



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

October 25, 2018
REPORT OF THE RULES SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
William A. White Jr.	Chair	Present	
Lance L. Davis	Vice Chair	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	Alderman at Large	Present	

Others present: John Long - City Clerk, Peter Forcellese - Legislative Clerk.

The meeting took place in the Committee Room and was called to order at 6:15 PM by Chairman White and adjourned at 6:40 PM.

Approval of the February 7, 2018 Minutes

RESULT:	ACCEPTED
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205458: That this Board implement procedures to reduce the amount of paper generated for Board and Committee purposes, including upgraded software and monitors in the Aldermanic Chambers and a "no print unless requested" policy.

Alderman Davis commented that the new computers installed in the Aldermen's Chamber has helped to reduce paper use and that he would like an informal procedure put in place to reduce unnecessary copying and printing of documents.

RESULT:	WORK COMPLETED
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206583: That this Board amend the Rules of the Board as noted in the attached list.

The committee dealt with these five proposed amendments individually, as follows:

Rule 16

This rule has 2 proposed amendments. The first, adding the phrase "...before the Board or a committee of the Board,..." was **Approved**.

The second, adding the phrase “*...be decided by a majority vote of those present and shall...*” was discussed by Alderman Davis, who expressed concern about a simple majority having the ability to end debate by adoption of the previous question on an item. He is considering proposing an amendment to this rule to require a 2/3 vote to end debate, saying that his intent is to not let a bare majority cut off debate on a topic. Chairman White commented that he would oppose such an amendment unless a mechanism is put in place to prevent a filibuster. He suggested that this part of the proposed rule change could be discussed at a Committee of the Whole meeting to allow all aldermen to express their views on the matter. Alderman Davis would like to hear what other aldermen have to say and Alderman Rossetti said that she supports the change and has no problem with this portion remaining in committee, to be discussed by the full BOA when the report of this meeting is presented at the next BOA meeting, therefore, this proposed amendment was **Discharged with No Recommendation.**

Rule 19

The proposed amendment was **Approved.**

Rule 29

Alderman Rossetti commented that this proposal does not allow for a majority of a committee to place an item on a committee agenda. She suggested that all aldermen be apprised of the various ways available to have items included on agendas over a Chairperson’s objection. Chairman White would like to determine how this is handles by Robert’s Rules of Order. Alderman Rossetti will research this matter further. Alderman Davis commented that perhaps language could be added that would permit a committee member to add an item to the agenda of that committee’s next meeting. **This item was Discharged with NO Recommendation.**

Rule 36

The proposed amendment was **Approved.**

Rule 37

The proposed amendment was **Approved.**

RESULT:	APPROVED
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