

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 Government Services

will met in the Council Chamber on May 18, 2022 at 6:30 P.M.

for the purpose of discussing the matters(s) listed below. Notice of this meeting was posted on

May 16, 2022 at 12:43 P.M.

(This meeting is being recorded)

ATTENDANCE

ABSENT WERE: Councillors Cohen, McClain and
Varella

SUBJECT(S)

#239 Petition from Alan Hanscom requesting no vendors on the Salem Common for 2022 (Temporarily)

Councillor Hapworth reads: "All committees shall be appointed by the president, unless otherwise provided. The chairperson of a committee may appoint a member of the City Council as a temporary member of said committee, when the absence of a quorum would cause a duly posted committee meeting to be canceled, postponed, or adjourned. Said temporary appointment shall not remain in effect beyond adjournment of the Committee meeting."

As this is a posted meeting without a quorum, I am naming Councillor Merkl to the committee."

TH: Ty Hapworth

AH: Alan Hanscom

DK: Dave Knowlton

RJ: Ray Jodoin

ET: Ellen Talkowsky

CWF: Caroline Watson Felt

AM: Alice Merkl

DM: Darlene Melis

TO: Trish O'Brien

TH: Introduces attendees, hands off to Alan Hanscom to discuss his petition

AH: I have lived near the common since 1995 never seen so much damage to the grass, so much foot traffic every day. This never had happened before. The layout of the rides and vendor tents didn't do as much damage as foot traffic. No grass left on the common. Criticism is that grass would be replanted. I am very pleased with restoration being done as we speak to restore grass. The reason grass has never grown well is because of the abundance of Norway Maples, toxic to ground cover.

According to Naomi Cottrell. We need to reevaluate allowing so much traffic on the common. The grass has done fine when only used for a few days at a time. DC has done a great job of rehabbing National Mall. My hope is we won't spend too much money and time fixing the common in the future. Salem Common belongs to everyone to take care of.

TO: Had a great meeting last night with park and rec commission approving various trees, along with some larger trees. Were able to do a lot of tree pruning leading up to the muster. Having received some grant funding we have done many improvements. Last year we added many accessible benches. With some of earmark funding we will have a chance to make some improvements, we have done some research into protective padding. I would like to give a shout out to our parks crew and DPW. FB makes it brutally tough. Many of these measures may prevent damage to the grass. A lot of shade, hard to grow grass in the front

ET: hardscape will make the area more unified, without worrying about grass

AM: Would love to know more about protective padding, is it practical?

RJ: Forreststry supply, translucent mat allows sun to reach grass. Won't kill grass, mat can stay down for five days. \$244 per pad, looking to 39k purchase, 41k total purchase

DK: Shares graphic showing placement of matts

DM: Many events longer than 5 days, why not just expand paths

DK: Cost and flexibility

DM: How long do these events last? Isn't it longer than 5 days

ET: dependant on weather

CWF: pads question. How do they function with mud when there is a deluge of water such as last year. One of the learnings last year. It was dry when tires went on. Then turned to mud. I'm wondering if these will still do their job. What makes these better than the other products that I've seen, those hexagonal tracks that I've seen. Are these better?

DK: Do you mean the geogrid? We did look at that. We thought these mats would give us more flexibility. We considered them, they are expensive, this gives us more flexibility.

CWF: Why not permanent? Flexibility for what purpose?

DK: we can move them around, we can stack them in one area or spread them out.

CWF: How do pads work with regard to mud?

DK: I don't think there will be an issue, you're still dispersing mud of tires, need inclement weather plan.

CWF: can they work more than 5 days?

DK: Manufacturer says 5 days, it's October

CWF: Fees and funds. Can I understand the fees for use of common. Does it make sense to look at . . . Not all events are equal. Some have more taxing effect than others. Have we considered any additional fees to offset damage. Don't want to hurt small business, curious if there is an oppty for something larger

TO: demand is getting higher, smaller events are generally interested, but getting bigger. Don't want it to be unfeasible, we have always incorporated 5%, turned into revolving fund.

ET: I can speak to October, what happened in October, vendors were moved. City goes out for RFP for people to manage these events. But they are our events. There is a manager for these events. We realize there is wear and tear, need to balance with using the Common as an open space.

CWF: I think it's a good model to subcontract for all kinds of events. I think the model is a good one. We can invest in these pads or tracks. We can expect they will be utilized.

TO: could be used at other parks as well

CWF: good conversation about how our parks are cared for

AH: It was the month long exposure to foot traffic that was most damaging that was from concerts. Don't forget all of that needs to be approved by Historic Commission

DM: Sometimes vendors deliver goods in carts not trucks. Are we going to make our way toward that.

ET: driving on common. Two permits are given, I make those permits

AM: Appreciate all being mindful of what events we get, app

Trees

DM: pleased with Naomi's presentation. Pattern to see replacement trees as Norway Maples come down, eliminates gaps

DM: Shares presentation

Aeration

DM: Visit tree commission website

TO - plan is to aerate some trees in front where it is very compacted. It's very expensive, 10k per tree

CWF - I mean absolutely no offense to any experts on this call, with Naomi's work, plans david shared, if we are adding width to two crosspaths I would hope those trees will account for this

ET: Yes, accounted for

ET: we try very hard to keep most events toward the front of the common, the business side of common in front. Leave open space

CWF: can david share around that plan

CWF: with regard to damage mitigating pads, what are next steps, what does timing look like?

TO funding from state, salem common revolving fund, need to submit letter to council to approve funds, timing depends on going out to bid,

DK: matter of getting contractors id'ed and starting the work.

DM: No that you have a definite 12 foot width ensure Naomi has drawings

Am: Motion to leave in committee

Second by CWF

3-0

Motion to adjourn by CWF

3-0

Adjourned at 7:56pm

On the motion of C. Watson Felt

_____ 7:56 _____ P.M.

the meeting adjourned at



(Chairperson)