

COMMITTEE ON ORDINANCES, CHARTER & RULES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2023, AT 6:04 p.m.
WOBURN CITY HALL
COMMITTEE ROOM

Voting members present: Chairman Joseph Demers, Councilor Lou DiMambro, and Councilor Robert Ferullo. Absent: Councilor Richard Gately and Councilor Darlene Mercer-Bruen

Non-voting members present: President Michael Concannon, Councilor Joanne Campbell, Councilor Charles Viola, and Councilor Jeffrey Dillon

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Reading and approval of previous meeting minutes: Motion made by Councilor Ferullo and seconded by Councilor DiMambro to approve the minutes of the meeting of July 24, 2023; approved, 3-0.

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Order amending WMC by adding Section 2-147A Community Gardens Coordinator:

Councilor Demers said there are two orders before the committee to transform the Community Gardens Coordinator from a volunteer position to a paid position with a base salary of \$4,000. Motion made by Councilor Ferullo and seconded by Councilor DiMambro that the order “ought to pass.” Clerk said there is someone in the audience who may want to address the committee in regard to the orders. Motion made by Councilor Ferullo and seconded by Councilor DiMambro to withdraw the motion that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 3-0. Motion made by Councilor Ferullo and seconded by Councilor DiMambro to suspend the rules to allow members of the public to address the order; approved, 3-0. Gerald Lohnes, 15 Garden St., Woburn, MA, said he is a member of the Woburn Conservation Commission who has also been the lead coordinator at the community gardens. He said he has been assisted by James Juliano. He said he is stepping away from the position. He said the position involves a lot of work. He said he estimates he put in 200-plus hours a year. He said he does not believe a \$4,000 stipend is a lot to ask. He said a big part of the job is managing email. He said he gets about 1,000 email messages per season. He said the job requires interpersonal skills. He said Anthony Langone and his wife have expressed an interest in staying on. He said it is important to hire someone who has experience with the community gardens. Councilor DiMambro asked what other characteristics the city should be looking for in a community gardens coordinator. Mr. Lohnes said it should be someone who is familiar with the rules and regulations, and someone with horticultural knowledge. He said the ability to fix plumbing leaks would also be a helpful trait. He said one of the most common issues is leaky faucets. He said he feels like the position will be a lot of work. He said the gardens need to be staked. He said there are around 500 stakes used. Councilor DiMambro asked who performs the prep work like rototilling. Mr. Lohnes said Heimlich Landscaping does the rototilling and then the volunteers set up each lot. Motion made by Councilor DiMambro and seconded by Councilor Ferullo to suspend the rules to allow any member of the council not on the committee to address the order; approved, 3-0. Councilor Campbell asked if the city pays for the prep work. Mr. Lohnes said the money for the prep work comes out of the fees. Councilor

Campbell said it seems the job is time consuming. Mr. Lohnes said it is. Councilor Campbell it is important that the coordinator knows prepping and staking. She thanked Mr. Lohnes for being the coordinator for so long. Councilor Dillon thanked Mr. Lohnes for his work as community gardens coordinator. He said Mr. Lohnes made the community gardens a major attraction. He said the new coordinator should be someone who is not afraid to say no and is willing to keep the rules intact. Councilor Viola thanked Mr. Lohnes for everything he does. He asked who flooding issues are handled. Mr. Lohnes said flooding has been a problem just about every year. Councilor DiMambro asked to whom the community gardens coordinator reports. Mr. Lohnes said he has maintained a good relationship with DPW Deputy Supt. Len Burnham. He said he thinks it would be important for the coordinator to report to the Conservation Commission on a bi-monthly basis. Councilor DiMambro asked if the Conservation Commission should oversee the position. Mr. Lohnes said it could. Chairman Demers said the order indicates the coordinator will be appointed annually by the mayor upon the recommendation of the Conservation Commission. He said he thinks it is important for the Conservation Commission to work with the Community Gardens Coordinator. He said he appreciates all the work Mr. Lohnes has done. Motion made by Councilor DiMambro and seconded by Councilor Ferullo that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 3-0.

Order amending WMC Section 2-180 Base Salaries to include Community Gardens

Coordinator: Motion made by Councilor DiMambro and seconded by Councilor Ferullo that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 3-0.

Order amending WMC Sections 2-193(A), 2-193(A)(22), 2-194(A), and 2-194(I) regarding creating the position of Facilities Manager: Chairman Demers said this order details the job description for the Facilities Manager position at the Dept. of Public Works. Motion made by Councilor DiMambro said seconded by Councilor Ferullo that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 3-0.

Order amending WMC Section 2-180 Base Salaries to include Facilities Manager:

Chairman Demers said the funding for this position was approved by the council along with the FY '24 budget. Motion made by Councilor DiMambro said seconded by Councilor Ferullo that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 3-0.

Order amending WMC Title 2, by adding Article XLI Substance Misuse Prevention and Community Support Coordinator: Motion made by Councilor DiMambro said seconded by Councilor Ferullo that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 3-0.

Order amending WMC Section 2-180 Base Salaries to include Substance Misuse Prevention and Community Support Coordinator: Chairman Demers said the salary of the full-time position will be \$75,000. Motion made by Councilor DiMambro said seconded by Councilor Ferullo that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 3-0.

Order amending WMC Title 12 Streets, Sidewalks & Public Places by adding Article XVI. Grant of Location Permits: Chairman Demers said this order was submitted by Councilor Gately and increases the application fees for grant of location permits. Motion made by

Councilor DiMambro said seconded by Councilor Ferullo that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 3-0.

Order amending WMC Section 2-5 to include an exemption for School Crossing Guards:

Chairman Demers said the order exempts school crossing guards from conflict-of-interest training. Motion made by Councilor DiMambro said seconded by Councilor Ferullo that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 3-0.

RAM 0 Cross Street LLC petition to amend Section 20 Woburn Loop Bikeway/Greenway Overlay District of the WZO by revising Section 5(i) and adding new Section 5(j) Buffer Requirements and new Section 7 Associate Criteria:

Motion made by Councilor Ferullo and seconded by Councilor DiMambro to suspend the council’s rules to accept comments from the public; approved, 3-0. Representing the applicant was John Paul Martignetti, Martignetti Enterprises, 304 Cambridge Road, Woburn, MA. Mr. Martignetti said the applicant is working with Building Commissioner Thomas Quinn to come up with dimensional regulations and some revised language. Chairman Demers said the matter is before the Planning Board later tonight and there are no updates at this time. He said the committee will be taking no action.

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MOTION made by Councilor Ferullo and seconded by Councilor DiMambro to adjourn; in favor, 3-0. Chairman Demers adjourned the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST

Gordon Vincent
Clerk of Committees