

**COMMITTEE ON LIAISON
NOVEMBER 13, 2018 at 6:23 p.m.
COMMITTEE ROOM
WOBURN CITY HALL**

Voting Members present: President Richard Haggerty, Alderman Michael Anderson, Alderman Michael Concannon, Alderman Richard Gately, Alderman Joanne Campbell, Alderman Darlene Mercer-Bruen, Alderman Lindsay Higgins and Alderman Edward Tedesco.

Absent: Alderman Mark Gaffney

Also present: Board of Health Agent John Fralick, Board of Health member Dr. Robert Tarpy, and Board of Health member Joel Long.

* * * * *

Resolve relative to regulation of dumpsters and trash hauling: President Haggerty said Alderman Gately has proposed regulations that could be adopted by the city's Board of Health to address on-going issues. Alderman Gately said the regulations were drafted out of Somerville's ordinance and he is trying to get an idea of how other cities and towns regulate dumpsters. He said there is a pretty bad rat problem in the city. Agent Fralick asked if Alderman Gately is relating the rat problem to dumpsters. Alderman Gately replied he recently saw two rats on Green Street doing the Viennese Waltz and that rats are coming out during the day on Holton Street. Agent Fralick said he had one on his front lawn, and he drove around it with his lawn mower. He said the last thing he would think of doing if he saw a rat was to call his alderman. He said he does not think imposing regulations on dumpsters will mitigate the rat problem in the city. He said during his 30 years as Board of Health Agent he can count on both hands the number of complaints he's gotten about dumpsters in the industrial areas of the city. He said there are additional things he can do for rodent control, but he does not think imposing dumpster regulations would be beneficial. He said Somerville has 25 people to enforce ordinances. He said if he thought the city needed dumpster regulations, he would have drafted them on his own. Alderman Gately asked if compost piles contribute to the rat problem. Agent Fralick said the most rats he's ever seen in the city was on North Warren Street. He said Richard Circle also had a rat problem about 20 years ago. Alderman Gately said the city needs to institute some sort of controls over dumpsters. Agent Fralick said there are already some regulations on the books regarding dumpsters at food establishments and anything above 3-family homes. He said the proposed regulations will create another layer that he does not believe is necessary. Alderman Gately said City Council members are getting calls from all over the city. He said a woman who lives on Salem Street found a rat in her cellar and had to kill it. Agent Fralick said rats are an indigenous species that has been around for one million years. He said there have been recent news reports about problems with rats in Peabody and Danvers. Alderman Gately asked why the Woburn Fire Dept. is the enforcement agency for dumpsters. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said there was a preponderance of dumpster fires in the 1970s, and that's when the fire department was put in charge of administering the dumpster regulations. Alderman Campbell asked if every dumpster in the city undergoes pest control measures. Agent Fralick said every dumpster that is used by a food service entity has pest control measures. He said there are no pest control measures for dumpsters in the industrial parks. He said he has never had a complaint about a

dumpster in an industrial area. Alderman Campbell asked if Agent Fralick thinks pest control measures for dumpsters in industrial areas would help. Agent Fralick asked rhetorically if there is any food in the dumpsters in industrial area. He said the next step would be to cut down every fruit-bearing tree and remove every bird feeder in the city, because those also attract rodents. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said he has learned the rodent problem is not all about dumpsters. She said people don't realize rats usually never travel more than 100 feet. She said neighbors need to get together and properly dispose of their trash so they are not attracting rats. She said a community meeting to discuss proper trash disposal might be a good idea. She said the only commercial dumpster she has gotten calls about is the one at Pier 1 Imports on Washington Street. She said the city may not necessarily need more dumpster regulations, but there does need to be more community involvement. Agent Fralick agreed everyone needs to be involved in rodent control. He said he is waiting for the first person to admit a rat was theirs. Alderman Mercer-Bruen asked Agent Fralick if he has any suggestions about how to better involve the community. Agent Fralick said Somerville offers extermination if the resident complies with what the inspectors tell them to do. He said he got a complaint about rats on Marlboro Road and put down bait boxes. He said rodent activity can be determined by how much bait is taken. He said there was not a nibble of the bait on Marlboro Road. He said he put out bait boxes on Hart Street and all the bait was eaten. He said there are rats on Hart Street even though there are no dumpsters there. He said implementing regulations for dumpsters might create chaos. President Haggerty asked if there are any other tools the Board of Health needs. Agent Fralick said he has spoken to Mayor Galvin about bringing in a rodent expert. He said he never expected to become the city's exterminator. He said he'd love to have more money to hire a rodent expert. He said he has started a map with push pins indicating the places where he has gotten complaints about rodents. Alderman Mercer-Bruen asked Agent Fralick would like to hold a community meeting. Agent Fralick said Danvers started a community hotline and it got 12 calls in a week. He said there are way too many dumpsters and imposing addition regulations would not give the city the best bang for its buck. President Haggerty suggested Agent Fralick could compile a list of the top 5 things the city can do to address the rodent problem in the city. Agent Fralick said he could do some research into what other towns have done. He said Somerville pays \$66,000 for a rodent control position and Quincy just spent \$284,000 on rodent control. He said residential trash tends to be more of a problem than dumpsters. He said there are 13,000 dumpsters in the city. He said that maybe something could be written into the specifications for the next trash contract. President Haggerty said City Council members do get a lot of calls. He said the Board of Health may want to put something on the city's website about how regulations are going to be enforced. Agent Fralick said he does not have a data base for dumpsters. President Haggerty said he would like to continue this conversation at some point. Motion made by Alderman Mercer-Bruen and seconded by Alderman Gately to ask Agent Fralick to compile a list of suggestions about how to better address the rat problem in the city; approved, 8-0.

Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Mercer-Bruen to adjourn; approved, 8-0. President Haggerty adjourned the meeting at 6:47 p.m.

Attest: _____

Gordon Vincent
Clerk of Committees