



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

October 26, 2021  
REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Chair	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Vice Chair	Present	
William A. White Jr.	City Councilor At Large	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	City Councilor at Large	Present	
Wilfred N. Mbah	City Councilor at Large	Present	

The meeting was held virtually and was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chairperson Scott and adjourned at 9:31 p.m.

Others present: Hannah Carrillo-Mayor's Office, Ed Bean-Auditor/Finance, Rich Raiche-IAM, Charles Breen-Fire, Tom Galligani-OSCPD, Roberta Cameron-CPA, Eileen McGettigan-Law, Michael Mastrobuoni-Finance, Brian Postlewaite-Engineering, Lauren Racaniello-Mayor's Office and Melissa Woods-OSPCD.

**Approval of the October 12, 2021 Minutes**

**RESULT: ACCEPTED**

**COUNCIL REQUESTS**

**212478: That the administration assign staff to support the Wage Theft Advisory Committee.**

Ms. Racaniello stated that the city is facing staff capacity issues at this time. Chair Scott will follow up with the City Clerk on this position.

**RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**212400: That the Director of Finance and the Treasurer create a separate revenue account for deposit of all funds received from handicapped parking violations, and allocate said funds to the Commission for Persons with Disabilities, as authorized under MGL.**

Chair Scott asked if there is any follow up. Ms. Racaniello shared that she did reach out to DOR on the guidelines on administering funds. She has not received any guidelines and they are still working on this

matter. Councilor White had previously asked for a legal opinion and asked again since Ms. Racaniello was not at the last meeting. Councilor White stated his request and language was highlighted in the last committee report.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**ADMINISTRATION REQUESTS**

**212528: Treasurer/Collector requesting approval to retain Hinckley Allen as bond counsel.**

Ms. Racaniello stated that the Treasurer was not available to attend tonight’s meeting. Councilor White will recuse himself from this item in future meetings.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**212550: Requesting approval to pay a prior year invoice totaling \$16,400 using available funds in the Human Resources Department Arbitration Services Account for arbitration services.**

Ms. Racaniello stated that no one was available to speak on this matter and it is a prior year invoice.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>AYES:</b>	Scott, Ballantyne, White Jr., Rossetti, Mbah

**211851: Requesting approval to amend a contract with Design Consultants for an additional 2 years and \$53,146.25, for final work related to the Beacon St. Roadway construction project.**

Mr. Rawson was not able to attend tonight’s meeting.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**GRANTS, RESTRICTIONS, EASEMENTS**

**212474: Requesting approval of a grant of easement in Inner Belt Road for Fiber Optic Communications Equipment.**

Mr. Postlewaite stated Ms. McGettigan and the applicant for the project were available to speak on this item. Mr. Postlewaite stated that Inner Belt Road is a private way owned by Somerville. This request could not go through the normal process and he worked with the applicant and Ms. McGettigan to develop an easement document that would be appropriate for this application. The fiber optics communications line runs along Inner Belt Road onto the MBTA right of way.

Ms. McGettigan stated that the easement is non-exclusive with the City of Somerville having the ultimate right to do what the city wants to do with the property.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>AYES:</b>	Scott, Ballantyne, White Jr., Rossetti, Mbah

**212480: Requesting approval of the Land Disposition Agreement for the property at 31 Tufts Street.**

Mr. Galligani stated that this is a long-standing project on a vacant lot located in East Somerville. They have been trying to activate the lot for some time. A couple of years ago, there was a vote to surplus this property. A company called E3 Development responded with a proposal and planned to create 16 units with affordable units and open space. The city is asking for a land disposition agreement. The developer is in the process of applying for building permits and it is timely to approve this request.

Councilor Mbah asked for clarification about a deal to the developer valuing for \$500,000 when the market value could be \$600,000. He asked if the city could require the developer to add binding language to keep the rent at a reasonable amount. Mr. Galligani stated it has sold as a substantial discount to help to attribute to funding affordable housing. This project will have many layers to make sure it stays affordable. There will be a deed restriction to make sure that affordability is accessible.

Ms. McGettigan stated that there is no material change in the development concept in response to the RFP and will be on the deed itself.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>AYES:</b>	Scott, Ballantyne, White Jr., Rossetti, Mbah

**212413: Requesting acceptance of a preservation restriction for 59 Cross Street.**

Ms. Cameron, Community Preservation Act manager, stated that the City Council approved funds for the Grays Baptist Church. The preservation restriction has been prepared and approved by the CPA.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>AYES:</b>	Scott, Ballantyne, White Jr., Rossetti, Mbah

**212325: Requesting acceptance of a Preservation Restriction for 277 Broadway.**

Ms. Cameron stated that this project at the Elizabeth Peabody house was approved in 2019.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>AYES:</b>	Scott, Ballantyne, White Jr., Rossetti, Mbah

**WATER/SEWER BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS**

**212518: Requesting approval to appropriate \$1,235,641 from the Sewer Capital Stabilization Fund to the Sewer Enterprise Fund in order to balance the FY 2022 Sewer Enterprise Fund budget.**

Items 11 and 12 were discussed together.

Chair Scott stated this is completing the paper work from the FY22 budget process. Mr. Mastrobuoni added that this is sticking to the plans for the enterprise funds.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>AYES:</b>	Scott, Ballantyne, White Jr., Rossetti, Mbah

**212519: Requesting approval to appropriate \$1,023,399 from the Water Capital Stabilization Fund to the Water Enterprise Fund in order to balance the FY 2022 Water Enterprise Fund budget.**

This item was discussed with # 11.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>AYES:</b>	Scott, Ballantyne, White Jr., Rossetti, Mbah

**STREET AND SIDEWALK REPAIRS**

**212516: Requesting an appropriation and authorization to borrow \$3,604,801 in a bond for street resurfacing, sidewalk improvements and ADA ramps and improvements.**

Mr. Raiche provided a memo for this item. Chair Scott displayed the budget memo. This is the annual paving and resurfacing for sidewalks. This work was not previously bid out due to COVID-19. The FY20 budget shifted one calendar year for Davis Square area and the city is now preparing to go to bid for Pearl Street. At the tail end of 2019, the request was broken into three contracts which includes one full street with ADA sidewalks, safety enhancement on College, a contract focusing only on sidewalks. There's another contract focusing on side streets. The priority for selecting streets remain unchanged from what was submitted in the memo. On Thursday, they will update the engineering webpage with all of this information. Mr. Raiche stated this bond request is to put out for a contractor to come in for the work. Winter is the better time to bid and get better pricing.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>AYES:</b>	Scott, Ballantyne, White Jr., Rossetti, Mbah

**212520: Requesting approval to appropriate \$500,000 from the Street Reconstruction Stabilization Fund for Street & Sidewalk Repairs and ADA Improvements.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED. [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>AYES:</b>	Scott, Ballantyne, White Jr., Rossetti, Mbah

**POPLAR STREET PUMP STATION**

**212549: Requesting an appropriation and authorization to borrow \$3,300,000 for Poplar Street Pump Station Pump House & Facilities pre-construction services.**

Mr. Raiche stated the concept and pictures are posted on the City of Somerville website. The preliminary design of the pump station and master planning found the utility of pump station is greater than had hoped for. There is a large tank in the low line area in Union Square in Ward 2 and parts of Ward 3. The storage tanks limit the elevation of the sewer shed and was not sure how useful the tank would be but is very favorable. There are limitations on when the city can pump into the MBTA. The project grew because of tank opportunity. There was a second challenge on what is taken out of sewer and catch basins when cleaned. The sewer division did not have anywhere to transfer the catch basin sewage. The city has been able to solve a number of problems which has made the design of the pump station more complex. The city will be using a Construction Manager at Risk (CM@R) to condense the schedule by doing an early action contract. Due to the increase of complexity of design, the CM@R will be brought on earlier to develop engineering and help control costs.

Councilor White asked what is the current estimate for actual construction cost for the entire project. Mr. Raiche stated there has been complexity, all inclusive of pump station, catch basin, Art Farm and Art Barn will be \$100M for everything.

Councilor White asked about the debt for the water and sewer and would it come out of the Sewer Enterprise funds. He also asked the purpose of the holding tank which would be used to assist MBTA potential flooding.

Councilor Mbah asked if this is where the Art Farm was supposed to be built. How long will the work take? Mr. Raiche stated using the CM@R schedule would be early action package starting this summer.

Chair Scott asked about the timeline and why this request did not make it to council until October. Mr. Raiche stated there are staff capacity issues and when they need to sign contracts. There is enough money currently and the additional funds will allow the time to bring on CM@R for pre-construction in early 2022. They will be submitting qualifications in November. Chair Scott asked Mr. Raiche if the funding is to increase value of pre-construction services and Stantec along with the CM. Mr. Raiche stated they have a working draft of the Request for Qualification document. Mr. Raiche who is the lead for the prequalification team stated the core representatives are from departments purchasing, IAM, Engineering, SomerStat and the city's PM. Mr. Raiche stated \$3.3M funding is \$2.1M for Stantec contract and the rest for CM. Mr. Raiche talked about having a 20% contingency plan and what it means to have a GMP. The contingency funds would be returned back to the city if not used. This avoids having to come back to the councilors for any unforeseen circumstances.

Councilor Rossetti stated that the high school is more massive than this project. There is huge demand to oversee this type of project. It is extremely time consuming to oversee and triple check the budget. She thinks it will need managerial oversight. Chair Scott stated that besides for full-time personnel to oversee the project, would like to have more visibility by setting up a building committee that does not have to be as extensive as what was done in high school committee. Mr. Raiche states that would be appropriate for a project this size to have a standing committee representative from Brick Bottom.

Chair Scott will reach out to residents at Brick Bottom and report back.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**SOMERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL**

**212517: Requesting approval to appropriate and transfer \$8,796,290 from the Facility Construction and Renovation Stabilization Fund to the Somerville High School Construction Fund.**

Items 16 and 17 were discussed together.

Mr. Raiche stated they are not ready to discuss this item. The mission is to negotiate a settlement price with the CM with the additional cost for unforeseen costs. They have not reached agreement and will present to the city council once they have the agreement, along with the additional appropriation. Councilor Rossetti stated the high school building committee meeting will be on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**212548: Requesting an amendment to the Somerville High School Construction appropriation to a new amount of \$278,790,633 and increasing the amount of bonds, fund transfers, and other available funds of the city authorized to meet said appropriation.**

Items 16 and 17 were discussed together.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**Assembly Square Fire Station Lease**

**212265: Requesting approval of a 30-year lease for the new Assembly Square Fire Station.**

Mr. Galligani provided a slide presentation on this request with updated information. See attached for more details. This consolidates a lot of the thoughts and concerns. There are three questions, why do we need this lease, options and what is the city proposing. He stated that Assembly Square is booming and in 20 years the area will more than double the size. There was a fire study back in 2016 that recommended moving Engineer 3 and take a hard look at Assembly Square. Response times continue to lag in Assembly Square. They looked at a number of different locations in the past which included various public-private partnership models. Mr. Galligani showed a slide that speculated that purchasing land and building a fire station could cost \$21M-\$44M. If leased, the timeline for the project proposal could have the fire station open in 18 to 24 months. The proposal from the only submittal received is for 30 years for 10,000 sq. ft. with very high rent. After negotiating with the developer, the price came down which also included taking out the property taxes. The cost comparison summary to acquire land and building could be \$21M-\$44M vs. 30-year lease of \$18M.

Councilor Rossetti voiced her concern about the lease amount comparing it to the city leasing for TAB Building for Tufts. She asked if anyone went back to renegotiate the price with the developer. Mr. Galligani discussed with purchasing and looked at MGL 30B. He is not sure if he can ask them to lower price and has not done so.

Chair Scott stated he cannot support the lease but can support moving very quickly to secure the land and build the property.

Councilor White suggested approaching the T for options relating to air rights.

Councilor Rossetti suggested to discharge without recommendation.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>NOT APPROVED. [2 TO 3]</b>
<b>AYES:</b>	Ballantyne, Rossetti
<b>NAYS:</b>	Scott, White Jr., Mbah

### **PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING**

#### **212362: Requesting an appropriation and authorization to borrow \$725,000 in a bond for Construction Manager at-Risk services for the pre-construction phase of the Public Safety Building .**

Mr. Raiche stated this item was sent back to the committee for additional discussion. The Chair shared the application for the CM@R from May 2021 which is a 36-page application. Chair Scott had some concerns about the timeline of the public safety building meetings and garage.

Mr. Raiche stated this was before the committee a couple of weeks ago and was asked to delay for couple of weeks. This is now starting to impact the schedule.

Ms. Woods stated they have advanced through schematic design.

Councilor White asked how much is the city wedded to this for approval. Mr. Raiche stated there is still a lot of ground to cover for design. There is a building committee for this project.

Chair Scott asked about the selection committee and/or prequalification committee. Mr. Raiche stated there is a committee for this request with members listed on page 5 of the proposal.

The chair would like to hear back from the community on this matter before deciding.

Councilor Rossetti stated when comparing to high school, they hired someone in this position early on.

Councilor Rossetti stated the OPM was hired in March 2013 for the high school. Mr. Raiche stated Suffolk construction was signed November 2016 for the high school.

Mr. Raiche stated the OPM for this project was hired this past year.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED. [4 TO 1]</b>
<b>AYES:</b>	Ballantyne, White Jr., Rossetti, Mbah
<b>NAYS:</b>	Scott

#### **Referenced Material:**

- FY2022 Pavement Management Program Detail Memo 2021Oct25 (with 212516, 212520)
- Assembly Fire Station Fin Com 10.26.2021 (with 212265)
- Email re Public Safety Building (with 212362)