



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

May 14, 2018

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jesse Clingan	Chair	Present	
Stephanie Hirsch	Vice Chair	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One Alderman	Present	

Others present: Wig Zamore, Annie Connor - Legislative Liaison, Rositha Durham -Clerk of Committees.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chairman Clingan and adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Approval of the April 10, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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205366: That the Administration refrain from appointing any further candidates to the position of Reserve Firefighter and seek to discontinue use of the Fire Reserve List at the earliest possible opportunity.

Alderman Scott joined the meeting. The committee was informed that the previous list had 25 individuals listed and that currently, there are 10-12 people on the reserve list. It's anticipated that it will take approximately two years to go through that list. A statement was made that veterans have no chance of being hired as a fire fighter. The committee asked questions as to why the city is using this outdated system. The city of Everett currently uses the reserve list and they never have more than 5-7 candidates on the list. The committee agreed that it would be beneficial to have the Fire and Police Chiefs and the Personnel Director at a future committee meeting. Ms. Connor will coordinate dates with the listed personnel.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205785: That the City Solicitor update this Board on the current status of the draft ordinance regulating Airbnb.

Ms. Connor told the members that there is a building code issue for three plus (3+) unit buildings and in order to register them, the entire building would need to be outfitted with a fire

suppression sprinkler system. The drafted ordinance does not address this issue at the state level. The City of Cambridge added a line to their ordinance that all units must comply with the state and building codes. The City of Boston is also considering this language in their ordinance. If the ordinance is passed here in Somerville, the city's liability would be low and it would fall on the Inspectional Services Department to enforce it. Multiple requests have gone to the state board to address this issue. Members were told that the vast majority of Airbnb facilities do not have sprinkler systems. The Mayor's office will provide an updated list of the number Airbnb facilities in Somerville, along with a list of the fines issued. The committee discussed having a public process on this topic before sharing the draft ordinance with the community. There were also a number of comments about what should be included in the draft, e.g., requiring that the owner of the Airbnb reside in Somerville and occupy the facility as his primary residence, limiting the number of nights a year that a unit may be rented and a process to review any issues between tenants and owners. The city will hold two public meetings on the topic in June, one on the east side of the city and one on the west side.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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203802: That the City Solicitor and the Superintendent of Inspectional Services provide this Board with a plan to address the use of AirBnB for whole house rentals, including communications to residents who report such uses.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204960: That the Director of SPCD update this Board on plans to renovate the area under I-93, near the Stop & Shop, for pedestrian access to Assembly Square.

Ms. Connor provide an update she received from OSPCD and told the committee that Alderman McLaughlin, State Representative Connolly and East Somerville Main Streets have been great partners. The city worked with MassDOT to require private developers to pay for new traffic contract signals to stop vehicles at the underpass. There is approximately \$50,000 from various sources that may be used to renovate the area under I-93. The committee requested a community process.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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204860: That the Director of SPCD arrange a meeting with the MBTA and this Board to discuss the elimination of the Route 95 bus stop on Mystic Avenue across from Fremont Street, and how that stop can be restored with proper lighting, markings, etc.

Ms. Connor stated that the bus stop was eliminated by the MBTA due to not being compliant with ADA regulations. This area has a large volume of traffic and it is being re-evaluated to determine ways to make it more efficient and safer for the community. There will be a public meeting on June 7th at Sullivan Square. The city continues to raise the issue with the MBTA.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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205075: That the Director of Water and Sewer report to this Board on whether our

municipal tap water is safe to drink.

The Director of Water and Sewer was unable to attend tonight's meeting due his attendance at a water and sewer rate hearing. Ms. Connor told the committee that reports on the quality of drinking water are available on the city's website and noted that the water is tested on a regular basis and is safe to drink.

RESULT:

WORK COMPLETED

Handout:

- Update (with 204960)