



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

January 20, 2022  
REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE MATTERS COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Lance L. Davis	Chair	Present	
Ben Ewen-Campen	Vice Chair	Present	
Willie Burnley Burnley Jr.	City Councilor At Large	Present	
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Ward Two City Councilor	Present	
Jesse Clingan	Ward Four City Councilor	Present	

Others present: Aneesh Sahni - Director of Legislative Relations, Peter Forcellese - Legislative Clerk.

The meeting took place virtually via GoToWebinar and was called to order at 6:04 PM by Chair Davis and adjourned at 7:50 PM on a roll call vote of 5 in favor (Councilors Clingan, Scott, Burnley, Ewen-Campen and Davis), 0 against and 0 absent.

Chair Davis explained that many of the items on tonight's agenda are resubmittals of expired items from previous council sessions. This was done in preparation for the new legislative tracking software that the city will be using. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to get any available updates from the administration regarding these items. Chair Davis explained that the resubmitted items may now show a new lead sponsor, and that the original sponsor may be found by following links within the new items. Chair Davis acknowledged all those viewing this meeting online.

**Approval of the December 2, 2021 Minutes**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ACCEPTED</b>
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**Re-submission requests:**

**212825: That the Administration re-submit the updated 2021 Surveillance Technology Annual Report.**

Councilor Ewen-Campen spoke on this item and made the following motion: **That the Administration post the Surveillance Technology Annual Report and the approved Surveillance Technology Impact Reports online in an easy to find location.** The motion was approved.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**212824: That the Administration re-submit its request for adoption of the Rental**

**Registration and Energy Disclosure Ordinance.**

Director Sahni will provide the committee with an update on the timing of this item.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**212823: That the Administration re-submit the Report of the Clean and Open Elections Task Force.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**212822: That the Administration re-submit its proposed amendments to modernize the city's biotechnology ordinance.**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b>
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**212821: That the Administration re-submit the 2021 Surveillance Technology Annual Report.**

This item was a forerunner to item 212825.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>PLACED ON FILE</b>
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**212805: That the Administration re-submit its two versions of a Home Rule Petition to establish the right to charge electric vehicles.**

See item 212815

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>PLACED ON FILE</b>
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**212817: That the City Solicitor re-submit the request for approval of an amendment to the Community Benefits Ordinance to create a Community Benefits Committee for the distribution of community benefits funds.**

Chair Davis commented that this is a tricky item that will take some time to work out. Councilor Ewen-Campen stated his support of the Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) negotiated for Union Square but he thinks that this type of incarnation would set up an advisory committee for how the funds are dispersed, therefore, he doesn't think that he can support this amendment until he hears from other stakeholders. He went on to say that he's willing to listen and would like to pursue something along these lines. Councilor Burnley commented that he favors giving residents more say in how their neighborhoods are developed. He has reached out to various groups for their input as to how they would like this item to proceed. Chair Davis explained that the amendment sets out guidelines for the distribution of funds and he is inclined to move forward with this request to resubmit the amendment. Councilor Scott commented that he disagrees with the way funds would be held by the city and apportioned by a community benefits commission. Councilor Clingan would like to scrap the CBA ordinance and start from scratch. Chair Davis said that he welcomes other approaches and asked the committee for input. Councilor Burnley said that he could submit an item along these lines with input from community members, if necessary,

adding that what happens in one part of the city affects other parts of the city. Chair Davis accepted the inclination of the committee and placed this item on file.

**RESULT:**

**PLACED ON FILE**

**212804: That the Administration re-submit its request for approval of a Home Rule Petition to authorize the continued employment of Acting Somerville Police Chief Charles Femino.**

Director Sahni informed the committee that this item has been resubmitted by the administration.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**212809: That the City Solicitor re-submit the request to rescind the adoption of MGL Chapter 48 Sections 59B, 59C and 59D relative to a Reserve Fire Force.**

Chair Davis stated that he hopes that the current administration will adopt the position of the previous administration to discontinue the use of the reserve list. Chair Davis told the committee that if the administration does not submit this item by the next City Council meeting, he will submit an order to do so.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**212810: That the City Solicitor re-submit the request to rescind of the adoption of MGL Chapter 147 Sections 11, 12 and 13 relative to a Reserve Police Force.**

Chair Davis stated that he hopes that the current administration will adopt the position of the previous administration to discontinue the use of the reserve list. Chair Davis told the committee that if the administration does not submit this item by the next City Council meeting, he will submit an order to do so.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**Discussion/update:**

**212811: That the City Solicitor draft language to change all pronouns in the city's ordinances to gender-neutral.**

Chair Davis commented on the difficulty experienced in trying to accomplish this. He asked that Assistant City Solicitor Shapiro contact him to discuss this item.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**212814: Proposing an ordinance that would require the Mayor to annually submit to this Council a report on the status of housing.**

Chair Davis stated that the prior administration wanted to take a closer look at this item to determine what could be done. Director Sahni had no additional information on this and welcomed any requests for more detailed information from the administration. Chair Davis asked that the administration inform the committee what can and can't be done and take steps to move this along. Councilor Ewen-Campen noted

that it's difficult to get the number of new bedrooms in the city and he would like the administration to provide that data.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

**212815: That this Council consider passage of a Home Rule Petition enabling a "right to charge," similar to HD4109 or Chapter 370 of the Acts of 2018, ensuring that tenants are provided access to charging stations.**

Chair Davis gave a brief history on this item and then asked the original sponsor, Councilor Scott, to speak on it. Councilor Scott noted that this is relevant with the increase in electric vehicles and the charging problems they pose. This proposal is a Somerville version of a bill, (HD4109), before the state legislature. Its purpose is to draft guidelines for installing charging stations and how associations would manage those installations. He pointed out that 80% of the residents in his district are renters and some landlords might not want a charging station hooked up to the common electrical circuit and this petition would provide guidelines and permissible ways to install a station. The problem that's trying to be solved is to provide a pathway to getting charging stations installed in instances where a lease or condo agreement might not allow it. Councilor Burnley noted that there are many in the community who have issues with cars and parking, and he sees this as a way to cut down on pollution. Councilor Ewen-Campen asked that an update be provided on the status of this technology to put this item into context. Director Sahni asked if consideration has been given to the city's older housing stock with regard to electrical capacity and Chair Davis stated that changes could be made during the process of drafting the petition. Director Sahni will meet with the city's Office of Sustainability and Environment to discuss this issue.

**RESULT:**

**KEPT IN COMMITTEE**