

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, AUGUST 15, 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 15, 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 – Absent
Mosammat Faria Afreen – Present
Nikolas Bowie – Present
Kevin Chen – Present
Max Clermont – Present
Jennifer Gilbert – Present
Kai Long – Absent
Patrick Magee – Present
Mina Makarios – Present
Lisa Peterson – Present
Ellen Shachter – Absent
Susan Shell – Absent
Jim Stockard – Present
Kathleen Born – Present
Present – 11, Absent – 4. Quorum established.

The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Lisa Peterson who made a motion to adopt the meeting minutes from July 18, 2023.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Kaleb Abebe – Yes

Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Absent

Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes

Nikolas Bowie – Yes

Kevin Chen – Yes

Max Clermont – Yes

Jennifer Gilbert – Yes

Kai Long – Absent

Patrick Magee – Yes

Lisa Peterson – Yes

Ellen Shachter – Absent

Susan Shell – Absent

Jim Stockard – Yes

Kathleen Born – Yes

Yes – 11, Absent – 4. Motion passed.

The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Jim Stockard who made a motion to adopt the communications received from the public.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Kaleb Abebe – Yes

Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Absent

Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes

Nikolas Bowie – Yes

Kevin Chen – Yes

Max Clermont – Yes

Jennifer Gilbert – Yes

Kai Long – Absent

Patrick Magee – Yes

Lisa Peterson – Yes

Ellen Shachter – Absent

Susan Shell – Absent

Jim Stockard – Yes

Kathleen Born – Yes

Yes – 11, Absent – 4. Motion passed.

The Chair, Kathleen Born opened public comment.

Suzanne Blier shared concerns about recent items that have passed within the Council and offered comments on ideological and politically driven decisions made by the Council and urged the Charter Review Committee to discuss these matters more.

Marilyn Frankenstein asked why there is no ward or district system where there could be At Large Councillors as well as Councillors for specific areas of the City and shared concerns about why Charter Review Committee members are not discussing this further.

Heather Hoffman offered comments and concerns related to people being selected for Boards and Commissions based on demographics and not expertise.

Anna Corning, Project Manager, reviewed the drafted language for City Council Goal Setting and Budget Priorities provisions, which was provided in advance of the meeting and included in the Agenda Packet. Anna Corning opened the discussion related to City Council Goal Setting and recognized Committee Members to share their comments and suggestions about the proposed language. Michael Ward and Patricia Lloyd from the Collins Center were available to respond. Chair Born noted the importance of making goal setting practical and introducing measurable aspects to it.

Charter Review Committee members along with Anna Corning continued to review the drafted language and focus on the Budget Priorities provision section. Committee members offered suggestions and raised concerns during discussion. Staff from the Collins Center were available to respond and provide feedback.

Anna Corning introduced additional draft language related to the City Manager Review and recognized Committee members for comments, questions, and concerns. Anna Corning noted that language regarding the City Manager Review was just recently added to the Charter and could be found under Section 116(a). Anna Corning shared potential elements that could be added to the Charter and provided examples of language from other municipalities. Michael Ward and Patricia Lloyd were available to respond to comments from Committee members.

Anna Corning shared that she would like to review Article 1 of the Charter with the possibility of approving the proposed language. Michael Ward offered an explanation of why Article 1 is included in modern Charters, noting that the language is there to help lay the foundation for the City and its powers.

Anna Corning recognized member Kevin Chen who offered the suggestion that in Section 1-5 to change 'municipality' to 'city'. Michael Ward shared he does not see any issues with that change and will confirm with other members of the Collins Center.

Anna Corning recognized member Mina Makarious who shared they would like to add at the end of Section 1-3 'appointed by the City Council'. Member Makarious proposed additional language be added to Section 1-6 related to the City Manager and the City Council's intergovernmental relationship.

The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Jim Stockard who made a motion to adopt Article 1: Incorporation, Powers, Etc., as amended in Committee (Attachment A), as proposed new Charter language.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Kaleb Abebe – Yes

Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Absent
Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes
Nikolas Bowie – Absent
Kevin Chen – Yes
Max Clermont – Absent
Jennifer Gilbert – Yes
Kai Long – Absent
Patrick Magee – Yes
Mina Makarios – Yes
Lisa Peterson – Yes
Ellen Shachter – Absent
Susan Shell – Absent
Jim Stockard – Yes
Kathleen Born – Yes
Yes – 9, Absent – 6. Motion passed.

The Chair, Kathleen Born reminded Committee members that due to the number of members that were absent, the previous vote on Article 1 was not a two-thirds vote, which is a requirement of the Charter Review Committee. The Chair noted that the Committee can continue with individual votes and plan to have a two-thirds acceptance vote with the final report.

Anna Corning opened discussion to Committee members on resident relief mechanisms and noted that there is the possibility of making several provisions within the relief mechanisms. Anna Corning shared that the possible provisions could be around free petitions, initiative, referendum, and recall.

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

Attachment A - Article 1: Incorporation, Powers, Etc., as amended in Committee.

Clerk’s Note: The City of Cambridge/22 City View records every City Council meeting and every City Council Committee meeting. This is a permanent record. The video for this meeting can be viewed at:

https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/559?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=98b8698751887a17df347dbd24c4b9e2