

CITY MANAGER'S AGENDA

1. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to a request for the City Council to adopt a statutory small business exemption for personal property accounts equal to or less than \$10,000.00 in assessed value, and if approved as a special act by the Legislature and Governor of the Commonwealth, for personal property accounts equal to or less than \$20,000.00 in assessed value.

Agenda Item Number 1A Apr 6, 2020

WHEREAS: Small businesses in the City of Cambridge ("City") are in need of substantial assistance due to the economic effects of the response to COVID-19;

WHEREAS: Payments of personal property tax is a financial and administrative burden for small businesses, and for smaller accounts, an administrative burden upon City departments;

WHEREAS: For fiscal year 2020, 49% of the City personal property accounts had an assessed value of \$10,000 or less, which represents just 0.27% of the overall personal property valuation of the City;

WHEREAS: For a \$10,000.00 personal property tax account, the proposed exemption would save a small business \$126.80 at fiscal year 2020 rates;

WHEREAS: G.L. c. 59, § 5, Clause Fifty-Fourth allows a city to exempt personal property from taxation and provides as follows:

The following property shall be exempt from taxation . . . Fifty-fourth. Personal Property, if less than an amount established by the city or town, but not in excess of \$10,000 of value. This clause shall take effect upon its acceptance by a city or town, which shall establish a minimum value of personal property subject to taxation and may modify the minimum value by vote of its legislative body.

WHEREAS: A personal property tax exemption is one part of the City's effort to assist small businesses in the City, and now, therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Council goes on record accepting the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 59 §5, clause fifty fourth, which allows for an exemption for personal property tax not in excess of \$10,000 of value; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager direct City departments to institute the full personal property tax exemption of \$10,000 of value as soon as practicable.

Agenda Item Number 1B Apr 6, 2020

WHEREAS: Small businesses in the City of Cambridge ("City") are in need of substantial assistance due to the economic effects of the response to COVID-19;

WHEREAS: Payment of personal property tax is a financial and administrative burden for small businesses, and for

smaller accounts, an administrative burden upon City departments;

WHEREAS: For fiscal year 2020, 62% of the City personal property accounts had an assessed value of \$20,000 or less, which represents just 0.54% of the overall personal property valuation of the City;

WHEREAS: For a \$20,000.00 personal property tax account, the proposed exemption would save a small business \$253.60 at fiscal year 2020 rates;

WHEREAS: Approval from the General Court is required for the City to offer a \$20,000.00 personal property tax exemption;

WHEREAS: A personal property tax exemption is one part of the City's effort to assist small businesses in the City, and now, therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager direct the City Solicitor to draft a home rule petition requesting authorization for the City to allow a personal property tax exemption up to \$20,000.00 of value; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager direct City departments to institute the full personal property tax exemption of \$20,000 of value as soon as practicable after approval of the aforementioned home rule petition.

Agenda Item Number 1C Apr 6, 2020

ORDERED: That the City Council petition the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to enact the attached Home Rule Petition entitled: AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE TO ALLOW FOR A PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION OF \$20,000.00 OR LESS.

2. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the transfer of \$25,000 from the General Fund Electrical Department Salary & Wages Account to the Electrical Travel and Training account (Judgments and Damages) to cover medical services and/or prescription reimbursement costs for personnel injured in performance of their duties.
3. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$16,620.00 from Free Cash to the General Fund Human Service Programs Other Ordinary Maintenance account for the support of the daytime operation of the First Church in Cambridge Shelter for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis.
4. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to an update on COVID-19.

CHARTER RIGHT

1. An application was received from Sam Kachmar, requesting permission for a curb cut at the premises numbered 207 Lakeview Avenue; 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 ZONDERVAN IN COUNCIL MAR 30, 2020]

2. 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 MAR 30, 2020]
3. 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 MAR 30, 2020]

ON THE TABLE

4. 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 JAN 27, 2020]
5. That the "2020 Cycling Safety Ordinance" be forwarded to the Ordinance Committee for discussion and recommendation. [TABLED ON MAR 23, 2020.]

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]

COMMUNICATIONS

1. A communication was received from Victoria Lynn Awkward, regarding support for BioMed Rezoning.
2. A communication was received from Cynthia Toomer, regarding Internet Access.
3. A communication was received from Kimberly S. Courtney, ESQ., regarding City Contracts for food preparation.
4. A communication was received from Peter Valentine, 37 Brookline Street, regarding the Earth being a living being.
5. A communication was received from John Pitkin, 18 Fayette Street, regarding War Memorial Recreation Center and Field House and temporary use of side street.
6. A communication was received from Dan Yonah Marshall, regarding Support of Rezoning 585 Third Street.
7. A communication was received from Maggie Currier, regarding Application for curb cut at the location of 207 Lakeview Avenue.

RESOLUTIONS

1. Resolution on the death of Maria Moniz. Councillor Toomey
2. That the City Council go on record thanking the Black Student Union for their important video thanking the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School's Custodial and Food Servicepersons for their dedicated service. Councillor Toomey, Councillor Simmons, Mayor Siddiqui

ORDERS

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. Councillor Simmons, Councillor Carlone
2. That the Mayor's Office be and hereby is urged to convene discussions with representatives of MIT and Harvard University to make determinations as to whether this year's annual senior luncheon gatherings shall be delayed or cancelled, to determine whether alternative celebrations can be planned in their wake, and to report back to the City Council in a timely manner. Councillor Simmons, Councillor Toomey
3. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to work with the relevant City departments to report back to the Council on what efforts have been made to work with other municipalities on this issue and to work with Cambridge's State Delegation and the Governor's office for a comprehensive regional housing plan to be put in place to house the homeless during the COVID-19 emergency. Councillor Toomey, Councillor Simmons, Councillor McGovern
4. That the City Manager expand tax-filing and stimulus benefit assistance to low-income and unhoused residents. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Zondervan

HEARING SCHEDULE

Mon, Apr 6

5:30pm City Council Meeting (Sullivan Chamber – televised virtual meeting)

Tues, Apr 7

3:00pm The Economic Development and University Relations Committee will meet for a hearing to discuss a report back from the Economic Development Division of the Community Development Department on steps the City of Cambridge has taken towards developing a vacant storefront registration policy. (cancelled)

Mon, Apr 13

5:30pm City Council Meeting (Sullivan Chamber – televised virtual meeting)

Tues, Apr 14

5:00pm The Ordinance Committee will hold a public hearing on the Affordable Housing Overlay Petition. (cancelled)

Wed, Apr 15

3:00pm The Ordinance Committee will hold a public hearing on the Affordable Housing Overlay Petition. (cancelled)

Thurs, Apr 16

5:30pm The Health and Environment Committee to hear a progress report and recommendations from the Climate Resilience Zoning Task Force. (cancelled)

Mon, Apr 27

5:30pm City Council Meeting (Sullivan Chamber – televised virtual meeting)

Tues, Apr 28

5:30pm The Ordinance Committee will hold a public hearing to discuss the Harvard Square Conservation District Study Committee report. (cancelled)

Mon, May 4

5:30pm City Council Meeting (Sullivan Chamber – televised)

Mon, May 11

5:30pm City Council Meeting (Sullivan Chamber – televised)

Tues, May 12

9:00am The Finance Committee will meet for a public hearing on the FY21 budget. (Sullivan Chamber – televised)

Wed, May 13

5:00pm The Finance Committee will meet for continued public hearings on the FY21 budget. (Sullivan Chamber – televised)

Mon, May 18

4:00pm *Cambridge Scholarship Awards Ceremony* (Sullivan Chamber – televised)

5:30pm City Council Meeting (Sullivan Chamber – televised)

Mon, June 1

5:30pm City Council Meeting (Sullivan Chamber – televised)

TEXT OF ORDERS

O-1 Apr 6, 2020

COUNCILLOR SIMMONS

COUNCILLOR CARLONE

WHEREAS: The City is continuing to make determinations about what expenditures will need to be made to mitigate some of the worst local impacts of the economic hardships caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, including providing additional funding for our human services programs, services for the homeless, and other unforeseen expenditures; and

WHEREAS: On [March 30, 2020, the City Council asked](#) that the City Manager provide a financial impact summary on how these unexpected expenditures will impact the City's budget and free cash reserves from April 1 to June 30, 2020; now therefore be it

ORDERED: 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.

O-2 Apr 6, 2020

COUNCILLOR SIMMONS

COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

WHEREAS: Governor Baker has extended his orders for residents of the Commonwealth to continue sheltering-in-place at home until May 4, and the likelihood suggests that this date shall be pushed back further into May and possibly beyond; and

WHEREAS: With a vaccine for the Covid-19 virus unlikely to become available until sometime in 2021 at the earliest, it would appear that many large social gatherings will be delayed indefinitely to ensure the safety of residents in Cambridge, the Commonwealth, and across the country; now therefore be it
ORDERED: That the Mayor's Office be and hereby is urged to convene discussions with representatives of MIT and Harvard University to make determinations as to whether this year's annual senior luncheon gatherings shall be delayed or cancelled, to determine whether alternative celebrations can be planned in their wake, and to report back to the City Council in a timely manner.

O-3 Apr 6, 2020

COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

COUNCILLOR SIMMONS

COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN

WHEREAS: Cambridge and Boston have both developed comprehensive sites to house the homeless population during the COVID-19 emergency; and

WHEREAS: Homelessness is a regional problem; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to work with the relevant City departments to report back to the Council on what efforts have been made to work with other municipalities on this issue and to work with Cambridge's State Delegation and the Governor's office for a comprehensive regional housing plan to be put in place to house the homeless during the COVID-19 emergency.

O-4 Apr 6, 2020

COUNCILLOR SOBRINHO-WHEELER

COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN

WHEREAS: In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government recently passed an economic stimulus package that will provide up to \$1,200 in cash assistance to individuals; and
WHEREAS: Many low-income and unhoused residents [may have difficulty](#) receiving the cash assistance because of the lack of a permanent home address and because they may not be tax-filers; and

WHEREAS: This direct cash assistance will be provide an important lifeline for low-income and unhoused residents in securing food and other life essentials as well as provide a boost for the local economy; and

WHEREAS: Cambridge has existing tax-preparation [assistance programs](#) that have been affected by the pandemic and should be expanded upon as a result of the potential assistance available through the COVID-19 stimulus package; and

WHEREAS: The tax-filing deadline has been extended until July 15, 2020 because of the pandemic; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager shall work to expand tax-filing assistance for low-income and unhoused residents, including by working directly with Cambridge residents on filing assistance and by advertising the cash assistance benefits available from the economic stimulus on billboards and online; and be it further
ORDERED: That the City Manager shall look into enabling residents without a permanent home address to use the address of City Hall or another public building as their tax-filing address; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager shall report back to the Council on this in a timely manner before the July 15, 2020 tax-filing deadline.