



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

January 11, 2011

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Maryann M. Heuston	Chair	Present	
William A. White Jr.	Vice Chair	Absent	
John M Connolly	Alderman At Large	Present	
Rebekah L. Gewirtz	Ward Six Alderman	Absent	
Thomas F. Taylor	Ward Three Alderman	Present	
Omar Boukili	Administrative Assistant	Present	
Jessie Baker	Personnel	Present	
Sarah Kloos	Personnel	Present	
Gregory Jenkins	Arts Council	Present	
Keith Craig	OSPCD	Present	
Stephanie Hirsch	SomerPromise	Present	
Matthew Dias	Traffic and Parking	Present	
Damon Luloff	SomerPromise	Present	
Michael Cabral	Deputy Chief of Police	Present	
Thomas Pasquarello	Chief of Police	Present	
Doug Willardson	Finance	Present	
John Crooks		Present	
Frank Wright	City Solicitor	Present	
Kevin Kelleher	Chief Fire Engineer	Present	

190161 - Transferring \$30,000 from the DPW B&G Electricity Acct. to the Law Dept. Judgments/Settlement of Claims Acct.:

Mr. Wright explained that this amount would be taken from surplus funds and used to reimburse the Law Department for a settlement payment that was made on behalf of the DPW.

RESULT: APPROVED

190235 - Requesting approval to declare as Surplus Equipment a 1989 fire pumper in the Fire Dept.:

RESULT: APPROVED

190236 - Requesting acceptance of a grant of \$39,343 from the US Dept. of Justice's Justice Assistance Grant Program for the Police Dept. to purchase equipment.:

RESULT: APPROVED

190237 - Requesting acceptance of a grant of \$5,222 from Federal Realty Investment Trust for Police expenses associated with the Riverfest Fireworks on Sept. 25.:

RESULT: APPROVED

190279 - Requesting approval for a \$7,500 grant from the MA Cultural Council to the Somerville Arts Council.:

RESULT: APPROVED

190280 - Requesting approval for a grant for \$ 25,890 from the MA Cultural Council for the Somerville Arts Council.:

RESULT: APPROVED

190281 - Requesting approval for \$4,500 grant from the MA Cultural Council to the Somerville Arts Council.:

RESULT: APPROVED

190287 - Requesting approval of a contract for five years with incoming Police Chief Thomas Pasquarello.:

This item is before the Finance Committee because it is a five year contract. Mr. Wright explained that the committee only has the authority to vote on accepting or denying the contract. The Board of Aldermen has the authority to confirm or deny the appointment and also has approval of any monetary expenditures. The terms of the contract are the responsibility of the executive officer, i.e., the mayor.

Alderman Taylor went on record stating that he believes that the Police Chief's salary is too high and that the contract should be for three years, rather than five. Chairman Heuston noted that if the contract were for three years the BOA would not have the opportunity to review it at all since City Ordinance stipulates the BOA has a vote on contracts of 5 years or more. Chairman Heuston

noted that at Confirmation of Appointments Committee meetings, there is essentially a vote to “hire” taken, but contracts and salaries are not voted on. Since the contract was sent to the BOA after a vote to hire, any oversight of the Board of Aldermen is limited. Chairman Heuston noted that the contract does stipulate that the BOA has approval over any increase to salary related to a merit review and that any reduction in salary to the city’s non-union management staff would include this position as well.

RESULT: APPROVED

190327 - Requesting approval to declare a 1994 Ford Crown Victoria in the Fire Dept. as a Surplus Vehicle.:

RESULT: APPROVED

190348 - Requesting Approval to Establish a Private-Purpose Trust Fund for the Activities of the SomerPromise Program:

Ms. Hirsch told the members that the overall program has been in the planning phase for the past 6 months and that it's now at the point where funding is needed to move it forward. Funds would be solicited by the city from private sources.

The committee requested a legal opinion and an explanation of the differences between trust funds and revolving accounts, especially since the Board of Aldermen has oversight of revolving accounts. If it is determined that a trust fund, rather than a revolving account, must be established, then the committee requested that it be created in such a way as to provide the Board of Aldermen with oversight powers.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

190385 - Requesting the creation of the Rockwell Restaurant Group Stabilization Fund and acceptance of a mitigation payment to the fund of \$9,015 from the Rockwell Restaurant Group, to purchase a multi-spaced parking meter.:

Mr. Dias explained that the payment is the result of a condition placed on the Rockwell Restaurant Group by the ZBA last February.

RESULT: APPROVED

190455 - Requesting a transfer of \$15,341 from the Computer Equipment Acct. to the IT Capital Outlay Acct. to purchase a Voice Recorder System for the Police Dept.:

Deputy Chief Cabral explained that the funds are being requested to update the phone system at the police station to allow for the recording and playback of calls.

RESULT: APPROVED

190545 - Requesting a transfer of \$45,000 from the Salary Contingency Acct. to the Police Other Lump Sum Benefits Acct. to fund the Early Retirement Incentive Program for Police Superiors.:

Ms. Baker told the members that a retirement incentive agreement was made between the city and the Police Superior Officers Union as a cost saving measure. Thirty three individuals were eligible for the incentive and three took advantage of it. Each of three individuals will receive a payment of \$15,000 as a retirement incentive. The funds would come from the city's salary contingency account, which is currently has a balance of \$150,000.

Deputy Chief Cabral spoke about the request and distributed information on the department's salary projections, essentially offering a scenario that allows for these three retirements, provides for promotions to fill those vacancies and increases the number of patrolmen, bringing the department's staffing level to the FY-11 budgeted number of 93. The department is anticipating the receipt of a \$180,000 grant and expects to end FY-11 in the black. The committee requested additional information explaining the funding outlined in the projections.

The committee noted that there needs to be better communication between the Administration and the Board of Aldermen with respect to financial matters, especially during these austere times, and also directed that a representative of the Finance Department be present at the January 13th BOA meeting to respond to any questions.

RESULT: APPROVED

190546 - Requeusting approval to enter into a lease agreement with Zipcar Inc. for 14 City parking spaces for a term of 3 years with two one-year options to renew.:

Mr. Craig spoke about the lease for Zipcar parking spaces and stated that it includes an additional six spaces, bringing the total to fourteen. The committee questioned what safeguards were in place to protect the city in the event that one or more of the spaces was on property that was going to be developed or that had a change in its use. Mr. Craig will check with OSPCD's legal counsel and report back to the committee.

RESULT: KEPT IN COMMITTEE

190548 - Requesting acceptance of a 2010 All Traffic Solutions, Variable Message Board Trailer, valued at \$17,208, from the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant, for the Police Dept.:

RESULT: APPROVED

190594 - Requesting the transfer of \$16,591 from the Workers Compensation Personal Services Acct. to the Somerstat Professional Services Acct. to procure training services for the LeaderSTAT Program.:

Ms. Kloos stated that the funds would be used to pay for the consultant's contract through the end of FY-11. The committee requested a breakdown of all associated costs and a copy of the consultant's resume.

RESULT: APPROVED

190614 - Requesting approval to expend a grant of \$10,000 from the American Health Association/American Stroke Association to the Health Dept. to promote physical activity and heart-healthy living.:

RESULT: APPROVED

190615 - Requesting approval to expend a grant of \$2,000 from the MA Region 4B Emergency Preparedness Office to the Health Dept. to support emergency preparedness.:

RESULT: APPROVED