

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Minutes of the Meeting
December 5, 2022

1. Vice-President McLaughlin called the meeting to order at 8:00pm in the City Council Chamber.
2. VP McLaughlin asked the Clerk to call the roll to record the attendance for the meeting. The Clerk called the roll – Councillors Bradley-MacArthur, Darcy, Dunn, Durkee, Harris, Katz, LaFauci, LeBlanc, President McMenimen, O'Brien, Paz, Stanley, Vidal and VP McLaughlin were present in-person. Councillor LaCava was absent.
3. President McMenimen moved to approve the minutes of the meeting on November 21, 2022. The motion was adopted on a voice vote and the minutes of the November 21, 2022 meeting were approved.
4. A request was received from the Mayor to approve the grant of two easements for third Avenue/Prospect Hill Lane. A motion to hear from Assistant City Solicitor Katie Laughman was adopted on a voice vote. Upon questions from Councillor LaFauci and President McMenimen, Attorney Laughman explained the purpose of the easement, including the length of time it would be in effect and the responsibility of the City to maintain the roadway. Councillor LaFauci moved to approve the grant of the two easements. The motion was adopted on a roll call vote of 14 in favor (Bradley-MacArthur, Darcy, Dunn, Durkee, Harris, Katz, LaFauci, LeBlanc, President McMenimen, O'Brien, Paz, Stanley, Vidal and VP McLaughlin) and LaCava absent.
5. Councillor Darcy moved to take the matter of the MBTA "Better Bus Project" (11/14/2022) from the table. The motion was adopted on a voice vote. Councillor Darcy moved to hear from the Mayor, State Senator Michael Barrett, State Representative Thomas Stanley and Traffic Engineer J. Michael Garvin. The motion was adopted on a voice vote. Councillor Darcy spoke from the podium and explained the impact of the "Better Bus Project" on the City of Waltham, specifically detailing the number of bus routes that were reduced and/or eliminated, particularly those in the North Waltham area. Councillor Darcy moved to send a letter on behalf of the City Council and to also be endorsed by the Mayor, Senator Barrett and State Representatives Thomas Stanley and John Lawn to oppose the elimination of certain bus routes and to have the MBTA reconsider its actions. On the motion, Councillor LaFauci asked if the Council was provided a copy of the letter and if the MBTA have provided an assessment of its decisions to reduce/eliminate service. Councillors Harris and Vidal voiced similar concerns about the lack of seeing the letter and the MBTA data. Councillors Bradley-MacArthur and Dunn voiced support for the letter and that the MBTA should appear to explain their rationale. Councillor Katz stated the Council needed to be smart about what it is asking from the MBTA. The Mayor corrected a previous statement of Councillor Darcy to state no City money was being used to fund the Route 117 bridge project. The Mayor expressed her support for the efforts, but reiterated her past advocacy and attempts to improve bus service in Waltham. Senator Barrett gave a brief overview of the "Better Bus Project" and its timeline

history. Senator Barrett responded to questions from Councillors LeBlanc, Dunn, Bradley MacArthur, Paz, Harris and O'Brien. Senator Barrett offered suggestions on a course of action the City could take and spoke of establishing partnerships with the business community. State Representative Stanley spoke about the lack of information from the MBTA, what he is able to do and the timeline to implement the "Better Bus Project". Traffic Engineer Garvin gave his perspective of the project, including utilizing other bus services. Councillor LeBlanc asked if the Waltham portion of the "Better Bus Project" could be delayed for a specific time period, possibly 90 days. It was suggested that Councillor Darcy update his letter with the concerns and amendments that were discussed this evening. Councillor Darcy moved to place the matter back on the table. The motion was adopted on a voice vote.

6. A motion by Councillor O'Brien to adjourn was adopted on a voice vote and VP McLaughlin declared the meeting adjourned at 10:10pm.

Paul G. Centofanti – Clerk to the Committee of the Whole