



City of Somerville
Review of Multiple-Member Bodies Committee
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, June 24, 2026
6:00p.m.

Staff Liaison

Brendan Salisbury, Legislative and Policy Analyst

Commission Members

Brenna Broderick

Jesse Clingan

Chris Dwan

Courtney Henderson

Derrick Rice

The meeting was held via Zoom. Chair Chris Dwan convened the meeting at 6:06p.m.

Others present: Brendan Salisbury, Legislative and Policy Analyst

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.1. Call of the Roll

Analyst Salisbury called the roll for attendance. Responses were as follows:

Liaison Broderick:	Present
Councilor Clingan:	Present
Chris Dwan:	Present
Clerk Henderson	Present
Derrick Rice:	Present

With five members in attendance there was a quorum and the meeting was called to order.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

2.1. Committee logistics and standards

Vice Chair Rice shared a draft document presenting rules, norms, and practices for the body.

The document is available online. Chair Dwan noted that future practice will be to coordinate with Analyst Salisbury to craft agendas that clearly indicate specifically what will be discussed by the body. He also requested that members of the body raise any issues they may have with how meetings are being conducted, if any issues present themselves. He recommended that the proposed rules be amended to say that any individual member may make an objection regarding proceedings rather than requiring the objection of two members.

Vice Chair Rice repeated the body's request for a shared drive for documents, and Chair Dwan noted that Analyst Salisbury had informed him that all meeting documents are uploaded to the city's website and attached to the relevant calendar event where the documents are discussed. He noted concerns about Open Meeting Law ("OML") related to the use of a shared drive. Vice Chair Rice asked if there would be difficulties with making revisions to documents available to the public using this mechanism. Councilor Clingan raised that while it would certainly be helpful to have documents attached ahead of time, but that any discussion outside of an open meeting would likely be deliberation, and to be safe it would be best to maintain a practice of using the city's website. Analyst Salisbury shared that there is a process in place, currently in use by the City Council, to clearly delineate versions of marked-up documents, and that previous versions of revised documents would remain available to the members and the public.



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Councilor Clingan requested confirmation that it would be a violation of OML to “work live” off of a document in a shared drive. Chair Dwan clarified that the hope was to have, for example, summaries of information about bodies in a drive available for member review, as a shared collection of knowledge, but that the existing system is functionally equivalent to that. Vice Chair Rice indicated an intent to revisit this discussion as part of the review of the functions of other multiple-member bodies, and whether improvements to the existing system might remove challenges with the sharing of materials.

Chair Dwan asked about a mechanism for members of the public to submit written comments regarding the work of the body. Analyst Salisbury shared that while it is not feasible to create a separate email account for contacting the body, members of the public can submit comments to his email address or to the City Clerk’s Office, and they will be attached as documents for discussion at the next meeting of the body. Vice Chair Rice expressed concern about communications to the body being filtered through staff. Liaison Broderick shared that for other bodies that do have a direct email address, those inboxes are monitored by staff, not members of the relevant body. Analyst Salisbury clarified that there are no issues with members of the body receiving communications directly from members of the public. Chair Dwan suggested that contact information for Analyst Salisbury, as the staff liaison, and for the chair and vice chair be made available to the public.

Vice Chair Rice moved for adoption of the proposed rules, as amended. The motion was approved on a roll call vote of five in favor (Broderick, Clingan, Henderson, Rice, Dwan), and none opposed.

2.2. Review of committee’s duties and responsibilities

Chair Dwan provided a review of the duties and responsibilities of the body in the form of a draft memorandum outlining the context and legal framework for the body’s work, and establish the focus of the body’s review.

Councilor Clingan asked about the mechanism for dissolution of “ad hoc” bodies, and whether they are automatically disbanded once they have fulfilled their purpose or if action is necessary to accomplish that. Analyst Salisbury shared that there is not, to his knowledge, a definitive standard, but also that the answer is not necessarily relevant to the body’s work. Chair Dwan noted that while review of “ad hoc” bodies may be out of scope for the body’s review, it would be fair to include an acknowledgement in the final report that review of “ad hoc” bodies was out of scope, but it may be helpful to clarify the process for disbanding them and take action to “clean up”.

Councilor Clingan highlighted the importance of considering what bodies are practically and legally capable of in the course of the review. Chair Dwan asked about the differences between the Veterans Commission and the Veterans Commission on Monuments, Memorials, and Dedications. Clerk Henderson clarified that those are two separate bodies, and also separate from the Memorialization Committee. Vice Chair Rice asked for clarification on the bodies listed as “excluded”. Chair Dwan stated that they are bodies not subject to review, per the provisions of the City Charter, but that the body could certainly still opine on them in their report. Analyst Salisbury shared that there does not appear to be anything barring the body from offering their



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opinions on bodies not subject to review in their report, but suggested that the inclusion of those opinions should be a secondary priority to completing the body's mandated duties.

Councilor Clingan requested clarification on the difference between a body that is required by Massachusetts General Law ("MGL") and one where the city accepted a local option, whether the body is authorized to review and make recommendations on local option bodies, and whether the city has the ability to opt out of those bodies after previously opting in. Analyst Salisbury shared that there is a difference between bodies established by MGL, and bodies required by MGL, and that while the city could opt out of a body established by MGL, it could generally not create a substitute that wields equivalent authority as provided to the body established by MGL. Chair Dwan shared that he may have mistakenly marked local option bodies as not subject to review and requested that members peruse his memorandum and raise any errors they identify at the next meeting. Vice Chair Rice and Chair Dwan both noted that the proposed list in the memorandum can be revisited if necessary.

Vice Chair Rice asked about provisions of MGL that require a municipality to create a multiple-member body, but provide substantial discretion to the municipality in terms of the specifics of its composition or responsibilities, and whether it would be appropriate for the body to review those. Analyst Salisbury stated that he was unable to provide an answer without consulting with the Law Department, but that the explicit text of the charter indicates that such bodies would not be subject to review.

Vice Chair Rice noted that while "ad hoc" bodies are not subject to the body's review, the issues that they were created to address are not necessarily in the past. Analyst Salisbury reaffirmed that the body may certainly make recommendations to establish new multiple-member bodies to address ongoing issues that were not resolved. Vice Chair Rice requested a reminder on what limited the body from reviewing "ad hoc" bodies, and Chair Dwan referred to the definition of multiple-member body in the City Charter, which excludes advisory committees and task forces.

Councilor Clingan made a motion to recommend the dissolution of five defunct bodies (AIDS Commission, Gang Advisory Board, Multicultural Affairs Commission, Municipal Athletics Facilities Commission, Recreation and Youth Commission). Vice Chair Rice expressed concerns about the dissolution of the Multicultural Affairs Commission, and shared that the duties of that body being taken up by a city department does not, in his mind, render the body unnecessary. He requested that the body consider recommending that the duties and authority of the Multicultural Affairs Commission be consolidated with those of the Human Rights Commission. The motion was approved on a roll call vote of five in favor (Broderick, Clingan, Henderson, Rice, Dwan), and none opposed.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

3.1. Resident concerns

Chair Dwan opened the floor for participation by attendees in the audience. Seeing no request to speak, Chair Dwan closed the public comment portion of the meeting. Vice Chair Rice asked whether it would be in order to bring to the body concerns from the public that were shared with them individually. Analyst Salisbury shared that he believed it would be no issue for



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members of the body to discuss the concerns that residents have brought to them, in the course of relevant discussion, but was unsure whether it would be appropriate for a member to serve as a proxy for a member of the public during the public comment section. Councilor Clingan suggested that members of the body encourage the public to submit their concerns as written comments, to be attached to future meetings.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4.1. Bodies pending recommendation

No motions were made regarding other bodies pending recommendation by the body.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1. Discussion and preliminary recommendations

No additional discussion was held regarding other bodies not yet reviewed by the body.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Clerk Henderson moved to adjourn at 7:46p.m. The motion was approved on a roll call vote of five in favor (Broderick, Clingan, Henderson, Rice, Dwan), and none opposed.