

City of Salem, Massachusetts



**"Know Your Rights Under the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A ss. 18-25 and
City Ordinance Sections 2-2028 through 2-2033."**

The City Council Committee on Administration and Finance
met in the Council Chamber on March 23, 2023 at 6:00 P.M.
for the purpose of discussing the matters(s) listed below. Notice of this meeting was posted on
March 14, 2023 at 2:59 P.M.

(This meeting is being recorded)

ATTENDANCE

ABSENT WERE: _____

SUBJECT(S)

#125 Bond Order to redesignate \$76,000 from FY 2021 CIP Electrical – Riley Plaza to Electrical – Smart-Signal Project.

See Attached

3/23/23 City Council Committee on Administration and Finance Minutes

Committee members Hapworth, Merkl & Stott present. Councillor Watson-Felt absent.

Chair McClain calls meeting to order at 6pm and reads notice of when meeting was posted & zoom access information.

City Electrician John Giardi present for testimony, Finance Director Anna Friedman absent.

Chair McClain reads an email statement from finance Director Friedman noting background information on the bond order. The statement notes the following:

- Salem's FY21 capital improvement budget included 76k for LED lighting in Riley Plaza. Funding was subsequently provided through a bond order approved by the City Council on July 9 2020 & updated January 27, 2022. The Riley Plaza project no longer requires the funds and the electrical department would like to use them to support a smart signal installation that uses similar hardware. However, since the funds were authorized specifically for Riley Plaza they can't be used for something different without council approval of the re-designation.

Chair McClain calls Giardi to the podium to give additional information.

Mr. Giardi notes that the original LED project no longer requires the \$75000 because the work was completed under budget using in-house staff support. The total cost of the smart signal project has meanwhile increased to \$409,600 due to increased materials costs since the initial budgeting.. The project will update traffic control measures including pedestrian crossing signage at signal locations along North Street from Essex Street to Woodside Street.

Chair McClain asks what the signal equipment does.

Mr. Giardi explains that the project will put traffic control cameras at intersections which will replace in-ground components currently sensing traffic. The in-ground equipment is frequently dug up during road construction and must then be replaced. Mr. Giardi notes that Mass Highway is already using likewise equipment on Route 107 in Salem.

Chair McClain asks if this will connect to other corridors with smart signal equipment.

Mr. Giardi confirms that this will connect to smart signal installations planned for derby street, congress street and Lafayette as well.

Chair McClain recognizes Councillor Stott.

Councillor Stott requests that Mr. Giardi makes sure that the smart signals continue to be installed in consultation with the Traffic & Parking Commission.

Mr. Giardi confirms that he works in consultation with Traffic & Parking Director Dave Kucharsky & the Salem Police Department as well.

Chair McClain asks how data collected from the smart signals is accessed & whether that information is shared with Traffic & Parking or the Salem Police.

Mr. Giardi notes that when smart signal array is fully operation the data can be accessed remotely via network, and that it can also be accessed by using a laptop connected to the signal itself. However, none of the currently installed smart signal installations have reached that point and no data is currently being harvested.

Chair McClain recognizes Councillor Merkl

Councillor Merkl is grateful to hear that part of the upgrade includes the installation of countdown signals for crossing because she feels they are safer. She asks whether data suggesting heavy pedestrian activity can influence the countdown period.

Mr. Giardi responds that yes, the countdown period can be extended in response to evidence of heavy pedestrian traffic.

Chair McClain recognizes Councillor Hapworth

Councillor Hapworth moves that the committee send a positive recommendation to the full council to approve the re-designation of 76000 from FY2021 CIP electrical–Riley Plaza to electrical–smart signal project.

Seconded by Councillor Stott

4 yea, 0 nay

Councillor Hapworth moves to adjourn

Seconded by Councillor Merkl

4 yea, 0 nay

Meeting adjourned.