has background with condo rentals and works with shelters. She lives in the Teele Square area. She found out about this position by complaining about street sweeping. Mr. Proakis sent her an email with open positions.

RESULT:

APPROVED

207210: Requesting the appointment of Laura Beretsky to the Community Preservation Committee.

Mr. Fager and Ms. Stelljes introduced the candidate who has a wide range of experience with community activism. Councilor Rossetti knows Ms. Beretsky very well and can attest to her passion and dedication. Candidate was asked where CPA funds can make the biggest impact in the community. There was a conversation about CPA funds eventually drying up and state match declining over time. There were additional conversations about CPA funds being separate and unique and not to be used to fill a gap when funds have fallen short.

RESULT:

APPROVED

207211: Requesting the appointment of Tatiana Shannon to the Community Preservation Committee.

Mr. Fagen introduced Ms. Shannon who has a lot of professional experience. She is an independent contractor and has flexible time which is helpful with this position. She is dedicated and has the time and energy. Ms. Shannon lives in Somerville, near Porter Square area.

RESULT:

APPROVED

207303: Requesting the appointment of Adam Wylie to the Historic Preservation Commission as an alternate member.

Ms. White introduced Mr. Wylie who is an independent decision maker. There were discussions about this candidate would only be able to vote in place of a regular member. He has experience in building trades and has done some work in Somerville. Most of his work is done in the Boston and Cambridge area. The committee felt his resume was very impressive. Ms. White talked about how challenging it has been to find candidates to volunteer. The chair said Mr. Wylie's experience will be useful to this commission.

RESULT:

APPROVED

206883: Requesting the appointment of Josh Grehan to the position of Jobs Creation and Retention Trust Board member.

Mr. Galligani introduced the candidate who is the last position to be filled for this board. The candidate is a senior manager business operations and the key person in recruiting for hiring. The candidate had reached out to be more involved in the city and is active with the Chambers. This board has regulatory authority. He talked about giving jobs to people from high school all the way up to those who have a PhD. He also has 40 employees who live in Somerville and wants to continue to help residents to stay in Somerville.

RESULT:

APPROVED

207420: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Althea Northcross to the Urban

Forestry Committee.

Dr. Boukili introduced Ms. Northcross to the committee. This is a newly formed committee with their responsibility being as an advisory role; review plans and develop educational materials. This candidate lives in Ward 2. This candidate feels this is a real opportunity to make changes in Somerville. She is new to landscape design and fell in love with streetscape while in Europe. The candidate considers the health of the urban canopy. There were 27 applicants interviewed for this committee. Councilor Rossetti reminded Dr. Boukili that the urban team was also to include a couple of students. Dr. Boukili has not reached out to any students as of yet. It was stated that the students should be given the same respect as others considered for the committee.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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207421: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Victoria Antonino to the Urban Forestry Committee.

Dr. Boukili introduced Ms. Antonio who is no stranger to the city. She is a strong advocate for urban forestry. She is a landscape garden designer and installs plants all over the city. Ms. Antonio thanked all activists in the community and the Councilors for listening to the needs of the community regarding trees. She also talked about native planting ordinance and native trees coming back, so that butterflies and crickets come back.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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207422: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Sharon Komarow to the Urban Forestry Committee.

Dr. Boukili introduced this candidate who is a landscape architect. She has technical expertise in tree planting, knowledgeable about plants. She has been involved in Mass DOT projects and is familiar with construction documents to help prevent tree losses. Ms. Komarow lives in Somerville. She talked about how some parts of the city is lacking urban canopy. The committee asked if there would be any conflict or concerns to address with her work and the city. Ms. Connors stated it is expected that candidates will recuse themselves, if there are concerns.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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207423: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Jennifer Clifford to the Urban Forestry Committee.

Dr. Boukili introduced Ms. Clifford who is a plant pathologist. She has done a lot of volunteering and outreach. Ms. Clifford talked about her childhood being raised by her father who loved the woods. She learned a lot about trees and wild flowers and finds it a safe place in the woods. The candidate talked about plant, soil health and the need for native plants.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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207424: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Chris Dwan to the Urban Forestry Committee.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

207425: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Amy Mertl to the Urban Forestry Committee.

Dr. Boukili is checking the candidates availability for a future meeting.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

207426: Requesting confirmation of the appointment of Alden Johnson to the Urban Forestry Committee.

Dr. Boukili introduced Mr. Johnson who is a certified arborist. He is very skilled in tree pruning and has a couple of other certificates relating to this type of work. The candidate was asked about tree climber and what was the highest tree he climbed, which was white pine of 118 ft. Mr. Johnson is not a Somerville resident, but does do some work in Somerville. He is bidding on an upcoming project in Somerville. There were discussions about potential conflict with his regular work and the work on the committee. Committee members would like clarification from city legal counsel on whether there is a conflict or not. Ms. Boukili stated there were no other applicants with his experience.

Councilor Rossetti's motion that the City Solicitor provide guidance regarding potential conflicts of interest of Urban Forestry Committee appointees prior to the next meeting of the City Council, was approved.

Dr. Boukili will reach out to the communications team to help recruit students for this committee. The chair suggested using the team who are teachers to assist in putting the communications together.

RESULT:

DISCHARGED W/NO RECOMMENDATION

204908: Requesting the re-appointment of Michael Lapiana as Animal Control Officer.

Chairman Scott said he received many communications from constituents about this candidate. Ms. Connor and Ms. Cooper asked the committee to keep this in committee to give the administration more time to prepare for the meeting. Members of the committee suggested this item should be withdrawn, since the candidate was duly notified with a letter about questions relating to his character. The candidate is allowed to be present, bring an attorney and record the executive session or choose to waive it. The chair received a letter from the candidate that was dropped off by his union rep. stating Ms. Cooper had given him advice on the matter. Ms. Cooper stated she did not give him any advice and only answered questions on his options. Councilor Rossetti stated this matter is sensitive and never believes what's in the newspapers, although she was disappointed that the candidate did not appear at the meeting tonight. The chair will reach out to the candidate and counsel regarding this matter. Ms. Connor asked that complaints go to personnel so that the candidate is aware of the complaints and not blindsided.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

207406: Requesting confirmation of the re-appointment of Michael Lapiana as Animal Control Officer.

See item #204908

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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Handout:

- Ordinance (with 207212)