

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, RULES,
AND CLAIMS COMMITTEE
Tuesday, March 24, 2026**

**GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,
RULES, AND CLAIMS
COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Chair
Vice Mayor Azeem
Councillor McGovern
Councillor Nolan
Councillor Simmons

A public meeting of the Cambridge City Council’s Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee was held on Tuesday, March 24, 2026. The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m. by the Chair, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025 adopted by the Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation. This public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and by remote participation via Zoom.

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

Vice Mayor Azeem – Present/Remote
Councillor McGovern – Present/In Sullivan Chamber
Councillor Nolan – Present/In Sullivan Chamber
Councillor Simmons – Absent*
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Present – 4, Absent – 1. Quorum established.

*Councillor Simmons was present and remote at 1:01 p.m.

The Chair, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler offered opening remarks and noted that the call of the meeting was to discuss the 2026 City Manager’s Annual Goals and Review Process. Present at the meeting was City Manager, Yi-An Huang, Deputy City Manager, Kathy Watkins, Assistant City Manager for Community Development, Melissa Peters, Commissioner of the Department of Transportation, Brooke McKenna, Chief People Officer, Raecia Catchings, Chief of Staff to the City Manager, B. Kimmerman, and Deputy City Solicitor, Elliott Veloso. Also present was Mayor Siddiqui.

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler recognized City Manager Huang who offered opening remarks and provided an overview of the City Manager’s performance review process, highlighting how the structure has created effective timelines and expectations. City Manager Huang reviewed some of the categories that were reorganized to help with establishing measurable performance goals. City Manager Huang added that he continues to look forward to establishing greater alignment

and transparency with the City Council while collaborating to reach priorities of the Council and the City.

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler opened public comment.

Young Kim, 17 Norris Street, Cambridge, MA, shared concerns about the City Manager's evaluation process and provided suggestions on how the City Council and City Manager could be more transparent.

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler recognized Councillor Nolan who shared questions related to the 360-degree review process and emphasized the importance of having community partners provide their input. Councillor Nolan added how important smart goals are and improving performance measures across the entire City. Councillor Nolan shared that it would be helpful to understand how Department Heads are being evaluated during performance reviews, noting that it is important to discuss both strengths and areas for improvement to be successful. City Manager Huang provided a brief overview of how the City uses measurable performance review information through resident and employee surveys. City Manager Huang shared he would be open to working with the City Council to create a more defined process that includes clearer metrics and evaluating performance reviews. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler acknowledged how the City Manager Review process can be complex because of the balance between administrative responsibilities and efforts towards policy decisions and added that having measurable metrics in the review process may be challenging.

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler recognized Mayor Siddiqui who shared her support for having a revised framework for the review process and separating different categories. Mayor Siddiqui offered comments on the importance of prioritizing community engagement and questioned how equity work and strategic planning would be included moving forward. Mayor Siddiqui asked for more information on how artificial intelligence (AI) would play a role in future city operations. City Manager Huang shared how identifying key initiatives are a reflection from Council discussions and administrative needs. City Manager Huang shared that efforts towards equity and strategic planning are ongoing and will continue to be presented for discussion in City Council and Committee meetings. The City Manager explained that the City has created a policy related to AI and has introduced Co-Pilot as a tool for staff to use. City Manager Huang shared that there will be more discussion with the City Council in the future related to AI. The City Manager provided examples of the City's ongoing operational work and long-term planning, such as IT modernization and emergency preparation.

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler shared that the review process will continue to evolve, and it is important to understand the complexity that comes with the role of City Manager and measuring the different performance categories. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler acknowledged the need to balance policy making and administrative responsibilities, while recognizing that overall performance, relationships, and effectiveness are not always easily measurable.

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler recognized Councillor Nolan who spoke in support of using AI as a tool to improve City operations and accessibility. Councillor Nolan added that it is important to review Boards and Commissions and suggested a review process to help consolidate them.

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler shared that feedback from the discussion would be incorporated into a revised review process that he would work on with the City Manager and then shared with the full City Council as well as a timeline for completing the evaluation process. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler emphasized the importance of continued improvement between the City Manager and Council priorities.

The Chair, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler recognized Councillor Nolan who made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Vice Mayor Azeem – Yes

Councillor McGovern – Absent

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Simmons – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Yes – 4, No – 0, Absent -1. Motion passed.

The Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee adjourned at approximately 1:27p.m.

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

[Mar 24, 2026 Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee - Cambridge, MA](#)