

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, AUGUST 1, 2023**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Kathleen Born, Chair
Kaleb Abebe
Jessica DeJesus Acevedo
Mosammat Faria Afreen
Nikolas Bowie
Kevin Chen
Max Clermont
Jennifer Gilbert
Kai Long
Patrick Magee
Mina Makarios
Lisa Peterson
Ellen Shachter
Susan Shell
Jim Stockard

The Cambridge Charter Review Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, August 1, 2023. The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:30p.m. by the Chair of the Committee, Kathleen Born. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor, this meeting was remote via Zoom.

At the request of the Chair, Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Kaleb Abebe – Present
Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Present
Mosammat Faria Afreen – Present
Nikolas Bowie – Present
Kevin Chen – Present
Max Clermont -Present
Jennifer Gilbert – Absent
Kai Long – Present
Patrick Magee – Present
Mina Makarios – Present
Lisa Peterson – Present
Ellen Shachter – Present
Susan Shell – Absent
Jim Stockard – Present
Kathleen Born – Present
Present – 13, Absent – 2. Quorum established.

The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized Member Ellen Shachter who made a motion to place the written communications from the public on file.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Kaleb Abebe – Yes

Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Yes

Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes

Nikolas Bowie – Yes

Kevin Chen – Yes

Max Clermont – Yes

Jennifer Gilbert – Absent

Kai Long – Yes

Patrick Magee – Yes

Mina Makarious – Yes

Lisa Peterson – Yes

Ellen Shachter – Yes

Susan Shell – Absent

Jim Stockard – Yes

Kathleen Born – Yes

Yes – 13, No – 0, Absent – 2. Motion passed.

The Chair, Kathleen Born opened Public Comment.

Heather Hoffman commented on communication within the City and on public records requests.

Anna Corning, Project Manager, Member Kai Long, and Member Jessica DeJesus Acevedo offered comments on the Charter Review Committee meet and greet at Tasty Burger that was held on July 25, 2023. Members shared and reviewed topics that were discussed during the community gathering. Anna Corning also shared her experience at the North Cambridge location of the CEOC and the outreach that was done there.

Anna Corning shared on the screen the upcoming meeting dates and planned topics of discussion (Attachment A). Committee members offered suggestions on moving forward and including additional topics of interest related to the Charter to discuss. Anna Corning reminded Committee members that in all the Committee discussions, the goal is to come to an agreement on what new provisions or changes to provisions members want to make to the Charter as well as to provide additional context and supporting elements.

Anna Corning opened discussion to Committee members on an accountability memo (Attachment B) that was sent from the Collins Center to Charter Review Committee members. Michael Ward from the Collins Center offered a detailed review of the memo. Staff from the Collins Center and Anna Corning were available to respond and help clarify questions and concerns from Committee members.

Anna Corning shared that they wanted to change the focus of discussion to City Council setting strategic goals, City Council budget priorities, and the City Manager review process. Anna Corning shared and reviewed a draft chart on the screen reflecting a three-year general time

frame around budget priorities and the City Manager Evaluation Process (Attachment C). Anna Corning and Committee Members offered suggestions and comments on how the Charter Review Committee could potentially revise the time frame for the two topics in ways they believe would be the most successful for the City. Anna Corning shared on the screen proposed language for City Council Strategic Goals and City Council Budget Priorities (Attachment D) and asked Committee members to share what they think is important to include in the Charter.

Member Jim Stockard shared that he agreed with all the proposed elements in the City Council Strategic Goal section and noted that even though the City Council and the City Manager are two separate parts of the government, it would be important to look at them as a team working together to set goals and collaborate.

Member Kaleb Abebe shared concerns about the possibility of the City Council and City Manager not agreeing when it comes to goal settings. Anna Corning noted that the main goal right now is focusing on City Council goals with the possibility of bringing the City Manager into the process and seeing what is achievable.

Member Kai Long asked how these goals are relayed to the public. Anna Corning shared that at a future date, the Committee will be discussing City Manager responsiveness to Policy Orders and public awareness. Member Long suggested that in relation to budget priorities, the City Council within their budget is given funding to use towards specific goals of the Council.

Member Lisa Peterson noted that it is important that goals and priorities work together to be successful. Member Peterson suggested adding public tracking of the goals, meeting benchmarks, and the importance of having those available to the public.

Chair Born shared that these goals are here to help make the City Council, as a body, the policy making and governing body of the City.

Member Patrick Magee shared that having the goal setting start at the beginning of new City Council terms will help normalize the political culture of the City. He noted that City Council candidates can promote their elections with their proposed goals and policies, which can then be potentially adopted in the new term. Member Magee shared that by default it would make candidates and those elected more accountable.

Anna Corning shared that moving forward, she will take all the thoughts and comments on the draft City Council Strategic Goals and use them as provisions to add to the current Charter.

Member Jim Stockard offered concerns with some of the language in the potential elements within the City Council Budget Priorities and provided suggestions on how it could be revised. Member Ellen Shachter shared concerns about the Executive Branch and City Council having different budget priorities and how the two can work together to support Council budget priorities.

Member Jessica DeJesus Acevedo suggested having a written report and a public meeting or forum related to Council budget priorities, and noted the importance of having more consistent engagement.

Member Lisa Peterson shared that Council goals should be tied to the budget priorities and vice versa.

The Charter Review Committee adjourned at approximately 7:30p.m.

Attachment A – Upcoming meeting dates and topics.

Attachment B – Memo from the Collins Center to the Charter Review Committee.

Attachment C – Draft three-year budget priorities and City Manager review.

Attachment D – Proposed language for City Council strategic goals, budget priorities, and City Manager review.