



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council Housing and Community Development Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

6:00 PM

The meeting took place virtually via GoToWebinar and was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chair Strezo and adjourned at 6:37 PM on a roll call vote of 2 in favor (Councilors Clingan and Strezo), none against and one absent, (Councilor Pineda Neufeld, who is out on maternity leave).

Others present:

Hannah Carrillo – Legislative Liaison, Peter Forcellese - Legislative Clerk.

Chair Strezo announced that due to the ending of the COVID epidemic, the Committee will be receiving quarterly, rather than monthly, reports on housing stability matters.

Roll Call

Present: Chairperson Kristen Strezo and Jesse Clingan

Absent: Vice Chair Judy Pineda Neufeld

Committee
Minutes
(ID # [23-0338](#))

Approval of the Minutes of the Housing and Community Development Committee Meeting of March 1, 2023.

RESULT: **ACCEPTED**

AYE: Chairperson Strezo and Ward Four City Councilor Clingan

ABSENT: Vice Chair Pineda Neufeld

Order
(ID # [23-0274](#))

By Councilor Strezo

That the Director of Health and Human Services create and distribute an outgoing participation survey for participants of the Teen Snow Shoveling program.

Liaison Carrillo had no update on this item. Councilor Clingan commented that many teens signed up for the program, but due to the low amount of snow this season, data isn't significant.

RESULT: **KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

Order
(ID # [23-0483](#))

By Councilor Gomez Mouakad

That the Director of Parks and Recreation explain the wait list process for enrollment in Parks and Recreation programs.

No staff was present to discuss this item.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

Order
(ID # [23-0482](#))

By Councilor Gomez Mouakad, Councilor Burnley Jr., Councilor Clingan, Councilor Davis, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Kelly, Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor Scott, Councilor Strezo and Councilor Wilson

That the Director of Parks and Recreation consider opening the Ginny Smithers Pool on Sundays to expand swim lesson opportunities, including consideration of engaging an outside vendor or organization to provide the swim lessons.

Liaison Carrillo had no update on this item.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

Order
(ID # [22-1567](#))

By Councilor Strezo, Councilor Kelly, Councilor Wilson, Councilor Pineda Neufeld and Councilor Burnley Jr.

That the Director of Human Resources discuss the possibility of modernizing crossing guard positions to attract candidates and increase hiring.

The PTA Council has made a recommendation to the administration regarding modernizing crossing guard positions. Chair Strezo feels that modernization might include other duties, such as acting as support staff in the schools. Liaison Carrillo commented that negotiations are presently underway and that the conversations in this committee have led to outreach by the Human Resources Department, adding that the administration recognizes the urgency of the matter. Chair Strezo inquired about further conversations regarding crossings at state roads and whether the state would be able to staff those locations.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

Order
(ID # [22-1826](#))

By Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Burnley Jr., Councilor Clingan, Councilor Davis, Councilor Gomez Mouakad, Councilor Kelly, Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Pineda Neufeld, Councilor Scott, Councilor Strezo and Councilor Wilson

That the Director of Economic Development update this Council on progress toward a Task Force for creation of a Community Center.

Chair Strezo commented that there is still a huge drive for a community center. Liaison Carrillo reaffirmed that community spaces investment was included in the Capital Improvement Plan. A community process will be undertaken to receive public input as the project begins to take shape. As this is a long term project, Liaison Carrillo stated that this will take some time to accomplish. She will provide an update at the next committee meeting.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

Order
(ID # [23-0648](#))

By Councilor McLaughlin

That the Director of Inspectional Services and the Director of the Office of Housing Stability meet with this Council to discuss strategies to identify new housing construction and renovation that may lead to displacement of tenants.

Liaison Carrillo stated that she has not yet had the opportunity to speak with ISD or Housing Stability staff. She also said that this item goes along with the city's request for a right to purchase authorization. Without that authorization, she believes that this would be difficult to accomplish. She thinks that an earlier mechanism may be needed to inform the city prior to permits being issued.

Councilor Clingan commented that most renovations are done by right and by the time larger renovations get to the Council, it may be too late to prevent displacement. He wondered if keeping an eye on the real estate market might be a way to get ahead of the situation.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE