



GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, RULES & CLAIMS COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEETING

~ MINUTES ~

Friday, April 12, 2024

10:30 AM

Sullivan Chamber
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

The Government Operations, Rules & Claims Committee will conduct a public meeting to discuss the 2024 City Manager’s Annual Goals and Review Process.

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Burhan Azeem	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Marc C. McGovern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Joan Pickett	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Paul F. Toner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

A public meeting of the Cambridge City Council’s Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee was held on Thursday, February 15, 2024. The meeting was Called to Order at 10:30 a.m. by the Chair, Councillor Toner. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted by 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.

Councillor Azeem – Present/Remote

Vice Mayor McGovern – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Pickett – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Toner – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Present – 5. Quorum established.

The Chair, Councillor Toner offered opening remarks and noted that the Call of the meeting was to discuss the 2024 City Manager’s annual goals and review process. Present at the meeting was City Manager Yi-An Huang and Acting City Solicitor, Megan Bayer. Also in attendance were Mayor Simmons, Councillor Siddiqui, and Councillor Wilson. City Manager Huang provided in advance a draft proposal for the 2024 City Manager performance review process and goals, which was included in the Agenda Packet.

The Chair, Councillor Toner recognized City Manager Huang who offered a review of the City Manager performance review process.

The Chair, Councillor Toner recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who asked if there has been any discussion on having residents and City employees offer feedback when reviewing the City Manager performance in addition to the City Council. Chair Toner explained that last year

the City Council took into consideration results from the 2023 Resident Survey and that 20-25 senior staff members were also interviewed for feedback. Councillor Pickett asked for clarification on how often the Resident Survey is being conducted. The City Manager explained that for many years, the Resident Survey was done on even years, but last year was the first year that the City Manager and his team decided that it should be done every year. The City Manager also pointed out that within the City Manager goals, one of them is to have a Resident Survey performance of greater than 60% in the excellent and good category for the overall performance of City government. The Chair noted the importance of hearing input from residents and from City employees.

The Chair, Councillor Toner recognized City Manager Huang who provided a review of the City Manager performance categories and the City Manager overall performance assessment. Committee members were recognized for comments and questions throughout the review.

The Chair, Councillor Toner recognized Councillor Wilson who asked where the Disparity Study and economic development fit in the performance categories. The City Manager explained that there is a gray area between the specific goals that he is setting related to his performance and City Council goals in terms of what he is responsible for versus the direction he gets from the City Council. The City Manager noted the importance of having conversations together to identify key initiatives and goals, and having a shared responsibility to which the Council has the opportunity to review his performance as a partner relative to meeting goals.

The Chair, Councillor Toner shared that he would like for the implementation of annual reviews to occur for senior management teams and ask that the Council is made aware when the evaluations are complete. City Manager Huang noted that that is the intention of the goal, and that staff are available to discuss what the process looked like but would not be discussing the actual reviews of individuals.

The Chair, Councillor Toner recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who offered suggestions of priorities to add to City Manager performance categories. City Manager Huang indicated that he would be happy to have conversations with the City Council to help decide what initiatives they would like to prioritize. Councillor Siddiqui echoed comments made by Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler and highlighted the importance of reaching initiatives like Universal Pre-K and Universal Afterschool and how to get more specific within the Council priorities. Vice Mayor McGovern pointed out that the previous Council voted unanimously on a Policy Order (POR 2023 #59) to develop a plan for Universal Afterschool, which the Vice Mayor sees as a direction to the City Manager and his staff.

The Chair, Councillor Toner recognized Councillor Pickett who offered the suggestion of creating a Sustainability Office that may help to tie in some of the City Council's goals. The City Manager responded by stating the importance of having a conversation to talk through what that may look like.

The Chair, Councillor Toner suggested that when the City implements the annual Employee Engagement Satisfactory Survey, it would be beneficial to have data that reflects employee turnover. Councillor Siddiqui shared that she agreed with that suggestion and noted the importance of the completion rate when the surveys are being conducted.

The Chair, Councillor Toner recognized Councillor Pickett who made a motion to extend the meeting by fifteen minutes.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Pickett – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Yes -5. Motion passed.

The Chair, Councillor Toner recognized Councillor Pickett who pointed out that she has heard that there was improvement that City staff would like to see improvement in certain areas and suggested having a City operation goal around system modernization. Councillor Pickett also shared that she would like to see improvements on the customer service level within some City departments and noted that in the Resident Survey there were concerns raised about how some departments respond quicker than others to customers reaching out with questions and concerns. The City Manager agreed that having additional conversations regarding customer service would be beneficial, and highlighted how important customer service is for the City to run efficiently. In addition, City Manager Huang provided examples of how the City has been improving system modernization, with residents having the ability to use See Click Fix and the implementation of the City being able to use DocuSign internally and with outside partners.

The Chair, Councillor Toner recognized Councillor Siddiqui who asked for a status update on the Telework Hybrid Plan 2.0. City Manager Huang shared that they were happy with Telework 1.0 which only required a few minor adjustments to it, which is why 2.0 was not implemented at this time. City Manager Huang also shared that some Departments are also using Hot Desking in addition to Telework due to the lack of space within some of the offices.

The Chair, Councillor Toner recognized Vice Mayor McGovern who noted the importance of City staff be given the opportunity to receive professional development training, especially for those who are on the front line of customer service. Vice Mayor McGovern also shared the importance of providing the right support for City employees. The City Manager shared that he strongly agreed with the Vice Mayor.

The Chair, Councillor Toner had clarifying questions on ARPA funds and deadlines for the money to be used. City Manager Huang shared that the City is in active conversations with community partners who are receiving funding and that the plan is to set a firm deadline for those partners in order to comply with the guidelines.

The Chair, Councillor Toner recognized Councillor Pickett who shared that it may be good to look closer at the capital budgeting process and at the accountability of how they are performing. City Manager Huang shared that it would be a good conversation for the FY25 budget process.

The Chair, Councillor Toner made a motion to extend the meeting by ten minutes.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Pickett – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Yes – 5. Motion passed.

The Chair, Councillor Toner recognized Councillor Wilson who asked what the response time was on payments being made to vendors. City Manager Huang shared that the City is within their goal of paying things on time, and if there are any complaints that do come forward his team is available to look into them.

The Chair, Councillor Toner and the City Manager shared that they would take the feedback from the Committee and submit an updated proposed document at the next Regular City Council meeting for further discussion.

The Chair, Councillor Toner recognized Councillor Pickett who made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Pickett – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Yes – 5. The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:52a.m.

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 these meetings can be viewed at:

https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/731?view_id=1&redirect=true

A communication was received from City Manager, Yi-An Huang, transmitting a draft proposal for the 2024 City Manager Performance Review Process and Goals.