



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
CLERK OF COMMITTEES

June 10, 2020
REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING AS A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jefferson Thomas ("J.T.") Scott	Chair	Present	
Katjana Ballantyne	Vice Chair	Present	
William A. White Jr.	City Councilor At Large	Present	
Mary Jo Rossetti	City Councilor at Large	Present	
Wilfred N. Mbah	City Councilor at Large	Present	
Matthew McLaughlin	Ward One City Councilor	Present	
Ben Ewen-Campen	Ward Three City Councilor	Present	
Jesse Clingan	Ward Four City Councilor	Present	
Mark Niedergang	Ward Five City Councilor	Present	
Lance L. Davis	Ward Six City Councilor	Present	
Kristen Strezo	City Councilor at Large	Present	

Others present: Annie Connor-Mayor's Office, Alex Lessin-Water & Sewer, Mike Mastrobuoni-SomerStat, and Khushbu Webber-Mayor's Office

210035: That the Director of Finance update this Council on all money received to date related to the COVID-19 situation.

Mr. Bean was not present to update the committee on this item.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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210036: That the Director of Finance update this Council on all expenditures, encumbrances and anticipated expenses to date related to the COVID-19 situation.

Mr. Bean was not present to update the committee on this item.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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210117: That the Director of Finance provide a written rolling cash flow analysis every 2 weeks during this COVID-19 emergency and include forecasts to ensure sufficient operating liquidity by estimating the available cash deposits, expected inflows, and

required disbursements.

Mr. Bean was not present to update the committee on this item.

RESULT:

KEPT IN COMMITTEE

201740: Proposing an ordinance relative to a mid-fiscal year report of municipal finances, with next-fiscal year budget projections.

Items 201740 and 209789 were discussed together.

The chair opened the meeting stating that this is an overview of the online software that will be used to present the budget to the committee and public. Additionally, after the presentation there will be a discussion about when to expect the budget.

Mr. Mastrobuoni walked through the online presentation of the budget Open Gov portal. The demonstration showed FY21 splash page and what will come up in the next week or so. This early preview of information is to get the city ready and is scheduled to send the budget to the councilors on 6/18 or 6/19 as a PDF. The FY21 budget table is located at the link <http://somervillema.opengov.com/transparency> which will bring you to the transparency portal with data that is live now. There is a tutorial with preloaded sets of filters. Every department is listed. There are columns with accepted budget for FY20 and proposed budget for FY21. Mr. Mastrobuoni suggested opening the link in Chrome for easier use. Budget tables are broken into Personal Service and Ordinary Maintenance, with how much has been spent from last year's budget compared to this year's budget. This software will give the city the ability to track back any changes with many years of budget details.

Councilor Rossetti inquired if the FY21 numbers on the Personal Services line will show the reason for reductions. Mr. Mastrobuoni stated there will be a narrative detailing reduction on FY21.

Chair Scott asked where to find list of salaries with changes from previous years which will be located on the departmental section. Councilor Rossetti and others asked for hardcopies of the budget for the Friday, June 19th meeting. It was stated the School department budget is not ready yet and will be finished in time for the city to submit the budget on Friday, June 19th.

Mr. Mastrobuoni showed a splash page for the FY21 budget and stated the appropriations summary which will be on the splash page for the final submission. He will also make a view for the councilors to see all departments together.

The instructions on the city's budget is located at <https://stories.opengov.com/somervillema/published/eOBzlvXVg> and will be on city's website with all hyperlinks.

Councilor Ballantyne asked a question about the splash page if it will be in the same order as paper budget. She also asked for the splash page to be organized in alphabetical order by departments to make it easier for constituents and residents to find the various depts.

Councilor Clingman asked if the employee names will be put back into the budget this year. Mr. Mastrobuoni stated he is committed to providing all public employee information needed in a separate file.

Mr. Mastrobuoni sent a memo putting Professional and Technical line items on one sheet along with a vacancy report. The city's auditing department will update city spending report year to date at last possible time to provide current information.

Mr. Mastrobuoni asked how the councilors would like to handle the requests to the departments and how the departments should prepare for the budget hearing.

Chair Scott stated the councilors will receive a draft of transfer for the Enterprise and Revolving budgets tomorrow night. Mr. Mastrobuoni stated he plans to have the budget pages up on Monday with the best-case scenario to have salary lines available 6/15 and budget 6/19. Enterprise, Revenue and CPA budgets will be available next week.

Councilor Niedergang expressed a concern about having the meeting on Friday, June 19 since Saturday night Shabbat starts at 8:07 and would prefer to start the meeting at 5:30 or 6. Chair Scott stated that the first night of the budget meeting would be a presentation from the mayor.

Mr. Mastrobuoni stated he anticipates the first night of the presentation will have a focus on the revenues, projects made and strategies of where to cut and save on the budget. This presentation may not be as long as previous meetings.

Councilor Rossetti asked if the councilors are to receive a full 12-month budget or vote a one-month budget to give them time to review the other 11 months. Ms. Connor stated the city is evaluating the possibility of providing a continuing appropriation option and working on what the impact would be in this case. Councilor Rossetti urged the administration to carry over to the month of July to have a proper public hearing with the public and vote sometime in July.

Chair Scott stated President McLaughlin sent him an email from State Rep Christine Barber that enables municipalities to more easily engage in 1/12 budgets. Chair Scott will send a copy of the email to the city councilors and will attach to the minutes.

President McLaughlin agreed with Councilor Rossetti and Chair Scott that a week is not long enough to review the budget and want the committee to be comfortable with their votes on the budget and not be rushed.

Chair Scott asked Councilor White about information from Mr. Bean, asking how a 1/12 budget would impact engaging with contracts. Chair Scott received an email from Ms. Connor that was distributed from Mr. Bean from DOR. This email details the current legislature DOR guidance from 2019 with information that will be helpful overall. Mr. Bean is expecting guidance from the DOR in the coming days. Chair Scott asked if a 1/12 budget is being prepared by the city. Ms. Connor stated they are working on putting something together and are having the departments also look at this matter.

Chair Scott anticipates holding one or more meetings next week to provide feedback on the budget. He asked President McLaughlin if there are any days to avoid. President McLaughlin stated the committee could have meetings on 6/16 for Revolving and Enterprise funds and that 6/17 is a holiday. Councilor Davis stated he will be canceling PHPS on 6/15.

Councilor Ballantyne asked if all meetings will be committee of the whole or just committee meetings. Chair Scott stated the earliest for the public hearing would be 6/24 and 6/25 would be a city council meeting and the council could meet again on Monday, June 29th. Chair Scott would like to go through as much as possible as a committee meeting and then have a full

council meeting about the budget later. There will be four meetings to go through the budget, unless go into July.

Councilor Rossetti stated she is available on 6/16 and she will be attending a high school construction meeting on 6/15 which starts at 5:30.

Both Councilor Davis and Councilor Ewen-Campen supported the plan for the finance committee to review the budget as suggested by the chair.

Councilor Strezo stated she is happy to clear her schedule and attend all meetings.

Councilor Niedergang agree that finance should meet as a committee, not as a whole. He also suggested maybe daytime meetings since people are around due to Coronavirus. It was stated that several councilors have work and other commitments during the day.

Councilor Ballantyne stated she feels the time is too short receiving budget on 6/19 and should have a contingency plan that may need to go into July, which could be a 1/12 month budget.

Councilor Mbah also suggested working on 1/12 budget for July 1.

Councilor Clingan made a comment that he trusts the finance committee to review the budget.

Councilor Niedergang asked if the Administration submits a 1/12 budget, does that require city council approval. Chair Scott stated its subject to city council approval.

President McLaughlin will schedule a special meeting for Friday, June 19. Additionally, the public hearing and cut night should be a committee of the whole. Any department that may be controversial should plan to be available for the meeting.

Chair Scott would like to have the public hearing on 6/23 or 24. He asked the law department about public hearing notices. It was stated one public hearing is required and can have multiple public hearing. Additionally, a notification of 7 days for public hearing would be 6/24 if the notice went out on 6/17.

Councilor White stated that Councilor Rossetti previously stated we do not need to have a public hearing only if a petition is submitted. It was stated that Assistant Solicitor Philips stated statute Chapter 40 section 32A Publication of ordinances requiring newspaper advertisement.

Councilor White asked Ms. Connor to send a memo to the finance committee once Mr. Bean receives the guidelines from the DOR.

President McLaughlin stated he did create the committee so there would be very little overlap for other committees and other committees can still get work done while the finance meeting is going through the budget.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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209789: That this Council's Committee on Finance discuss the peoples' budget and priorities for FY21.

Items 201740 and 209789 were discussed together.

RESULT:	KEPT IN COMMITTEE
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Handouts:

- FY21 Unofficial Budget Memo (with 209789)
- DOR Budget questions (with 201740, 209789)