



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA • JUNE 22, 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 a COVID-19 update.
CMA 2020 #134

City staff provided a COVID-19 update.

Reopening Update: The City Manager reported that outdoor restaurant dining has largely been a success so far, and that the City is continuing to process [applications](#) for businesses hoping to expand into private or public ways. As indoor dining was slated to begin on Monday, June 22nd, and new sectors opened, reopening guidelines and contact information for City staff will be sent out to them.

Outdoor City facilities are reopening in phases. Tennis courts, dog parks, golf courses (by appointment only), athletic fields (passive use), and parks are all already open. Basketball courts (for non-contact drills), playgrounds, and tot lots are slated to reopen on Monday, June 29th, alongside water features. While I understand the need to be cautious, I am disappointed to see that children and their families will have to go another weekend without playgrounds. For kids who have been largely confined to their homes since March, playgrounds are an invaluable resource to play, grow, and let off steam. And with rising temperatures, water features are even more important for residents without access to air conditioning or other cooling methods. Children rarely transmit or contract COVID-19, so we need to be conscious of this and their needs moving forward as we continue to reopen facilities.

Several City departments have resumed or will soon resume offering services. The Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department, Clerk's Office, Finance Department, Inspectional Services Department, Historical Commission, Personnel Department, Consumer's Council, Assessing Department, Animal Control Office, and the Licensing Commission are all available to residents in-person by appointment only. The Fire Prevention Office will open on Monday, June 29th, and the City is currently examining the possibility of offering services on Fridays as well, as appointments are currently only offered Monday-Thursday.

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Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Update: The City has been working with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation to expand closures of Riverbend Park to open up room for pedestrians and cyclists. Memorial Drive will be closed to vehicular traffic for both Saturdays and Sundays, giving residents the space they need to enjoy the weather, exercise, and get to where they need to go while practicing physical distancing.

The Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department will be hosting a [webinar](#) on [the Shared Streets Pilot](#) on Thursday, June 25th at 6pm to give information and answer residents' questions. An online [feedback form](#) is also being used to gather community insight. Although the Pilot was originally supposed to begin on June 15th, it was pushed back to procure additional signage and to collect community feedback. Following Thursday's webinar, it could begin to be implemented as soon as this Friday, June 26th, although one section in the Port will be delayed to respond to residents' concerns. Although I am frustrated that it has taken so long to accomplish this, I am hopeful we can see a swift implementation of this Pilot in time for the weekend, and that the Pilot can be further expanded to include more streets in this safe streets network.

[New changes](#) to increase outdoor dining space were also announced. Parks of certain streets in Central and Inman Squares will be closed to vehicular traffic to allow outdoor dining to expand into the streets. As a result, Cambridge Street will be made one-way (westbound towards Harvard) for cars, while two-way traffic on Massachusetts Avenue in Central Square will stay the same. The City is also looking to develop potential similar changes to benefit restaurants in Harvard and Kendall Squares. This is a great way to ensure restaurants can welcome back their customers in a safe and inviting way. As the Chair of the Economic Development and University Relations Committee, I know these changes are desperately needed by our local restaurants, and I look forward to continuing to develop new ways to uplift our small business community in their recovery.

Cars will need to be moved for street cleaning beginning July 1st.

Human Services Update: The Department of Human Service Programs (DHSP) began operating [summer food sites](#) yesterday, Monday, June 22nd, taking over from the [Food For Free](#) team that has been running the school meal distribution sites. DHSP will also be offering [online/offline summer programming](#) for free.

Public Health Update: Although COVID-19 fatigue is weighing on us all, we have to remain vigilant and continue to wear masks, physically distance, and practice hand hygiene. The Cambridge [COVID-19 Case Count](#) now shows 1,078 positive cases, with a steadily declining hospitalization rate. There have been a devastating 97 COVID-19 deaths, but as we mourn this loss of life and loss in our community, the Public Health Department reports that we went nearly two weeks without another death, a sign our vigilance has been working. Roughly 60% of cases (643 residents) have recovered so far.

The Public Health Department will continue their mobile testing efforts, and announced they are working on a mobile testing schedule for next week, where testing will be available for one day each

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week in a particular neighborhood. Additionally, the [East Cambridge testing tent](#) will be decommissioned this Friday, June 26th. The Public School Task Force is also discussing testing with schoolchildren. COVID-19 affects children less than adults, but sick children are also often sent to school because of childcare concerns, and there is a risk for teachers and staff, so an in-depth conversation has to be had on this possibility before the fall.

Currently, Cambridge has an overall COVID-19 testing positivity rate of 6.4%, lower than Somerville, Arlington, Boston, and Chelsea. Upwards of 15,000 tests have been administered in Cambridge, and with more and more coming back negative, Cambridge is set on a path towards recovery. Moving forward, the Public Health Department will continue to address the disparate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color by collecting better public health data, examining the effectiveness of mitigation strategies, increasing community engagement, and alleviating the disproportionate impact of social determinants of health.

This item was placed on file.

2. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of the Mass Cultural Council FY2020 Safe Harbors grant in the amount of \$2,250 to the Grant Fund Historical Commission Salaries and Wages account which will support the Commission's part-time archives assistant.

CMA 2020 #135

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

3. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$1,245 received from the Board of Library Commissioners (MLBC) to the Grant Fund Library Other Ordinary Maintenance account which will be used to support community summer learning programs at the Library.

CMA 2020 #136

This appropriation will be used to purchase library books and other materials in support of community summer learning programs. The Library will be holding its usual 10-week summer reading program, which now includes different challenges to engage readers in new, active ways, even though the program is being held virtually. In addition, virtual performances featuring puppeteers, musicians, acrobats, and more will be held, and 800 children's books will be given away. While 800 books are a good start, it won't be enough to get every child the books they need to last all summer long, especially for eager, voracious readers. While library patrons can use the online reservation system, that model won't work for kids, especially those who want book recommendations. Instead, I hope we can look at setting up mobile sites to safely distribute children's books on-site at key City locations. Regular summer learning loss will be paired with COVID-19 learning loss, so it's imperative that we make educational and enriching resources like physical library books as available and accessible as possible.

This item was adopted.

4. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$500.00 from Cambridge in Motion, through the Cambridge Public Health Department, to the grant fund

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Emergency Communication Other Ordinary Maintenance account which will be used to support a program to encourage all staff to take on a monthly challenge designed to improve physical activity during the shift such as standing for fifteen minutes each hour or walking the building during breaks.

CMA 2020 #137

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

5. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to a transfer in the amount of \$65,000 from the General Fund Law Department Salaries and Wages to the General Fund Law Department Other Ordinary Maintenance account which will be used to cover cost increases related to litigation and legal matters handled by outside counsel.

CMA 2020 #138

The City's Law Department sometimes uses outside counsel when they need expertise on a specific subject, or additional support on time-consuming matters.

This item was adopted.

6. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$1,641,000 from Free Cash, to the Public Investment Fund Public Works Extraordinary Expenditures Account for the first year of a two-year lease of operating and office space for the Department of Public Works on Mooney Street.

CMA 2020 #139

This appropriation will be used to cover first-year expenses for the Department of Public Works (DPW) to use a leased space. The Public Works facility on Hampshire Street already has significant space shortages, and with COVID-19, it is even more crucial that DPW employees have the space they need to safely practice physical distancing while on the job.

This item was adopted.

7. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$5,300,000 from Free Cash to the Public Investment Fund Human Services Extraordinary Expenditures Account to construct a new Universal Design Playground.

CMA 2020 #140

Funds from this appropriation will be used to construct a new Universal Design Playground on an unused .75 acre parcel of land at Danehy Park. This will be the first of its kind in Cambridge, and will ensure every child and family can engage in play, regardless of ability level. This \$5.3 million appropriation does not include \$500,000 in planning costs. The original cost estimate of \$2.5 million has increased to add a bathroom facility, specialized playground equipment, and more sensory features, in addition to a necessary 25% construction contingency, as the site was formerly a landfill, and 5% set aside for COVID-19 related matters. Construction on this inclusive playground is expected to begin in late summer, and will last nine to twelve months.

This item was adopted.

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8. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to a recommendation of the Community Preservation Act Committee (CPAC) for an allocation of \$1,000,000 from the CPA Fund Balance to the Community Preservation Act Fund COVID-19 Housing Stabilization Program.

CMA 2020 #141

This appropriation provides \$1 million in funding from the Community Preservation Act Committee to support the Cambridge COVID-19 Housing Stabilization Program. These funds will be used to provide short-term housing assistance to Cambridge residents experiencing financial instability due to COVID-19, who are at risk of losing their housing. This is an effort across several different City departments, and the City is hoping to open applications for this program by July 13th. Those who have already received housing assistance through the Mayor's Disaster Relief Fund are eligible to apply. In a time when many of our neighbors are struggling, we have to ensure that this process is as streamlined and as accessible as possible, without barriers to entry for the many Cambridge residents who need swift and meaningful relief.

This item was adopted.

9. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the authorization of a spending limit of \$1,300,000 FY2021, for the Renewable Energy and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Revolving Fund, pursuant to Chapter 3.24 of the Municipal Ordinance titled "Departmental Revolving Funds".

CMA 2020 #142

This appropriation will be used for solar panel installation, design, and procurement.

This item was adopted.

10. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of Federal CARES Act funds in the amount of \$1,529,834 to the Public Investment Fund Community Development Department Extraordinary Expenditures account which will be used to assist residents and small business owners who are impacted by the virus.

CMA 2020 #143

This appropriation will use \$1.53 million in federal CARES Act funding to assist both residents and small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. \$500,000 will be used alongside Community Preservation Act funds to support the Cambridge COVID-19 Housing Stabilization Program, which provides short-term housing assistance to residents. \$1 million will be used to provide short-term financial assistance to small businesses affected by COVID-19 through the Small Business Recovery Grant Program. Lastly, nearly \$30,000 will be used to offer and expand tele-coaching services for small businesses. As businesses adapt and begin to reopen, they have a wide variety of needs, so providing a diverse set of tele-coaching services, including social media training, financial planning, technical assistance, HR and legal services, and patio designs for restaurants seeking to expand dining service to sidewalks or streets, would help ensure we return from this public health crisis to a recognizable Main Street with the small businesses we know and love.

This item was adopted.

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11. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of grant in the amount of \$613,262 from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the HOME Program to the Public Investment Fund Community Development Extraordinary Expenditures account (\$578,992) and to the Grant Fund Community Development Salary & Wages account (\$34,270) which will be used to continue the development and rehabilitation of affordable housing in the City of Cambridge.

CMA 2020 #144

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

12. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$120,000 from Free Cash to the General Fund Executive (Cambridge Office of Tourism) Other Ordinary Maintenance account which will directly support a city-wide campaign, “Hello Again” in collaboration with the City and the business community - to welcome businesses, customers, and the surrounding neighborhoods back by promoting health safety and positivity following the COVID-19 shut down.

CMA 2020 #145

This appropriation will help support a city-wide “Hello Again” campaign, welcoming customers back to the local business community, while promoting public health guidelines through materials reminding residents about mask use, hand hygiene, and physical distancing. This campaign originated from the hard work of Michael Monestime, Executive Director of [the Central Square Business Improvement District](#), to uplift the local small business community by sending a clear, consistent message to residents about how they can support their favorite small businesses.

This item was adopted.

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II. CALENDAR

CHARTER RIGHT

1. Policy Order Re Addressing Systemic Racism in Cambridge.

**CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR SIMMONS IN COUNCIL JUNE 10, 2020
POR 2020 #136**

Councillor Simmons previously exercised her charter-right (no vote was taken, discussion was ended, and it appears on the next week's agenda) on this order to allow for more deliberation and discussion. This order, filed by Councillor Simmons, asks the City Manager to work with the Chair of the Civic Unity Committee to appoint a committee to make recommendations on how the City can better address racism and racial intolerance. It also asks the City Manager to work with the Chair of the Civic Unity Committee to convene a Town Hall meeting to gather related community insight. This order was amended to ask the City Manager to also confer with the Chair of the Public Safety Committee on these matters.

This order was adopted as amended.

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. An application was received from Duncan MacArthur, requesting permission for a curb cut at the premises numbered 56 Creighton Street; said petition has received approval from Inspectional Services, Traffic, Parking and Transportation, Historical Commission and Public Works. No response has been received from the neighborhood association.

TABLED BY IN COUNCIL JUNE 1, 2020

APP 2020 #22

No action was taken.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4. 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. POLICY ORDER AND RESOLUTION LIST

1. That the City Manager be and is hereby requested to work with the appropriate city departments to place all collective bargaining agreements between the City and unions on the city website, in an easily accessible location, to increase transparency for the public.

Councillor McGovern, Vice Mayor Mallon, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Simmons

POR 2020 #138

Councillor McGovern, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Simmons, and I put this policy order forward to ask the City Manager to make all of the City's collective bargaining agreements available online. Doing so will enhance transparency and accountability for all City departments and personnel in unions, especially those in the Police Department. This is just one of the many steps my colleagues and I are taking to ensure public safety feels safe to every resident, and as someone who has been a leader in reforming public safety in Cambridge for my entire time on the Council, I look forward to continuing this critical work.

This order was adopted.

2. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the appropriate City staff to work with the Central Square Business Association in developing a pilot program that will allow Central Square to close to vehicular traffic on Sundays and allow restaurants to fully embrace the concept of outdoor dining for the summer months of 2020, and to report back to the City Council on this matter in a timely manner.

Councillor Simmons

POR 2020 #139

This policy order asks the City Manager to develop a pilot program of prohibiting vehicular traffic in Central Square on Sundays. As we reimagine what Central Square could look like, this is a great opportunity not only for businesses and restaurants to expand into the sidewalks and roadways, but for pedestrians and cyclists in need of space to physically distance too. Moving forward, I'm hopeful we can move forward with such a pilot, and even expand it to other business centers. Last October, I filed [a policy order](#) asking the City Manager to close certain parts of Harvard Square on select days to increase foot traffic for small businesses, and although the Council hasn't heard back from the City Manager yet, the City must act quickly and urgently to ensure residents and small businesses alike are well-supported in Cambridge's COVID-19 recovery.

This order was adopted.

3. That the City Manager be and is hereby requested to identify an air-conditioned space for a Cambridge Day Services Center for unhoused people

Councillor McGovern, Mayor Siddiqui, Vice Mayor Mallon, Councillor Simmons

POR 2020 #140

Councillor McGovern, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Simmons, and I filed this order to ask the City Manager to create a Cambridge Day Services Center for homeless residents. Before the COVID-19

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pandemic, Councillor McGovern, Mayor Siddiqui, and I were lucky enough to visit the Downtown Day Services Center (“The Center”) in Washington, DC, and got to see the critical work being done there to support those experiencing homelessness. By offering meals, shower access, laundry facilities, case management, legal services, healthcare and more, The Center uses a housing-first model that helps set homeless individuals onto a path of stable, long-term housing, that we need to see replicated in Cambridge. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the issues facing unhoused individuals as resources like the Multiservice Center and the Meals Exchange closed. And as temperatures are rapidly rising, we must ensure they have a safe, welcoming space to cool down, build community, and access the services they need. After hearing a suggestion from a resident, I amended this order to replace the “air-conditioned” wording to “climate-controlled” to ensure the space will be accommodating in the winter months as well.

This order was adopted as amended,

4. Anti-Racist Free Little Libraries

Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Simmons, Councillor Nolan, Vice Mayor Mallon
POR 2020 #141

Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Simmons, Councillor Nolan, and I submitted this policy order to ask the City Manager to place four little free libraries across Cambridge in specified locations, and to provide the initial books for the little free libraries. The locations were suggested by [the My Brother’s Keeper Task Force](#), and will help ensure more anti-racist texts are available to Cambridge residents. These books will serve as an educational tool, while also sparking critical dialogues on how race shapes our daily lives, and building community.

This order was adopted.

5. That the City Manager is requested to provide a report by the end of summer for discussion at a September Council meeting on the advantages and disadvantages of continuing with Civil Service, and the process by which Cambridge could exit Civil Service.

Councillor Nolan
POR 2020 #142

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

6. That the City Council goes on record in support of the Stop The Money Pipeline movement calling on the insurance industry to not insure or invest in fossil fuels

Councillor Zondervan, Councillor Carlone, Councillor Nolan, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler
POR 2020 #143

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

7. That the Cambridge City Council go on record in support of including a two-track Grand Junction railway crossing in MassDOT’s Allston Multimodal Improvement Project plans, and urges the FMCB to vote in favor of this inclusion

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Nolan

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POR 2020 #144

Since 2014, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation has been planning the Allston Multimodal Improvement Project, which will transform road, railway, and land use patterns along Interstate 90 across the river from Cambridge, and will also create new planning opportunities in Cambridge itself. One potential opportunity would be expanding the Grand Junction Railway bridge from a one-track crossing to a two-track crossing, allowing more communities to be connected via high-speed regional rail. This policy order asks the City Council to go on record in support of a two-track crossing. However, as the State has tried to do this twice before, and as he was concerned about having a high-speed rail so close to the proposed [Grand Junction Multi-Use Path](#), Councillor Toomey exercised his charter-right.

Councillor Toomey exercised his charter-right.

8. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to immediately publish a list of all upcoming temporary tow-zones in the Port neighborhood and distribute this list to residents

Councillor Zondervan, Councillor Simmons, Mayor Siddiqui

POR 2020 #145

This order was adopted.

9. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to obtain an itemized statement of all materials, tools, and property owned by the Cambridge Police Department

Councillor Zondervan, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler

POR 2020 #146

This policy order asks that an itemized list of all materials, tools, and property owned by the Cambridge Police Department be made available. Understanding what exact materials the Police Department owns is one of the many ways we can promote transparency and accountability within the City. However, as Councillor Simmons stressed during discussion, we cannot talk about systemic racism as if it exists in a vacuum, and that we must address the ways it permeates our community beyond policing. Councillor Simmons then exercised her charter-right so she could file a complementary policy order addressing racism in the entire municipality.

Councillor Simmons exercised her charter-right.

10. Fossil Fuels impacting Public Health and quality of life

Councillor Carlone

POR 2020 #147

This order proposes adding a section into the Zoning Ordinance that would require a Green Building Project to submit an energy source analysis before they can be approved for a building permit. This amendment to the Zoning Ordinance would not mandate that a renewable energy source be used, but that the feasibility and cost of installing fossil fuel systems and renewable energy systems both be evaluated. As many renewable energy sources can be the same cost as fossil fuels, this amendment hopes to educate and encourage more developers to choose a greener option,

This order was referred to the Ordinance Committee and the Planning Board for further discussion.

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11. That the City Manager includes the weekly COVID-19 Expert Advisory Board meeting notes on the following Monday nights City Council agenda for discussion starting on the Monday, June 29th meeting.

Vice Mayor Mallon

POR 2020 #148

Policy Order and Resolution List Item #11-16 were all late orders, meaning they had been filed on the day of the City Council meeting. As the meeting had already lasted five hours, and as late orders typically should be reserved for timely matters, some Councillors expressed frustration that there were six late orders this week. However, some orders, such as my above order asking the City Manager to include weekly updates from the COVID-19 Expert Advisory Board, are time-sensitive, and the other orders are similarly important. In addition, next Monday, June 29th, is the last regular City Council meeting before our summer recess, so the agenda for that meeting will likely be long as well. Ultimately, Councillor Zondervan exercised his charter-right on every late order, so they will appear on next week's agenda.

Councillor Zondervan exercised his charter-right.

12. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to consult with the appropriate City personnel to take the necessary measures that will ensure that June 19 be formally observed as the Juneteenth Holiday beginning in 2021 and every June 19th thereafter, and to report back to the City Council on this matter in a timely manner.

Councillor Simmons

POR 2020 #149

See Policy Order and Resolution List Item #11 for discussion.

Councillor Zondervan exercised his charter-right.

13. That the City Manager confer with the Cambridge Police Department, Emergency Communications Department, Department of Public Health, Department of Human Services and other relevant departments to determine the feasibility of an alternative Public Safety Crisis Response System, which department would be responsible for it, and how it would be funded and implemented in FY2022, and report back to the Council by September 14th.

Vice Mayor Mallon

POR 2020 #150

See Policy Order and Resolution List Item #11 for discussion.

Councillor Zondervan exercised his charter-right.

14. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to reinstitute the practice of dispatching crews of hand-sweepers from the Public Works Department to Harvard Street (between Prospect Street to Portland Street) in the Port on a regular basis to ensure that the City does a better job of keeping the streets and sidewalks in this neighborhood clean, and to report back to the City Council on this matter in a timely manner.

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Councillor Simmons

POR 2020 #151

See Policy Order and Resolution List Item #11 for discussion.

Councillor Zondervan exercised his charter-right.

15. That the City Manager be and hereby is directed to provide the City Council with an update on the formal Anti-bias /Cultural Competency Strategic Plan that was called for in a [Policy Order passed on May 20, 2019](#) and was again called for on [December 16, 2019](#); and be it further

Councillor Simmons

POR 2020 #152

See Policy Order and Resolution List Item #11 for discussion.

Councillor Zondervan exercised his charter-right.

16. That the City Manager confer with the City's Housing Liaison and Multi Service Center to discuss a variety of long-term housing solutions and tenant protections and report back to the City Council on July 27, 2020.

Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor McGovern, Councillor Simmons, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler

POR 2020 #153

See Policy Order and Resolution List Item #11 for discussion.

Councillor Zondervan exercised his charter-right.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS FROM OTHER CITY OFFICERS

1. A communication was received from Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, transmitting information from the School Committee's Special Meeting and Regular Meeting.

COF 2020 #37

This communication from Mayor Siddiqui outlines the work the School Committee is doing, including the appointment of two new Assistant Superintendents and two new Student Members, as well as the work of the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee on COVID-19 related facilities planning. [Click here](#) to read Mayor Siddiqui's full communication.

This communication was placed on file.