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June 2, 2009

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

The Committee on Legislative Matters convened on June 2, 2009 with Chairman Thomas Taylor presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Rebekah Gewirtz, Robert Trane and John Connolly also present and voting. Also present were Administrative Assistant Jessie Baker, City Solicitor John Gannon, Executive Director of the SHA Joseph Macaluso and SHA Assistant Director Paul Mackey.

187621: Regarding conveyance of certain land in the City to the Housing Authority

Mr. Macaluso addressed the members and explained that the SHA would like to purchase the old water works building that was out up for sale by the state eighteen months ago. The SHA would like to partner with the VNA to provide assisted living dwellings as part of a 26 unit senior housing project that would also have units set aside for Section 8 housing. Mr. Macaluso told the members that there is a potential to develop a Senior Center on the property as well and he explained that the process would require the passage of a Home Rule Petition to allow the SHA to purchase the property from the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance. The development is in the conceptual stage at the present time. Mr. Mackey informed the members that the purchase would allow a collaborative effort to be undertaken by the SHA and the VNA. The city had the first chance to purchase the property, but declined. Ms. Baker told the members that the city is comfortable with the SHA developing the property. Chairman Taylor inquired about transportation at that location and Mr. Macaluso replied that the development would include a public transportation proposal for a paved and safe walkway to the bus stop. Representative Sciortino and Senator Jehlen are aware of the proposed project.

Alderman Connolly's motion *that the Somerville Housing Authority enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Somerville stating that the SHA will support state efforts to facilitate the City's taking control of the parcel referenced in this Board's item # 187621, consistent with state law, in the event that the SHA does not use the property,* was approved.

187492: Special Municipal Employee designation

The committee was informed that this is a temporary, emergency position being utilized by the Health Department to enable its database to be updated.

187485: Technical amendment to the Living Wage Ordinance

Mr. Gannon addressed the committee and stated that this item is a technical correction on the bump-up from year to year. The intent is to amortize the amount each year at a rate that should be paid.

187423: Amendment to the Tree Preservation Ordinance

Alderman Gewirtz stated that she has spoken with the mayor and that he is in favor of the proposed amendment.

The committee discussed matters before it and took action on the following 4 items:

187423: Ordinance - By Ald. Gewirtz, Amending Sec 12-100, the Tree Preservation Ordinance, to create an annual city tree plan for public trees.

RECOMMENDATION: Should be approved

VOTE: Unanimous, 4 - 0 in favor

187485: Communication from Mayor - Requesting approval of a technical amendment to the Living Wage Ordinance, at Section 2-399(b).

RECOMMENDATION: Should be approved

VOTE: Unanimous, 4 - 0 in favor

187492: Communication from Mayor - Requesting the designation of the Data Entry Clerk position as a “special municipal employee” pursuant to MGL c268A, s1(n), for the use of the Health Dept.

RECOMMENDATION: Should be approved

VOTE: Unanimous, 4 - 0 in favor

187621: Communication from Mayor - Requesting approval of a Home Rule Petition authorizing the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance to convey certain land in the City to the Housing Authority.

RECOMMENDATION: Should be approved

VOTE: Unanimous, 4 - 0 in favor

Alderman Thomas F. Taylor, Chairman
Committee on Legislative Matters