



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

City Council

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 10, 2026

7:00 PM

NOTICE: This is NOT the official version of the City Council's minutes. While reasonable efforts have been made to assure the accuracy of the data provided, do not rely on this information without first checking with the City Clerk.

1. OPENING CEREMONIES

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM by Ward Six City Councilor Lance L. Davis.

The City Council entered recess at 7:17 PM and returned at 7:18 PM.

The City Council entered recess at 7:45 PM and returned at 7:47 PM.

The City Council entered Executive Session at 8:05 PM and returned at 9:22PM.

- 1.1. Roll Call Call of the Roll.
(ID # [26-1370](#))

RESULT: **PLACED ON FILE**

Present: Ward Three City Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen
City Councilor At Large Jon Link
Ward Two City Councilor Jefferson Thomas (J.T.) Scott
Ward Four City Councilor Jesse Clingan
City Councilor At Large Kristen Strezo
Ward Five City Councilor Naima Sait
City Councilor At Large Ben Wheeler
Ward Seven City Councilor Emily Hardt
Ward One City Councilor Matthew McLaughlin
City Councilor At Large Wilfred N. Mbah
Ward Six City Councilor Lance L. Davis

- 1.2. Remembrances Remembrances.
(ID # [26-1371](#))

Councilor Mbah and Clingan requested a moment of silence in memory of Vijendra Kumar Pradhan.
Councilor Strezo requested a moment of silence in memory of Mary Bedard.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

- 1.3. Minutes Approval of the Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of July 9,
(ID # [26-1372](#)) 2026.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

2. CITATIONS

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS**4. ORDERS, ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS OF MEMBERS**

- 4.1. Resolution (ID # [26-1217](#)) By Councilor McLaughlin, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Davis, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Hardt, Councilor Link, Councilor Mbah, Councilor Sait, Councilor Scott, Councilor Strezo and Councilor Wheeler Recognizing the seriousness of myotonic dystrophy and expressing support for the designation of September 15, as “International Myotonic Dystrophy Awareness Day”.

Discussed with item # 26-1366.

Councilor McLaughlin sponsored Jim Nolan to speak. Mr. Nolan spoke about being misdiagnosed for a number of years and noted that the symptoms are not the same for everyone. He mentioned that there is no treatment or cure available to those afflicted with this illness and he thanked the Council for calling attention to this disease and for raising awareness about it.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 4.2. Resolution (ID # [26-1359](#)) By Councilor Clingan In support of striking Encore Boston Harbor workers.

Councilor Clingan spoke about visiting the picket line and stated that he stands with Encore workers, many of whom live in Somerville. Councilor Clingan sponsored James Atkins and Fred Sanchez to speak. Mr. Atkins spoke about the difficulty of earning a decent wage at Encore and noted that there are 1,300 workers on strike. Mr. Sanchez Vasquez commented that the striking workers are asking to be paid according to the value of their work. Councilors Ewen-Campen, McLaughlin, Link, Scott, Mbah, Sait and Wheeler spoke in support of the workers.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 4.3. Resolution (ID # [26-1360](#)) By Councilor Clingan That the Director of Engineering and the Commissioner of Public Works discuss with the Committee on Public Utilities and Public Works the City’s current requirements for restoration of streets following utility and other permitted excavations, including whether the City has the authority and ability to require full-lane, expanded, or curb-to-curb restoration on streets that have passed the five-year street opening moratorium but remain in good condition.

Discussed with item # 26-1361.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION

FOLLOWUP: Sustainability and Infrastructure Committee4.4. Resolution
(ID # [26-1361](#))

By Councilor Clingan

That the Director of Engineering and Commissioner of Public Works discuss with the Committee on Public Utilities and Public Works the feasibility of establishing a Street Preservation Offset Fee or similar pavement-degradation fee, modeled on programs such as Cambridge's, to help offset the City's costs associated with utility and other excavations in public streets.

Discussed with item # 26-1360.

Councilor Clingan spoke about the city's street opening policy and suggested that Somerville implement a program, like Cambridge has, whereby utility companies are charged a fee to assist with costs associated with excavations of public streets.

RESULT: **APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION****FOLLOWUP:** Sustainability and Infrastructure Committee4.5. Resolution
(ID # [26-1362](#))

By Councilor Clingan, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Link, Councilor Hardt, Councilor Davis, Councilor Strezo, Councilor Sait, Councilor Mbah, Councilor Wheeler and Councilor Scott

That the Director of Engineering, the Commissioner of Public Works, and the Chief Procurement Officer discuss with the Committee on Public Utilities and Public Works the City's current practices for establishing, monitoring, and enforcing construction timelines for municipal projects, including the use of project milestones, completion deadlines, contractor staffing levels, liquidated damages, and other tools to ensure that projects are completed in a timely manner.

Discussed with item # 26-1363.

Councilor Clingan spoke about the amount of time some projects take and he would like the city to be more proactive in the bidding process to ensure that work gets completed in a timely fashion.

RESULT: **APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION****FOLLOWUP:** Sustainability and Infrastructure Committee4.6. Resolution
(ID # [26-1363](#))

By Councilor Clingan

That the Director of Engineering, the Commissioner of Public Works, and the Chief Procurement Officer explore best practices used by other municipalities and public agencies to encourage timely completion of public construction projects, including performance incentives, liquidated damages, milestone requirements, recovery schedules, and cost-plus-time or "A+B" bidding, and discuss which approaches could be appropriate for Somerville.

Discussed with item # 26-1362.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Sustainability and Infrastructure Committee

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

6.A. FINANCE COMMITTEE

- 6.A.1. Committee Report Report of the Committee on Finance, meeting on September 3, 2026.
(ID # [26-1355](#))

Councilor Wheeler reported that the Finance Committee approved 7 grant acceptances and expenditures, 2 fund transfers, 2 fund appropriations, payment of 1 prior year invoice and the creation of 1 stabilization fund.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.A.2. Mayor's Request Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$65,000 grant with no new match required, from the Mass Department of Mental Health to the Police Department for operational funding for the Metro Boston Crisis Intervention Training and Technical Assistance Center.
(ID # [26-1219](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.A.3. Mayor's Request Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$12,000 grant with no new match required, from the Mass Department of Mental Health to the Police Department to partially fund the operation of the jail/arrest diversion program.
(ID # [26-1220](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.A.4. Mayor's Request Requesting approval of a transfer of \$315,000 from the Sewer Enterprise Debt Service Account to the Morrison Avenue & Greater Davis Square Area Sewer Separation Design Capital Fund to fund required project expenditures.
(ID # [26-1226](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

- 6.A.5. Mayor's Request Requesting approval to use available funds in the Police Salaries account in the amount of \$8,800 to fund Fiscal Year 2027 cost of living increases for the Deputy Chief positions.
(ID # [26-1234](#))

RESULT: APPROVED

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| 6.A.6. Mayor's Request
(ID # 26-1241) | Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$284,700 grant with no new match required, from the Massachusetts Gaming Commission to the Strategy and Development Department for Eastern Washington Street Transit Priority Project.

RESULT: <u>APPROVED</u> |
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| 6.A.7. Mayor's Request
(ID # 26-1242) | Requesting approval to pay a prior year invoice totaling \$3,572 using available funds in the Professional & Technical Services Account for the implementation of ArcGIS Urban module.

RESULT: <u>APPROVED</u> |
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| 6.A.8. Mayor's Request
(ID # 26-1243) | Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$85,933.60 grant with no new match required, from the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization to the Mobility Division for the Bluebikes state of good repair equipment replacement.

RESULT: <u>APPROVED</u> |
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| 6.A.9. Mayor's Request
(ID # 26-1248) | Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$366,729.25 grant with no new match required, from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to the Mobility Division, for new e-bikes, replacement batteries and two new docking stations as a part of the Bluebikes bikeshare system.

RESULT: <u>APPROVED</u> |
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| 6.A.10. Mayor's Request
(ID # 26-1249) | Requesting approval to create the Tufts Street Soil Project Stabilization Fund and accept a payment to the Fund of \$332,497 from the Unifirst Corporation to pay for cleanup and soil disposal costs associated with remediation work at 50 Tufts Street.

RESULT: <u>APPROVED</u>

AYE: Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Link, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Wheeler, Ward Seven City Councilor Hardt, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, City Councilor At Large Mbah, and Ward Six City Councilor Davis

ABSENT: City Councilor At Large Strezo |
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| 6.A.11. Mayor's Request
(ID # 26-1250) | Requesting approval to appropriate \$332,497 from the Tufts Street Soil Project Stabilization Fund for remediation efforts at 50 Tufts Street.

RESULT: <u>APPROVED</u> |
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AYE: Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Link, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Wheeler, Ward Seven City Councilor Hardt, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, City Councilor At Large Mbah, and Ward Six City Councilor Davis

ABSENT: City Councilor At Large Strezo

6.A.12. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1255](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$187,200.00 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grant with no new match required, from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to the Public Space and Urban Forestry Division for the Green and Cool Somerville: Sustainable Sidewalk and Tree's project.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.A.13. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1256](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$20,239 grant with no new match required, from the United States Bureau of Justice Assistance to the Police Department for overtime related to the Fédération Internationale de Football Association In World Cup 2026 summer games.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.A.14. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1316](#)) Requesting approval of a transfer of \$60,000 from the DPW-Admin Salaries & Wages Temp Account to the DPW-Admin Professional & Technical Services Account to support temporary clerical staffing.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.B. LAND USE COMMITTEE

6.B.1. Committee Report (ID # [26-1356](#)) Report of the Committee on Land Use, meeting on September 3, 2026.

Councilor Ewen-Campen reported that the Land Use Committee approved the Urban Center Housing Tax Increment Financing (UCH-TIF) Zone, Plan, and Form of Agreement for Assembly Square and East Somerville as well as an amendment to Section 2.1.1 of the Zoning Ordinance regarding Homeless Shelters.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

6.B.2. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-0746](#)) Requesting approval of the Urban Center Housing Tax Increment Financing (UCH-TIF) Zone, Plan, and Form of Agreement for Assembly Square and East Somerville.

RESULT: **APPROVED****AYE:** Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Link, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Wheeler, Ward Seven City Councilor Hardt, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, City Councilor At Large Mbah, and Ward Six City Councilor Davis**ABSENT:** City Councilor At Large Strezo

- 6.B.3. Zoning Ordinance (ID # [26-0835](#)) By Councilor Davis, Councilor Ewen-Campen, Councilor Clingan, Councilor Link, Councilor Mbah, Councilor Hardt, Councilor Sait and Councilor Wheeler
Proposing an amendment to Section 2.1.1 of the Zoning Ordinance regarding Homeless Shelters.

RESULT: **ORDINANCE ORDAINED AS AMENDED****AYE:** Ward Three City Councilor Ewen-Campen, City Councilor At Large Link, Ward Two City Councilor Scott, Ward Four City Councilor Clingan, Ward Five City Councilor Sait, City Councilor At Large Wheeler, Ward Seven City Councilor Hardt, Ward One City Councilor McLaughlin, City Councilor At Large Mbah, and Ward Six City Councilor Davis**ABSENT:** City Councilor At Large Strezo

6.C. SCHOOL BUILDING FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

- 6.C.1. Committee Report (ID # [26-1357](#)) Report of the Committee on School Building Facilities and Maintenance, meeting on September 8, 2026.

Councilor Link reported that the committee discussed custodial staffing, rodent control, temperature control, updates on the Winter Hill School plan, re-use possibilities for the Cummings School building and seeking space for a teen center.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

- 6.C.2. Resolution (ID # [26-0063](#)) By Councilor Link and Councilor Wheeler
That the Commissioner of Public Works and the Director of Engineering explore the feasibility of establishing a teen center at the Cummings School, accessible via School Street, considering current building uses and provide this Council with an analysis on space availability, operational considerations, community impacts, and potential next steps.

RESULT: **WORK COMPLETED**

- 6.C.3. Order
(ID # [26-0839](#))
- By Councilor Link and Councilor McLaughlin
That the Commissioner of Public Works provide an update to this Council on improvements made to custodial staffing at the East Somerville Community School.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

- 6.C.4. Resolution
(ID # [26-1022](#))
- By Councilor Hardt
Recognizing and expressing appreciation to the Department of Public Works, the Department of Health and Human Services Division of Public Health, and the Inspectional Services Department for their work in addressing rodent issues at the West Somerville Neighborhood School.

RESULT: WORK COMPLETED

7. COMMUNICATIONS OF THE MAYOR

- 7.1. Mayor's Request
(ID # [26-1364](#))
- Requesting that this Council convene in Executive Session to receive an update on collective bargaining negotiations.

The Council voted to enter into Executive Session to discuss this matter after being advised by Assistant City Solicitor/Labor Counsel Matthew Sirigu that the item to be discussed meets the criteria set forth in the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

The regular meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM and the members moved into Executive Session.

The regular meeting was reconvened 9:22 PM. President Davis announced that no votes were taken in Executive Session, other than the vote to adjourn.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 7.2. Mayor's Request
(ID # [26-1258](#))
- Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 3.2.17, 4.1.15, 4.2.15, 4.3.15, 4.4.15, 5.1.16, 6.1.13, 6.2.14, 6.3.13, 6.4.16, 6.5.13 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to correct parking maximums.

President Davis waived the readings of items 7.2 and 7.4 through 7.7 and referred them to the Land Use Committee.

Councilor Wheeler asked if these items are being put forth by the Planning and Zoning Department. Councilor Ewen-Campen stated that these items will be referred to the Land Use Committee for a public hearing on October 1st, at which time each item will be explained in detail. Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Amanda Nagim-Williams, explained that a majority of these items are to rectify omissions or to clear up language.

RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION

FOLLOWUP: Land Use Committee

- 7.3. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1259](#)) Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 2.4.4, 3.1.7, 3.1.8, 3.1.9, 3.1.10, 3.1.11, 3.2.7, 3.2.8, 3.2.9, 3.2.10, 3.2.11, 4.1.7, 4.2.7, 4.3.7, 4.4.7 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinances to remove ground story elevation requirements.

Discussed with item # 26-1373.

RESULT: **REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**

FOLLOWUP: Land Use Committee

- 7.4. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1261](#)) Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 3.1.5, 3.2.5, 6.3.5, 6.4.6, 7.3.5, 8.3.6, 10.10.3, 15.2.1, 15.3.2, 15.7.2 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to streamline the jurisdiction of review boards.

President Davis waived the readings of items 7.2 and 7.4 through 7.7 and referred them to the Land Use Committee.

RESULT: **REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**

FOLLOWUP: Land Use Committee

- 7.5. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1336](#)) Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 3.1.3, 3.1.6, 3.1.8, 3.1.9, 3.1.11, 3.1.12, 3.1.13, 3.1.16, 3.2.6 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to align with State Law regarding protected accessory dwelling units.

RESULT: **REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**

FOLLOWUP: Land Use Committee

- 7.6. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1337](#)) Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 2.4.5, 3.1.17, 3.2.16, 4.1.8, 4.1.9, 4.1.14, 4.2.8, 4.2.9, 4.2.14, 4.3.8, 4.3.9, 4.3.14, 4.4.8, 4.4.9, 4.4.15, 5.1.7, 5.1.8, 5.1.9, 5.1.16, 6.1.12, 6.2.7, 6.2.8, 6.2.14, 6.3.12, 6.4.9, 6.4.15, 6.5.7, 7.2.8 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to clarify requirements for principal entrances.

RESULT: **REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**

FOLLOWUP: Land Use Committee

- 7.7. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1338](#)) Requesting ordainment of an amendment to Sections 2.1.1, 2.4.5, 3.1.16, 3.2.8, 3.2.9, 3.2.10, 3.2.11, 3.2.15, 4.1.3, 4.1.7, 4.1.8, 4.1.9, 4.1.10, 4.1.13, 4.2.3, 4.2.7, 4.2.8, 4.2.9, 4.2.10, 4.2.13, 4.3.3, 4.3.7, 4.3.8, 4.3.9, 4.3.10, 4.3.13, 4.4.3, 4.4.7, 4.4.8, 4.4.9, 4.4.13, 5.1.3, 5.1.7, 5.1.8, 5.1.9, 5.1.10, 5.1.11, 5.1.14, 6.1.3, 6.1.7, 6.1.8, 6.1.11, 6.2.3, 6.2.7, 6.2.8, 6.2.9, 6.2.12, 6.3.3, 6.3.8, 6.4.3, 6.4.9, 6.4.11, 6.5.3, 6.5.7, 6.5.8, 6.5.11, 7.2.7, 7.2.10, 7.4.3, 7.4.6, 7.4.7, 7.4.8, 7.4.11, 8.1.1, 8.1.2, 8.1.4, 8.1.5, 8.1.6, 8.2.2, 8.2.4, 8.2.5, 8.4.16, 8.4.17, 8.4.19, 9.1.7, 12.1.1, 12.1.2, 12.1.4, 12.1.5, 12.1.6, 12.1.7, 12.3.5, 12.3.6, 12.3.7 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance to update terminology for affordable dwelling units and commercial spaces.
- President Davis waived the readings of items 7.2 and 7.4 through 7.7 and referred them to the Land Use Committee.
- RESULT:** **REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
FOLLOWUP: Land Use Committee
- 7.8. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1334](#)) Requesting approval to appropriate \$350,000 from the Immigrant Legal Services Stabilization Fund for legal services for immigrants and asylum seekers seeking permanent residency.
- Councilor Wheeler moved to waive the readings of items 7.8 through 7.15 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT:** **REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.9. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1240](#)) Requesting approval to appropriate \$255,045 from the Transportation Network Receipts Reserved Account to the Transportation Network Revolving Account for Fiscal Year 2027 Vision Zero efforts.
- Councilor Wheeler moved to waive the readings of items 7.8 through 7.15 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT:** **REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.10. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1322](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$295,463 grant with no new match required, from the State 911 Department to the Police Department for E911 dispatcher personnel costs.
- Councilor Wheeler moved to waive the readings of items 7.8 through 7.15 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT:** **REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

- 7.11. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1254](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$215,919.15 grant with no new match required, from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to the Health and Human Services Department for a Shared Services Coordinator and a Clinical Community Health Worker.
- Councilor Wheeler moved to waive the readings of items 7.8 through 7.15 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.12. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1323](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$159,754.04 grant with no new match required, from the State 911 Department to the Police Department for training costs for E911 dispatcher certification and recertification.
- Councilor Wheeler moved to waive the readings of items 7.8 through 7.15 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.13. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1320](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$24,500 grant with no new match required, from the State 911 Department to the Police Department for emergency medical dispatch.
- Councilor Wheeler moved to waive the readings of items 7.8 through 7.15 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.14. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1221](#)) Requesting approval to accept and expend a \$9,809.81 grant that requires a match, from the United States Bureau of Justice Assistance to the Somerville Police Department for body armor vests.
- Councilor Wheeler moved to waive the readings of items 7.8 through 7.15 and refer them to the Finance Committee.
- RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 7.15. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1341](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$80,852.95 using available funds in various Department of Public Works accounts for various services.
- Councilor Wheeler moved to waive the readings of items 7.8 through 7.15 and refer them to the Finance Committee.

RESULT: **REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION**
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee

- 7.16. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1271](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoices totaling \$1,687.50 using available funds in the Fire Department Professional and Technical Services Account for medical screening services.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

- 7.17. Mayor's Request (ID # [26-1328](#)) Requesting approval to pay prior year invoice totaling \$19.76 using available funds in the Immigrant Advancement Professional and Technical Services Account for on demand phone interpretation services.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

- 7.18. Withdrawn (ID # [26-1335](#)) Withdrawn.

RESULT: **WITHDRAWN**

- 7.19. Mayor's Communication (ID # [26-1365](#)) Proclaiming that the week of September 10 through September 19, 2026 is Welcoming Week.

Mayor Wilson commented that this is an opportunity to reflect and plan for the next phase of the city's welcoming work. He introduced the Director of the Office of Immigrant Advancement, Maria Teresa Nagel, who spoke about connecting with others.

RESULT: **PLACED ON FILE**

- 7.20. Mayor's Communication (ID # [26-1366](#)) Proclaiming that September 15, 2026 is International Myotonic Dystrophy Awareness Day.

Discussed with item # 26-1217.

Mayor Wilson informed the Council that he has proclaimed September 15, 2026, as International Myotonic Dystrophy Awareness Day to raise awareness about this disease, which affects 1 in 2,100 people in this country, and to encourage continued medical research.

RESULT: **PLACED ON FILE**

- 7.21. Mayor's Communication (ID # [26-1353](#)) Conveying an update on Civilian Oversight.

Jon Hillman, Public Safety for All Project Manager, provided a brief

presentation on the development of Somerville's Civilian Oversight Initiative. The initiative has evolved over more than two decades, beginning with calls from the Human Rights Commission in the early 2000s and gaining momentum in 2020, when the City declared systemic racism a public health emergency. At that time, 81% of surveyed residents expressed support for civilian oversight. Recommendations from community groups and the City Council in 2021 led to the creation of a two-year Civilian Oversight Task Force process, which concluded in 2025 with detailed guidance regarding the mission, role, composition, and implementation of a civilian oversight body. The City is currently reviewing key resources, including the Task Force Report, Racial and Social Justice workshops, City Council analyses, and community policy recommendations. The City is also considering Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission requirements, collective bargaining considerations, policy development steps, and civilian oversight models used in other municipalities. Upcoming milestones include a September 10 overview and bargaining update, a September 24 administration update, a tentative September 29 Legislative Matters discussion, and an October public hearing.

The item was laid on the table to allow item #26-1364, a request to enter into Executive Session, to be taken up. Following the Executive Session, the item was removed from the table for further discussion.

Councilor Ewen-Campen stated that the City needs meaningful civilian oversight of the Police Department, including a significant role in investigations and disciplinary matters. He also noted that an oversight body should have the ability to obtain information and issue subpoenas, as well as make decisions and recommendations based on the information it collects. Councilor Scott noted that civilian oversight has been sought by both the City Council and residents for many years and cautioned against adopting policies that have not been effective in other communities. Councilor Sait stated that the civilian oversight body should have a strong role in disciplinary matters, the ability to conduct parallel investigations into complaints, and access to relevant information and video footage.

Councilor Hardt asked whether all pertinent documents related to civilian oversight could be centralized to make the information easier for the public to access. Mr. Hillman stated that the documents are publicly available and that his department would work to make them available in one location, although he could not provide a specific timeline. President Davis asked to be informed of any obstacles that could prevent the documents from being centralized. Councilor Wheeler stated that civilian oversight should include ongoing review of police policies and practices, have access to funding for investigative support, and provide regular opportunities for collaboration between the oversight body and the Police Department.

Councilor Mbah assumed the Chair to allow President Davis to speak on the

item. Councilor Davis reiterated several points raised by the other Councilors and noted that civilian oversight bodies in other municipalities have, in some cases, not functioned as intended because they lacked sufficient authority or resources. He also stated that, in addition to the responsibilities discussed, there should be a clear process governing when and how information collected by the civilian oversight body would be released to the public. Councilor Davis encouraged members of the public to share their concerns and experiences with the City Council so that their input could be considered in developing the structure of the civilian oversight body.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 7.22. Mayor's
Communication
(ID # [26-1330](#))

Conveying the appointment of Lena Warnke to the Somerville Arts Council Board.

Councilor Mbah moved to waive the readings of items 7.22 through 7.26 and place them on file.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 7.23. Mayor's
Communication
(ID # [26-1331](#))

Conveying the appointment of Josh Breeden to the Somerville Arts Council Board.

Councilor Mbah moved to waive the readings of items 7.22 through 7.26 and place them on file.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 7.24. Mayor's
Communication
(ID # [26-1332](#))

Conveying the appointment of Sharon Lacey to the Somerville Arts Council Board.

Councilor Mbah moved to waive the readings of items 7.22 through 7.26 and place them on file.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 7.25. Mayor's
Communication
(ID # [26-1333](#))

Conveying the appointment of Bess Paupeck to the Somerville Arts Council Board.

Councilor Mbah moved to waive the readings of items 7.22 through 7.26 and place them on file.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 7.26. Mayor's Communication (ID # [26-1367](#)) Conveying the appointment of Christopher Oates to the Ranked Choice Voting Committee.

Councilor Mbah moved to waive the readings of items 7.22 through 7.26 and place them on file.

RESULT: **PLACED ON FILE**

8. COMMUNICATIONS OF CITY OFFICERS

- 8.1. Officer's Communication (ID # [26-1339](#)) Director of Emergency Management conveying the 2025-2026 Cummings School Winter Warming Center After Action Report and Improvement Plan.

Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Amanda Nagim-Williams, explained that the city intends to use the Cummings School building as a warming center for the upcoming winter season and is actively searching for other locations to use in the future. The Administration has submitted a Memorandum of Understanding to the School Committee and looks forward to discussing it with the City Council. Several councilors commented on the previous problems encountered and the time spent in line waiting for access to the warming center.

RESULT: **PLACED ON FILE AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION**

FOLLOWUP: Public Health and Public Safety Committee

- 8.2. Officer's Communication (ID # [26-1352](#)) City Clerk conveying Block Party Licenses issued.

RESULT: **PLACED ON FILE**

9. NEW BUSINESS

- 9.1. Public Event (ID # [26-1349](#)) Theatre@First applying for a Public Event License for Iphigenia by Euripides on various dates between September 26 and October 11 from 3pm to 7:30pm.

Councilor Hardt moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.10 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: **APPROVED**

- 9.2. Public Event (ID # [26-1351](#)) Saint Benedict Parish applying for a Public Event License for Journey to World Youth Day 2027 Fundraiser on September 12 from 11:30am to 2pm (raindate September 19).

Councilor Hardt moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.10 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.3. Public Event
(ID # [26-1348](#))
- Matthew Taylor applying for a Public Event License for 21st Honk! Festival on October 9, 10 & 11 for various times.

Councilor Hardt moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.10 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.4. Public Event
(ID # [26-1346](#))
- Bow Market applying for a Public Event License for Bow Market Renaissance Faire on November 7 from 8am to 8:30pm (raindate November 14).

Councilor Hardt moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.10 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.5. Public Event
(ID # [26-1347](#))
- Somerville Road Runners applying for a Public Event License for 30th Annual Gobble Gobble Gobble Road Race on November 26 from 6am to 1pm.

Councilor Hardt moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.10 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.6. Public Event
(ID # [26-1350](#))
- Mayor's Office applying for a Public Event License for City Hall Truck O' Treat 2026 Spectacular! on October 29 from 4pm to 8pm (raindate November 5).

Councilor Hardt moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.10 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.7. License
(ID # [26-1342](#))
- New Drainlayer's License, Valor Excavation, LLC.

Councilor Hardt moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.10 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 9.8. License
(ID # [26-1343](#))
- New Livery License, Lubana Coach, 2 Snow Terrace, operating 1 vehicle.

Councilor Hardt moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.10 and approve them this evening.

RESULT: APPROVED

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- 9.9. License
(ID # [26-1344](#)) New Second Hand Dealer License, Somerville Communications, 52 Broadway.
Councilor Hardt moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.10 and approve them this evening.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.10. License
(ID # [26-1345](#)) Renewing Taxi Medallion License, Country Club Transportation Inc, Med. #3,4,5,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,46.
Councilor Hardt moved to waive the readings of items 9.1 through 9.10 and approve them this evening.
RESULT: APPROVED
- 9.11. Public Communication
(ID # [26-1368](#)) Bruce Schulman submitting comments re: snow emergencies.
RESULT: PLACED ON FILE
- 9.12. Public Communication
(ID # [26-1369](#)) Marianne Walles submitting comments re: item #26-1268, comments related to Zoning Ordinance Sections 3.1.7c, 3.1.8c, 3.1.9c, 3.1.10c, 3.1.11c, 3.1.15a.i, 3.2.7c, 3.2.8c, 3.2.9c, 3.2.10c, 3.2.11c, 4.1.7c, 4.2.7c, 4.3.7c, 4.4.7c.
RESULT: PLACED ON FILE AND SENT FOR DISCUSSION
FOLLOWUP: Land Use Committee
- 10. SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS**
- 10.1. Zoning Ordinance
(ID # [26-1373](#)) By Councilor Link
That Section 3.1.7.c of the Zoning Ordinances be amended as detailed within.
Discussed with item # 26-1259.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Land Use Committee
- 10.2. Mayor's Request
(ID # [26-1354](#)) Requesting approval to enter into lease agreements with various tenants to provide commercial arts space at the Somerville Armory Building, 191 Highland Avenue.
RESULT: REFERRED FOR RECOMMENDATION
FOLLOWUP: Finance Committee
- 10.3. Public Event
(ID # [26-1379](#)) Veteran Services applying for a Public Event License for 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony on September 11 from 5:30pm to 7:30pm.
-

RESULT: APPROVED

- 10.4. Public Event
(ID # [26-1377](#)) Junkyard LLC applying for a Public Event License for Junkyard Davis Square on September 19 from 10am to 11:30pm.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 10.5. License
(ID # [26-1375](#)) New Drainlayer's License, Knight Excavation Co. Inc.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 10.6. License
(ID # [26-1376](#)) New Second Hand Dealer License, The Heartland Roadshow, 30 Washington Street.

RESULT: APPROVED

- 10.7. Public
Communication
(ID # [26-1374](#)) President of Tufts University submitting comments re: #26-1302, in support of a fair and dignified resolution for an international graduate student at Tufts University.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

11. LATE ITEMS

- 11.1 Resolution
(ID # [26-1388](#)) Councilor Ewen-Campen resignation.

Councilor Ewen-Campen informed the Council that he has submitted his letter of resignation from the City Council, effective December 31, 2026, to the City Clerk and he asked President Davis to submit an order for the next City Council meeting calling for a special election to fill the seat being vacated.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

- 11.2 Resolution
(ID # [26-1389](#)) Councilor Scott resignation.

Councilor Scott informed the Council that he, also, will be resigning from the City Council, effective December 31, 2026, and he asked President Davis to submit an order for the next City Council meeting calling for a special election to fill the seat being vacated.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was Adjourned at 10:44 PM.