



## CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

October 7, 2019

### REPORT OF THE EQUITY, GENDER, FAMILIES AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Stephanie Hirsch	Chair	Present	
Wilfred N. Mbah	Vice Chair	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Ward Seven City Councilor	Present	

Others present: Councilor J. T. Scott, Nancy Solomon - HHS, Andre Green - School Committee, Jill Lathan - Parks & Recreation, Annie Connor - Mayor's Office, Peter Forcellese - Legislative Clerk.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:02 PM by Chairman Hirsch and adjourned at 6:43 PM.

**208573: That this City Council, In collaboration with the School Committee and the Administration, particularly the Director of Parks and the City Solicitor, draft a "Local Title IX" ordinance ensuring equal opportunity and spending on the basis of gender identity to athletic and academic programs offered by the City.**

Councilor Ballantyne provided some background on this matter and noted that much of the city's recreational spending has been geared to one gender. Data regarding instruction, cost of equipment, etc., was collected and showed that for the last three years, the financial split has been 70% for boys and 30% for girls. Councilor Ballantyne has been pushing for an equitable split of 50% for each. Councilor Scott told the committee that he has drafted an ordinance to expand Title IX within the city. He stated that Title IX is dated, having been created approximately forty years ago, and that it should apply to schools, but doesn't.

Mr. Green confirmed that academic tutoring is being offered to SHS athletes. He also informed the committee that the Human Resources Director for the School Department serves as the Title IX administrator for the School Department. Councilor Scott would like to make the Title IX administrator's position full time. His proposal is to draft an ordinance to expand Title IX to community schools and after school programs and to be vigilant about its implementation before the city is sued for violating its provisions. Chairwoman Hirsch commented that it would be good to look at applying it to other out of school activities, as well.

Ms. Lathan asked for some clarification as to what the committee is looking for, since many of the Parks and Recreation Department's programs are already co-ed. She added that this is an important issue and she is excited to look at co-ed programs to see how they can be made more inclusive.

Mr. Green pointed out that the School Department is not the same as the Recreation Department and has an equity split closer to 50/50. He stated that he doesn't want the School Department to be told how to spend its budget based on what the Recreation Department is doing. He also noted that the Recreation Department is not responsible to the state in the same way the Schools Department is.

Councilor Scott explained that the city has failed to address Title IX for forty years and his hope was to get this conversation started. He said that he's leaning towards writing the ordinance to deal with Recreation Department and would like to start the process and exercise it there. Chairwoman Hirsch commented that she would be interested in seeing an equity report to see how it matches the makeup of the community and questioned if the city could have a more generic ordinance beyond Title IX.

Councilor Ballantyne said that the process is moving too slowly to address the inequalities and she believes that an ordinance will move the needle quicker. Ms. Connor suggested that the Law Department be contacted to have staff assist in this matter.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
----------------	--------------------------

**208682: That the Director of Parks and Recreation work with the Administration and the School Department to assess opportunities and barriers non-binary youth and adults have when wanting to participate in athletics and access public facilities, such as Dilboy Pool.**

Chairwoman Hirsch reported that she met with city staff and community members regarding this issue, saying that some parents told her that their children loved sports, but dropped out when they didn't want to identify as male or female. Ms. Lathan stated that the majority of programs in the Parks and Recreation Department are co-ed and those that aren't will be examined for ways to make them more inclusive. Dilboy pool has the opportunity for a non ADA compliant bathroom to be used, thereby bypassing the male & female locker rooms, however, due to its location and accessibility, protocols would have to be put into place. The Kennedy pool bathroom has ADA access. Mr. Green told the committee that the School Department made a commitment two years ago to train staff in supporting non-binary students and that this program was the second of its kind in the country. He stated that the School Department is happy to work with the Recreation Department, and others, to make programs more inclusive.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>WORK COMPLETED</b>
----------------	-----------------------

**208960: Director of Parks and Recreation responding to #208682 re: opportunities and barriers for non-binary youth and adults to participate in athletics and access public facilities.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>WORK COMPLETED</b>
----------------	-----------------------