

**COMMITTEE ON LIAISON  
NOVEMBER 27, 2017 AT 6:25 PM  
COMMITTEE ROOM  
WOBURN CITY HALL**

Voting Members Attending: President Richard Haggerty, Alderman Michael Anderson,  
Alderman Mark Gaffney, Alderman Michael Concannon, Alderman Lindsay Higgins,  
Alderman Darlene Mercer-Bruen, Alderman Edward Tedesco, Alderman Richard Gately  
Absent: Alderman Joanne Campbell

Also present: City Solicitor Ellen Callahan Doucette:

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**On the Open Meeting Law Complaint filed by Elaine Sutherlin:** President Haggerty said the complaint was filed in reference to an executive session held on October 17, 2017, to discuss “the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual” under exemption #1 of the state Open Meeting Law. President Haggerty said he spoke to City Solicitor Callahan Doucette and in his opinion the OML does not apply to Ms. Sutherlin as the Council referenced a memo she wrote but she was not the employee whose character was discussed. President Haggerty said he believes the Council did not violate the OML. City Solicitor Callahan Doucette she can draft a letter within the next day or two indicating there was no OML violation. City Solicitor Callahan Doucette said she believes Ms. Sutherlin is misinterpreting the OML and her character or reputation was not being discussed by the Council, and therefore she did not require notification of the meeting. City Solicitor Callahan Doucette suggested the Committee could vote to refer the matter to her office for a response. Alderman Gately asked when Ms. Sutherlin gets a chance to speak on her behalf. City Solicitor Callahan Doucette said the Council did not conduct a public hearing in regard to Ms. Sutherlin’s memo. Alderman Gately asked what would happen if the Council goes along with Ms. Sutherlin’s complaint. City Solicitor Callahan Doucette said the Council would have to find itself in violation of the Open Meeting Law. President Haggerty said the City Council felt there was nothing in Ms. Sutherlin’s complaint that would prompt the Council to move forward. City Solicitor Callahan Doucette said there was clearly no OML violation. Alderman Concannon said there are two separate issues and that the OML applies to the party who was referenced in Ms. Sutherlin’s email and she was subject to a letter written by the Human Resources Director that was discussed by the Council at the meeting referenced in Ms. Sutherlin’s complaint. City Solicitor Callahan Doucette said Ms. Sutherlin is misinterpreting the statute and she is not the individual who is protected under the OM in this instance. Alderman Concannon said Ms. Sutherlin believes she is protected because the Human Resources Director referenced Ms. Sutherlin in her letter. City Solicitor Callahan Doucette said that is not enough to require Ms. Sutherlin to be notified of the executive session under the statute. Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Anderson that the Committee finds there was no violation of the Open Meeting Law and to refer the matter to the City Solicitor’s office for a response to Ms. Sutherlin’s complaint; approved, 8-0.

Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Anderson to adjourn; approved, 8-0. President Haggerty adjourned the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gordon Vincent  
Clerk of Committees