

Special Budget & Finance Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 24, 2020

REMOTE PARTICIPATION**-Minutes-****Present: Chair, Councilor Melissa Cox, Vice Chair, Councilor Scott Memhard, Councilor John McCarthy****Absent: None****Also Present: Councilor Barry Pett, Mayor, Joanne M. Senos, Kenny Costa, Vanessa Krawczyk, John Dunn**

Councilor Cox called the meeting of the Budget & Finance Committee for Wednesday, June 24, 2020 to order at 10:00 a.m.

Councilor Cox announced that this meeting is recorded by video and audio in accordance with state open meeting law, consistent with the governor's order suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law and banning gatherings of 10 or more people. This meeting is connected by remote participation. If you are calling in on a phone, you can press Star 9 to request to speak. If you are watching on a computer or device, there is a raise hand and a button that you can tap or press to request to speak.

Matters were taken out of order.

- 1. Memorandum from Information Services Director re: request to pay FY19 invoice from W.B. Mason with FY20 funds**
- 2. Memorandum from Information Services Director re: request to pay FY19 invoice from Kyocera with FY20 funds**

CFO John Dunn conveyed to the Committee that this happens occasionally where we have a general purchase order out there, particularly for these two vendors. In some cases, particularly with WB Mason, they do not send us statements. If we miss an invoice because it hasn't been opened or it hasn't been delivered, we generally almost don't even know about it until six months later when they inform them that we didn't pay this particular invoice. This is the situation we have with WB Mason. They are one of our bigger office supply vendors. We probably process a couple hundred invoices with them a year, and it is not a surprise generally that we miss one. This is the same situation with Kyocera. Mr. Dunn is seeking permission to pay these two FY19 invoices with FY20 funds. City Auditor Kenny Costa requested reconsideration of the Council's vote tonight on both of these so they can pay them this week.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council in accordance with MGL c. 44, §64 approve payment of a prior year invoice from W.B. Mason, Invoice #200174507, a portion of the invoice amount to be paid with FY2020 Management Information Systems General Fund Department budgeted funds for a total of \$92.58.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council in accordance with MGL c. 44, §64 approve payment of a prior year invoice from Kyocera, Invoice #55L1731307, a portion of the invoice to be paid with FY2020 Management Information Systems General Fund Department budgeted funds for a total of \$10.70.

3. Memorandum, Grant Application & Checklist from Mayor's Office re: request acceptance of Cities Complete Count Grant in the amount of \$10,000

Interim CAO Vanessa Krawczyk conveyed to the Committee that in late May, early June we were contacted by the Secretary of State's office. They wanted to offer us the opportunity to receive a Ten Thousand Dollar grant called the Cities Complete Count Grant Program. This grant is used to assist municipalities with providing a complete and accurate count in the 2020 census, is used to support outreach efforts in communities that are at significant risk of being undercounted. At that time, we were around 60 percent total households who have been counted in the US 2020 census. This Ten Thousand Dollar grant would be used for public relations efforts. We are working with John Guilfoil to produce the PSA in multiple languages. They'll be posted to the city website on all our Facebook feeds, as well as a palm card that we will target some of our hard to count, more specifically, Ward 2 and didn't have information on the other ward on hand. We would target specific communities, specific stores, establishments, just so that we can have these palm cards available just to remind people that there are several easy ways to fill out their census. The urgency is that the funds need to be expended by June 30th. We are working with Guilfoil, and we have actually already received Ten Thousand Dollars from the state. We are hoping that you will accept this grant so that we can finalize the work and get the PSA out, the palm cards out. We also working on an ad that we will be reaching out to all of the Councilors, along with the Mayor, to sign on to urge residents to make sure they get counted in the 2020 census. This is critical funding for our city and so very important. There was a discussion with the City Clerk regarding the two wards, the new tracking system and where today's percentages were compared to the 2010 census. Ms. Krawczyk said she will be reaching out to Councilors in the hardest to count wards for ideas on where they should put the palm cards. Councilor McCarthy told Ms. Krawczyk to reach out to him. Council McCarthy said when he took over the Chief's job, and with the Mayor did a lot of the underground type churches and hit a lot of the groups in Ward 2 that probably should be a target audience.

Councilor Cox said that she has a connection with the President of the UU Church Board, she does the Grace Center and they would be more than willing to post some palm cards there as well. Councilor Pett conveyed to the Committee that he had some of the issues when running for election with people in Ward 2, obviously being reluctant to either respond or participate, etc. He also talked with Anne Williams, who used to be at the chamber, now the Regional Director for the census, and she has been very helpful to get that information out. She would be glad to take some of the cards if you're doing them. He offered to assist, especially if the State asked this to be done in the next number of days, to help and pass them around. He suggested the pavilion beach area would be a great one this time of year for the city if they had someone to be able to go down there and do that. The Mayor conveyed to the Committee that she spoke with the Secretary of the State. He conveyed to her that it was Ward 3-1, Ward 2-1 and Ward 2-2 that they are our major problems all the time, and offered the grant. We have a lot of different citizens in Gloucester, who are afraid to fill out census because they don't know where their information is going to. She talked to some of the groups. A member of the Human Rights Commission and myself will reach out to them and see what they can do. They will reach out to the Brazilian, Spanish and Sicilian communities but she could not guarantee that they will participate. Some of the seniors don't think they have to answer census because they live in a complex, and they do not have access to the Senior Center to assist them. She suggested that they need to reach out again, but also to the housing authority to see what they can do, and maybe some of the senior centers to see what they can do. As far as saying, OK, give us the information, maybe we can put it in the system for you. Council Cox suggested that the housing authority, maybe put a computer up for a while at each of the locations so they can try to encourage them to come down and do the census. Councilor Cox informed that Committee that she will ask for a reconsideration of the Council vote this evening.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council accept under MGL c. 44, §53A, a state grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts called the Cities Complete Count Grant Program, “CCCGP” in the amount of \$10,000 for the purpose of assist municipalities with providing a complete and accurate count for the 2020 Federal Census and support outreach efforts in the City that are at significant risk of being undercounted. There’s no local matching requirements for the grant and the grant period is through June 30, 2020.

A motion was made, seconded and voted by ROLL CALL to adjourn at 10:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Senos
City Clerk