



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 6, 2022

6:00 PM

This meeting was held via GoToWebinar and was called to order by Chair Wilson at 6:06 pm and adjourned at 6:57 pm. Councilor McLaughlin moved to adjourn, and the motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Others present: Aneesh Sahni - Mayor's Office, Richelle Embree - SPD, Benjamin Bloomenthal - DPW, Jill Lathan - DPW, Karin Carroll - HHS, Rebecca McKeivitz - PSUF, David Shapiro - Solicitor's Office, Christopher Major - Fire, Stephanie Widzowski - Assistant Clerk of Committees.

Roll Call

Present: Judy Pineda Neufeld, Charlotte Kelly, Matthew McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Jefferson Thomas (J.T.) Scott and City Councilor At Large Jake Wilson

Bonding Appropriations

1. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1439](#)) Requesting authorization to borrow \$993,132 in a bond, and to authorization to appropriate the same amount for the General Fund portion of the Clarendon Hills Infrastructure Improvements project.
Chair Wilson said that Dir. Bean would be able to join to discuss this and item 22-1440 at the next Finance meeting.

RESULT: **KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

2. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1440](#)) Requesting authorization to borrow \$662,088 in a bond, and authorization to appropriate the same amount for the Sewer portion of the Clarendon Hills Infrastructure Improvements Project.

RESULT: **KEPT IN COMMITTEE**

Grant Acceptances

3. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1441](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$108,226.71 grant from Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to the Health & Human Services for the Public Health Shared Services Grant.

Dir. Carroll explained that this grant is awarded at the state level to encourage innovation in public health. The award is being issued just for this fiscal year, and just to fund the position of Shared Service Coordinator that will help with data collection and health needs assessment across three communities.

Councilor Kelly asked if all tools for data collection were included in the breakdown of costs. Dir. Carroll said that the original budget had other tools and software in addition to the Service Coordinator position, and also allocated for an epidemiologist position. The communities decided to start

with the coordinator and see if an epidemiologist would be needed after initial work.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld, City Councilor At Large Kelly, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott and City Councilor At Large Wilson

4. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-0477](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a National Park Service Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant of \$750,000, with no new match required, from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA), Division of Conservation Services (DCS) to the Public Space and Urban Forestry Division for the renovation of Conway Park.

Public Space Planner Rebecca McKevitz explained that this item was before the Council in July and is reappearing due to a procedural error. The original document was based on an outdated template that the state had since updated. Councilor Kelly asked if the grant application had already been approved, to which the answer was yes.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld, City Councilor At Large Kelly, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott and City Councilor At Large Wilson

5. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1420](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$24,500 grant with no new match required, from State E911 to the Police Department for E911 emergency medical dispatch services.

Taken together with items 22-1421 and 22-1422. Councilor Kelly asked for a breakdown of how much overtime is used for trainings. Dir. Embree said that there is usually a mix of regular time and overtime, but would get a formal breakdown for Councilor Kelly. Councilor Scott asked for clarification that these grants are not connected to UASI or DHS; Dir. Embree said they are not.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld, City Councilor At Large Kelly, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott and City Councilor At Large Wilson

6. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1421](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$295,463 grant with no new match required, from State E911 to the Police Department for E911 Telecommunicator personnel costs.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED

AYE: Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld, City Councilor At Large Kelly, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott and City Councilor At Large Wilson

7. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1422](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$104,951.96 grant with no new match required, from State E911 to the Police Department for E911 Training and Certification of 911 Telecommunicators.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED

AYE: Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld, City Councilor At Large Kelly, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott and City Councilor At Large Wilson

Prior Year Invoices

8. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-0432](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$357,881.73 using available funds in the Department Public Works Administrative, Highway, and Sanitation Accounts for the purposes of resolving outstanding invoices.

Dir. Bloomenthal described three action items within this request. For the work within the Highway division, the vendor continued to deliver cement after funding was exhausted. In multiple instances, DPW asked the vendors if there were additional invoices and were told that there were not, only to have more invoices materialize later.

Councilor Scott asked if there was a legal issue with the Clean Earth invoices. Dir. Bloomenthal said that an attorney had contacted DPW on behalf of Clean Earth to seek collections. Dir. Bloomenthal brought the letter to the City Solicitor, who responded on behalf of the city to say the invoices would appear before the Finance Committee. Councilor Scott also asked about concrete for sidewalk repair in his ward, to which Dir. Lathan replied that the invoices need to be paid before Somerville can receive more concrete from the vendor.

RESULT: RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED

AYE: Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld, City Councilor At Large Kelly, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott and City Councilor At Large Wilson

9. Mayor's Request (ID # [22-1438](#)) Requesting approval to pay a prior year invoice totaling \$29,820 using available funds in the Law Department Outside Legal Counsel Services Account for Legal Services.

Solicitor Shapiro said that this invoice was received after the close of the fiscal year and that they have an existing PO of about \$18,000. Councilor Scott commented on the heavy redactions in the document, to which Solicitor Shapiro said that the labor counsel's advice contains nuance that

the city typically would redact.

Councilor Kelly commented that the overall cost of this invoice would pay for half a year of in-house work. Chair Wilson asked if outside counsel had taken from the Law Department's budget. Solicitor Shapiro said that their budget is fine as of now, but they will probably come back before the Council eventually.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld, City Councilor At Large Kelly, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott and City Councilor At Large Wilson

10. Mayor's Request
(ID # [22-1433](#))

Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$207.69 using available funds in the Fire Department and Vehicle Repairs Account for the purchase of automotive parts.

Taken together with item 22-1434. Assistant Chief Major said that the invoices were originally sent to DPW and that by the time they received it, the fiscal year had passed. They spoke with the vendor, who should now know to send the invoices to the correct department.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld, City Councilor At Large Kelly, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott and City Councilor At Large Wilson

11. Mayor's Request
(ID # [22-1434](#))

Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$60.06 using available funds in the Fire Department and Vehicle Repairs Account for supplies for the repair shop.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld, City Councilor At Large Kelly, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott and City Councilor At Large Wilson

12. Mayor's Request
(ID # [22-1437](#))

Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$371.24 using available funds in the Health and Human Service Professional and Technical Account for Service Labor Cost for Mobile Market Van.

Dir. Carroll said that the invoice was not for the van, but for yearly maintenance of a walk-in refrigerator.

RESULT: **RECOMMENDED TO BE APPROVED**

AYE: Ward Seven City Councilor Pineda Neufeld, City Councilor At Large Kelly, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, Ward Two City Councilor Scott and City Councilor At Large Wilson