

DIVISION 12. CLIMATE ACTION COMMISSION

(Ord. No. [2001-19](#), 11-20-2001; Ord. No. [2025-04](#), 4-24-2025)

Sec. 2-304. Establishment; function.

- (a) There shall be established a Climate Action Commission, hereinafter called the "commission."
- (b) It shall be the function of the commission to:
 - (1) Address and reverse both the climate and environmental crises through community and local government operations toward the ultimate goals of creating a healthier, safer, thriving, equitable, resilient community, advancing environmental justice, and adapting to climate change.
 - (A) The commission may consider and pursue interventions in any relevant areas, including: public engagement; environment; policy; adaptation; mitigation; climate science; public finance; business and workforce; equity; social and infrastructure resiliency; community health; buildings; natural resources; waste; municipal and school operations; transportation; or, mobility.
 - (2) Advise the mayor and municipal staff.
 - (3) Mobilize Somerville residents and stakeholders by educating the public through outreach and engagement.

(Ord. No. [2001-19](#), 11-20-2001; Ord. No. [2025-04](#), 4-24-2025)

Effective on: 4/24/2025

Sec. 2-305. Membership; appointment; term; removal.

- (a) The commission shall be composed of no less than five and up to thirteen members who shall be appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the City Council. Members shall be residents of the city, except one member who owns or does business in Somerville may reside outside the city. Two members shall be youth representatives, one between the ages of fifteen and seventeen and the other between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five.
- (b) Initial appointments to the commission shall be staggered, with three members appointed for a term of one year, five members appointed for a term of two years, and five members appointed for a term of three years. Subsequent appointments shall be for a term of three years, with the exception of the youth representatives who shall be appointed for a term of one year. It is the intention that each year, approximately one-third of membership of the Commission will be subject to appointment and confirmation.
- (c) If a vacancy occurs prior to the expiration of a member's term, a new member shall be appointed by the mayor, subject to confirmation by the City Council, to serve the remainder of the vacated term.
- (d) If any member is absent from three or more successive meetings, the commission may request the mayor remove that member from membership.
- (e) In appointing members of the commission, the mayor shall consider diverse representation of its membership including by socioeconomic status, religious creed, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and neighborhood.
- (f) A quorum of the commission shall be a simple majority of the members serving on the commission.
- (g) Members of the commission shall be classified as special municipal employees for the purposes of M.G.L. c. 268A.

(Ord. No. [2001-19](#), 11-20-2001; Ord. No. [2025-04](#), 4-24-2025)

Effective on: 4/24/2025

Sec. 2-306. Support for the commission.

- (a) The director of the Office of Sustainability and Environment, or their designee, shall serve as a member of the commission by virtue of their office.
- (b) The director of the Office of Sustainability and Environment, or their designee, shall serve as the staff liaison to the commission, and serve as the custodian of all records for the commission, including recordings, attachments, minutes, agendas, advertisements, and materials.

- (c) The superintendent of Somerville Public Schools, or their designee, shall serve as a member of the commission by virtue of their office.

(Ord. No. [2001-19](#), 11-20-2001; Ord. No. [2002-01](#), 3-14-2002; Ord. No. [2025-04](#), 4-24-2025)

Effective on: 4/24/2025

Sec. 2-307. Election of chairperson; by-laws.

The members of the commission shall elect a chairperson from among its members and adopt by-laws for the commission.

(Ord. No. [2001-19](#), 11-20-2001; Ord. No. [2025-04](#), 4-24-2025)

Effective on: 4/24/2025

Sec. 2-308. Powers and duties.

The commission shall:

- (1) assist the city in:
 - (A) adapting to climate change and improving the environment;
 - (B) decarbonizing and mitigating the impacts of climate change; and,
 - (C) ensuring environmental justice and equity are central components of strategies implemented to address climate change and improve the environment.
- (2) review progress towards the city's climate, environmental, and emissions goals, actions, and strategies.

(Ord. No. [2001-19](#), 11-20-2001; Ord. No. [2025-04](#), 4-24-2025)

Effective on: 4/24/2025

Sec. 2-309. Interim commission.

- (a) The Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change shall serve as interim membership of the Climate Action Commission until a sufficient number of members to achieve quorum has been appointed.

- (1) An interim member of the Climate Action Commission may apply for appointment to a full term.

(Ord. No. [2001-19](#), 11-20-2001; Ord. No. [2025-04](#), 4-24-2025)

Effective on: 4/24/2025

