



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA • OCTOBER 26, 2020

Regular Meeting

Sullivan Chamber

5:30 PM

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

I. CITY MANAGER'S AGENDA

1. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$921,062 from Free Cash to the Public Investment Fund, Emergency Communications Extraordinary Expenditures account to procure a new Records Management System (RMS).

CMA 2020 #237

This appropriation will be used to procure a new Records Management System for the Cambridge Police Department (CPD), which has been using the same outdated system for 24 years. This new system will help promote transparency and accountability in policing because it has the technical capability to capture data on if and where bias may exist within CPD, and provide automatic statistical analysis of traffic stops, behavioral crises, and, eventually, use of force, taking out any potential bias in an employee who would otherwise be performing that analysis. It is expected to take eight to ten months to implement this new Records Management System, and the procedural justice dashboard documenting bias within the Police Department will be put up as soon as possible. For the past three years that I've served on the City Council, I've been working with the Police Commissioner and City leadership to ensure this police dashboard is created in a thoughtful, intentional way that promotes transparency in policing. As we reimagine public safety, this procedural justice dashboard means committing to a transparent, publicly accountable Police Department that uses a data-driven approach towards eliminating bias and building trust within our community. I am excited to see this moving forward in a meaningful way, after a long and deliberative process.

This item was adopted.

2. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$11,712.78, received from various donations to the Council on Aging, to the Grant Fund Human Service Programs Other Ordinary Maintenance account which will be used to support services for Cambridge Seniors, including support for the new virtual platform for instruction.

CMA 2020 #238

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

3. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of new Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the amount of \$551,448 to the Grant Fund Human Services Salary and Wages

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account (\$57,294) and to the Other Ordinary Maintenance account (\$494,154) which will be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus pandemic among individuals and families who are homeless, will support shelter operating costs and provision of essential services to homeless persons outside of a shelter setting, and will support the administration of this grant.

CMA 2020 #239

During discussion, Councillor McGovern explained that, in order to be eligible to receive these funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, a municipality must have a “Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness.” As the Chair of the Human Services and Veterans Committee, Councillor McGovern also announced he would be scheduling a committee meeting to get an update on Cambridge’s progress with our plan.

This item was adopted.

4. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of the Emergency Food and Shelter National Board Program (EFSP) grant in the amount of \$15,000 to the Grant Fund Human Service Programs Other Ordinary Maintenance account which are used annually to supplement fuel assistance payments.

CMA 2020 #240

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

5. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of the Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance grant funded by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in the amount of \$112,119.46 to the Grant Fund Human Service Programs Salary and Wages account (\$95,118.25), Other Ordinary Maintenance account (\$15,401.21), and Travel and Training account (\$1,600.00) which will be used for costs related to the Carey Men’s Permanent Supported Housing Program operated by the Multi-Service Center.

CMA 2020 #241

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

6. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of a grant from the Museum of Science to the STEAM Initiative in the amount of \$34,000 to the Grant Fund Human Services Other Ordinary Maintenance account which will be used to provide professional development training and to purchase STEAM related supplies for Early Childhood and Out of School Time educators around STEAM content.

CMA 2020 #242

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

7. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 20-24, regarding a report on the distribution of gator bags.

CMA 2020 #243

This item was placed on file.

8. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 19-49, regarding a report on restrictions on signage specific to retail establishments that sell e-cigarettes and other vaping devices.

CMA 2020 #244

Back in April of 2019, I filed [a policy order](#) with Councillors McGovern and Toomey asking the City Manager to issue recommendations and restrictions on vaping advertisements in retail stores that sell those products. Teen smoking is on the rise, and marketing campaigns have misled teens to believe that

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e-cigarettes are less dangerous and addictive than traditional cigarettes. That's why I was disappointed to see this response from the City Solicitor that recommends prohibiting vaping advertisements throughout the City, except at retail stores that sell these dangerous products. My policy order focused on restricting these signs at stores that sell e-cigarettes, and, as this is a huge public health concern for our young residents, the City Council voted to return this to the City Solicitor's Office. I hope our legal team will work more thoroughly with our public health officials to develop an ordinance that more closely embodies the spirit of my policy order.

This item was referred to the City Solicitor's Office.

9. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 20-15, regarding a report on the feasibility of limiting the number of Saturdays and holidays any one developer can be permitted for any one construction project.

CMA 2020 #245

Last February, I submitted [a policy order](#) asking the City Manager to explore limiting the number of Saturdays and holidays any one developer can be permitted for a specific construction project. For residents who live near an active construction site, the noise can be disruptive and burdensome to the point it could potentially impact their health and wellbeing, especially now that residents are encouraged to work from, learn from, and stay at home whenever possible, so having a Saturday or a holiday where they knew there wouldn't be construction is crucial. This communication is a response back from the City Solicitor, where she opines that the City legally should not impose individualized limits, but could develop an objective standard that applies to all developers. The City Solicitor's Office will be sitting down with the Department of Public Works, the Inspectional Services Department, the Licensing Commission, and other relevant City departments to develop that objective standard. While no one wants to delay projects, especially housing projects, we have to put the wellbeing of our residents first, so I look forward to seeing what that objective standard looks like, and moving it forward.

This item was placed on file.

10. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 20-22, regarding a report on working with the Inspectional Services Department to increase the fines for absentee property owners who continue to have violations stemming from rodent infestation.

CMA 2020 #246

This item was placed on file.

II. CALENDAR

CHARTER RIGHT

1. An application was received from Charles Doty, requesting permission for a curb cut at the premises numbered 810 Main 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.

CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR SIMMONS IN COUNCIL

OCTOBER 19, 2020

APP 2020 #41

Councillor Simmons exercised her charter-right (discussion ended, no vote was taken, and it appears on the next City Council agenda) on this application last week as she had concerns that abutters weren't meaningfully engaged in this process. She's since reached out to neighborhood groups in the area, but needed more time for some questions to be answered, so this item was tabled (no action will be taken for an indefinite amount of time).

This item was tabled.

ON THE TABLE

2. Green Energy Analysis Zoning Amendment.

TABLED ON MOTION OF COUNCILLOR CARLONE IN COUNCIL OCTOBER 5, 2020

POR 2020 #147

No action was taken.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

3. 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.

4. The City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the City of Cambridge Law Department to review the above changes to the language of the Domestic Partnerships Ordinance and report back to the Council.

PASSED TO A SECOND READING IN COUNCIL JULY 27, 2020. TO BE ORDAINED ON OR AFTER SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

POR 2020 #180

No action was taken.

5. Order to amend the rules of the Cambridge City Council.

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THIS ITEM WAS ADOPTED ON SEPTEMBER 14, 2020. PURSUANT TO RULE 36B OF THE CITY COUNCIL RULES IT MUST BE APPROVED ONCE MORE PRIOR TO ENACTMENT.

POR 2020 #201

This order contains amendments to the City Council rules that govern the way we conduct public meetings. Notably, one new rule will limit public comment speakers to two minutes if more than twenty people sign up for public comment. This was a tough decision to make; on one hand, listening to residents' feedback is one of our most important responsibilities, but on the other hand, we cannot and do not always make the best policy decisions when three or four hours of public comment pushes our meetings into the night, sometimes until two or three am. Having long public comment periods means that people further down on the list may not get a chance to speak because they have other responsibilities and can't wait for their turn. As residents also have the option to email their comments to the City Council, which most public speakers often do, and as there may be a way to coordinate with the IT Department to get the word out on the two minute limit, I voted in favor of trying this new rule.

This item was approved.

6. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to a response to Policy Order O-13 of October 5, 2020, regarding a draft Truck Safety Ordinance.

PASSED TO A SECOND READING IN COUNCIL OCTOBER 19, 2020 TO BE ORDAINED ON OR AFTER NOVEMBER 9, 2020

CMA 2020 #234

No action was taken.

III. APPLICATIONS AND PETITIONS

1. An application was received from The Smoke Shop BBQ Restaurant, requesting permission for a projecting sign at the premises numbered 8 Holyoke Street, approval has been received from Inspectional Services, Department of Public Works, Community Development Department and abutter.

APP 2020 #42

This application requests permission to install a neon illuminated sign, which requires approval from the Historical Commission. This application packet didn't contain that paperwork, but I was able to confirm that the Historical Commission did approve of this sign.

This application was approved.

IV. POLICY ORDER AND RESOLUTION LIST

1. That the Executive Assistant to the City Council confer with the Dedication Committee to consider the request from Denise Cosby for a suitable dedication in the vicinity of Blackstone Street and River Street in honor of her late son, Justin Cosby

Councillor Simmons

POR 2020 #237

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

2. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the Community Development Department and other relevant City personnel to establish a plan that will allow for greater outreach to women-and minority-owned businesses, technical assistance to these businesses in applying for financial relief, and a clear plan to ensure that those small businesses that have not yet received financial assistance be granted every opportunity to access any future City funding should it be made available, and to report back to the City Council on this matter in a timely manner

Councillor Simmons

POR 2020 #238

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

3. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to raise this issue with the appropriate representatives of the Cambridge Crossing buildings, and with the appropriate representatives of the Governor's Office, to ensure that these businesses are not in violation of any current statewide Covid-19 protocols

Councillor Simmons

POR 2020 #239

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

4. That the City Council adopt a municipal ordinance to reduce or prohibit campaign donations from donors seeking to enter into a contract, seeking approval for a special permit or up-zoning, seeking to acquire real estate from the city, or seeking financial assistance from the city;

Councillor Carlone, Councillor Nolan, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Zondervan

POR 2020 #240

This order suggests a new ordinance that would reduce campaign donations from donors with an invested financial interest in the City. The proposed ordinance is predominantly cut and pasted from [Somerville's "Pay to Play" ordinance](#), but with some additional language around "attribution rules", i.e. who would be affected by this ordinance. We anticipate this needing a lot more work to finalize language, and bring the School Committee into this discussion as well, as this ordinance would also impact their campaigns. I introduced an amendment that would broaden the policy order's language to apply not just to zoning, real estate, or financial assistance matters, but to any issue where there may be a perception of unfair advantage. We need that greater level of flexibility as we head into committee discussions on this proposed ordinance, but, as a City Council, our focus must remain on addressing COVID and the rampaging impacts it's having on our community. As we head into a potential third wave, our first priority has to be keeping residents in their homes, helping small businesses keep their doors open, uplifting non-profits and Arts organizations, and implementing intentional public health guidelines to keep our community safe. As she shared my concerns over the School Committee needing to be included in this process, Councillor Simmons exercised her charter-right on this order.

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Councillor Simmons exercised her charter-right.

5. That the City Manager be and is hereby requested to work with the Solicitor to draft Ordinance language to prohibit the use of tear gas in Cambridge

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Zondervan, Councillor Nolan, Mayor Siddiqui

POR 2020 #241

This policy order asks the City Solicitor to develop draft language for an ordinance banning the use of tear gas in Cambridge. Exposure to tear gas can have serious immediate and long-term health impacts, but it is still being used in certain municipalities across the country against protestors advocating for racial justice. The Cambridge Police Department doesn't use tear gas, but that isn't clear from the current language of this policy order, so Councillor Simmons exercised her charter-right to develop new language with the order's sponsors.

Councillor Simmons exercised her charter-right.

6. That the City must work with all major housing providers to eliminate or reduce the filing of evictions during the ongoing COVID-19 public health crisis.

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

POR 2020 #242

The statewide eviction moratorium expired on October 17th, leaving countless tenants vulnerable against the threat of evictions. Aside from the devastating, immediate impact of an eviction, having any record of an eviction court filing can severely damage a renter's ability to find a new home, regardless of fault, outcome, or underlying basis for that court filing. That's why this policy order asks the Housing Committee to work with major housing providers to reduce or eliminate eviction filings during this public health crisis. As a member of the Housing Committee, I look forward to having this critical conversation, and hope residents will join us for this discussion at our [October 28th Housing Committee meeting](#), starting at 10am.

This order was referred to the Housing Committee for further discussion.

7. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to instruct the Director of the Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department to suspend all citywide street cleaning operations on November 3rd.

Councillor Simmons

POR 2020 #243

This late order asks that street cleaning be suspended on election day. Some voting locations, like the Pisani Center in the Port, would benefit from voters being allowed to temporarily park nearby without the fear of being towed due to street cleaning.

This order was adopted.

V. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS FROM OTHER CITY OFFICERS

1. A communication was received from Mayor Siddiqui, transmitting information from the School Committee.

COF 2020 #61

This communication from Mayor Siddiqui outlines the work she and the School Committee are doing to support our scholars as they engage in remote and in-person learning. [Click here to read her full communication.](#)

This communication was placed on file.