



FINANCE COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEETING

~ MINUTES ~

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

3:00 PM

Sullivan Chamber
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

The Finance Committee will hold a public hearing to discuss status updates on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in Cambridge.

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Burhan Azeem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Marc C. McGovern	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Patricia Nolan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Joan Pickett	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sumbul Siddiqui	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Paul F. Toner	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ayesha M. Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
E. Denise Simmons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3:10 PM

A public meeting of the Cambridge City Council’s Finance Committee was held on Wednesday, August 7, 2024. The meeting was Called to Order at 3:00 p.m. by the Co-Chair, Councillor Nolan. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2022 adopted by Massachusetts General Assembly and approved by the Governor, this public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and by remote participation via Zoom.

At the request of the Chair, City Clerk LeBlanc called the roll.

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

Present – 6, Absent – 3. Quorum established.

*Mayor Simmons was marked present and in the Sullivan Chamber at 3:10pm.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan offered opening remarks and noted that the Call of the meeting was to discuss status updates on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in Cambridge. Present at the meeting was City Manager, Yi-An Huang, Assistant City Manager of Finance, Claire Spinner, Assistant Finance Director, Michele Kincaid, Matt Nelson, Director of Administration and Operations, and Ellen Semonoff, Assistant City Manager for the Department of Human Services.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized City Manager Huang who offered brief remarks relative to ARPA. City Manager Huang acknowledged and thanked the Finance team and shared he appreciated the work that has been done.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Matt Nelson who thanked the large group of people who have played a role with ARPA funding in Cambridge. Matt Nelson gave a presentation titled “American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Cambridge Update”. The presentation was provided in advance of the meeting and included in the

Agenda Packet. The presentation included information on timeline extensions, budget changes, ARPA realignment with Federal regulations, status of committed ARPA funds, ARPA reallocations by priority areas, potential projects for reallocated ARPA funds, and ARPA commitments by priority areas.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan opened Public Comment.

Heather Hoffman, 213 Hurley Street, Cambridge, MA, offered comments on the allocation of money.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Councillor Siddiqui who asked for clarification on what contract ready means. Matt Nelson shared that it is a contract that can be turned around quickly and provided examples of contract ready projects. Councillor Siddiqui had additional questions regarding allocating projects and Matt Nelson shared how a project would be budgeted and if there were additional funding left over, that money would be reallocated.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Councillor Wilson who thanked Matt Nelson and his team for their presentation and for updating and showing where priorities are in the City. Councillor Wilson asked Matt Nelson to share and highlight the amount of work that is being done with different organizations in the community. Matt Nelson shared how it is a significant amount of work that has been going on for over a year and that ARPA Project Managers are working with organizations often and creating relationships. Matt Nelson added that additional support has been brought in to help with each community organization and their contracts. Councillor Wilson asked how housing and homelessness support is being funded through ARPA and what resources are available to help individuals who are unhoused. City Manager Huang clarified if Councillor Wilson was referring to migrant families, which she confirmed she was. The City Manager shared that housing eviction support has not been focused on migrant families and that the State is committed to fund case management and other services to support those families in need. City Manager Huang provided examples of services that families have access to. Councillor Wilson noted the importance of making sure families and children are not left behind.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan had clarifying questions regarding job training nonprofit organizations. Matt Nelson responded by sharing information from a chart that details funding for job training and existing partnerships within the community, such as Just-A-Start and other housing organizations. In addition, Matt Nelson shared information and examples relative to job training resources in Cambridge. Councillor Nolan provided comments on the importance of reaching climate change goals. Councillor Nolan shared examples of efficiency upgrades and possible projects that could be funded. Matt Nelson shared that small businesses and nonprofits can receive efficacy upgrades within a program that is being rolled out through Community Development, adding that they will have a team for community outreach.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Vice Mayor McGovern who provided comments regarding housing issues and offered suggestions on ways funding could help those who are unhoused and prevent people from becoming unhoused. The Vice Mayor thanked everyone for their hard work.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan asked the Matt Nelson and his team if there was any support they need from the City Council or the Finance Committee to continue moving forward in the right direction. Claire Spinner shared that they appreciate the questions and input that were received at the meeting. Claire Spinner recognized all the focus and work that has gone in to ARPA and shared her excitement to update the Council in January regarding where everything has landed as it relates to funding and allocations. City Manager Huang provided additional comments to support the work that is being done by the ARPA team.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Councillor Wilson who had a question regarding the list of priorities and asked if they are addressed in the order they are listed. Matt Nelson indicated that they are not a priority area in the order they are listed and many factors contribute to how a priority area is addressed.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Councillor Wilson who made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

City Clerk LeBlanc called the roll

Councillor Azeem – Absent

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Pickett – Absent

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Absent

Yes – 6, No – 0, Absent – 3. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:57p.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/805?view_id=1&redirect=true

A communication was received from Matt Nelson, Assistant to the City Manager, transmitting a presentation relative to an ARPA update.

A communication was received from Matt Nelson, Assistant to the City Manager, transmitting the ARPA allocation summary.