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April 6, 2009

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance convened on April 6, 2009, with Chairman Maryann Heuston presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Bruce Desmond, John Connolly and Walter Pero also present and voting. Also present were Alderman Rebekah Gewirtz, School Committeeman Mary Jo Rossetti, Administrative Assistant Jessie Baker, DPW Commissioner Stan Koty, Purchasing Director Roistha Durham, Deputy Police Chief Paul Upton, Elizabeth Craveiro, Monica Lamboy, Jerry Boyle and Matt Diaz from SPCD, Election Commissioner Nick Salerno, Director of Traffic and Parking James Kotzuba, Matt Diaz from Auditing, Mark Levy and Diane DeAngelis from Assessing, Solicitor John Gannon, Library Director Nancy Milnor, City Clerk John Long, Dave Sloney from IT, Personnel Director Richard Tranfaglia and Finance Director Ed Bean.

The committee discussed the Mayor's FY-09 Budget Reversion Plan. Mr. Bean informed the members that due to local aid cutbacks made by the Commonwealth, the City of Somerville needs to cut \$2,953,217 from its FY-09 budget. This will be accomplished by making cuts in the following areas:

- \$672,976 in City Departmental Personal Services Budget reversions
- \$988,026 in City Salary Contingency Budget reversions
- \$474,215 in City Operations and Maintenance Budget reversions
- \$800,000 in School Department Budget reversions

Commissioner Koty outlined the steps taken to reduce the DPW budget, including cuts to the salary and engineering accounts, cuts to the Ordinary Maintenance account for motor, gas and oil and cuts to the account used for park lighting. Commissioner Koty stated that lighting funds would come from a revolving account and he assured the members that services for lights would not be cut. Alderman Gewirtz stated that funding for lights shouldn't be cut and should be increased. Alderman Gewirtz also requested that a list of vacant positions in the Health Department be provided to the committee. Alderman Pero stated that the members should be aware of the difficult decisions that were made in cutting the budget.

Various Department Heads outlined the measures taken to reduce their budget and a detailed breakdown is attached as part of this report.

Chairman Heuston told those present that she would schedule a public forum (on the FY-09 and FY-10 budgets) with the School Committee for April 28th.

The committee discussed matters before it and took action on the following 2 items:

186958: Communication from Mayor - Requesting the extension of a contract with Fay Spofford & Thorndike LLC for designing and planning the Mystic River Reservation Trail Wellington/Rt. 28 Undercarriage.

RECOMMENDATION: Should be approved

VOTE: Unanimous, 4 - 0 in favor

186959: Communication from Mayor - Requesting the appropriation of a mitigation payment of \$17,500 from Federal Realty Investment Trust to a new Stabilization Fund to be known as the "Wellington Undercarriage Fund," to fund the Wellington/Rt. 28 Undercarriage for the Mystic River Reservation

RECOMMENDATION: Should be approved

VOTE: Unanimous, 4 - 0 in favor

Alderman Maryann Heuston, Chairman
Committee on Finance