

Somerville Interim Climate Action Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2025 7:00 P.M.
Virtual Meeting

Commissioners Attending: *Alexis Washburn, Eliza Johnston, Courtney Koslow, Ramón Bueno, Larry Yu (chair), Christine Blais (ex-officio)*

Commissioners Not Attending: None

Attendees: Naomi Grosse (OSE), Kate Crowley (OSE), Ben Capraro

Meeting started at 7:03 PM.

Agenda item

- Introductions
 - Commissioners, OSE staff, and members of the public introduced themselves.
- Approval of Meeting Minutes
 - Courtney motioned, Alexis seconded, the motion was passed unanimously at 7:06PM
- Staff update on networked geothermal, curbside food waste collection pilot program
 - Food Waste
 - A two-year curbside food waste collection pilot is launching in East Somerville, targeting ~1,200 households. Enrollment is expected to open soon, with a press release and webpage available for updates.
 - Currently, 120 households have expressed interest. The city is conducting targeted outreach and has informed ward councilmembers. There are plans to track interest from outside the pilot zone for potential pilot expansion.
 - There is no specific tonnage diversion goal, but the city will receive reports from the vendor (Garbage to Garden) and track related data like 311 rodent reports and trash requests to assess impact.
 - Commissioners emphasized the importance of clear composting guidelines, repeated outreach, and visual aids (e.g., countertop bins) to ensure success with the pilot.
 - East Somerville was chosen due to low current participation in composting programs. The city aims to understand if interest leads to action and may expand based on results. A separate drop-off composting service was also approved through participatory budgeting. More details around its launch will be announced soon.
 - Geothermal
 - The city is exploring a networked geothermal pilot with 3 potential sites and has identified around 200 interested households out of a goal of 400. No commitment is currently required from households to participate. Upcoming steps include public meetings in Wards 2, 3, and 4, and issuing an RFP this fall to select a vendor to advise on ownership, financing, and operations structures and considerations.
 - While current participation is theoretical, the pilot could eventually replace natural gas systems.

- Fall outreach opportunities
 - OSE staff shared that there are several upcoming opportunities to volunteer for outreach and engagement. The city calendar has several events posted and more will be posted as they are confirmed. Additionally, Climate Ambassadors will be supporting with outreach activities.
 - Launching this year is 5th grade STEM week which will focus on climate and give students the opportunity to experience hands on problem solving. The city is looking for volunteers for the week of October 20-24th, 2025.
- Discussion of new heat pump rates and interaction with Somerville's Community Choice Electricity program
 - Community members should contact Eversource to sign up. [WBUR also has a good explanation online.](#)
- ICAC bylaw and CAC guidance drafting discussion
 - Commissioners thanked the subcommittee for their work. A motion to provisionally approve the item pending legal review was made by Commissioner Koslow, seconded by Commissioner Johnston, and the motion passed unanimously at 7:50 PM.
 - Commissioners Yu and Johnston will draft a commissioner job description before the next meeting. Suggestions included clarifying the CAC's evolution from CEUCC and ICAC, ensuring the description is clear and accessible, and noting that legal review is required before anything is finalized.
- Scheduling
 - October ICAC meeting will be 10/14/25 and potential agenda topics could include:
 - School building decarbonization
 - Climate forward plan status update
 - Heat resiliency pilot updates
 - November meeting is scheduled for 11/17.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.