

Economic & Community Development Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 1, 2016

Councillor Darcy, Chair called meeting to order at 7pm.

The Clerk took roll call.

Attendance: Fowler, Waddick, Darcy, Logan, Vidal

Absent: None

Councillor Vidal moved to take a matter regarding the Rail Trail out of order. All were in favor. Councillor Darcy spoke on the matter. Councillor Darcy stated the Mayor was invited to attend meeting tonight but unfortunately could not make it. She has information for us and would like to attend the next meeting to discuss.

Councillor Waddick moved to invite the Mayor to the next Committee meeting held on February 16, 2016. All were in favor of this request.

Councillor Vidal moved to table the matter. All were in favor.

The matter was tabled.

The Clerk read the next agenda item; 25 Lexington Street

Councillor Waddick moved to here from off committee members. All were in favor. Mr. Zuppe, Director of Health Dept. and Mr. Forte, Building Inspector were present to speak on matter.

Councillor Waddick spoke on the matter and explained to the non-committee members the concern the Council has regarding a communication from the Mayor moving the current departments out of their current locations because of health issues in the basement of Government Center and City Hall. Mr. Zuppe responded expressing he was not aware of any health issues or environmental concerns he has or was made aware of since he has worked in his current position. He explained in detail that the basements in both locations are dry and there is no excessive moisture in either one. There was once a rodent infestation issue at City Hall but nothing in recent years. Any asbestos that may have ever been in the basement has been covered years ago and if we any kind of testing done we should contact an environmental engineering firm.

Mr. Forte also reiterated that he is not aware of any specific threats or does not have any first-hand knowledge or health concerns of the locations. Mr. Forte stated that any below or sub grade level spaces are not optimal conditions. Air quality and control is not good and natural sunlight or opening windows is not a possible in these locations. Mr. Forte read a letter from two staff members regarding the possible move to a new location.

Councillor Waddick made a motion to accept a proposed order stating the following:

The City Council responds to the Mayor's communication dated January 7, 2016 regarding 25 Lexington Street and Basement Offices – City Hall Government Center, by recommending that the Mayor, in concert with the Superintendent of Public Buildings and city department heads develop a plan to utilize space in existing municipal buildings with the goals of maximizing the health, safety and convenience of municipal employees and public and of maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of the operations of municipal government *including detailed cost estimates for all moves and provide the City council with the plan as soon as possible.*

On the motion Councillor Fowler spoke on the matter.

Councillor Logan also spoke on the matter. He believes this is a solution in search of a problem. He would like to know what the Council's role in this communication is. Why does anyone need to move?

Councillor LeBlanc spoke on the motion. She had reached out to Department Head's specifically Assessors and Retirement and they believe this is a good thing to do despite the costs, changes etc. They are all open to relocating.

Councillor Waddick stated the city council has never before been involved in seating arrangement for municipal employees. It is an executive function.

Councillor Logan believes cost is a Council matter and would like to include that in the proposed order Councillor Waddick moved. Councillor Logan proposed an amended motion from Councillor Waddick.

On the motion Councillor Vidal asked to have the new amended order read to Council. All were in favor of the order and the proposed order was accepted by a voice vote.

The Chair read the second agenda item: 14 Church Street

Councillor Waddick spoke on the matter. He believes that the city should go through the proper channels to deem the building surplus before the Council can act on this matter.

Councillor Waddick moved to approve a proposed order stating the following:

The city Council responds to the Mayor's communication dated January 7, 2016 regarding 14 Church Street, by recommending that if the municipal property known and numbered 14 Church Street is declared surplus in accordance with the Massachusetts Law that the disposition of said municipal property shall be done in accordance with the applicable laws and municipal ordinances and with the recommendation to the City Council of a special committee appointed by the City Council President to approve a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the disposition of the property.

All were in favor of the order and the proposed order was accepted by a voice vote.

Councillor Waddick moved to adjourn.

All were in favor.

Chairman Darcy moved that the meeting was adjourned at 7:33p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara Wilson

Executive Assistant to the City Clerk

February 2, 2016