



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA • APRIL 13, 2020

Regular Meeting

Sullivan Chamber

5:30 PM

Cambridge City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Ave, Cambridge, MA 02139

I. CITY MANAGER'S AGENDA

1. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to an update on COVID-19.

CMA 2020 #82

During the meeting, City Manager Louis A. DePasquale, Police Commissioner Branville Bard, City Solicitor Nancy Glowa, and Director of Communications Lee Gianetti all provided a COVID-19 update. The City Manager noted that applications for [the Mayor's Disaster Relief Fund](#) are now being accepted, and that some residents will receive monetary assistance from it as early as Thursday, April 16, 2020. In addition, it was announced that [203 nursing home and assisted living facility residents and employees](#) in Cambridge tested positive for Coronavirus. The City previously [partnered with the Broad Institute](#) to test these vulnerable individuals and the staff who care for them. These results highlight just how dire this public health emergency has become, especially for groups at a higher risk of infection, and show just how crucial testing is to understanding the true impact COVID-19 is having on our community. Commissioner Bard provided an update on [the emergency homeless shelter](#) being opened at the War Memorial Recreation Center. The [shelter partially opened this morning](#), April 14, 2020, to quarantine homeless residents experiencing symptoms as they await test results. Over the weekend, [the State announced it is contracting with hotels](#) to provide self-isolation space to homeless individuals with Coronavirus, so residents who test positive will be brought to [the Freepoint Hotel in Cambridge](#) for isolation and treatment. The main section of the homeless shelter that will serve asymptomatic homeless residents is expected to open later this week. As the City continues to adapt to ever-changing circumstances, it must work towards enhancing the quality and safety of this asymptomatic area. Placing partitions or other physical barriers between beds in sleeping areas not only has the potential to reduce transmission rates, but also increases privacy for our homeless residents, and offers them a space to store their personal belongings. Delivering human services in a humane way is crucial to ensuring the success of this homeless shelter, and of all of the City's efforts to support our vulnerable communities in these challenging times. City Solicitor Glowa also provided an overview of all of the emergency orders the City has instituted during COVID-19, while Gianetti summarized the City's efforts to update residents with key information and educate them on what resources are available to them during this pandemic.

This item was placed on file.

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2. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appointment of the following person as a member of the Cambridge Health Alliance Board of Trustees for a term to expires June 30, 2021: James Henderson

CMA 2020 #83

This item was placed on file on the consent agenda (no discussion).

3. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the transfer of \$50,000 from the General Fund Traffic, Parking and Transportation Fund Salary and Wages account to the Travel and Training (Judgment and Damages) account to cover current and anticipated medical services and/or prescription reimbursement costs for the remainder of the fiscal year for Traffic and Parking personnel injured in the performance of their duties.

CMA 2020 #84

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

4. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$215,450 from Free Cash to the General Fund Human Service Programs Other Ordinary Maintenance account to support the Homeless Shelter / Local Restaurant Community Meals Program.

CMA 2020 #85

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

II. CALENDAR

CHARTER RIGHT

1. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the relevant City departments to give the Council a financial impact summary on how the local Covid-19 response will be impacting the City's free cash and ability to budget looking into July 1, 2021, and to report back to the City Council in a timely manner.

CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR SIMMONS ON APRIL 6, 2020

POR 2020 #74

At our last City Council meeting, Councillor Simmons exercised her charter-right on this order (no vote was taken, and it appears on the next City Council agenda) because there was uncertainty on whether [the above order](#) is substantially similar to [an order](#) the Council previously adopted at our March 30, 2020 meeting. There is a City Council rule prohibiting substantially similar policy orders from being considered during the same legislative session (a two year period). After City Clerk Anthony Wilson advised on the issue (see Communications and Reports from Other City Officers Item #5), Councillor Simmons withdrew this policy order.

Councillor Simmons withdrew this order.

ON THE TABLE

2. That the City Manager is requested to direct the City Solicitor, Community Development, Public Works, Inspectional Services and any other related departments to review the proposed amendments regarding the prohibition of Natural Gas Infrastructure in New Buildings.

TABLED ON JANUARY 27, 2020

POR 2019 #339

No action was taken.

3. That the "2020 Cycling Safety Ordinance" be forwarded to the Ordinance Committee for discussion and recommendation.

TABLED ON MARCH 23, 2020.

POR 2020 #50

No action was taken.

4. That the City Manager is requested to confer with the Director of Traffic, Parking, and Transportation on streets in each neighborhood that could be closed to all non-essential traffic for the duration of the Health Emergency and report back to the council as soon as possible.

CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR SIMMONS IN COUNCIL MARCH 30, 2020

POR 2020 #67

No action was taken.

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5. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to work with DCR to explore closing Memorial Drive for the duration of the Stay at Home order to give people in Cambridge a safe space to exercise and be outside without violating social distancing practices.

**CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR SIMMONS IN
COUNCIL MARCH 30, 2020**

POR 2020 #68

This policy order, which had been tabled, asks the City Manager to work with the State Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to explore closing Memorial Drive to vehicular traffic. Traffic volumes are incredibly low due to the Stay at Home Advisory that's in effect, yet pedestrians and cyclists have been forced to remain on our narrow sidewalks, where practicing responsible social-distancing is impossible. Opening up Memorial Drive would help ensure our residents are able to safely practice physical distancing and remain healthy when they go out, whether it be a runner exercising to support physical and mental health, an essential worker on their daily commute, or someone running errands for their elderly neighbor. As Councillor Nolan also noted during discussion, DCR implemented a pilot program of closing certain streets this past weekend, and experienced no issues with overcrowding, despite the nice weather.

This order was adopted.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 18-108, regarding a report on offering early voting in City Council and School Committee Elections.

PENDING RESPONSE FROM LEGISLATURE

CMA 2018 #286

No action was taken.

III. APPLICATIONS AND PETITIONS

1. An application was received from Top Drawer, requesting permission for a external illuminating projecting sign at the premises numbered 5 Brattle Street approval has been received from Inspectional Services, Department of Public Works, Community Development Department and abutter mailing has been provided.

APP 2020 #20

This application was approved on the consent agenda.

IV. POLICY ORDER AND RESOLUTION LIST

1. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to appoint and convene a Small Business Recovery Advisory Committee.

Councillor Simmons, Vice Mayor Mallon

POR 2020 #78

This policy order, sponsored by Councillor Simmons and myself, asks the City Manager to create a Small Business Recovery Advisory Committee. Non-essential businesses will continue to be closed until May 4th, at least, and the resulting loss of income has had a devastating impact on our local small business community. By convening this Advisory Committee, we will be able to hear directly from these small businesses on how the City can better uplift small businesses and their employees during this time of critical need, while continuing to distribute information on relief resources available to them, and developing a reopening plan. Supporting our small businesses is crucial to ensuring that we emerge from this public health crisis with a recognizable Main Street, and a strong local economy. Click [here](#) to learn more about resources available to businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This order was adopted.

2. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to appoint and convene a COVID-19 Advisory Committee to review the impact of the pandemic on local communities of color, to propose ways to better disseminate information on Impact to Communities of Color.

Councillor Simmons

POR 2020 #79

This order asks the City Manager to convene an Advisory Committee to better support our communities of color during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to a number of factors, [minority communities are experiencing an influx of COVID-19 cases](#), with Mass General Hospital reporting last week that 35-40% of their COVID-19 patients are Latinx, when Latinx individuals made up 9% of their general patients before the outbreak. That's why I am grateful for the hard work Councillor Simmons has done to protect our communities of color, and why I've asked the City's Public Health Department to begin recording race on our [case visualization tool](#), to ensure any potential health disparity is documented, and that our Coronavirus response works for all residents. This order was amended to add Mayor Siddiqui as a co-sponsor.

This order was adopted as amended.

3. That in absence of revised City Council goals for the new term, the most recent approved goals are used in all Council business, particularly the budgetary process.

Councillor Carlone, Councillor Simmons, Mayor Siddiqui

POR 2020 #80

This order was adopted.

4. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the Public Health Department to develop and implement stricter public health regulations to protect our grocery store workers

Vice Mayor Mallon, Mayor Siddiqui

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POR 2020 #81

This policy order, sponsored by Mayor Siddiqui and myself, asks for stronger public health regulations to be implemented to support our essential workers. Employees at grocery stores, pharmacies, and more continue to provide critical, essential services at the risk of their own health. Expanding public health guidelines to require employees and patrons to wear masks or other face coverings, to mandate more frequent store and equipment sterilizations, to reroute cash transactions to self-service kiosks, and more, will help ensure the safety and health of these crucial workers and their loved ones. The order also encourages their employers to give these workers much-deserved hazard pay during the COVID-19 pandemic. As we continue to receive reports of workers at grocery stores and other essential businesses testing positive for Coronavirus, these enhanced protections and supports are needed now more than ever. While the order initially focused on grocery store workers, I amended the order to include all of our frontline essential employees. This order was also amended to include Councillor Simmons as a co-sponsor. Click [here](#) or [here](#) to read more about this order.

This order was adopted as amended.

5. That the City Council go on record in full support of this petition and of Harvard graduate students as they courageously stand up for their needs in a time of crisis

Councillor McGovern, Mayor Siddiqui, Vice Mayor Mallon, Councillor Zondervan
POR 2020 #82

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

6. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to light up City Hall blue to honor all frontline workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, Friday, April 17, 2020.

Mayor Siddiqui
POR 2020 #83

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

7. That the City Manager examine expanding the City's jobs programs for those unemployed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Carlone
POR 2020 #84

This order was adopted.

8. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to repurpose the War Memorial facility into only a COVID-19 testing and temporary quarantine site for unhoused individuals awaiting their test results.

Councillor Zondervan, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler
POR 2020 #85

This policy order asks the City Manager to remove the main section for asymptomatic homeless residents from the emergency homeless shelter opening at the War Memorial Recreation Center, and instead house these individuals in vacant hotel and dorm rooms. While the City must continue to adapt to the ever-changing circumstances this pandemic presents, this order does not address the immediate need to de-densify the Albany Street Shelter homeless population, as changing routes so quickly would set us back weeks, and this Shelter is critically overcrowded. Housing homeless residents in hotel or dorm rooms would require a lengthy and intensive planning process, not only with hotels and universities providing space, but with vendors and nonprofits to provide food, security, day programming, and other support services to this vulnerable population. The expert Emergency Task

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Force that was appointed to create housing for our homeless residents during the COVID-19 pandemic needs to be properly consulted on any potential change in our course of action moving forward. Councillor Zondervan exercised his charter-right to allow for further thought and consideration on the matter.

Councillor Zondervan exercised his charter-right.

9. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to work with the appropriate City staff to determine the feasibility of immediately enacting the above mentioned recommendations.

Councillor Simmons

POR 2020 #86

This policy order requests that the City Manager explore the feasibility of eliminating certain applications and license fees, extending operating permits, and allowing businesses to expand their hours when it is safe to do so. By reducing the administrative burden that fees and additional applications typically present for small businesses, this policy order is one of the many small but impactful ways we can support our local restaurants, and ensure they are ready to reopen as we emerge from this public health crisis. This order was amended to add Councillor Toomey, Councillor Nolan, and myself as co-sponsors.

This order was adopted.

10. That the City Manager work with the Public Health Department, the Cambridge Health Department and our State Delegation to report back on how Partners Healthcare and Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital are sharing resources with the Cambridge Health Alliance for the health and safety of CHA patients and Cambridge resident

Vice Mayor Mallon

POR 2020 #87

I filed the above policy order to ask the City Manager to develop a reciprocal partnership between Partners Healthcare, Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, and the Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA). Partners Healthcare recently announced a partnership between Mass General and Brigham Hospitals with Spaulding Rehabilitation Center to serve as a “step-down” facility for patients recovering from COVID-19. However, the close proximity of Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital to Cambridge Hospital means that any relapsed patients will likely be brought to Cambridge Hospital for more intensive care. Accordingly, we need to ensure that the CHA is included in this resource-sharing partnership, to protect the health and safety of CHA patients and all Cambridge residents. This order was amended to include Mayor Siddiqui as a co-sponsor.

This order was adopted.

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V. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS FROM OTHER CITY OFFICERS

1. A communication was received from the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, transmitting the 2019 Annual Report
COF 2020 #21

This communication was placed on file.

2. A communication was received from Mayor Siddiqui, transmitting Communicating regarding information from April 7 Regular School Committee Meeting and Public Hearing on the FY21 Budget
COF 2020 #22

This communication from Mayor Siddiqui serves as an update on the [Distance Learning Plan](#) developed by Cambridge Public Schools, and on the Schools' [Budgeting Process](#). Our schools will continue to be closed until at least May 4th, so I am grateful for the work the School Committee is doing to ensure our students continue to receive a quality education, and for Mayor Siddiqui's efforts to keep the City Council informed and engaged throughout the Schools' budgeting process. Click [here](#) to read Mayor Siddiqui's full update.

This communication was placed on file.

3. A communication was received from Mayor Siddiqui, transmitting Communicating regarding COVID19 Response.
COF 2020 #23

This communication was placed on file on the consent agenda.

4. A communication was received from Mayor Siddiqui, transmitting Communicating regarding COVID specific Legal Coaching from New Leaf Legal.
COF 2020 #24

This communication announces a partnership with New Leaf Legal to provide tele-coaching services to HUD-eligible small businesses. Our small business community has been hit especially hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, and has reported difficulty with navigating the new supports offered to them, especially with the federal stimulus packages. That's why Mayor Siddiqui and I were proud to work with the Community Development Department to identify funding for these tele-coaching services. The legal and technical support that New Leaf Legal provides will allow our small businesses to explore the relief options available to them, helping them make the best decisions for themselves and their employees in this time of uncertainty. Businesses can contact Bonnie May Shantz, bshantz@cambridgema.gov for more information.

This communication was placed on file.

5. A communication was received from Anthony Ivan Wilson, City Clerk, responding to a question regarding parliamentary procedure.
COF 2020 #25

This communication was placed on file.

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6. A communication was received from Councillor Quinton Zondervan, transmitting thoughts on planning for the next phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Councillor Zondervan, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler

COF 2020 #26

This communication was placed on file.