

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui  
Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon  
Councillor Burhan Azeem  
Councillor Dennis J. Carlone  
Councillor Marc C. McGovern  
Councillor Patricia M. Nolan  
Councillor E. Denise Simmons  
Councillor Paul F. Toner  
Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan

August 2, 2023

Dear Mayor Siddiqui and Councillors,

The Charter Review Committee has continued its important work of reviewing our City's governing document.

The committee has continued to meet on a bi-weekly basis to review the Cambridge City Charter with the goal of modernizing its structure, increasing accountability of local government, and aligning the Charter with the values of our city, in particular equity and accessibility.

We have continued to engage with the Cambridge community, hosting two public events since our last report, one in May at the Foundry and a second in July at Tasty Burger Central Square. Every household in Cambridge received a mailer describing our work and providing a link to more information. Our coUrbanize website has garnered a number of responses and we continue to incorporate all public feedback and ideas actively into committee discussions and timelines.

Please find attached our approved meeting minutes since the last update to the city council, as an update on our work. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the committee staff if you have any questions or would like any more information on plans for outreach or our projected schedule.

Sincerely,  
Kathleen Born, Chair  
On Behalf of the Cambridge Charter Review Committee

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE  
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, JUNE 27, 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 Makarious  
Lisa Peterson  
Ellen Shachter  
Susan Shell  
Jim Stockard

The Cambridge Charter Review Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, June 27, 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 – Absent**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Present**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Present**

**Nikolas Bowie – Present**

**Kevin Chen – Absent\***

**Jennifer Gilbert – Absent**

**Kai Long – Absent**

**Mina Makarious – Present**

**Lisa Peterson – Present**

**Ellen Shachter – Present**

**Susan Shell – Present**

**Jim Stockard – Present**

**Kathleen Born – Present**

**Present – 11, Absent – 4. Quorum established.**

**\*Member Kevin Chen was marked present at 6:04p.m.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized Member Patrick Magee who made a motion to place the three communications from the public on file.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

**Kaleb Abebe – Absent**  
**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Yes**  
**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes**  
**Nikolas Bowie – Yes**  
**Kevin Chen – Absent**  
**Jennifer Gilbert – Absent**  
**Kai Long – Absent**  
**Mina Makarious – Yes**  
**Lisa Peterson – Yes**  
**Ellen Shachter – Yes**  
**Susan Shell – Yes**  
**Jim Stockard – Yes**  
**Kathleen Born – Yes**  
**Yes – 11, Absent – 4. Motion passed.**

### **Public Comment**

Valerie Bonds offered comments on anti-bullying policy for Councillors in Boston, two-year terms for Councillors, and the process of electing a Mayor.

Anna Corning, Charter Review Committee Project Manager, explained to the Committee that the Council adopted a City Manager Agenda item at the June 26, 2023 City Council meeting making Charter Review Committee members Special Municipal Employees.

Anna Corning shared that she would like to continue the discussion from the previous meeting on term limits for City Councillors. Member Ellen Shachter offered comments on their experience with participating in a Board with term limits and how to balance democracy and participation, noting that new people will bring in new ideas.

Anna Corning recognized Member Susan Shell, Chair Kathleen Born, Member Jessica DeJesus Acevedo, Member Mina Makarious, Member Patrick Magee, Member Nikolas Bowie, Member Jim Stockard, Member Lisa Peterson, Member Mosammat Faria Afreen, Member Max Clermont, and Member Kevin Chen who offered comments on term limits. Discussion included Committee members sharing concerns and suggestions on term limits, with some members expressing that they would be in favor of staggered terms, while others were leaning towards not having term limits. Member Kevin Chen highlighted that the Committee should focus on what type of term limit would serve the public's interest the most. Committee members recognized the importance of encouraging younger residents to be more involved with government and noted how term limits could discourage them from pursuing their participation. It was also suggested that voting in a Cambridge election can be overwhelming, which can push residents away from going out to vote.

Anna Corning reminded members that the Committee took a straw poll at the previous meeting not to extend term limits for City Councillors and noted that it is always something the Committee can come back to in the future to see where everyone is standing.

Anna Corning brought forward that she would like to conduct a straw poll with Committee members sharing if they would like to continue the conversation on term limits or are content with ending the conversation. There were nine members who shared that they would no longer like to continue the discussion, three members that would like to continue discussion, and three members that were absent during the poll.

Anna Corning opened discussion to Committee members on the election and powers of the Mayor/Chair of the City Council. Committee members discussed whether the title of Mayor should be changed to Chair of the City Council, Head of the City Council, Speaker of the Council, or President of the City Council. Chair Born suggested that the Mayor should not be the Chair of the School Committee and that School Committee members should be able to elect their own Chair. Chair Born noted that she was in favor of having a member of the City Council participate as a member of the School Committee for the purposes of budgeting. Members of the Committee agreed that there should be a change of title as well as agreeing with comments about the School Committee. Member Lisa Peterson commented that the Charter should reflect having a goal setting process for every term regarding Councillors because it can have a positive effect towards the City.

Anna Corning recognized Michael Ward from the Collins Center who noted that President and Chair are titles that have been used in municipal bodies, but he was not familiar with Speaker being used in Massachusetts.

Committee members continued discussion on changing the title of the Mayor and what role the Mayor should play in the City.

Anna Corning shared with the Committee that she would like to take a straw poll on changing the title of Mayor to Chair of the City Council, Head of the City Council, or President of the City Council. There were eleven members that were in favor of changing the title, one member who shared they have no opinion, and three members that were absent during the poll.

Anna Corning opened discussion to Committee members on the appointment process for department heads and multi member bodies. Anna Corning noted that currently the City Council appoints the City Manager, the City Auditor, and the City Clerk and noted that the City has many multi member bodies, Boards and Commissions, and Committees. She noted that the City Manager is currently responsible for making those appointments and that some of the Boards and Commission require Council approval.

Anna Corning recognized member Jim Stockard who shared that he believes the City Manager should be able to pick their own team when it comes to the executive branch and department heads within the City. He noted that if the Council wants the City Manager to be effective, it is not unreasonable for them to pick the team which they trust will help make the City successful. Member Stockard also shared that the City Council approval of appointments to Boards and Commissions is reasonable because they are policy making bodies. Many members of the Committee shared that they agreed with the comments that were made by Member Stockard.

Anna Corning recognized Member Nikolas Bowie who suggested that the City Council should have the power to remove or discipline department heads and offered comments on appointments to Boards and Commissions and the importance of their role within the City. Member Ellen Schachter shared that she was not in favor of the City Council having the power to remove department heads. Member Max Clermont agreed. Member Kevin Chen offered suggestions on City Council removal of department heads.

Elliot Veloso, First Assistant City Solicitor, offered clarifying remarks on Boards and Commissions and the role some department heads play in those Boards. Elliot Veloso was available to respond to questions and concerns from the Committee. Michael Ward shared examples of how the City Council is involved with the hiring process from other municipalities.

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

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE  
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 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, June 20, 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 – Present  
Patrick Magee – Present  
Mina Makarios – Absent  
Lisa Peterson – Present  
Ellen Shachter – Present  
Susan Shell – Present  
Jim Stockard – Present  
Kathleen Born – Present  
Present – 12, Absent – 3. Quorum established.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Jim Stockard who made a motion to adopt the meeting minutes from the May 23, 2023 Charter Review meeting.**

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

**Kaleb Abebe – Yes**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Absent**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Absent**

**Nikolas Bowie – Yes**

**Kevin Chen – Yes**

**Max Clermont – Yes**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Yes**

**Kai Long – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Absent**

**Lisa Peterson - Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Yes**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Yes**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

**Yes – 12, No – 0, Absent – 3. Motion passed.**

The Chair, Kathleen Born, recognized Elliot Veloso, First Assistant City Solicitor, who reviewed the memo that was included in the Agenda Packet from the Law Department to the Charter Review Committee regarding the response to Council Order No. O-4 of April 10, 2023, and made himself available to respond to questions and concerns from Committee members.

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Lisa Peterson who made a motion to adopt the memo from the Law Department to the Charter Review Committee.**

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

**Kaleb Abebe – Yes**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Absent**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Absent**

**Nikolas Bowie – Yes**

**Kevin Chen – Yes**

**Max Clermont – Yes**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Yes**

**Kai Long – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Absent**

**Lisa Peterson - Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Yes**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Yes**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

**Yes – 12, No – 0, Absent – 3. Motion passed.**

**Anna Corning, Project Manager, opened public comment.**

Valerie Bonds thanked Anna Corning for hosting an event in the community room at 808 Memorial Drive and making herself available to questions from residents and offered comments and suggestions on term limits for Councillors.

Anna Corning shared that she would like to conduct a straw poll to help focus meeting discussions on topics the Committee members are most interested in and use the poll as a tool moving forward.

The first straw poll was to determine if Committee members were interested in keeping an at-large City Council, or continuing the discussion about adding district Councillors. Nine Committee members were in favor of maintaining at-large Councillors, three Committee members were in favor of continuing the discussion, and three members were recorded as absent.

The second straw poll was to determine if Committee members are interested in continuing the conversation on term lengths for City Councillors or if they are interested in keeping the current term length. The Committee members who were present chose unanimously to keep the current term length for City Councillors.

The final straw poll was to determine if the Committee was interested in discussing the addition of term limits for the City Councillors. Four Committee members were in favor of continuing the discussion of adding term limits and eight were not in favor of continuing the discussion.

Anna Corning shared that Chair Born, Member Max Clermont, and Member Lisa Peterson have been discussing ideas on adding additional elements for public engagement into the Charter. Anna Corning gave an overview of the discussions between the Committee members around engagement. Anna Corning shared that one thing that she would like the Committee to focus on is citizen participation mechanisms, which include free petitions and group petitions, and offered examples of both. Member Max Clermont noted that a free petition gives residents the opportunity to bring issues forward on the City Council Agenda by submitting the petition as a communication. Anna Corning shared with the Committee that a group petition needs a threshold of anywhere between 150-300 resident signatures or a percentage of the voters from the last municipal election, which could be around 2%-5%, once the petition has collected signatures it would then and require the City Council to hold a public hearing on the matter being brought forward through the petition. Committee members were recognized for questions and concerns and team members from the Collins Center Michael Ward and Elizabeth Corbo were available to respond and provide further information on petitions and public engagement. It was noted that if more public engagement were to be proposed in the Charter, the Committee should focus on language that would include goal setting for City Councillors and how information should be more accessible to the public.

Anna Corning shared that Chair Born, Member Clermont, and Member Peterson discussed two other potential provisions. The first was a resident assembly, which would include a large group of random, diverse individuals who are given questions and topics that they are to address. Anna Corning offered suggestions and examples of how a resident assembly could be used in

Cambridge. Member Nikolas Bowie and Member Jim Stockard shared that they strongly support resident assemblies. Member Jennifer Gilbert and Member Susan Shell offered comments and shared concerns about resident assemblies only having a short time together to focus on important topics and how participants in resident assemblies are selected. Anna Corning shared additional information on resident assemblies and made suggestions on how the Charter Review Committee can move forward with the addition on resident assemblies in the Charter.

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

**Clerk's Note:** This is a permanent record.

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE  
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 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, June 6, 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 – Present**

**Patrick Magee – Present**

**Mina Makarios – Present**

**Lisa Peterson – Present**

**Ellen Shachter – Present**

**Susan Shell – Present**

**Jim Stockard – Absent**

**Kathleen Born – Present**

**Present – 13, Absent – 2. Quorum established.**

**\*Jessica DeJesus was marked present at 5:36p.m.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized Member Lisa Peterson who made a motion to adopt the meeting minutes from May 9, 2023 and place them on file.**

**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 – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Yes**

**Lisa Peterson – Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Yes**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Absent**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

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

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized Member Patrick Magee who made a motion to adopt communications received from Committee Members and the Public and place them on file.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

**Kaleb Abebe – Yes**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Yes**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Absent**

**Nikolas Bowie – Yes**

**Kevin Chen – Yes**

**Max Clermont – Yes**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Yes**

**Kai Long – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Yes**

**Lisa Peterson – Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Yes**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Absent**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

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

**The Chair, Kathleen Born opened public comment.**

John Hawkinson thanked the Committee and Law Department staff for responding to his communication and referenced some of the response from the Law Department's memo.

Valerie Bonds thanked Committee Members for the important decision that they will have to make and shared that some of their concerns with government are about accountability.

James Williamson shared that they were in support of a city-wide survey for residents on topics discussed in Charter Review.

Heather Hoffman offered comments on the form of government and noted that whatever form of government the Committee decides, it needs to promote transparency.

The Chair, Kathleen Born reviewed the letter received from the Law Department (Attachment A) regarding a legal opinion on voting for Charter Review Committee deliberations. Anna Corning, Project Manager, and Kathleen Born were available to clarify questions from Committee Members.

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized Member Max Clermont who made a motion to move forward with the City Manager-Mayor-City Council form of government as part of the committee deliberation process.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

**Kaleb Abebe – Yes**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Yes**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes**

**Nikolas Bowie – No**

**Kevin Chen – Yes**

**Max Clermont – Yes**

**Jennifer Gilbert – No**

**Kai Long – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Yes**

**Lisa Peterson – Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – No**

**Susan Shell – No**

**Jim Stockard – Absent**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

**Yes – 10, No – 4, Absent – 1. Motion passed.**

Anna Corning introduced Elizabeth Corbo from the Collins Center who opened discussion on the Legislative Branch of government to Committee Members. Anna Corning noted that there should be three main points that Committee Members should focus on during conversation, which were:

1. Does the Committee want to recommend a change to how City Councillors represent the City? Adding some or all district representation to the current all-at-large structure.
2. Does the Committee want to change the length of terms for City Councillors (or include staggered terms)? Does the Committee want to establish term limits for City Councillors?
3. Role of Mayor/Chair of City Council. How is the Mayor/Chair elected? What should the power and duties of the Mayor/Chair of City Council be?

Member Ellen Shachter offered comments on ward representation and at large Councillors and shared that they believed a key problem with the system is making sure minorities get the proper representation.

Member Susan Shell shared that she agreed with comments made by Member Ellen Shachter and noted it is important that areas of the City are not left out in decision making, which could happen by having neighborhood representation.

Member Lisa Peterson offered comments on the possibility of district Councillors and shared it could be beneficial to some residents in the City, but found the City being broken up into three districts would be problematic for effective representation.

Member Mina Makarios noted that they have similar thoughts to Member Lisa Peterson, and shared concerns about what does not work for the current system with low turnout rates and low representation.

Member Jessica Acevedo shared that district representation is important to have individuals represent the diverse population and noted that they were in favor of staggered terms for Councillors.

Member Patrick Magee shared frustrations with the current City government on both the administration and government side. Member Magee offered comments on district representation and goal setting.

Member Kevin Chen shared that they were leaning towards the at large representation and noted they would be interested in exploring where to direct attention on the legislative side of government.

Member Nikolas Bowie shared that they felt very strongly about having the Mayor be called the Chair of the City Council to reflect what they actually are and also felt strongly against district based representation.

Member Jennifer Gilbert shared the importance of accountability and having a city-wide perspective when it comes to major changes in the City. Member Gilbert noted that they were not in favor of switching to district representation at this time.

Member Kai Long offered the suggestion of each Councillor having different responsibilities in representation to help direct community members who have concerns and noted that there should be term limits for Councillors and possibly the City Manager.

The Chair, Kathleen Born shared that she believes that proportional representation already allows for neighborhood representation. She is not in favor of districts. The Chair offered comments on term limits, noting that she is not in favor of term limits, in particular eight or ten year term limits or shorter.

Members of the Charter Review Committee continued their discussion on government by offering concerns and suggestions on ways the Committee can continue to move forward with topics they wish to address while forming a new Charter to propose to the Council. Anna

Corning, Elizabeth Corbo, and Michael Ward from the Collins Center were available to respond to Committee members. Anna Corning shared that if Committee members were interested in learning more information on the roles and power of duties of the Chair of City Council/Mayor, she and the Collins Center would be available to provide material for future discussions.

Member Lisa Peterson shared concerns from residents on whether the Mayor should be the Chair of the School Committee or if it should be someone that is specifically elected to be on the School Committee. Member Peterson noted that she was in favor of having the Mayor being the Chair, but also offered suggestions on how the Chair could be elected. Chair Born responded to comments made by Member Peterson, sharing that if a Mayor were to be elected there should be a discussion on what the roles and duties of the Mayor should be.

Member Patrick Magee asked if the Chair could go through the process of how the Mayor is currently elected and share her experience while being on the Cambridge City Council. Chair Born was available to respond and was happy to give an overview of the process.

Anna Corning reviewed the major themes that were discussed throughout the meeting and recognized Committee Members for comments. Elizabeth Corbo offered comments on theories on why officials are challenged less in district representation versus at large. Anna Corning shared suggestions from the public on how the districts could potentially be divided.

Anna Corning suggested that if Members do not feel strongly about changing something, going forward there should be votes taken in order to move on from certain discussions and topics.

Members of the Charter Review, the Collins Center, and Anna Corning discussed the City having a “311” informational telephone number similar to Somerville to assist residents with reporting various concerns and incidents and receiving a response in a timely manner.

Member Ellen Shachter shared concerns about term limits. Anna Corning, Michael Ward, and Elizabeth Corbo were available to respond and provide examples of term limits in other municipalities in Massachusetts and other States. Michael Ward noted that term limits are very rare in Massachusetts. Anna Corning shared that she would get more information on Massachusetts municipalities to provide to the Committee. Member Jennifer Gilbert asked the Collins Center why Massachusetts is different from other States regarding term limits. Michael Ward shared that he would look into it further.

Member Kai Long offered comments on term limits and noted that they would be in favor of term limits for various reasons, including having more diversity.

Anna Corning reminded Committee members and the public of future meet and greets with residents and noted that there will be no meeting on July 4, 2023.

**The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30p.m.**

Attachment A – Legal opinion from the Law Department.

**Clerk’s Note:** This is a permanent record.

The video for this meeting can be viewed at:

[https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/522?view\\_id=1&redirect=true&h=12abd6eeef3d616d2cfd6f99744013e2](https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/522?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=12abd6eeef3d616d2cfd6f99744013e2)

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE  
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, MAY 23, 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, May 23, 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 – Absent\***

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Present**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Absent**

**Nikolas Bowie – Absent\***

**Kevin Chen – Present**

**Max Clermont – Present**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Absent**

**Kai Long – Present**

**Patrick Magee – Present**

**Mina Makarios – Absent**

**Lisa Peterson – Present**

**Ellen Shachter – Present**

**Susan Shell – Present**

**Jim Stockard – Present**

**Kathleen Born – Present**

**Present – 10, Absent – 5. Quorum established.**

**\*Member Nikolas Bowie was marked present at 5:41p.m.**

**\*Member Kaleb Abebe was marked present at 6:00p.m.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized Member Ellen Shachter who made a motion to adopt and place on file written communications received from the public. The motion was seconded by Member Jim Stockard.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

**Kaleb Abebe – Absent**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Yes**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Absent**

**Nikolas Bowie – Absent**

**Kevin Chen – Yes**

**Max Clermont – Yes**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Absent**

**Kai Long – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Absent**

**Lisa Peterson – Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Yes**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Yes**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

**Yes – 10, No – 0, Absent – 5. Motion passed.**

The Chair, Kathleen Born noted that the meeting was for Committee Members to continue the discussion on forms of government and shared that Michael Ward and Elizabeth Corbo from the Collins Centers were present at the meeting.

**The Chair, Kathleen Born opened Public Comment.**

James Williamson shared that he was supportive of Committee Members moving towards a more democratic government and offered comments and suggestions on different forms of government.

Member Kai Long offered comments on using the word “democracy” when discussing form of government and shared they would like to have a better understanding of how other Committee Members feel they are using the word “democracy” when they are offering comments during conversations. Member Nikolas Bowie responded by sharing their thoughts on democracy and offered comments on Mayor-CAFO-Council form of government, as well as the budget. Members Jim Stockard, Ellen Shachter, Susan Shell, Lisa Peterson, Kai Long, Max Clermont, and Patrick Magee responded to remarks made by Nikolas Bowie and offered comments on form of government, democracy in the community, and the budget. Member Nikolas Bowie stressed the importance of building up a democratic body. The Chair, Kathleen Born shared that based on discussions in the Committee, it feels that there is a universal support for budget process reform regardless of what form of government Committee Members are leaning towards. Michael Ward offered comments on voter turnout and Mayor and Manager forms of government.

Anna Corning recognized Elizabeth Corbo who shared a chart titled “Decision Chart for Article 3: Executive Branch” (Attachment A), with the focus being on Mayor-CAFO-Council form of

government. The chart reviewed the potential decision areas which included qualifications, term of Office, compensation, prohibitions, evaluation, goal setting, powers/duties, appointments by Office, temporary appointments, temporary vacancy in Office, removal (City Manager), and Veto (Mayor). While reviewing the chart, comments and concerns that were brought forward by Committee members were added to the document (Attachment B). Members from the Collins Center and Anna Corning were available to respond to questions and concerns from Committee members.

Member Ellen Shachter shared concerns about the procedure for the Committee moving forward with decision making. Anna Corning noted that the plan was to try and finish up the form of government discussion at the current meeting with the goal of a vote being taken at the next meeting. Anna Corning shared that the majority vote on form of government would then be the focus moving forward and members who vote in the minority would have the opportunity to produce a minority section on that form of government to be submitted with the final report. Member Ellen Shachter suggested that if Members were not available to vote at the next meeting, they could possibly submit a vote by proxy. The Chair, Kathleen Born noted that the Law Department should be consulted on this issue.

Members Kai Long and Susan Shell offered comments on democracy and voter turnout. Member Nikolas Bowie shared that they agree with Kai Long and Susan Shell on voter turnout and noted that the low turnout in the City is not a good way to run the City. Nikolas Bowie noted that the Committee can make changes within their control to change voter turnout. Anna Corning and Michael Ward offered comments and suggestions about voter turnout and shared that the Committee can look at other ways to increase voter participation. The Chair, Kathleen Born asked for clarification on ways to increase participation in elections. Anna Corning and Member Nikolas Bowie, noted that under the State's Home Rule Amendment, municipalities are not allowed to change voting laws without State Legislative approval.

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

Attachment A – Decision Chart for Article 3: Executive Branch

Attachment B – Decision Chart for Article 3: Executive Branch with comments and questions

**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/515?view\\_id=1&redirect=true&h=a9eb99a2717b74e1865b80f83ba5a5d9](https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/515?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=a9eb99a2717b74e1865b80f83ba5a5d9)

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE  
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, MAY 9, 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 Makarious  
Lisa Peterson  
Ellen Shachter  
Susan Shell  
Jim Stockard

The Cambridge Charter Review Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, May 9, 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 – Absent  
Kevin Chen – Present  
Max Clermont – Present  
Jennifer Gilbert – Present  
Kai Long – Present  
Patrick Magee – Present  
Mina Makarious – Absent\*  
Lisa Peterson – Present  
Ellen Shachter – Present  
Susan Shell – Present  
Jim Stockard – Present  
Kathleen Born – Present  
Present – 13, Absent – 2. Quorum established.**

**\*Member Mina Makarious was marked present at 5:47p.m.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Patrick Magee who made a motion to adopt and place on file the Charter Review Committee meeting minutes from April 11, 2023 and April 25, 2023. The motion was seconded by member Lisa Peterson.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

**Kaleb Abebe – Yes**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Yes**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes**

**Nikolas Bowie – Absent**

**Kevin Chen – Yes**

**Max Clermont – Yes**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Yes**

**Kai Long – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Absent**

**Lisa Peterson – Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Yes**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Yes**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

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

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Jim Stockard who made a motion to adopt and place on file communications received from the public. The motion was seconded by Kevin Chen.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

**Kaleb Abebe – Yes**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Yes**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes**

**Nikolas Bowie – Absent**

**Kevin Chen – Yes**

**Max Clermont – Yes**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Yes**

**Kai Long – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Absent**

**Lisa Peterson – Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Yes**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Yes**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

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

### **The Chair, Kathleen Born opened Public Comment.**

Jameson Quinn shared that they have been watching the process and appreciate the work the Committee has been doing and suggested that when it comes to voting systems, start with a statement of values to fulfill those values.

Anna Corning, Project Manager, reviewed the goals for this meeting and the next meeting, with the intent to take a vote on form of government at the May 23, 2023 meeting with a majority vote. Anna Corning noted that the final report will require a 2/3 majority vote and can also include a minority report. Members of the Charter Review Committee offered questions and concerns on the plan moving forward.

Members Kai Long, Susan Shell, Ellen Shachter, Mosammat Faria Afreen, and Mina Makarious, shared concerns and offered comments about the form of government decision making process. Anna Corning and Michael Ward from the Collins Center were available to respond to questions and concerns that were raised. Anna Corning shared that she would like to do a straw poll to see which form of government members were leaning towards to begin discussion.

Anna Corning opened the discussion to Committee members on the City Manager-Council-Mayor and Mayor-CAFO-Council form of government. Anna Corning recognized Elizabeth Corbo from the Collins Center who shared a chart titled “Decision Chart for Article 3: Executive Branch” (Attachment A). The chart reviewed the potential decision areas which included qualifications, term of Office, compensation, prohibitions, evaluation, goal setting, powers/duties, appointments by Office, temporary appointments, temporary vacancy in Office, removal (City Manager), and Veto (Mayor). While reviewing the Chart, notes and questions that were brought forward by Committee members were added to the document (Attachment B). Members from the Collins Center and Anna Corning were available to respond to questions and concerns from Committee members.

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

Attachment A – Decision Chart for Article 3: Executive Branch

Attachment B – Decision Chart for Article 3: Executive Branch with comments and questions

**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/499?view\\_id=1&redirect=true&h=04bab9598a2b86d0b810dd6a3260cf5a](https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/499?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=04bab9598a2b86d0b810dd6a3260cf5a)

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE  
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, APRIL 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 Roundtable meeting on Tuesday, April 25, 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.

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

**Kaleb Abebe – Absent**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Absent\***

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Absent**

**Nikolas Bowie – Present**

**Kevin Chen – Absent**

**Max Clermont – Absent**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Absent\***

**Kai Long – Present**

**Patrick Magee – Present**

**Mina Makarios – Present**

**Lisa Peterson – Present**

**Ellen Shachter – Present**

**Susan Shell – Present**

**Jim Stockard – Present**

**Kathleen Born – Present**

**Present – 9, Absent – 6. Quorum established.**

**\*Member Jessica DeJesus Acevedo was marked present at 5:40p.m.**

**\*Member Jennifer Gilbert was marked present at 5:37p.m.**

Members of the Charter Review Committee held a roundtable meeting on Tuesday, April 25, 2023, to continue their discussion on the form of government in Cambridge.

The Chair, Kathleen Born, reminded members of the Committee and the public that it was a roundtable meeting, noting that no public comment and no votes would be taken during the meeting. Present at the meeting were Michael Ward and Elizabeth Corbo from the Collins Center who made themselves available to respond to any questions or comments brought forward by Committee members.

Anna Corning, Project Manager, gave an overview of the agenda for the meeting and noted that the discussions would be on City Manager-Council-Mayor form of government and related changes and on Mayor-Chief Administrative and Finance Officer (CAFO)-Council form of government and related changes. Anna Corning shared that Committee members should be concentrating on the strengths and challenges of each during the discussion.

Anna Corning recognized member Jim Stockard who led a focused discussion on City Manager-Council-Mayor form of government. Jim Stockard gave an overview of the pros of having a City Manager, sharing that City Managers are not subject to political pressure and are able to choose a successful team to run the various City Departments. Jim Stockard shared that they feel with the many communications, public comment, and forums the Charter Review Committee has conducted, the public seem to be leaning towards keeping a City Manager. Jim Stockard shared a question that was brought forward by a member of the public which was, "What is the problem you are trying to fix?". Jim Stockard shared that that question has stuck with him and believes that the City, for the most part, runs fairly well with the current form of government. Jim Stockard reviewed some of the cons that have been brought up during discussion regarding City Manager form of government, sharing the most noticeable concern with members is the City Manager not being an elected official and having too much power overseeing the budget. After Jim Stockard reviewed the pros and cons of the City Manager-Council-Mayor form of government, Committee members were able to offer comments and concerns, with many members sharing their opinion on this type of form of government.

Anna Corning recognized member Nikolas Bowie who led a focused discussion on Mayor-CAFO-Council form of government. Nikolas Bowie shared that no form of existing democracy is a guarantee that an elected leader will care about everybody in the community, but what democracy does well is create a strong incentive for elected officials to care what people think. Nickolas Bowie noted that as members of the Committee, they have many resources to ensure that City government is accountable. They noted that it is important, whether it is with electing a strong Mayor, or any type of form of government, that elections are as inclusive and as representative as possible. By stressing the importance of having representation in elections, voters will have the ability to make the government more accountable than it currently already is. Nikolas Bowie stressed that democratic accountability has been the biggest factor in those in favor of a strong Mayor. Nikolas Bowie shared that they were in favor of a suggestion made by the Collins Center, which would include a Resident Advisory Committee for strong Mayor form of government and suggested that having a citizen jury and/or having random people chosen to participate in decisions would be beneficial. Nikolas Bowie ended by noting that they believe

that the City will work better if everyone can equally participate in deciding how everything in the community can flourish. After Nikolas Bowier reviewed the pros and cons of the Mayor-CAFO- Council form of government, discussion was open to Committee members to offer their comments and concerns.

Anna Corning suggested that moving forward it could be a good idea for the Committee to start focusing on other aspects of the Charter and return to a form of government discussion after Committee members have thought about it more.

The Chair, Kathleen Born offered closing remarks about form of government and shared they agreed with Anna Corning on the idea of taking a break on form of government discussion and coming back to it later. The Chair shared that it is important to discuss other topics of the Charter so the Committee can continue moving forward.

**The Charter Review Committee adjourned at approximately 7:30p.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 this meeting can be viewed at:

[https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/491?view\\_id=1&redirect=true&h=c12c827141cb251ff084cfe8d4262b66](https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/491?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=c12c827141cb251ff084cfe8d4262b66)

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE  
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 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, April 11, 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  
Jessican DeJesus Acevedo – Present  
Mosammat Faria Afreen – Present  
Nikolas Bowie – Present  
Kevin Chen – Present  
Max Clermont – Present  
Jennifer Gilbert – Present  
Kai Long – Present  
Patrick Magee – Present  
Mina Makarios – Present  
Lisa Peterson – Present  
Ellen Shachter – Present  
Susan Shell – Present  
Jim Stockard – Present  
Kathleen Born – Present  
Present – 15, Absent – 0. Quorum established.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Lisa Peterson who made a motion to adopt the meeting minutes from March 29, 2023. The motion was seconded by member Kevin Chen.**

**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 – Yes**

**Kai Long – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Yes**

**Lisa Peterson – Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Present**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Yes**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

**Yes – 14, No – 0, Present – 1. Motion passed.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Jim Stockard who made motion to accept and place on file fifteen communications received from the public. The motion was seconded by member Mosammat Faria Afreen.**

**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 – Yes**

**Kai Long – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Yes**

**Lisa Peterson – Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Present**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Yes**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

**Yes – 15, No – 0. Motion passed.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born opened public comment.**

Valerie Bonds shared that they do not believe the City Council is ready for a four-year term and noted that the City Manager is a public servant who is responsible and accountable to the people only, where the City Council is accountable to the voters.

Charles Henebry shared that they are in favor of at large districts and believes it is good for proportional representation.

Gleb Bahmutov spoke in support of keeping rank choice voting and at large City Councillors.

James Zall encouraged the Committee to keep the at large status of the Cambridge City Council.

Dazhong Xia shared that they support at large City Council because they make decisions that reflect the entire City rather than geographic areas.

James Williamson suggested ways the City could be better at allowing the public to participate in Charter Review Committee meetings on the website. They shared that they support an elected Mayor and shared their experience with a City Manager form of government.

Stephen C. shared they were in support of a strong Mayor form of government and believes that a Manager and a Mayor would be equally accountable or unaccountable.

Marie Saccoccio shared that they were in favor of keeping two-year terms for the City Council and would like to see the Plan E Charter retained.

Pio Szamel suggested that the Charter Review Committee review how votes are cast for at large seats.

Heather Hoffman offered comments on government and shared that it is hard to find people to run to be an elected official and the residents and voters need to remain involved, otherwise there would be no accountability.

Jameson Quinn offered comments around staggered Council terms and suggestions on rank choice ballot voting.

Kai Long shared that it would be important to create and collect the data that is being submitted from communications to help the Committee have a better understanding of what the residents are saying. Anna Corning, Project Manager, shared that she would be happy to start tallying and creating an overall summary of the opinions and information that is being received from the public.

Anna Corning, Project Manager, noted that they are in the process of creating an online survey with members Lisa Peterson and Jennifer Gilbert as well as Chair Born. Anna Corning shared that the survey could have polls or open-ended questions for residents to respond to. Chair Born noted that the idea of the survey came from the City Council at the Special City Council meeting on March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Members of the Charter Review Committee discussed and shared concerns around conducting a survey within the community regarding the form of government and matters related to it. Anna Corning noted that it is important for Committee members to share their suggestions and ideas for surveying, so the Committee can execute the survey to get the best outcome possible. Anna shared that there can be more than one way a survey is done.

Elizabeth Corbo from the Collins Center noted that conducting this survey will not be the last opportunity to receive feedback from the public and reviewed what the process will look like in the future for the Committee moving forward and shared that there will be several more instances where input will be gathered from the public.

Anna Corning shared that they would like to transition the topic of discussion to form of government and have Committee members share their thoughts.

Member Ellen Shachter shared that they would like to see a system that has a combination of a Mayor and a Chief Administrative and Finance Officer (CAFO). They noted that in their experience, they have seen more accountability with a Mayor.

Kai Long shared that they worry about having a strong Mayor and the accountability between the Mayor and City Council that would be involved and how they would be able to work together.

Mina Makarious shared that they are leaning closer to a City Manager form of government and noted that a strong Mayor with a CAFO could work if the Mayor's position would not have complete power and the possibility of making decisions with the Council.

Nikolas Bowie shared they support a strong Mayor system and likes the idea of having a CAFO. They stressed the importance that whoever sets the budget for the City should be accountable to the voters.

Jim Stockard shared that they are in favor of City Manager form of government and he likes the idea that the City Manager can stay away from campaigning and elections. Jim Stockard noted that they would like the City Council to have a leader within the Council that is elected to advocate for good policies to benefit the City.

Lisa Peterson noted that they are in favor of the City Manager form of government, and shared that a good City Manager tries to balance the interests of people across the City. They shared that if the Committee went with a strong Mayor it would be important to have an elected CAFO and for the Council to have more authority around the budget.

Susan Shell shared that they were in favor of a strong Mayor with a CAFO and that the budget should be overseen by elected officials.

Mosammat Faria Afreen shared that they were leaning toward having a strong Mayor form of government due to the potential of increasing voter turnout and noted it was important to have a strong public figure in Cambridge in terms of infrastructure and having a larger say with the budget.

Kaleb Abebe offered comments around form of government and shared they were in favor of keeping the current form of government.

Kathleen Born noted that a strong elected official is the best way for the City to have a future. The Chair noted that the City is stuck right now and it would benefit the City to have someone come in with a vision for the future and provide answers on how to get there.

Kevin Chen offered comments around the budget and noted that with a strong Mayor system, decisions around the budget could be different. They shared that they agree with the Chair about lack of leadership in the City and would support a strong Mayor system with a CAFO role in place.

Jennifer Gilbert shared that they support a strong Mayor form of government because it is a way for the City to create leadership and prioritize the City. They shared that a Mayor is someone that would be more accountable to lead the City in the future.

Jessica DeJesus Acevedo shared that they believe the City is going towards the direction of change, but is concerned with having a strong Mayor form of government. They shared they would like to look more into how the City Council can be improved and noted it would be important to help increase the number of minorities who are represented in the City, and shared that with a strong Mayor it would not be a full representation of citizens.

Patrick Magee shared that they support a City Manager - Council form of government and offered comments on the budget, noting that the past City Managers have not been able to accomplish what they have with regards to the budget without the push from the City Council.

Max Clermont shared that they are leaning towards City Manager form of government and agrees with comments made by Jim Stockard.

**The meeting was extended thirty minutes by the Chair, Kathleen Born. No vote was taken.**

The Charter Review Committee continued their discussion on the form of government and members offered concerns and suggestions around strong Mayor versus City Manager. Anna Corning suggested that members go around and share what side they were leaning towards.

**The Charter Review Committee adjourned at approximately 7:57p.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 this meeting can be viewed at:

[https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/481?view\\_id=1&redirect=true&h=8db2b148ca769c0a979e9f579e4e1cab](https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/481?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=8db2b148ca769c0a979e9f579e4e1cab)

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE  
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 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 Makarious  
Lisa Peterson  
Ellen Shachter  
Susan Shell  
Jim Stockard

The Cambridge Charter Review Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, March 28, 2023. The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:30p.m. by the Chair of the Committee, Kathleen Born. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2022 adopted by Massachusetts General Assembly 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 – Absent\***

**Kevin Chen – Present**

**Max Clermont – Present**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Present**

**Kai Long – Absent\***

**Patrick Magee – Present**

**Mina Makarious – Absent\***

**Lisa Peterson – Present**

**Ellen Shachter – Present**

**Susan Shell – Present**

**Jim Stockard – Present**

**Kathleen Born – Present**

**Present – 11, Absent – 4. Quorum established.**

**\*Members Jessica DeJesus Acevedo and Kai Long were marked present at 5:37p.m.**

**\*Member Nikolas Bowie was marked present at 5:35p.m.**

**\*Member Mina Makarious was marked present at 6:30p.m.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Ellen Schachter who made a motion to adopt the meeting minutes from February 28, 2023, and March 14, 2023. The motion was seconded by member Lisa Peterson.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the role.**

**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**

**Mina Makarious – Absent**

**Lisa Peterson – Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Yes**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Yes**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

**Yes – 12, No – 0, Absent – 3. Motion passed.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Jim Stockard who made a motion to adopt communications from Committee Members and the public. The motion was seconded by member Mosammat Faria Afreen.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the role.**

**Kaleb Abebe – Yes**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Yes**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes**

**Nikolas Bowie – Yes**

**Kevin Chen – Yes**

**Max Clermont – Yes**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Yes**

**Kai Long – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Absent**

**Lisa Peterson – Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Yes**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Yes**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

**Yes – 14, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born opened public comment.**

Liz Speakman spoke in support of keeping the same form of government that the City has had with a strong City Manager and believes that a strong Mayor would be risky.

Marilee Meyer shared they do not want to see more power from the Council and asked that the current system stays in place.

Valerie Bonds supported the same comments made by previous speakers and shared the City Council is not ready for a four year term.

Stephen Cellucci thanked the Committee for taking time to discuss the future of the City and spoke in support of a strong Mayor.

Jesse Baer spoke in favor of a strong Mayor and shared that politics is democracy and politics is under a threat and this is not the time to be moving away from politics.

Suzanne Blier spoke in favor of keeping the City Manager for now to see how the new City Manager is in his new role. She offered suggestions around the possibility of residents voting for the Mayor during Council elections.

Robert Winters offered many suggestions on updating and reformatting the current Charter and shared that giving the Election Commission more flexibility in some of the ways things are done would be beneficial.

Heather Hoffman offered comments around proportional representation and shared that done correctly, politics is the art of getting somewhere by bringing people together.

James Williamson shared a quote from Niccolo Machiavelli and would like to see a shift of power where citizens have input in decisions that are made and participate in the decisions that effect their lives.

Ilan Levy shared it is important for residents to have a clear understanding of the actual consequences of the form of government that the City will be using and voices of the people need to be heard in the final decisions that are made.

Anna Corning, Project Manager, introduced Elizabeth Corbo and Michael Ward from the Collins Center who gave an overview of their chart titled “Menu of Forms of Government with Example Options for Modifications” (Attachment A). After their presentation they made themselves available to Committee Members to respond to any questions or concerns.

Member Kai Long offered comments around strong Mayor and Manager and shared that the possibility of modifying and working on what government the City already has could be beneficial.

Member Mina Makarious noted that they agree with comments that were made by Kai Long and if the Committee decides to keep the City Manager he would like to see the Council and the public be more involved with the approach of hiring a new City Manager.

Member Nikolas Bowie shared he was in favor of switching to a strong Mayor system and realizing how much Massachusetts State Law puts into the budgetary process is a key factor that helped him lean towards a strong Mayor.

Member Lisa Peterson shared that she believes that the current system works very well but could use some improvement. Lisa Peterson noted that a directly elected Mayor is putting a lot of power to one person versus having a City Council that would require a vote of five people to make decisions within the City. Member Peterson shared that mutually agreeable goals are needed between the Council and Manager to make progress.

Member Jim Stockard offered comments and shared that the Charter Review Committee should not want to change the Charter just for the sake of change, but there are improvements in the current Charter the Committee can make moving forward. He shared that he likes the idea of keeping the current government system, noting that the City Manager is held accountable by the City Council. Jim Stockard also agreed with statements made by member Nikolas Bowie around the budget process and shared that the City Council should have more input and accountability with the budget.

Member Susan Shell shared that they agreed with comments made by member Jim Stockard. She shared that she is reluctant to change things radically without more time to deliberate and noted that maybe this is not the best time to go with a strong Mayor but feels most of the changes that will happen will be at the level of the City Council.

Member Jennifer Gilbert encouraged all members to speak on the topic of form of government if they feel comfortable. They shared that they are leaning towards a strong Mayor government and offered comments on why they are leaning that way, noting that it is hard to have a nonelected official be the voice of the City in regards to the budget and representing the City regionally.

Member Kevin Chen shared that they appreciate hearing comments from fellow Committee members and from listening to the conversation at the meeting, they are leaning towards strong Mayor only if there is a Chief Administrative and Finance Officer (CAFO) role partnered with a Mayor. Kevin Chen noted that having a Mayor will help bring accountability and transparency to the City, which is what many residents and Committee members have voiced in their concerns, and a CAFO will allow a manager type role that can help the City go in the right direction.

Member Mosammat Faria Afreen shared that if the Committee decides to keep the current form of government one thing they would like to see changed would be towards the budget, and noted giving the responsibility of the budget to the elected officials is important.

Member Patrick Magee agrees with comments made around the budget process and shared it would be helpful to look at past budgets and compare them to municipalities that have a strong Mayor to see where Cambridge's budget stands in comparison to those to see if members are happy with that, or what the difference would be under different circumstances. He shared that there could be the possibility of strong Mayor form of government not being progressive enough and noted there is a balance of having a collective group deciding who the City Manager is could be a good safety net.

Member Kaleb Abebe shared he had similar thoughts to Patrick Magee to compare budgetary spending with other municipalities and how it relates to Cambridge. Kaleb Abebe offered comments around the budget and noted that more input from elected officials and the City

Council, is more of a high priority for him while also maintaining the Council-Manager relationship.

Member Jessica DeJesus Acevedo shared that she is apprehensive towards elected voting due to the lack of representation of minorities. She offered comments around the budget and the struggles of being a small business owner and resident in Cambridge, but noted she was in favor of a City Manager structure because she believes that role is more accountable. She shared suggestions around terms and noted that a four-year term would be more beneficial for the Council and the City to accomplish goals.

Member Max Clermont noted that he was in favor of a strong Manager and Council form of government and shared that there is more of a role that the Mayor could play as a member of the Council and with the City Manager.

The Chair, Kathleen Born shared that it has been very difficult to decide on the form of government and shared she is not ready to move away from a City Manager form of government. She agrees there could be changes made in the Charter and a more efficient way to elect a Mayor to Chair the City Council.

Member Kai Long shared that having nine elected leaders and helping them figure out how to work together would be extremely beneficial and a good goal for the Committee to work together towards.

Member Mosammat Faria Afreen noted that the rise of costs in the City has played a role in how many people who identify as a minority vote in Cambridge and shared that the idea of having people who may not live in Cambridge, but work in Cambridge, vote as well, which could be a benefit regarding the increase of voter turnout.

Member Lisa Peterson had a clarifying question about how much input the Boston City Council recently got towards the budget and how they were able to make that change. Anna Corning noted that it was a ballot question that the State gave Boston to allow new power to the Council to allow them to amend, reject, or propose line items, as long as the overall budget number did not increase.

Member Nikolas Bowie stressed the importance that when the Committee goes to the State Legislature, they should approach the process from the perspective that the Charter is the vehicle to push through the legislature the changes the people of Cambridge want.

Member Susan Shell shared it is useful to think about the residents of Cambridge who will be here in twenty years, and noted that decisions made today may influence what the demographic of the city is in the future.

Anna Corning noted that at the next Charter Review Committee meeting she would like to finish the conversation and take a working consensus vote on the form of government.

**The Chair, Kathleen Born extended the meeting by fifteen minutes, no vote was taken.**

Member Jennifer Gilbert shared she looks forward to more conversation to help flush out and get a better consensus on form of government.

Member Mina Makarious offered comments regarding how the Committee will vote next week on the form of government.

Member Kai Long had a clarifying question on how the Charter can make the City Council and City Council- Manager relationship more accountable and if a Mayor-Council would be an easier relationship to build towards accountability. Anna Corning noted that with a Mayor system, they are less accountable to the City Council because they do not have to report to the City Council, whereas the City Manager does have to report to the City Council.

The Chair, Kathleen Born shared that she would like more information from the Collins Center regarding what a tight goal setting process would look like to tie goals to the budget. She also shared that understanding more about the State Legislative process and other Charters submitting Home Rule petitions would be helpful moving forward. Anna Corning and Elizabeth Corbo were available to respond and shared that there are many methods to use towards goal setting.

Member Kevin Chen had a clarifying question regarding the possibility of voters being able to appoint and remove a City Manager. Elizabeth Corbo provided answers, sharing that there is the possibility of having a form of a citizen free petition.

Member Jim Stockard shared it is important to communicate with State Representatives and Legislators sooner so they are on the same page and have an understanding of what the Committee is trying to address.

Member Mosammat Faria Afreen thanked the Collins Center for their chart and shared a table that represents the roles of the Manager and CAFO with a column on how they could be kept accountable by the Council and the voters would be helpful. Anna Corning shared that a CAFO role is person who is working for the Mayor and acts as a department head.

Anna Corning thanked everyone for participating and believes it was a very productive meeting.

**The Charter Review Committee adjourned at approximately 8:00p.m.**

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE  
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 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, March 14, 2023. The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:30p.m. by the Chair of the Committee, Kathleen Born. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2022 adopted by Massachusetts General Assembly and approved by the Governor, this meeting was remote via zoom.

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

**Kaleb Abebe – Absent**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Present**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Present**

**Nikolas Bowie – Absent**

**Kevin Chen – Present**

**Max Clermont – Present**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Present**

**Kai Long – Present**

**Patrick Magee – Present**

**Mina Makarios – Present**

**Lisa Peterson – Present**

**Ellen Shachter – Present**

**Susan Shell – Present**

**Jim Stockard – Absent**

**Kathleen Born – Present**

**Present – 12, Absent – 3. Quorum established.**

**The Chair, Katleen Born recognized member Kevin Chen who made a motion to adopt the meeting minutes from February 7, 2023 and Subcommittee meeting minutes from January 27, 2023. The motion was seconded by member Kai Long.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

**Kaleb Abebe – Absent**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Yes**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes**

**Nikolas Bowie -Absent**

**Kevin Chen – Yes**

**Max Clermont – Yes**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Yes**

**Kai Long – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Yes**

**Lisa Peterson – Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Yes**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Absent**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

**Yes – 12, No – 0, Absent 3. Motion passed.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Lisa Peterson who made a motion to adopt and place on file one written communication received from the public (Attachment A). The motion was seconded by member Patrick Magee.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

**Kaleb Abebe – Absent**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Yes**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes**

**Nikolas Bowie – Absent**

**Kevin Chen – Yes**

**Max Clermont – Yes**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Yes**

**Kai Long – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Yes**

**Lisa Peterson – Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Yes**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Absent**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

**Yes – 12, No – 0, Absent -3. Motion passed.**

Anna Corning, Project Manager, shared that she would like to hear opinions on the proposed timeline (Attachment B) and adopt it at the meeting. She noted that she tried to incorporate the two main items she heard as feedback from members, which included dedicated time to review drafted charter text, and dedicated time slots for topic-specific public forums. Anna noted that the plan would be to propose this timeline to the Council at the meeting being held on March 22 with the understanding that the Charter Review Committee would ask for an extension through the end of the year. Anna opened discussion to members about edits and concerns around the proposed timeline.

Member Ellen Shachter had a clarifying question around summer meetings and the possibility of some members being away on vacation. She noted the importance of making sure there is a quorum for summer meetings so the Committee is able to meet. Anna Corning noted that there will be a summer break where meetings will not be held and shared she would be reaching out to members to confirm their availability.

Member Susan Shell had a clarifying question on how the timeline would be affected by an extension and what it looks like moving forward. Anna Corning noted that the timeline is the framework behind asking for the extension with the goal being to discuss the extension at the City Council Special meeting on March 22, and shared that the timeline currently goes to mid-November, and members should think about if they are able to continue to make a commitment to participate.

The Chair, Kathleen Born shared that it would be good to end in November because it is an election year and it would be good to have the current City Council members present when the new Charter Review language is complete and ready to be submitted. The Chair encouraged members to look at the proposed timeline so they have a good idea of what will be happening in the upcoming months and future meetings.

Member Kai Long offered comments and positive feedback around the proposed timeline and is in favor of moving forward with it, and believes November is a good end date.

**The Chair, Kathleen Born recognized member Ellen Shachter who made a motion to adopt the proposed timeline. Member Patrick Magee seconded the motion.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

**Kaleb Abebe – Absent**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Yes**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes**

**Nikolas Bowie – Absent**

**Kevin Chen – Yes**

**Max Clermont – Yes**

**Jennifer Gilbert – Yes**

**Kai Long – Yes**

**Patrick Magee – Yes**

**Mina Makarious – Yes**

**Lisa Peterson – Yes**

**Ellen Shachter – Yes**

**Susan Shell – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Absent**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

**Yes – 12, No – 0, Absent – 3. Motion passed.**

The Chair, Kathleen Born reminded Committee members of the Special City Council meeting being held on March 22<sup>nd</sup> and encouraged some members to join in the meeting, but also stressed the importance that Charter Review Committee members that do attend have to be less than seven to stay away from a quorum.

Anna Corning introduced City Manager Yi-An Huang who thanked the Committee for inviting him to join the meeting. The City Manager offered opening remarks about his transition from his previous employment to his current role as City Manager, and shared his background on what led him to become a City Manager. He shared that he recognized the opportunity to come into the City to build off of things that are already strong, and work towards strengthening areas in the City where it was needed. The City Manager noted that he believes the conversation with the Charter Review Committee is very important, and he is excited and happy to share what he has learned, seen, and experienced since taking the role of City Manager.

Member Kevin Chen began by asking the City Manager if there were a Mayor position that had been opened with the City, is that something he would have applied for. The City Manager shared that he would not have applied for a political role like that, he does enjoy reading about politics, but does not see himself as a politician. The City Manager noted that what excites him about the role of City Manager is being able to build a strong organization and a culture where he is able get things done.

Member Ellen Shachter offered comments and asked the City Manager what he believes is the appropriate interface with the people in the community and the position of City Manager. The City Manager responded by sharing he believes that it is very important to have all levels of engagement within the community and noted that there is always room for improvement on how the City continues to be accessible, engaging, and receiving feedback.

Member Susan Shell had a question for the City Manager regarding his relationship with the City Council around legislation and also questioned how the City Manager, within his own office, sets up the various divisions and demands and prioritizes what needs get met with first. The City Manager began by noting that it is a unique governing structure. He shared that he believes the Councillors got into their roles because they wanted to make an impact and shape their community. He noted he believes his role when he is working with the Councillors is to try and come to a consensus and shape policy together through dialogue, even when everyone is coming from different perspectives, and achieve those positive impacts for the City together. Organizationally within his Office he aspires to have short term plans where his team can see what they are working on currently and how it will impact decisions going forward to make long term investments. He noted that the Councillors exercise a great deal of power and influence on the City Manager, which is applied over time, and noted how affordable housing is a great example of that.

Member Kai Long questioned the City Manager on how much in his job description is engaging with the public or how much within the perimeter of the job would be with the public. The City Manager responded by sharing that it was the responsibility of the Council to hire someone who they believed would be beneficial towards the City in all aspects, including community engagement. He shared that when he came into the position, he had the desire of setting up structures that have not been in place, with an example being the City Manager annual review. He commented that he worked with the City Council to create the review, which had just been finalized, and it offers the opportunity to achieve goal setting and feedback from the community and other City Departments. Kai Long had a clarifying question regarding the review and was interested in knowing if the review were something that would continue to apply once City Manager Huang is no longer in the role of City Manager. The City Manager responded by sharing that it could be something that becomes permanent but should be flexible as time changes and the City evolves.

Member Lisa Peterson asked the City Manager if he was able to provide specific recommendations that members in the Committee could think about to try and change Charter language to accomplish more public participation. The City Manager noted that there are some larger challenges the City is trying to solve and recognized that more public representation, participation, and engagement is important.

Member Jennifer Gilbert offered questions around issues that are more regional and national, and asked how, with our current form of government, where does the City stand with other cities and towns, and how does Cambridge contribute to some of these major issues like climate change, housing, and transportation. The City Manager offered comments, noting that it is understood that regionally that these are issues that need to be collaborative on.

Member Patrick Magee had questions around the amount of Awaiting Reports that are on the weekly Council Agenda and suggested that when City Councillors are elected, they try to set their policy setting earlier in their term. Patrick Magee shared that by doing this it would help to set the stage and allow staff to know and focus on what the two year term would look like. He offered additional comments and asked for the City Manager's view on a suggestion like this. The City Manager shared that there should be a goal setting exercise between the City Council and the City, which has been missing. He shared that this year the City and the City Councillors will plan out what that goal setting looks like moving forward. The City Manager agreed with Patrick Magee and believes that there is a need to be clearer about overall direction, and where the staff time and efforts need to be focused.

Member Mina Makarios asked the City Manager from his perspective, or anything he has heard from the City Council, on what the Charter Review Committee should be working towards to help the Council function better as an advisory board. The City Manager noted that ultimately the Councillors are held accountable by the voters. He shared that having a more citizen base that are working with Councillors and paying attention to legislation could be beneficial moving forward. The City Manager offered additional comments and noted that he enjoys working with each Councillor and getting different perspectives from them when making decisions.

Member Jessica DeJesus Acevedo submitted questions to the City Manager and was unable to speak during the meeting. Member Acevedo wanted to know what the City Manager's leadership style was, what is the most difficult part of your role, how are you ensuring policy and legislation based on social media, and how are we supporting the BPOC and small businesses in our city to remain in the city from your position and lens post-COVID and ARPA rollout. The City Manager shared that he focuses on trying to assemble a good team that will focus on tackling an issue, and he is trying to look at and build into the City a diverse group of people. The City Manager noted that when involving groups of people, he wants to make sure they feel free to speak and have input, and that they are listened to when they do speak.

Member Ellen Schachter had clarifying questions around decisions that come down to risk and the ability to take risks, noting that it is critical to take risks in order to go forward, and asked where does risk fit into the role of City Manager. The City Manager noted that there are many risks that come with his role, sharing that there are a lot of different risks and at the end of the day there should be an assessment of what type of risk you are taking and looking at the different scenarios with that risk, the impact, and the reward.

The Chair, Kathleen Born thanked the City Manager for taking time to be with the Charter Review Committee around a clearer mission for the Mayor, which is something the Charter Review might accomplish by deciding if they go with directly electing a Mayor through rank choice voting. The Chair, Kathleen Born asked for the City Manager's thoughts around the possibility of the Mayor having a different role with establishing priorities. The City Manager noted that there is some value in having a different role for the Mayor, sharing that it could be more attractive to voters.

Anna Corning thanked City Manager Huang for participating the Charter Review meeting and making himself available to answer questions and be open to discussion. The City Manager thanked all the Charter Review Committee members and thanked them for the important work they are doing.

Anna Corning reminded members that the goal is to meet a working consensus on the form of government topic by the end of the next meeting and asked members to submit any questions or concerns they had around the topic to help them reach the goal of getting to a consensus.

Member Jennifer Gilbert shared their concerns around the discussion about the form of government and noted it should be thorough and thought out on how members engage in discussion on the topic of form of government. Anna Corning suggested she can brainstorm with The Chair and the Collins Center to help break down the questions and frame them into building block questions that will help get to a decision in a thoughtful way.

The Chair, Kathleen Born offered her concerns around the decision of form of government and noted she had relistened to some of the interviews and meetings that were conducted throughout the last few months to help with her thought process.

Member Mina Makarious agreed with the Chair about her concerns. They shared that learning about the different leadership styles has been beneficial and wants to make sure that the

Committee is conscious of the option to not make any changes to the overall form of government in the decision making process.

Anna Corning introduced Elizabeth Corbo and Michael Ward from the Collins Center who gave a review of their memo (Attachment C) which was a menu of forms of government with example options for modifications. Members from the Committee shared their questions and concerns around the memo and the team from the Collins Center made themselves available to respond.

**The Chair, Kathleen Born extended the meeting by fifteen minutes. Members of the Committee agreed to the extension. No roll call was taken.**

Members of the Charter Review Committee, the team from the Collins Center, and Anna Corning continued their discussion around the memo. Many members of the Charter Review offered clarifying questions around the memo and the team from the Collins Center and Anna Corning were available to provide more detail and examples around the questions.

Anna Corning thanked members from the Charter Review for their thoughtful questions and discussions during the meeting.

**The Charter Review Committee adjourned at approximately 7:50p.m.**

Attachment A – Written Communication from a member of the public.

Attachment B – Adopted Project Timeline

Attachment C – Memorandum from the Collins Center to the Charter Review Committee

**Clerk's Note:** The video for this meeting can be viewed at:

[https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/462?view\\_id=1&redirect=true&h=92987b32666239a03ed7d617bcfad620](https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/462?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=92987b32666239a03ed7d617bcfad620)

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE  
CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 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, February 28, 2023. The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:30p.m. by the Chair of the Committee, Kathleen Born. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2022 adopted by Massachusetts General Assembly and approved by the Governor, this meeting was remote via zoom.

**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 – Present  
Jim Stockard – Present  
Kathleen Born – Present  
Present – 14, Absent – 1. Quorum established.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born opened the meeting with the Adoption of the Minutes from the January 31, 2023 Charter Review Committee meeting. Member Jim Stockard made a motion to adopt the minutes, and the motion was seconded by member Ellen Shachter. Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

**Kaleb Abebe – Yes**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Yes**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes**

**Nikolas Bowier – 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 – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Yes**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

**Yes – 14, No- 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born noted that there were four written communications that were received from the public (Attachments A-D) and recognized member Ellen Shachter who made a motion to adopt the written communications and place them on file. The motion was seconded by member Kaleb Abebe.**

**Kaleb Abebe – Yes**

**Jessica DeJesus Acevedo – Yes**

**Mosammat Faria Afreen – Yes**

**Nikolas Bowier – 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 – Yes**

**Jim Stockard – Yes**

**Kathleen Born – Yes**

**Yes – 14, No- 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.**

**The Chair, Kathleen Born opened Public Comment.**

Lee Farris shared that it would be nice as a user or resident that when the newsletter goes out there would be a link that would go straight to the documents that are being described in the newsletter, it would make it easier for the reader.

Patrick Hayes shared that he and Committee members went to a Harvard Square Business Association meeting recently to spread the word about the Charter Review Committee.

Member Jim Stockard shared discussions he has had with community members, some of whom voiced their concerns and noted that they were not in favor of having the option to allow older youth to vote.

Anna Corning asked for feedback on the draft proposed timeline (Attachment E) that was sent to Committee Members and shared that she would like to have it completed before the Special Meeting with the City Council on March 22, 2023. She noted that the proposed timeline is a way to set goals and have topics for future meetings.

Member Ellen Shachter had a clarifying question on the timeline around the drafting of language for the Charter. Anna Corning was able to provide more detail and feedback on what the proposed drafting language should look like as the Charter Review Committee continues to move forward.

Member Kevin Chen had a clarifying question regarding the proposed timeline would work around community engagement. Anna Corning shared that the way the Charter Review has been engaging is a good way to continue, but members should think about offering public forums or workshops that are more structured around specific topics.

Member Mina Makarious suggested that as the Charter Review moves forward with drafting new charter language, it may be beneficial for the City Solicitor's Office to review all of the proposed language.

Member Jim Stockard asked for clarity on when the Charter Review Committee should be requesting an extension from the City Council. Anna Corning noted that it's mostly up to the Committee if they want to continue to volunteer meeting and noted that it would be up to the members of the Charter Review Committee to determine a proposed timeline to bring to the City Council when asking for an extension. Anna Corning suggested that members should think about if they are comfortable extending the timeline and could ask for the extension at the Special City Council meeting in March.

Member Ellen Shachter suggested that the Charter Review Committee members use specific questions to bring to the community groups to target what the Charter Review is asking for feedback on.

Michael Ward from the Collins Center introduced the panelists that were invited to join the Charter Review Committee meeting. They included Alex Morse, current Manager of Provincetown and former Mayor of Holyoke, Joe Curtatone, former Mayor and Alderman of Somerville, and Eileen Donoghue, former Manager and Mayor of Lowell and former State

Senator. Panelists made themselves available to answer questions and concerns of Charter Review Committee members.

For the remainder of the meeting, Charter Review Committee members and the panelists went into discussion about strong mayor versus strong manager, with panelists offering their personal experiences in those roles. Charter Review members engaged with the panelists and spoke on topics that included risks and responsibilities that come with mayor and manager, the role of city councils in the two different forms of government, accountability, the leadership part of the position and the type of visibility that comes with it, community engagement and goals, limitations with community engagement specific to the type of role, the disconnect with diverse citizens and accessibility to information, lining the community needs with the budget, the budget process including more engagement from the Council or the community, and racial and social representation within government,

The Chair, Kathleen Born thanked the three panelists for attending the meeting and shared she was excited about the conversations that took place.

**The meeting was adjourned at 7:30p.m.**

The Charter Review Committee received four written communications from the public, Attachments A-D.

Attachment E – Draft proposal timeline

**Clerk's Note:** The video for this meeting can be viewed at:

[https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/456?view\\_id=1&redirect=true&h=ff06191c9981904379b832d74b03383a](https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/456?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=ff06191c9981904379b832d74b03383a)