



FINANCE COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEETING

~ MINUTES ~

Tuesday, May 26, 2020

9:00 AM

Sullivan Chamber

Call to Order

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Dennis J. Carlone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
E. Denise Simmons	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sumbul Siddiqui	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Marc C. McGovern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Timothy J. Toomey	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	9:23 AM
Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Quinton Zondervan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Patricia Nolan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Alanna Mallon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

The Finance Committee will conduct public hearings on the city and school budgets covering the fiscal period July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021



CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS, CHAIR

COMMITTEE MEETING

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

MAY 26, 2020

9:00 AM, SULLIVAN CHAMBER

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Good morning. The time of the hearing having arrived, let us all stand to salute the flag, and then pause for a moment of silence. (Pledge of Allegiance). (Gavel) Again, good morning. I'm gonna read the Governor's Executive Order on how we should conduct our meetings in this new time, after which we will have opening remarks from my co-chair, Councillor Carl--Carlone.

Uh, and then we're gonna go over the ground rules a bit, and then we'll open the floor for opening remarks from the city manager and his staff. And the Governor's Exec Orders read as follows, "The Governor's Executive Order issued on March 12th, 2020, has authorized the use of remote participation at meetings of the city's public bodies in response to the threat posed to the public by the COVID-19 virus, and issues guidelines for the city's use of remote participation.

In addition to having members of the Council participate remotely, we have also set up Zoom teleconference for public comment." Please be aware that Zoom is only being used for public comment. In order to watch the meeting, please tune into Channel 22, or visit the Open Meeting portal on the city's website.

If you would like to provide public comment, please visit the City Council section of the city's webpage, "Instruction on how to sign up to speak." They are posted there. Once you've completed the sign-up procedure, you'll receive a link to the Zoom meeting. Please be--uh, that we will have--we will not allow any public comment after sign up at 9:30.

We are gonna take a roll of the members, um, present. After which--uh, that have--after that has been confirmed, we will do another--a couple of other procedural kinds of items that are required. We will hear--uh, I will say some few opening remarks.

My co-chair, Councillor Dennis Carlone, will make some opening remarks, we will go over a few ground rules, and then we will open the floor to the city manager, uh, to talk about COVID-19 and its impact on the 2019--not, excuse me. 2020 on the budget. So, let's first take the roll call. Clerk Wilson, will you please call the roll?

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Present

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Present

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Present

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Present

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Present

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Present

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Present

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Present

Present-7, Absent-0

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Clerk Wilson.

And for the record, the Councillors--the Councillors participating remotely are clearly audible in the chamber. Clerk Wilson, please inquire of the members participating in the Finance Committee, hearing if they are clearly hearing the meeting, and we will also see if they're audible to us.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Yes

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON: And also, I see that, uh, Councillor, uh, Councillor McGovern has joined, uh, the

Zoom link. Councillor McGovern, are you present?

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Yes.

CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON: Present. And the meeting is clearly audible to you, Council McGovern?

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Yes.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: The meeting being clearly audible to all members, let me read the call as soon as I put my hands back on it. Mr. Clerk, I know you gave it to me and I ate it. Thank you so much.

The Finance Committee will conduct public hearings on the city and school budgets covering the fiscal period, July 1st, 2020, to June 30th, 2021. One of the more--of the following departments may be present.

So, as we know, during this pandemic, we have been placed in very challenging times, and challenging times call for innovative ways of putting people connected in carrying out city's business, and we have therefore set this Finance Committee hearing to be in line with that.

In the room, you'll have our clerk, we have our executive secretary, Naomi Stefan, we have members of the Finance Committee. I think I see Neha. Tell me your name, please. I can't hear you.

MS. ANGELA: Angela.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Angela. We have, from the Finance Department, Taha Jennings, we have our City Manager, Louis DePasquale, we have David Kale, we also have, from my office, Neil Albert, and we also have my co-chair, Councillor Carlone.

And we are doing this in this way, and we have our members online so that we can not only continue to carry on city business, but also making sure that we keep people safe. For this meeting, we have pulled the following areas, um, department, and I will say your--each department that has pulled that department head, and only that department head is going to be present.

And the departments we will hear from, excuse me, during this hearing are: Executive Leadership, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Public Information Office, Tourism, City Council, Finance Administration, Personnel, Information and Technology, Public Celebration, Police Department, Traffic, Parking and Transportation, Inspection Service, Inspectional Services, and Licensed Commission.

The meeting has begun. We started at roughly around 9:00. We'll be taking--after each department speaks,

there'll be a moment, a break, because we'll be wiping down the area before the next department comes in. So, there'll be a little low in the flow of what's going on today.

At 12:00, we're going to stop for a break, so those-- those here can have some lunch and do whatever they need to do in that brief period. After which we'll start again at 1:00, and the meeting ends at 5:00. Having--excuse me. Having said that, I will turn the floor over to my co-chair, Councillor Dennis Carlone.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Um, I thought I would share a few thoughts. I've--I've read the budget, and there's a very interesting, uh, series of statistics in the early part of the section in Section Two, City Overview, and I only repeat a few. "32% of residents are foreign-born in Cambridge, 34% are single-person households. 81% of residents over 25 have a four-year college degree." Um, I, I think sharing these kinds of statistics really help us understand, uh, what Cambridge is, and, uh, we should be proud of that.

One other, under the Economic Summary, that I wanted to share is, "Cambridge continues to maintain a high job to residential ratio with 1.09 jobs for each resident,

including children, obviously." And I just wanted to say there are both pluses and minuses associated with that. Um, certainly toward the cost of housing, um, there are some very good statistics on jobs by sectors, housing costs, and, uh, residential property tax rate comparison. Where Cambridge comes out as being the least, um, taxed city, at least in the list.

Uh, maybe in the future, we could also include average tax bills, so we have a good sense of that. The other thing I wanted to say is, over the last three years, the--the Council has been more specific on its goals. And, um, certainly, each of the nine councillors will have questions why a certain area was in better finance.

But it has to be said that, uh, the manager and his team have more quickly achieved an affordable housing goal than what was originally proposed, and, uh, that really should be saluted. So, uh, Madam Chair, I look forward to this meeting, and, uh, we have a lot of good questions, which will really generate information and in many ways, that's the goal. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Vice--Mr. Co-chair. Uh, with that, I'd like to open the floor to our

City Manager and his team. One of the questions that came from the floor, uh, from the City Council floor, was the impact COVID-19 was having on the city's finances.

I think that was a very important question that was supported by the co-chair of Finance and myself. Looking forward and looking back, we needed to have, uh, as good a handle on how our finances--what's--what condition our finances are in this, uh, time. So, uh, Mr.--Mr. City Manager, I will turn the floor over to you and those in your company.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Thank you. First of all, I wanna thank the co-chairs for setting up this Finance Committee meeting in these unusual times. Uh, this presentation's gonna be a little different, in the sense that, in our budget document for the first time, is a joint letter from the manager and the mayor, discussing COVID-19. So, I just thought I would briefly talk a little about that letter, then talk about what we're doing to move forward.

Then we'll give a summary of the expenses that COVID-19 had on the '20 and '21 budget, which we forwarded out. And then we'll be looking at what's happening with our '21 budget. So first of all, I dearly wanna thank the residents

of the City and--and our employees, for really stepping up during this incredible difficult time, in really providing incredible services to our residents.

Uh, there were a lot of decisions that had to be made. And on a March 19th, they cleared Cambridge of public health emergency by the Public Health Commissioner and myself. And that gave us some ability to do certain things, things which we feel have had positive implementation on the City. But also, over and above that, some of the items that we've been talking about every Monday, I do think it's important to just bring up a few because they do somewhat relate to the budget as well.

So, since that time, we have been able to take a look at how we can make Cambridge a better place for everybody, and I think we've addressed this. First of all, we've had the Mayor's Disaster Relief Fund, which has raised over \$4 million. Something we're incredibly proud of.

We've been able to set up a small business loan program, which raised \$3.6 million in funding, and we had a million dollars put aside for non-profits. So we've been able to get about \$8 million to address issues right there, especially to address individuals and families who needed--

who've been facing financial hardship, as everyone knows, also, our small business community. Two concerns that were very important to the mayor and the City Council.

So, we were able to address that. We've been able to come up with \$250,000 to keep the Y2Y homeless shelter going through June 30th. That's something we had. It was a high priority. And \$150,000 funding for Food for Free, which has done an amazing job for--to create our community food line.

We've also called over 7,000 seniors. Uh, we set up a temporary homeless shelter at the War Memorial. Uh, we've allowed restaurants and consumers to go on with selling groceries during this COVID-19. We've waived fees and deadlines as we continue to be flexible with our taxpayers trying to help them burden some of the price costs they face. Uh, but a couple of things we're really proud of.

We were the first city to really take a look at long-term care facilities and temporary homeless shelters, by testing a rapid test plan. Thanks to the Broad Institute, the Peak Health Alliance, and ProEMS.

And since then, we have done a lot of work, again, in conte--testing our homeless. But also, we finished up

today, our housing authority, and that was done with the Broad Institute and the Cambridge Fire Department residents, and we've also done a testing site at the Port, based on the need for that area.

So again, trying to provide services for people who need it, being able to react quickly during these times, is incredibly important. And like I said, the buildings have been closed, but the work that's been done, especially by Police, Fire, Emergency Communication, Human Services, and IT and Finance, has been exceptional.

And I wanna thank them for that work. I also want to thank Lee Gianetti and Eddie. One of the things we really tried to do during this time, is to make our residents aware of what was happening. And the Council's had updates every Monday night, which has been important, but we've done all different kinds of communications to make sure that our residents know what's happening. And I think, especially our COVID-19 website, has been a, a phenomenal resource for our residents. So, we continue to move quickly, we continue to evaluate.

We have an Expert Advisory Team who works with the Commissioner of Public Health before we make these

decisions. Uh, our decisions are team based, and I think they've come with one thing in mind, "To protect our residents as best we can." And I think we've really tried to do that and have done that with the decisions we've made.

So that's just a quick summary of where we are. And that's on page one--one through 1.4, in the budget document, and that's something new. Uh, again, really sticking with the COVID-19, uh, we also realized that at some point, we were gonna reopen. And how are we gonna do that--and how we were gonna do that safely for our employees and our residents? And we put up some subcommittees to address certain things when it comes to opening. And a lot of this is gonna be at Thursday's COVID-19 update. But I do wanna briefly mention the fact that, we do have a Return-to-Work Planning Group led by Lisa Peterson.

Uh, we have now sent to that Planning Group, self-screening protocols and safety and hygiene training guidelines. Uh, we will be having departments back at no more than 25%, on June 1st. Uh, those will be building City Hall, which has really been at that number even though the

building has been closed. The Lombardi Building, 344 Broadway, in the Frazier Building. Uh, we've got some protocols in place and we'll be working with that.

But the building for employees will be open June 1st. It will not be open to the public at that time. But we are taking a look at when we would be opening to the public, probably first by appointments, and then open regularly. So that's in discussion.

Uh, Matt Nelson has worked with Community Development Department on our Small Business Advisory Committee. Uh, Vice Mayor Mallon and Councillor Simmons have been deeply involved with this committee, to really figure out how we can reimagine public spaces to help our small businesses and our restaurants. And, uh, we've been moving--uh, we--we're moving forward. I think there's gonna be some good news on how we can help our small businesses. But I think the recognition of our 3.6 million loan program is something that we all should be very proud of. We also were the last person to bring back construction, just after Boston and Somerville. Uh, Boston and Cambridge were the first two to really say, "No, we're not coming back." When the governor said so.

We created a 22 person Construction Advisory Committee. We worked together for five weeks. Uh, when you put 22 people on a committee, I said this to them, you usually don't make the progress this group has made. But it's been a phenomenal team effort. And we're actually beginning this week, the first week of site preparation for safety purposes.

June 1st, we would start doing city buildings and affordable housing, which we clearly felt was a top priority of the city, in some large existing permits. And in week three and four--phases three and four, we would start on June 15th, and June 29th. And really on June 29th, opening it up to new work. Up till then, it'll be all permits that were in place. And that was clearly important.

But again, the importance of the safety of the people working on the jobs in our residents, uh, was key. We also knew the Governor was gonna be coming up with a checklist. I've been very fortunate to be on a committee that meets with the Lieutenant Governor regularly, and we've had the opportunity to speak to the Governor, and to try to get as many updates as we can on what's happening.

Uh, David Kale is the point person on evaluating when

the Governor says things are opening, and how it's gonna affect Cambridge. I think mostly if you know that, when the Governor has made declarations, for the most part, we've followed 'em. But if we needed to be more restrictive in certain areas, we've done that and we'll continue to look at that.

But since phase one has been included, we uh, sent out letters to all the barbershops and salons, to the manufacturers, to the large business offices, to restaurant and food establishments, and to the fete community, just letting them see the guidelines, letting them know we're there, and how we suggest they move forward.

And it's been very positive. Uh, Councillor Simmons, uh, coordinate her fete group that we've met, and had over 50 people in a Zoom call last week. They'll be followed up with another meeting this week. The mayor will also attend it. But having the fete community, talking to them, going over their concerns, they have been a real partner with us to make sure that when this--when we do reopen, we'll be-- it'll be done in the--in the right way.

So again, uh, all these committees are in place. Uh, we've tried to also take a look at, if--when re-opening is

happening, if you go to our website, we are listing who you can call, who's the specific person, a contact list.

Because one thing we found, is when questions come up by the Governor's rulings, there's also--there's always confusion. So, we're really trying to be clear, that if you have a question, we can get to you. Uh, inspection of services was that all this week ending.

Again, checking to see who's open, if everything's going okay, and who's getting ready to be open. So again, slowly but carefully as we move forward under COVID-19. So that's a little bit of a COVID-19 update in terms of committees.

But one of the things that I can tell you is pretty amazing, is the fact that in fiscal '20, the city will raise out of operating budget off free cash, \$7 million to help support COVID-19 expenditures in this year. And we gave the Council a summary list.

But that \$7 million is made up of \$2 million for the War Memorial shelter, \$3.6 of expenditures to date, and \$1.4 of remaining expenditures. In that \$7 million, it does not include the \$750,000 that Harvard and MIT have contributed.

So out of that \$7 million, our free cash position has allowed us to put \$4 million towards these programs, and our operating budget, due to the fact that--primarily, because of the fact we've managed outages so carefully, uh, we've been able to raise \$3 million. So that's \$7 million from general fund money that we have put towards COVID-19 since March. But then when you add the fact that the Mayor's Relief Fund raised \$4.1 million, we've put \$1.6 million in block grant funds in there. Uh, we've used \$1.5 million from the redevelopment authority, and a million from community benefits. That's another \$8 million that we've put for the situation.

So, since March, the City of Cambridge, thanks to a lot of its residents and it's businesses as well, as some of this was donated, has put \$15 million to this operation. And I would challenge any city to see as a size, that they were able to put \$15 million towards an operation.

So, what has that all meant to our year end? And this was a key important question. Normally when we're preparing next year's budget, we don't often talk about the current year we're in, because we've been able to have incredibly strong years. But this year is a little different.

So this is a summary of where we're gonna end the year, and I think it's important to--to look at it. Uh, we have--we are projecting about \$13 million in salary outage. Uh, we average usually, between 10 and \$12 million there, but right now we have a hundred--hundred vacant positions. Normally we have between 60 and 70. But between the buildings being closed and the reality that we wanted to be careful, knowing that some of the issues we've had, we've been able to work that \$13 million, and David Kale oversees the filling of positions now, in working with departments.

We have \$4 million in our ordinary maintenance account. This is mostly supplies and items like that, contracts, consultants that we've been able to save. 850,000 in damages/training. And then extraordinary expenditures, one time item, so--and debt service. So, we're gonna have about an \$18 million balance in our operating budget. Uh, which is pretty similar, little less than what we usually have had in the past, but in that range.

On the revenue side, there clearly have been revenues that have been hit hard in FY-20. Uh, some of them are pretty obvious, the hotel/motel tax, the meals tax, motor

vehicle exercise, sewer revenue, and DHSP revenue. So, if you take a look at that revenues based on where we feel we'll be at by the end of the year, there's about a \$6 million loss in those revenues. Uh, state aid, which is as low as revenue, we have been told by the state that we will get our full payment in June, so at this point, that's not listed.

So that's \$6 million less in revenues. But on the other hand, we are very fortunate, as we've said in the past, to have some strong revenues during the year that we--that we've been able to replace things with. And uh, this year--year, even with that, we've got about \$26 million in positive revenues. Those are mostly building permits and building permits related, uh, interest earnings, uh, uh, money related to the green line extension, it comes in after we front some money up, and obviously, mitigation.

So, if you take a look at the summary page, uh, we will have \$18 million in budget balances. And I know this is confusing, so I'll try to go slow. What that means is, money not spent in the FY-20 budget. We had anticipated \$18 million. We are anticipating a loss in revenue from the categories we estimated at, at \$6 million. And we have

revenues over and above, excluding those categories, primarily, building permits, at about \$26 million.

So, on net balance to the good, this year will be \$38 million. Now that would go to free cash, if we had not spent any free cash money, and would be added to free cash. Uh, one of the advantages of being in the situation we are in, is that we--we've been able to use free cash this year in many areas. But uh, we had planned on spending the largest amount of free cash in--in the city's history this year, so we've had to balance that with COVID-19. But we still felt we were in a strong enough position to do that.

So, we're estimating that we're gonna spend \$100 million in free cash. We have spent \$89 million to date, but we have a COVID-19 appropriation coming up, we have the universal design coming up, we have a public works facility rental coming up, and we have a police system coming up. So, at the end, it'll be about \$100 million in free cash appropriations. Uh, fortunately, we had \$246 million going in. So, you take that \$100 million away, that gives you \$146 million. You replenish the \$38 million in.

As someone who sits on a lot of metro mayors and has been talking to other mayors, the fact that we are in a

positive balance at the end of '20 of \$38 million, trust me, is the exception, not the rule. Most cities are now looking at a deficit in FY-20, so it's something we should be incredibly proud of. And I wanna thank all the departments for recognizing this and working with us, as well as the Council.

So, we will end this year at about \$184 million. These are rough numbers, but it still puts us in an excellent position moving forward in '21. But now more than ever, is when you need it; as we come to '21. So late into the presentation, and usually it's the first part of the presentation, we get to the budget.

So, I'll now just go over some of the concerns and highlights of the budget. So, as I stated earlier, we did two budgets pretty much this year. We had a budget that was complete, and in COVID-19, just continued to grow, and we knew we had to address certain items in the budget. So, this budget as it stands right now is a 5.1% adjusted budget increase, down from 5.7% a year ago. So not a major decrease, but a reduction. But in a city that provides so many services, it is important to recognize that we also wanna be able to have a budget that can continue to provide

those services.

Uh, the way this budget stands, it's an 8% property tax levy increase. Now every year since I've been budget director, finance director, or city manager, I think it's been stated that, "We try to make the budget the worst case scenario for tax levy, and at the time of the tax rate, we'll be able to reduce that." I'm not quite sure we can say that this year. I'll tell you why. But we also have five months now to kind of put this all in play, because all these numbers are finalized, not in the budget, believe it or not, but at the setting of the tax rate in September.

So that'll give us some time to really take a look at all the uncertainties we are facing. I can tell you as someone who's put together a lot of budgets, there's never been a budget with so much uncertainty. And I've put together the prop two and a half budgets, the governor's override budgets, back in the eighties and the nineties, but this budget's different. And we really wanna be prepared for the worst, but also understand if it isn't as bad as we hope, that we can do things quickly to make sure that we're providing the services we want.

So, in this budget, we had 33 new positions planned.

Really, 25A was increasing eight positions to full-time, but we added them to the list. Uh, when we created those 25 positions, we rarely set, "What are--what--what are the key initiatives that the Council are looking forward for our residents, and how can we do it?" And that was the number we felt we needed to do.

Uh, this is an interesting thing, because all those positions still appear on the personnel sheets. They're still in the department budgets. But due to the lateness of the adjustments, what we did is, we took a salary adjustment number and reduced all those positions to three months. That lowered the budget by about 2.5 million.

Now we've said that these positions will have to wait nine months, but we have a hundred vacant positions to date, so I wanna make one thing clear. As we continue to move forward and we don't have all the answers today, clearly, there are areas that the council and the manager will wanna prioritize to say, "Let's get those positions moving quickly." And I understand that and we will--and we are gonna work on that.

So, there will be some positions that will start a lot earlier than that, there may be some positions that are not

started at all. There may be some positions that are in that a hundred vacant positions that get delayed in order to address these 25 new positions.

I will tell you the areas that these new positions are in. Uh, obviously, in the expanded library branch hours, which we were hoping to do. Social worker position. Positions related to additional bike lanes. But it-- positions related to the expansion of, especially, tree work and public works, and some early childhood expansion.

So, we'll take a look at all of that, these are key priorities, and try to balance out how we can address all of these positions. However, this budget is different in the sense that, due to the uncertainty of COVID-19, we did not adjust revenues as we adjust expenditures. And I, I just wanna make this clear, 'cause this is clearly something that we knew we could do in September.

We wanted to wait the five weeks, and felt we were in a position we could make that adjustment. But this is not where you would traditionally do a budget. And I really want to thank David, Taha, and the budget team, for the flexibility. Because this was some real last minute changes to get to where we're at.

But if you take a look at the '21 budget, we stated there were revenues that needed to be looked at in this year that would obviously follow into next year. And those three revenue sources are primarily, the hotel/motel, the meals tax, and for next year's state aid, as they were-- they were areas that we felt could be addressed, uh, negatively, about everything that's going on. So, we had to determine what we felt was an appropriate reduction in those categories.

So, we took a look at the hotel/motel, uh, and said the revenue is estimated at \$16 million. Uh, and again, we've been doing this working with other cities and towns and in constant communication with the state. And I do believe these are worst case scenarios. Uh, but these seem to be numbers that are what other cities and towns may be looking at.

We took a 40% reduction in hotel/motel tax; that \$6.5 million that we would lose. We took a 40% look at meals tax, that's \$2 million we would lose. And in talking to the speaker, the head of the Senate, and with the mayors, we feel 15% in state aid is probably a reasonable number. Uh, that's another \$6.5 million that we would lose. So, there's

potentially, \$15 million in this budget that may not appear.

Uh, now, again, it's early to decide, and hopefully things will come back better. I know there's gonna be a push to try not to have a 15% reduction in state aid. I think that's unlikely. I mean, the good news for Cambridge and state aid, unlike a lot of cities, it's only 6% of our budget. So, we can absorb a state aid reduction better than most cities and towns, but when you're facing other revenue losses, it's difficult.

The editing that we wanna recognize in this \$15 million in state loss is, we also wanna--we also understand how this has impacted our residents, and especially our small businesses. So, as we take a look at a \$15 million loss in revenue, we are meeting regularly with the small business community to figure out how we can help them by waiving fees. That is also not in here, but we think there are some fees that we will be able to waive for them, that we will also have to try to absorb. But we're in this together. There's no sense of trying to collect fees that we can't collect at the expense of businesses closing down.

And how we balance that and protect the financial

position of the city, is something we're putting a lot, a lot of time into, to make sure that we do it the right thing. So due to the fact that we're potentially \$15 million over in revenue, what would be some of the areas that we can look at to say, "This is not an issue?" 'Cause I really don't believe it is, if these numbers stay consistent. So, one of the things that we did way back then, that we will look at again this year, and again, it's too early, we wanna wait till the end of the year; end of September, is we have an \$80 million health insurance budget.

Uh, we--we added a 3% increase to that number. Uh, right now our claims are coming in below that. As we take a look at where we end up, we may do a rescission audit to lower that budget. It could be anywhere up to \$5 million, but that clearly is up for discussion. We also have a fund balance of \$33 million. And, you know, I think I've been saying, especially, since city manager the last four years, that it's great to have these fund balances. And often it's said, "How much is enough?" And I don't know the answer to that, but we've always said, "Well, we need it for when something happens." And I can tell you, I never expected

that we would need it for something like this. But now more than ever, it's come in handy and we'll have that \$33 million to take a look at that.

We also have been fortunate with the CARES and FEMA Act, to be eligible for some reimbursements. And seeing that we're spending as much as we're spending, uh, we will clearly be getting that money. Uh, that money will come in for us next year. So that's a potential minimum of \$5 million that we could use to help address these concerns.

We may have to use that as a free cash item and then replenish it based on how the state guidelines work. And I apologize 'cause I know we're throwing out a lot of numbers here. But I'm just trying to give an example of where we're at. And then we'll take a look at other revenues, where we may have some flexibility in our debt stabilization fund, our health claims trust, our interests turn-in, and our building permits.

So, we feel comfortable that even though we're \$15 million in question, we think that's the worst case come September, with our flexibility. We believe at this point in time, there will be no reduction in services, there will be no layoffs, there will be no furloughs. Uh, but again,

it's early to tell. But I don't think you'll be hearing that story from many cities or towns. So, what did we put on this budget? I think that's important to bring home, is the fact that when we went back and did a round two, we did not touch the school budget. Education has been a top priority of the City Council and the city administration, and we felt like at this point in time, when we were making these changes, it would be very difficult for the school to work those changes in.

So, we are very pleased to announce that the school budget includes 57 new positions. Uh, our budget has zero, but we felt it was important to do that. And it's a 5.9% increase. So, we've worked closely with the mayor, the superintendent, and it's a budget that we feel is gonna be exceptional, especially with other cities and towns that may be facing, but due to the importance of that, uh, we felt we should leave it.

Uh, another area, and I appreciate Co-chair Carlone mentioning, is the fact that, clearly, affordable housing has been a key, key, key priority. I think it's safe to say it's number one. Uh, and we just felt that we had heard, we needed to do more for affordable housing. And last year I

committed to, hopefully, within three. But a three to five year window was given to me, and Councillor Carlone had this discussion with me, and we said maybe we could do it until, hopefully, three.

But we really wanted a five year window, and I know, working with him and Councillor Simmons, there was some pushback that, "Gee, that seems long." And I think the council felt the same way. So, we're pleased to announce even in these difficult times, we will have doubled our number in two years. Uh, we'll have \$27.3 million, specially assigned for affordable housing in this budget.

And it's something I really wanna thank the council for, for their continued passion and pushing to say, "This has to be a top priority, this has to find ways of funding." And it's something we're incredibly proud, we were able to do this year. But housing and school are not the only priorities that we've tried to address in this budget.

We've heard over and over again, "Early childhood education cannot be slowed down and must be moved." So, this budget, includes \$2.5 million in additional funds for early childhood. A million dollars for

scholarships, \$600,000 for head-start, \$900,000, which does include the three new position, so a portion of that will go, but also for the expansion of quality new pre-schools and increased professional development.

Uh, the only issue with the pre-schools, other than the fact that we believe we'll be able to come up to hopefully fund this position is, under the COVID-19 situation, class size has become a factor. So, we may not be able to serve as many pre-schools, uh, children as we've had in the past, due to those kind of requirements. And Ellen Seminar is working on this. And I think when we get to the Human Services budget, this is an issue we should be spending a lot of time on, "On how COVID-19 is gonna replace early childhood in terms of some of the plots and how that'll all work." But it's something that we're proud to have in here.

Some of the other small things that we wanted to make sure what we knew were important to the Council, the--the Tenant Task Force Displacement Team, which I know the mayor worked a lot of time on, we've added \$160,000 into--to that program, to increase funding for legal services. Uh, small businesses, the Recycling Program has been an incredible

plus for them.

We added 125 additional businesses that we would be able to pay for recycling. Uh, as we've talked long and hot about how could we do something on taxes, this has been a priority of the Council for a long time. We will have the small business property exemption available in. Due to, again, these difficult times for small businesses, for the first time, we will be funding all the business district beautification programs in all the districts in the city.

I committed to that and will continue to do that. We also knew the Mattress Recycling Program has been a very successful one. We wanted to keep that. The Police Cadet Program, there was a thought that we wait a year. I said, "No, it's been a priority. It's too important. We're gonna keep that." We--we've continued to increase funds in climate change preparedness. And lot, but not least, something that I know has tremendous passion to everybody, is what are we gonna do with participatory budgeting?

The budget in this year is budget--is the one that was already approved for next year. And we are still committed to doing that. It's gonna also have to look differently, but we'll continue to look at this. Uh, just some other

quick points I wanna bring in place is, clearly, over and over again, we heard that there are categories that are important to the City.

And if you look at our housing and homeless chart, and again, Co-chair Carlone was instrumental in saying, "You gotta--you gotta get these keys initialized, and summarize them." \$40 million for housing and homeless, \$21 million for early childhood, \$26 million for sustainability, \$20 million for Vision Zero. And, uh, and I know Councillor Simmons has been a leader in this saying, "Anti-biased diversity, we need to do more culture. How do we--how do we get that?" That budget now has \$5.4 million.

So, in a difficult time for budgeting, we've been able to put \$115 million into key priorities, which I think will affect our residents in an incredible positive way, but also addresses as, uh, the Council--Councillor Carlone said, "The priorities of which the Council has set." So, I know this was a long presentation, but this is a very unusual budget. Again, I wanna thank the Council for working with us during these difficult times. Uh, a lot of government has slowed down due to COVID-19, but a lot has continued to work.

I think our financial position has put us in an incredible situation right now. And to be having this type of a budget discussion, even though it's a little less than what the budget discussion for Cambridge usually is, it's an incredible situation, and I think it's something we all can be proud of, the City administration.

But I think the City Council deserves great credit here, because they have allowed the City to grow these fund balances in all these categories, they've worked with the City administration, and now more than ever, the ability to address these concerns have become prominent. So, I'm gonna see if David wants to add a lot, or Taha. I know I spoke for a while here, but this is such a unique situation, such a different budget.

Uh, I wanted to kind of go over it in sections, but again, I think it's a budget that we can be incredibly proud of. We'll continue to monitor the impact of COVID-19. We will continue to move slowly. Uh, we've committed to do what we think is best for our resident's safety first. But I gotta tell you, all the people we've worked with, have been tremendous partners and have worked with us in all the decisions that we've made to date. So, I, I know there's

gonna be a lot of questions. But I don't know if David has anything, or Taha, if there's anything they wanna add, so I guess we will open up the question--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: So, thank you, Mr. City Manager. Uh, to Mr. Jennings. Mr. Kale, do either of you want to contribute or add something to the conversation before we go to the Finance Committee members?

MR. DAVID KALE: Uh, not at this time, Madam Mayor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Jennings. Hearing, uh, no further discussion from, uh, the finance team, I open the floor to the City Council. Are there any questions, Mr. Clerk, I can't see the cue. So, are there any questions from our colleagues? I can't--uh, let me--uh, before we do that, I wanna recognize Councillor Toomey, who's with us, and let the record show that he is present. Questions from the floor?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Madam Mayor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Mayor. Are we on the budget overview or is that still to come?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: This is the part of the

budget overview, Councillor.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Okay, great. Thank you so much. Um, and through you, thank you to the, uh, manager, for that update, um, and for this budget. I, I read through very carefully, and I'm very concerned about the idea that we are going to increase expenditures when we are facing what may be the largest downturn, uh, economically in--in over a century.

And we are already predicting, uh, potential property tax increases, which are going to be very difficult for a lot of people during a downturn. I, I know this Council has, for many years, suggested that we should be slowly and carefully increasing property taxes, um, to pay for these many great initiatives that the city funds.

But now when we're facing such a major downturn, um, rapidly increasing property taxes to not just cover, um, expected revenue shortfalls, but--but in fact, to increase our expenditures, uh, just doesn't strike me as very realistic. So, I, I would love to hear a little bit more context on how we're thinking about that.

I mean, if we're looking at a--a commercial, uh, landlord, you know, where so many business--small

businesses are unable to pay the rent, the commercial property owner won't be able to afford a--a property tax increase. Uh, and similarly with--with many, uh, small landlords who are renting out units in their homes. So, I'd just like to understand a little bit more, how we're planning to--to deal with that, uh, in--in the next--in the coming fiscal year.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Councillor, I appreciate that question.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Hold on, hold on just a moment, um, Mr. DePasquale. Thank you, firstly to my--my colleague. Thank you very much for that question. Uh, one of the things I didn't mention from an operational perspective, is, we'd like to have each councillor ask, uh, you know, two questions, they can ask one if they want, but two questions per item.

And you have--I'm not picking on you. You just happen to be the first one to ask a question. But because we have such a thick, um, amount of items, we wanna be able to get through as many of those as possible. So, I meant to say that beforehand, but I didn't wanna say it after you spoke. I wanted to make sure I got it set early in the

conversation. Thank you. Councillor Zondervan, uh, to you meet Mr. DePasquale, could you please respond to my colleague?

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Sure. So, through you, Madam Chair, I would say that I'm glad to hear Councillor Zondervan feels this way. I would say there has been nobody over the last 30 years in the city, who has spent more attention to property tax bills than myself.

That it's been a key to my whole career, in terms of working with Mr. Haley and Mr. Rossi, going back 20 years when bills went up high to make sure that bills were managed. And I take great pride in the fact that, even when increasing our budget, uh, our average tax increase for the last 10 years is five point--is 5%, and the last five years is 5.1%.

So, it's something that I'm incredibly proud of. We created the chart about no one paying more than \$250, and our numbers are at 61%, was the low. So, this is an incredible amount of time paid on taxes. We feel we can get this percentage, uh, down.

But this increase was related also to the fact of where we thought we'd be, based on the fact that, you know,

there are services that this city feels like they needed to provide; affordable housing, childcare, uh, early childhood, uh, public works, in terms of the environment.

So, we try to work this all with the Council goals. I'm proud of this budget. There will be a slight increase in taxes. But one thing in working with the head of assessing, and I think we'll have impact as well, is that traditionally assessment, but tax bills are based on the tax rate, but your assessment.

And on the assessment side, Cambridge assessments have gone up between 10 to 12% annually, especially on the residential side. My guess this year, residential assessments will go up, even though they're based on a year ago, will go up about two to 3%, and commercial will be facing a similar. So, uh, even though the rate may be up slightly, I think with the assessments values going down, the builds would not be changed dramatically.

So, I didn't think this was a city that would be at this point in time, looking for layoffs. It's not something that I feel we need to do. We will have flexibility and revenue, as we always have in the past.

So, I think at the time of the tax rate, we will be

able to present a budget that continues to meet the demands that our residents want and deserve, continue to meet the goals of the Cambridge City Council, but continue to meet the goals of my administration and my career as finance, that has paid great attention to the taxpayers in this city. So, I appreciate what you're saying.

I could not agree with you more that it has to be a priority, but we have decided not to just add this to taxes. That's why we went back and reduced those positions. And that's why we'll take a look at additional revenue, and we may use our reserves as well, because I do think now more than ever, that it's important to pay attention to tax bills.

But I also felt the largest tax increase is the school budget. And at this point in time, I did not want them have to take, uh, any lesser than we had promised before this. So those are the scenarios, but obviously taxes, like I said, have been a priority and we'll--we'll continue to make it a priority. So I can appreciate any councillor who feels that we should be paying tremendous attentions to tax bills.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr.

DePasquale. Councillor Zondervan, do you have another question relative to the budget overview?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Yes, Madam Chair. Thank you. And--and I appreciate the answer from the manager. The--the concern is, of course, that um, if--if we raise property taxes, that would presumably result in a raise in rents, which again, people won't be able to afford, uh, during an economic downturn.

So, um, as you mentioned, all the new hires are postponed until April, and--and I guess, I don't fully understand that, um, from a--from a budgeting point of view, because I don't understand how to evaluate whether a position now is going to happen or not.

Um, if--if we think that a particular position is--is critical to providing our--our services, then why wouldn't we just hire them? And if we think we can live without it, then why wouldn't we just say, "It's not in this year's budget?" Because again, there's so much uncertainty, and, you know, in my mind, and of course, you know, different people can come to different conclusions.

But the likelihood that we're going to be in a situation by April, that's similar to where we were, um, a

few months ago, just seems very unlikely to me. So why do it this way versus saying, "These positions are off the table for next year, and these other critical positions, uh, we're going to find a way to make them happen?"

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Uh, through you, um, Madam Chair, and I can ask David to talk about this. But Councillor, it's really to address what you were saying. The best way to avoid tax increases is to say, "These positions are important. They reflect where the city wants to go." However, we do wanna control tax bills.

So, if I had budgeted all 25 in full, the bills would be up dramatically. However, as I stated earlier, we have a hundred vacancies. We now have 25 new positions that we're gonna look at. We have funded them through April, but we have great flexibility in determining how we're gonna bring some of those positions back. Some may be earlier, some may be later, some may be not at all.

But with the flexibility that we have in terms of managing budgets with the, a hundred vacant positions, and trying to work with where we're gonna be, I think in working with departments, this is all happening fast. Uh, so we will now sit down and prioritize what positions we

can bring back earlier, as we monitor our other hundred positions that I said. Some of these new positions may replace some of the old positions. But we wanted to get the positions into the personnel sheet, 'cause I really don't create positions that are not already in a budget. Have the flexibility, work with the Council on priorities, work with the department heads on what their needs are. And I think this gives us the flexibility to have the best of both worlds.

We know the areas that the Council has set priorities in, we know the areas the Council has asked us to expand services in. In order to reach that, some of these positions are gonna be needed. But we wanted to have a discussion with all those departments who've asked for those positions, and take a look at what positions are vacant that we can adjust.

There's just not enough time to try to do that and submit a budget on time. So, I think this gives us the best of all worlds. David Kale has been already working with department heads to have these discussions. Uh, and we will gradually go slowly and determine what we can fill, what we will fill, what we will not fill, and we will prepare a

balance budget by the year end.

And, uh, again, I think the fact that we have a hundred vacant positions here and we have everything on hold right now, gives us great flexibility, but also gives us the ability to address, like I said, some of the concerns that we talked about earlier where we knew were clap--key priorities of the City Council. David, do you want to add anything?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Kale.

MR. DAVID KALE: Uh, through you, um, Madam Chair, to Councillor Zondervan. Again, I think the manager hit the nail on the head, which is, our flexibility. Many cities and towns don't have the flexibility we have.

So, we will review where we are between now and late September, when we submit the classification, uh, hearing information, and we will make adjustments. And as you said, there may be--if things are not going as, uh, planned in terms of the recovery, we may be looking at some of the positions that have been added and maybe we take, uh, a hiatus on them for the final three months, and, uh, reevaluate them as part of the '22 budget.

But I think everyone I've talked to and just--um, and

the municipal feel there is--'21 is a bridge year, and basically what you're trying to do, is find a way to bridge yourself to '22, with the assumption that '22 will be significantly better than '21, and hopefully back to where we were prior to the COVID outbreak.

Um, but again, our flexibility is, uh, enormous with our free cash balances and our reserve balances, and our ability to manage our budgets, and to um, make sure that if we, uh, for example, uh, spend a little more in free cash than we wanted to, to be able to control our expenditures to generate replenishments, and to be conservative with our, um, uh, revenues, uh, in the fall, to make sure that we're not over budgeting revenues, uh, where we know there may be an issue.

So, I think we're all saying the same thing as we're trying to, uh, make sure that the tax increase is as small as possible, 'cause we know that, uh, people are in difficult circumstances in some cases, uh, both commercial residential taxpayers, um, at the same token, trying to balance that to move things forward. But I think our ability to manage, uh, revenues and expenditures, and to be able to do an evaluation in the fall to reconcile all those

things, is the prudent course of action.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Kale. Our next person signed up to speak on--on the budget overview, and I apologize 'cause I didn't look down at my list, was Vice Mayor Mallon, followed by my--my co-chair. So, I would like to go back--to go to Vice Mayor Mallon, and let her have the floor. Vice Mayor Mallon.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you, Madam Co-Chair, and, uh, through you to the City Manager, and Mr. Kale, and Mr. Jennings, I--I just first wanna commend everybody for doing a budget, um, that is this thoughtful, in the midst of a global pandemic.

Um, I know that there's a lot of uncertainty, uh, certainly for many, many people, and our municipality is, um, is not alone. And I--I understand that there are a lot of municipalities in Massachusetts and across the country, that are looking at furloughs, layoffs, um, negative balances in some areas.

And so, I--I appreciate the, um, the City of Cambridge and their fiscally conservative position, in putting us into a place where, um, we were prepared for a rainy day because it is pouring. And, um, I liked Mr. Kale's, uh,

thinking around, and--and verbiage around this being--
fiscal '21 being a bridge year; a bridge to get us to '22.

Um, I, I understand that this must have been a very
difficult budget to put together, and I appreciate the
thoughtfulness around figuring out, um, how to really think
about those 25 new positions. And some of them are
critical. Um, we can talk about this, you know, as the
budget moves on.

But, you know, the housing liaison position, uh, to--
to supplement more of Pens tax work, it's gonna be
absolutely critical as we think about, um, how many people
are gonna be losing, um, their homes, their apartments, you
know, due to job losses in the recession and depression
that is--is forecasted?

So, you know, some of these, I wanna know, um, maybe
not right now, but how are we prioritizing those 25
positions, and then the a hundred open positions? Um, how
is that being thought about? So, um, it's not something
that I expect you to answer right now, but I--I would like
for--if you--if you have some thoughts on that, Mr.
DePasquale, I'd love to hear them.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Uh, we've--we've

actually--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Oh! I'm sorry. Through you, Madam Chair. We actually already started that. Uh, we're taking a look at, you know, where we need to go, we're meeting with department heads. And, you know, David's the point person working with Taha.

It'll all come back to me and Lisa, and we're gonna, obviously, work with the Council to determine where we need--uh, how to prioritize. And, you know, I think one of the flexibilities, we'll be taking a look at how long some of those a hundred positions have been vacant, and can we now focus on the new positions while determining what to do with those old positions?

So, uh, we wanna get this started early. Uh, I don't wanna give the Council or the department heads, the impression that, "Come July, we're gonna have this resolved and positions will be in place." But the sooner we address it, the sooner I think the affordable housing positions in CD and executive are, some we really wanna focus on.

Uh, we'll prioritize and, you know, believe me, we're gonna get some of those new positions up and running before

April. Uh, and--but I--I have tremendous flexibility with the hundred we have, and I have a team of department heads who understand the importance of trying to get through this financial situation, uh, but also meeting the needs of our residents and what the Council expects. And I really believe when this is said and done, even though this, we're gonna be able to manage that. But it will take time, but that process has already begun.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. DePasquale. Vice Mayor Mallon, do you have another query?

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: I do. Um, you know, in terms of--I have--actually I have a lot of queries and, um, I just wanna express that I hope that you'll revisit the two questions, per councillor, per subject. Because I know that, A, we have three full days of the budget, um, slotted out and--and forecasted in our time.

And I think that this is a--first of all, this is the most important thing that we do all year, is really income, and talk about the budget. I think it's important for residents, I think it's important for the City Council, I think it's important for head departments to really showcase, um, their--their efforts and their programs, as

well as being challenged on how to do them better.

Um, so I--I hope that we can revisit that. I don't remember it being, um, a process in the past. And, um, especially for this budget, I think we are gonna have a lot of questions that, you know, as you mentioned, Madam Chair, in--in the opening remarks, "This is going to, um, generate a lot of conversation." And I think that's good. So, I would just like to say that I hope that we can revisit that.

So, my--my second question, I guess, is around small businesses and how we are going to be supporting them moving forward into--in this bridge year. Um, one of the things you mentioned, Mr. City Manager, is that we will be looking at waiving fees for, um, small businesses, to really help them in any way that the city can.

Um, knowing that we can't just give money to small businesses, uh, to help them survive this bridge year, um, but what are the ways that the city can provide funding through not, um, actually billing for it, for things? So, things like permits, fees. One of the things--um, one of the best ways I think that we could probably do that, is through the small business Recycling Program, because it is

such a huge expense for, uh, small businesses.

And I know we're expanding it to, um, to be 250 businesses this year. But I would really challenge us to think about, you know, not just waiving like a milk fee, right? Which is \$6. Um, and, you know, having it come up to, you know, \$100 a year. I would really like to think outside the box and figure out, what are the ways that are gonna make the most impact for our small business community? And one of those ways is through the Recycling Program. And has there been any thought about, um, expanding that citywide, to--just to help during this time?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Uh, through you, Madam Chair. Uh, there was, like I said, we knew how important this was, and that's why in talking to Owen, we increased it by another \$125 million. Uh, we have a lot of items on the table to help our small business.

Uh, Matt Nelson and Community Development have been working part of this with the small business community. It's trying to get that balance of understanding, we have some difficult budget decisions, but also understanding, as I said earlier, it's gonna be worse if these places are no

longer with us in the future.

So, we're open for these discussions. How we balance the budget in these times, are tricky. But I think hopefully, you know, as we move down the line, we'll have more answers. I know in talking to Matt, who's been my point person for this small business group, is making progress.

And I agree with you. The last thing I want to do is, uh, give small businesses permit reductions of \$6 and \$10. That's not gonna be the savior. We need to think appropriately. And I think, based on the conversations we're having, it will be a--a reasonable substantial discount, but also understanding that the city's facing some difficult times.

But fortunately for the city, we are better prepared for those difficult times than some of these small businesses are. And I do wanna bring home, and I know you were instrumental in this, the fact that, we should be incredibly proud of our \$3.6 million grant in loan program. I don't know what Boston's total number is, but I just read how proud they were, over \$4 million grant in loan program, and maybe there's more coming for Boston. But when you

consider their size and our size, I was incredibly proud to read about \$3.6 number.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Well, thank you, Mr.--

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Madam Co-chair, if I could just follow up quickly, um, on that last point. Um, I just think, if you think about the Recycling, for a second, it does get to our other City Council goals.

And if we can think of these things holistically, if we take trucks off the road--multiple trucks off the road and off routes, um, if we have one recycling truck, it gets to a lot of our other Council goals, with making safer streets, um, decreasing emissions.

So, if we can think about, um, these things in a very holistic way, not just, "This would affect small business." But rather, "This would affect small business, our safer streets and healthier environment." I think that would be very helpful. So, thank you again for, um, presenting this budget. I look forward to the next, uh, three days, talking, uh, in depth about it. Uh, I yield the floor.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Madam Chair, can I just add? This is also something I'll be happy to talk to the commissioner about when his budget will be coming up,

and we can follow up, if that would be helpful at his budget. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. DePasquale. Um, Co-chair Carlone, you're on the list this morning to speak to the budget overview. Do you wanna speak now, or did you wanna speak a little later?

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you Madam Chair. Um, I was, uh, one of the people that asked about the city staff retiring or moving on, and thank you for that information. I think sometime in the future, it would be great to talk about the five year financial capital plan debt and reserve policies, just to educate us.

And--and I'm not doubting anything, it's just, uh, uh, I--I think that kind of information would be useful. The--one of the jobs that are on hold is related to evaluating commercial development up-zonings, or at least I believe, that was the position. And this is something we've been talking about for at least a year and a half. And probably the only job of the 25 that was listed, that will bring in money to the city. Um, now I've done some research, I've asked people in Boston and other towns, New York City, about how you evaluate up-zonings, and um, it's-

- it seems a little silly not to have that expertise available earlier.

I believe it was a consultant that also was said for economic development. I assume that's what it was, but I could be wrong. And we know there's going to be four new towers being proposed, all of which want up-zonings. And in my mind, it's \$200 a square foot; additional square foot of land value. But having somebody sooner rather than later, that we can talk to during the up-zoning process, seems critical. And I know you would agree. Is that one of the 25 jobs, have I read that correctly?

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: I don't-

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: --believe so. Through you, Madam Chair, and we can confirm this. That's a consultant, so it wouldn't be listed as a position. It would be in the OOM account. So, I don't believe that--that consultant contract has been reduced.

Uh, so I believe it's there, but Iram will be here at the next meeting to confirm that. But that position was not a payroll position, so it would not have been subject to the delay. And I don't believe it was reduced from the OOM

account. But it's a great question and I will get back to you to confirm that.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Then I might have misread that.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: David, do you wanna--

MR. DAVID KALE: Through you, um, Madam Chair, to the, uh, other Co-chair. Um, we just completed the interview process for RFPs for the consultant to do the evaluation that you just spoke of. Um, I was scheduled to be on the interview committee, um, but other things pressed.

Gayle Willett was on the interview committee, and I think they are in the process of making a recommendation to, uh, um, enter into a contract agreement with a firm to provide that kind of evaluation that you just described here, and we'll just turn to Gayle, see if I just misspoke or not.

MADAM GAYLE WILLETT: Correct [inaudible 01:18:15]

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: If you could be on the mic when--

MR. DAVID KALE: So, Gail, Gail, basically said, within the next two weeks, we should have a recommendation to purchasing to engage the contractor. And there were

several firms, I think there were seven that were interviewed, and, uh, um, Gail was on the committee. I don't know if, Gail, you wanna add anything?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Gayle, Ms. Willett.

MADAM GAYLE WILLETT: Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Did you want--

MADAM GAYLE WILLETT: [inaudible 01:18:42].

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Is it not working? Then come to the table, please. Where's Chris?

MADAM GAYLE WILLETT: Um, yes, so the committee-- there we go. The committee for the position has been meeting for the last couple of weeks. We did interviews, the, uh, teams for the seven consultants, um, and we're in the process of getting our ratings together, and I would think in the next week or two we will be, um, presenting those to purchasing, to continue moving forward on the contract.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Any further questions?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: To follow up on that. So, the position I misread, um, which is a good thing

I misread it, is additional at community development to have a financial analysis person or something to that effect. I think that's great. And frankly, I wish they had it when I was there back when, uh, but that's progress. My other question is more--is not gonna be answered today. But having--and I'll bring it up when, uh, the commissioner is here, of public works. Having an idea of what the overall infrastructure needs are, and I know we have to rebuild every 40 years, anyway, I'm not questioning that, sort of immediate needs, um, would help us in the future and understand the budget more about what we're doing and what we're not doing at this time. So, I don't expect a big answer now.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: I, I would just say through you, Madam Chair, I agree and I think at the capital budget as well, we can go over some of the debt issues, some of the five year policy. I mean, this is an aggressive debt policy plan that we have right now.

And as we look at things that we may look at to--to reduce, sometimes capital projects on that area, now that causes long range problems, like you say. So how do we balance addressing immediate needs, yet not putting the

city in a bad position down the--the road? Is an incredibly--it's a question we've never really had to worry about as much because of our position. But now more than ever, as you start talking about, "Should we be doing this two or three years out?" We should be having those discussions, so I agree, Councillor.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: And Madam Chair, the reason I bring that up is, for instance, we know we need a fire station in Kendall Square, we know we need, uh, a fire department repair facility. And, theoretically, could be incorporated into new development. And the more we know it and speak to you about it, the more we could work toward that, especially in projects that are being up-zoned. Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Uh, thank you, uh, Co-chair Carlone. I see Ms. Nolan's hand is up. Ms. Nolan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you, uh, Chair Simmons. And I echo what every, uh, colleague has already said about the challenge of putting together a budget. As we are, the analogy of flying a plane. Building a plane as you fly, it is certainly apropos to what, um, this budget

has been and continues to be.

And as has been iterated many, many times by the City Manager and Mr. Kale, we clearly are in another league, in terms of inability to withstand the ups and downs of a--an historic downturn in, uh, an upheaval, in our economic situation. I really appreciated the chart--uh, the summary chart that was sent out yesterday.

That would be good to make sure the public has access to that too, in terms of the overall situation and where the--the summary of the COVID-19 impacts have been on the budget this year. With some anticipation, in verbally, it wasn't as written down.

I would really appreciate it writing down of what the City Manager covered, in terms of the possible impact for next year. Uh, the summary of the information presented, particularly one reference was said that, there's a possibility of another \$15 million of, uh, downturn for, I believe that was for next year's budget. But since it wasn't, uh, in writing and included in the summary, it's a little hard for me to understand.

I would like--um, I--I don't know if it can be answered now. But when we get the detail of many of these,

uh, um, projections, it would be really helpful to know what it was based on. For instance, one of the things I had, um, asked about and tracked, was the question of, "As our revenues go down, what would we expect not just for this year but next year?"

And at least in the budget book that I saw an an example, which we know we rely on and provides as much as \$15 to \$16 million of the hotel tax, in addition to many other taxes. And yet we're only projecting a two and a half percent decline from the actuals received last year in fiscal year 2019, for this coming year of 2021.

Which strikes me as impossible to achieve, unless there's something I don't understand about that. But to have only two and a half percent, when we know that this pandemic will lead to much lower utilization of hotels for at least the next few months, is an example of something I don't quite understand how it is that we are projecting that.

Unless that is part of the \$50 million possible loss that we don't want to see. So it would be, um, helpful to have a delineation of that. And one thing I've also asked about, which maybe nobody's paying their taxes by credit

card. But it seemed like that would--that alone could have generated another one to \$2 million loss, because those credit card fees are two and a half percent, I believe, that we would've to pay.

So, it would be helpful to me to have this all written down, in terms of the summary, for us to understand what the ups and downs are for next year. Will we be getting that kind of--of summary of, "Looking forward, what would be the possible impacts by next year?" So that we can then do some advanced planning in case some of these worst case scenarios or just middle case scenarios, uh, wind up.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Sorry. Through you, Madam Chair. And again, I know there was a lot that we presented. And to put this all in writing was difficult as we were still doing it at about three o'clock yesterday afternoon.

But, uh, as I stated, when we put the FY-21 budget together, we took a look at the expenditure side, we decided to hold off on the revenue side. The hotel/motel, the meals tax, and the state aid, are three areas that, in this budget, are overstated.

There's no question about that. So, in the \$15 million

that we said we were looking at, if you take the hotel/motel tax, we are projecting a potential 40% reduction, the meals tax, a 40% reduction, and state aid, a 15% reduction. That's after talking to the state and chairs, to make sure these are reasonable numbers. Those three numbers combined, come up to the \$15 million that we are looking at. Uh, we feel we have solutions to all of those.

We feel as those are the worst case scenarios. Uh, but that is something we are looking at. Uh, Mr. Kale, I think has an update on the tax. I think it's around 200. The last time I looked, 150. But David, I know you're in the details of that better than I am.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Kale.

MR. DAVID KALE: Through you, Madam Chair, uh, to Councillor Nolan. So, we eliminated the credit card fees, uh, when the pandemic hit in, uh, March, um, just before the tax bill season hit. So, we've spent, uh, \$97,000 approximately in, uh, uh, credit card fees, that, uh, would normally have been a convenience fee to the taxpayers.

Um, but, uh, we still are waiting for some property tax monies to come in. So as the manager said, at the end

of the year, we will be somewhere between that 150 and 200. Uh, whether or not the credit card fee waiver continues indefinitely, uh, we're still evaluating. But, uh, uh, most of our tax payments come through escrow payments directly. Um, and, uh, believe it or not, some folks have used the, uh, payment box that is now located in the back of City Hall, who normally come into City Hall to pay in person.

Uh, and then our commercial taxpayers, uh, typically, uh, uh, don't use credit cards to pay their tax bills. So, it's finally a convenience, uh, that we've been able to extend during this, um, pandemic, and it's about, to year to date, about \$100,000.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Great. That's exactly--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thanks, Mr. Kale. Ms. Nolan. Councillor Nolan.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Yeah, thank you. That's exactly what I would've hoped to hear, that, that \$15 million address the--the questions I had on--on some of the hotel and meal. That was really helpful. Um, and I understand you're all working late into the night, it's the 24/7, and the budget, um, would not have reflected that.

So, I appreciate the information, since what we have out there in the public is gonna be a little bit different obviously than what we end up with. My other overview question, as many of my colleagues have already indicated, I--I hardly endorse many of the, um, uh, ways in which we should think strategically about whether to fill some of the new positions and then keep on hold some of the positions that are not filled now.

I think that's a, a, a good governance approach to understanding what the needs are, and it would not change the underlying budget overall. Um, I particularly think that the, uh, Vice Mayor's suggestion about understanding, also, how it is that we can perhaps be more efficient and reduce fees to some of our small businesses, particularly in the area of recycling, and some of the other areas in which those, uh, businesses have to rely on different services, is definitely something we should be looking at.

Uh, as we prepare that strategic look in the future, that if it is that the situation deteriorates and we feel that we have to perhaps reduce or--or, um, adjust to a new reality. One questions I've--I've always wondered about is, do we ever, um, in monitoring, and assessing, and

evaluating our effectiveness as a city, how much do we look to other cities to make sure that we are doing everything we can to be as efficient, um, and effective in our spending?

And in particular, when we are doing those measurements, which hopefully we're doing, to look at, uh, as compared to best practices across the state and also the country, how much of our, um, services can we--I've never seen a way that students are taken out of our, um, demographic information, so that for instance, if our, uh, trash services are servicing only 100,000 people, not 120,000. Because 20,000 are being served by the colleges and universities.

It would be really important for us to understand those kinds of, um, of--of information, whether it's recycling, or police services, or other kinds of maintenance. Do we ever look at that and take out an account for the fact that a significant percentage of our population are actually living in group quarters that are, uh, dormitories and controlled by, and serviced by from what would otherwise be public services?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale, Mr.

Kale.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: I'm not really sure. As long as we're not providing the service, we could look at their--what their cost is. But in terms of preparing our budget, no, we don't take a look at cost that other agencies are paying for a service that's not related to a service we provide.

Obviously, our budget's based on services we provide for our residents and for our city, so I'm not quite sure how we would go about that. But I certainly would turn it over to Mr. Kale, to see if he had any thoughts. But that's not the way we have looked at things, and I'm not quite sure. I may be missing something, so we may need to talk about this offline, I guess.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Chair, Chair Simmons, lemme clarify. I didn't mean that we should be asking them for their information. It's more like, as we go forward to assess how it is that we can provide services in the most effective and efficient way, particularly as we approach a situation where we may need to, um, reallocate certain funding, just to understand when we do any kind of comparisons, and understanding and monitoring our own

effectiveness.

If we are ensuring that when we do that, we take into account the fact that our population base is different than a city without major universities, where a large percentage of the population--a significant percentage of the population are living in situations that do not get city services.

I don't mean us to have extra work to ask them for their costs. It's really our--as we step back and assess our own effectiveness, whether we understand how it is that, um, we are doing, compared to--a really apples-to-apples comparison, if we're looking at, um, effect--effectiveness of our own providing of services. If--and if that doesn't make sense, it's a question I'll try to write it out so that we can, um, move forward.

MR. DAVID KALE: I think--through you, I think, Madam, uh, Chair, to Councillor Nolan, um, it would probably be great if you could write that out, because I think we have some initiative, um, uh, what works city's program that actually is a matrix of looking at data and comp--doing comparisons, and I think, uh, Lee has been spearheading that.

So I think if you, um, put them in writing, we may be able to take what we're currently doing and give you some examples of how we're measuring. And then, um, in addition to that, um, the commissioner, I'm sure will be able to talk about, for example, on the trash, the cost per capita and the like. So, but I know we, um, do have a couple of initiatives that we can provide information onto you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Kale.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor Nolan. We'll now move to Councillor McGovern, followed by Mayor Siddiqui, she has a question. Councillor McGovern, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to the City Manager, um, and Mr. Kale, Mr. Jennings, and the entire budget staff, um, for this budget and for the presentation today. Um, you know, I think that there's, uh, there's a lot in this budget, uh, to like, and I think the manager had said a few times, and I think it bears repeating that, um, you know, "It's comparatively to--to so many other communities, we are in a--uh, this budget is really a testament to our strong fiscal management and--

and position."

And, and that--um, I mean, the fact that we're--you know, that--one of the things that--that everyone has said so far, is talked about how we're gonna add more--what positions are we going to add, when we're going to add them, what the priority is to add them? The fact that we're even talking about adding, uh, is something that most other communities are not gonna be discussing.

And so, um, I think that that's--that's worth, uh, noting again. Um, and I would just say that, you know, we--uh, some of the things I--uh, the--the affordable housing, homelessness, roughly \$40 million, give or take, um, is tremendous to see. And I thank--uh, I know Councillor Carlone and, um, and Councillor Simmons, and--and really the--the Council in general, had talked about, you know, putting more money towards affordable housing.

And you reached that goal, uh, sooner than expected, and--and exceeded it in--in a lot of ways. Um, the expansion of early education scholarships and money, the continuing with the renovations of the firehouse and--and firehouses, and, and, um, the Tobin School Project, are roughly 6%, 5.9% increase in our public school budget.

Um, you know, these are all things to celebrate. I, I mentioned to the manager, and I mentioned before the public at the--our last Council meeting. You know, I wish that there was money allocated for the Municipal Broadband study, and moving that forward.

So, you know, there's always things that we can point to in a budget that we wish we saw a little bit more of over here, a little less of over there. But overall, this is, um, this is quite good. Um, my first question, and you probably don't have this on--on hand. But, um, you did mention, and this goes to the--the COVID-19 spending.

Um, you had mentioned the \$200,000, um, or the \$2 million, sorry, on the War Memorial. Um, but there's also a lot of other things that we have done to support our homeless community, uh, that's not related to the War Memorial.

There's the--the money that we're, we're, we're--we've been contracting with First Church, the money we've been contracting with restaurants, uh, and other things. And so, I'd like to get--um, just because I get asked this question, I'd--I'd like to get a--a more full picture of, um, the money we have put towards addressing that need.

Um, because it's--it's goes--it's--it--the War Memorial is great, but it goes beyond that. And so, I'd like to--I'd like to--to know what that total picture is. Um, and again, you don't have to answer that right now. And then I'll just be really quick.

I wonder with the reduction in--in revenues and, um, spending more money out of free cash, uh, do we see this impacting our bond rating at all move--moving forward, because that's also very key in what we get to do, uh, in the city?

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Uh, those are great questions. Through you, Madam Chair, I--I believe it's another \$600,000 that we've appropriated for free cash for human service programs, like what you've talked about, so I think it's 2.6. That doesn't include cost that are related to overtime and all of those issues, but I think it's \$600,000.

We've been working with our rating agencies. Uh, obviously, every city's gonna be facing this. I think one of the things we've always said about free cash was, we were gonna use it when we needed it and we were gonna provide them with the information.

So, of the \$100 million with spending, the good news is, is other than the COVID money, there's really nothing that we didn't tell them we were gonna do. So, we told them we were gonna be taking a hit in free cash this year. It's a little bigger than we thought because of the COVID, uh, decreases.

I think the rating agency's gonna recognize the fact that for FY-21's budget, there's gonna be some concerns. And I think people are gonna be using free cash and one-time money to help balance. Now we are not necessarily doing that more than usual.

But I think the reality is rating agencies will hopefully understand that they have to work with cities and towns. But the AAA rating is something that me and David have talked about a while in the--during the middle of this. But I would say that the rating agencies don't say this, but we have the top of the top of the AAA, uh, in writing. But we know that in, I think, based on where we're at and based on the plan we have, we will continue to be a AAA. Obviously, we're not gonna be as strong as we were two years ago, but nobody is. So, I think that's the re--the reality of it.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: And just--just, Madam Chair, one quick clarification because we--we did talk a lot about people who brought up the--the additional, um, 25 positions. I just wanna make sure, so if I heard you correctly, Mr. Manager. So, for now, in the budget, we're talking about those positions, potentially starting in April.

But you--I believe I heard you say that, "In September, when we set the tax rate, we're gonna have a more clear picture and that some of those positions--we will have further discussions around which of those positions to prioritize and bring on sooner." And so, I wanna make sure that I heard that correctly.

And then just to say again, you know, we could look at this and say, "Well, why aren't we bringing these on right away? Why are we waiting until April?" But the other way to look at it is to say, "They're still budgeted." And no one would've blamed you if you had said, "We're not doing any new positions given the circumstances." And you didn't do that. You figured out a way to keep those positions and to keep the priorities that the Council has put forward.

So, am I correct that--in hearing that it's not

necessarily gonna be April, but we will re-evaluate that come September, early fall, and we may see those positions sooner?

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Uh, through you, Madam Chair, I couldn't have said it better myself. I wanted the flexibility to have the ability to create these 25 positions at some point during the year. The only way I could do that was to fund it for some period of time.

Uh, we felt three months was the appropriate date. It also allowed us to reduce \$2.5 million from the budget. But some of these positions will clearly be on sooner, as we take a look at the other vacancies we have, there could be a position here that never comes on that year. But I think for the most part, it will be more that, hopefully, we see positions sooner than we see later, from my point of view.

And that's where we'll work with the department heads and the Council, and figure out what's the game plan. And also, again, having those hundred vacant positions and really monitor them closely, is something important.

You know, we want the opportunity, we've already started this discussion with the department heads now to let them realize they may have to do some picking and

choosing, and some timeframes that we've not had to do in the past. But reality is now we have to. But flexibility was so important here, and I think we've allowed ourselves to do that this way.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor McGovern. We now move Mayor Siddiqui, do you have a question that you wanna raise? We'll pass over and we'll go to Councillor Toomey, do you have a question? Yes, no? Oh! You're on--I don't--okay, Councillor--Mayor Siddiqui. Sorry.

MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI: Yeah, I'm sorry. A rookie mistake. I haven't--I, uh, I forgot to un--unmute and I--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Unmute yourself. Okay, no problem.

MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI: Yeah. Uh, no questions, but I just wanted to thank, um, City Manager and, uh, the--the team, for working around the clock on--on this. I know from the conversations that I've had with the City Manager, there's a lot of unknowns to come.

Uh, you know, when we think about the schools, uh, and

that reopening, that--um, that is going to require, um, more expenditures to come that we don't even--we haven't even imagined yet. So, uh, there's--there's a lot of challenges ahead. Uh, but, uh, I'm grateful to the City Manager and others, for--for constantly thinking ahead, um, of what way may come, uh, and I look forward to working together.

I think one thing that I'm really worried about is, uh, the tenant displacement piece. Uh, after this moratorium is lifted and the emergency is over, uh, what we can expect to see, and I have been talking to, um, Maura Pensak about that. And I think as we've done in the past, there may be, um, more, you know, expenditures that relate to legal services and other things that, uh, I can foresee. So, I just wanted to mention that. But overall, thank you and thank you to the co-chairs.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mayor Siddiqui. Uh, Councillor Toomey, you've the floor.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Thank you, first of all, and thank Councillor Simmons and Councillor Carlone, and the City Manager and his fiscal staff, for this presentation of the budget. And I know there's been a lot

of hard work that've been put into drafting this.

Um, this--between my school committee and City Council, this is my 35th, uh, budget, uh, that I've been involved with. And certainly, as the manager said, this has been the most challenging, um, budget that we've ever seen. Uh, certainly in the past years have--have been somewhat spoiled, just coming in and, you know, and, um, the budget was always balanced.

There were always increases for all the departments, and especially, benefiting all the residents, of great services that we provide. But over the years, you know, in looking at the future, um, what does that hold for the City of Cambridge?

And certainly, I'm curious if anyone from Community Development fund and other manager's office has reached out to a lot of these, um, large, life science buildings, um, and the impact that is gonna have on--on the future. Clearly, the last couple of months, majority, if not 70%, 80% of those businesses, the employees are working from home. Is that trend going to continue? And what--what does that mean for the future?

And--and I just don't always wanna focus on Kendall

Square, but, you know, I'm just so familiar with it. And if these--you know, I'm sure that these, uh, owners are looking at, you know, "Well, why am I paying 200 square foot in these buildings, when I can reduce that substantially by employees working at home?" So, I'm just curious, and I don't know if you have the answer, but I think something--that clearly has to be looked at. Because the spill effect of--of that is unbelievable. Because if those employees aren't there, they're not shopping, they're not in the--in--in the thing.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Through you--I'm sorry.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: I'll just--you know, we have a lot of new buildings that are being proposed. Have we talked to those companies, uh, is that going to con--are they going to move forward with those--those plans and those developments? Um, is there a need for that anymore, for those--you know, just this whole workforce thing is--is just changing dramatically.

And I'm just going to throw caution to the wind on--on this, because it--that changes substantially, that impacts the revenue that's coming in. And speaking of that, do you

anticipate these, um, like the hotel/motels, and a lot of those commercial developments, coming to the city for tax abatements, and what would the impact of that be? And even residential people are applying for tax abatements.

So, I'm just curious, um, on that part. Are we talking to those large institu--the colleges? A lot of them are gonna be online now, and we don't know. But I think it's something really that we have to start, and I'm hoping that there's individuals whose task right now is to solely focus on that. I don't know if you wanna just comment on that.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Through you, Madam Chair. Great question. We actually met with head of assessing, uh, this--last week, about this exact issue. Uh, we believe, and assessing has been in contact with a lot of these big businesses, uh, who I wanna thank for bringing their employees back slowly.

We also sent them a letter asking them to do that. Uh, that at this point in time, they're planning on staying even though more people are working at home, in their facilities that they have now. Those times can change and we need to be on top of it, but the word we are getting is that, "People are looking to stay right where they're at in

Cambridge." I think Kendall Square is one of those unique places that may be able to just have enough leverage itself to allow that to continue.

But I know, like I said, Gayle was working with them directly and I know community development's also talking with him. So, for now we think it's a positive note. Uh, the hotels are an interesting situation, because as you know, assessments are based on the previous year.

So, it really won't have the COVID-19 issues in as much, uh, when they apply for abatements. And I know Gail is spending a lot of time trying to figure out and working with the hotels, how we could address that. But these are questions that I know Gail has put a lot of time into.

We spoke, me, her, David, Taha, last week about the Michelle Kincaid, about tax bills, and assessments, and long range. What's gonna happen if Walmart people work from home? And it's a great question. It's something we're trying to stay on top of because, obviously, it plays a major role in the success of our taxes for our residential properties. But we'll continue to stay on top of that.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Toomey.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Thank you. And in

terms of the residential sales, are we monitoring that, uh, aspect of it? And I think the housing market is still very strong. Around the corner, for me, the single-family house-home just sold for \$1.7 million. That now impacts the Director Butters who--'cause when we assess regularly re-assessments, it's on the sales of surrounding area.

And I'm thinking and know all--all of individuals there, senior homeowners there, working class, so their assessments are gonna go up. And I know you said that--you know, and the tax rate is based on what the assessment is, I believe. So, when those assessments go up, that tax bill does go up substantially. So, I'm really, you know, looking--you know, single-family, \$1.75 million. So, are we looking at that part of the market? How does that one affect, you know, long-time property owners?

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: So, through you, Madam Chair, and I'll let David follow up. Uh, so we--again, we had a meeting on this last week, because obviously, the budget helps strive the tax bills in September. And when we see a budget levy increase, the next question is, "What's it gonna be towards assessment?"

So, we have averaged, roughly, annually, about a 10 to

12% residential increase in assessments, annually. In talking to Gail last week, and I think this is pretty accurate. Gail, if I'm off, you can gimme holler. We're looking at a maybe a three to 4%. So, we are still holding ground, but assessments will not be up as high as they have in the past, in terms of their increase. That's probably more important than ever this year, because if we do rely a little more on taxes, uh, having the assessments less will help us at some of the bills. So, we are still holding our assessment value, but it's not growing as fast as it's in the past. Then if there's every year you'd probably want that, this is it.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR: My last question, um, Madam Chair, through you. Has the city looked at possibly providing--uh, offering an early out incentive to our employees?

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Uh, so I know the metro mayors are talking to the state about that. Uh, as someone who has been here, I think for three of those, if not so, I think there's been three. The problem with the early out incentive is, if you then--as long as you don't fill those positions, it is a financial winner for the

city, certainly in the short range.

However, based on your willingness to eliminate positions, which has not been necessarily what we have done, it's a financial non-winner. So, it's a tricky situation because it's a quick fix, but unless there's a commitment to say, "Those positions are not coming back."

Financially, for a city in the long run, it puts you in a more delicate spot. So, trying to balance that is tricky. Some people, it's also--it's a great advantage for our employees. But I think for Cambridge and our willingness, probably, not to eliminate positions, we may not be a city that jumps at that without doing a little more research to really determine, "Will we not bring those positions back?"

And--and if David wants to add more, but this is another item that we have been having discussions about. It would not surprise me at some point if that is a possibility that the state allows, but for some quick relief for some cities. But I'm not positive it's something we would support yet without some more analysis. But David, I know--

MR. DAVID KALE: On--on a--through you, Madam Chair,

on a couple of calls we've had, um, recently with representatives from the state, clearly, usually these early outs happen through the state and then they allow municipalities to, uh, piggyback. There didn't seem, at that point, to be an appetite to, uh, have, uh, the governor proposed legislation to provide for a early out program.

And again, any early out program that would be adopted by the City, would have an impact and on our unfunded pension liability, down the road. And the other thing just to note about, um, the assessed values, the tax bills that will go out in the fall of 2020, is based on values as of January 1st, 2020. So again, um, that's just to, um, note that basically, the values--assessed values will be as of 1/1/20, for the bills that go in the--in the fall for fiscal '21. So, your example of folks who may have had a sale, that won't be reflected until next year.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor Toomey. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler.

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: Thank you, uh, Madam Chair, no questions at this, uh, time. I'll have some questions for the departments later. But thanks for all the

work that's gone into the budgets so far in this, uh, unusual time.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Did you say no questions, Councillor?

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: Uh, no questions at the--at the moment, no.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor. Any other discussion relative to the budget overview, before we close this item and move onto the executive? Hearing none, we will close the budget overview--overview and we'll move on to executive. Under executive, there are three pieces, leadership, equity and inclusion, and housing liaison. Those items can be found on V15, V17 and V 22. The Vice Mayor did pull leadership, and Madam Vice Mayor, I would like to give you the floor.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you, Madam Co-chair. Um, I had a couple of questions. One, um, around housing, the housing liaison and also equity and inclusion. Are we doing these in order or can we--can I just talk--ask all my questions in my time period?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: What's your pleasure, do you wanna do it all at once or you wanna do it item-by-

item?

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: That would be great. All at once.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Very good. Um, the floor--

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: The floor's yours.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you, Madam Co-chair, through you to the City Manager, I think we touched upon this briefly. But one of the, um, positions that we talked about at length this past year, was, um, some support for Maura Pensak in the Housing Liaisons, uh, Office.

I know that this position to help assist her in her work, has been put on hold. Um, and in the narrative it was, you know, these--all of these positions will be held until quarter of 21. And I know in your opening statement, you said that we would be re-evaluating these, um, you know, come September, and trying to prioritize them, which I appreciate.

I would just like to say that, um, I think Maura Pensak is doing, um, an incredible job. Uh, she needs a lot

of help, and I think, given the pandemic and what it is going to do, um, to a lot of our residents who have experienced wage losses, job losses, um, other financial hardships, it is going to be a critical, crucial position starting July 1st.

Um, I'm just wondering--I'm just wondering if--if there were thoughts on, again, prioritizing this position, uh, as we move forward into fiscal year '21, because it would've been great, I think, to have this position over the past year, let alone, um, starting in fiscal year '21.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Through you, and--and Maura's on the phone, uh, because housing is such an important item, I did ask her to be available, so she can follow up, but if she'd like. But I think as I said earlier, affordable housing is clearly, and that might've been the top priority of the City Council and this administration.

Uh, due to the fact that, again, our commitment to the Affordable Housing Trust, we doubled it in two years. This clearly would be a position as well as the positions in CD that I would think would move to the top. Now it's

obviously in my department, so it's gonna be a little tricky for me to announce, "I'm the first department who is filling early."

But I think due to the fact that it's affordable housing, we'll have that flexibility. So, I wanna have that discussion with all our departments, in all our situations. But as someone who's talked to Maura, and went over why she fairly needs this position, I don't see how it wouldn't be one of the first ones. But if Maura wants to talk a little more about the position, I think that would be helpful.

Maura.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Ms. Pensak, can you hear us?

MS. MAURA PENSAK: I can. Can you hear me?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Fairly.

MS. MAURA PENSAK: Um, can you hear me?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Can everyone hear Mr. Pensak?

MS. MAURA PENSAK: Is this better?

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Yes.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: It's much better. You have the floor.

MS. MAURA PENSAK: Great. Thank you. Thank you, um, Mr. City Manager, and through you, Madam Chair, and thank you Vice Mayor Mallon. Um, yes, I--I appreciate the--the question, and I can talk a little bit about the position. I appreciate everyone's, um, support of housing and the housing related needs in our city.

Uh, as--as we all know that, uh, while I am very--um, or I hope you know. That I'm very, um, happy to respond to individual, uh, needs and to do case management with our residents, both tenants and homeowners. Um, the position, uh, is also required to do a number of other systemic--um, uh, a lot of work around systemic changes and looking at, uh, best practices and, possibly, policy review.

Uh, and so in the past nine months, um, most--a lot of my work has been taken up--been taken up with, uh, specific individualized case management. And as I look to move into the next phase of work, uh, to address some of the systemic, uh, needs, both, you know, directly to work with tenants in terms of education and outreach, um, as well as management companies and owners, um, it would be really helpful to have someone who is specifically, uh, there to address intensive case management--um, to--to do intensive

case management, uh, with some of our residents. And this would be ongoing work.

Um, it would require--it requires field-based work, where you are taking folks to appointments, uh, walking them through systems, and, um, uh, it's--um, and--and also working with, um, folks who--you know, to connect them to other services, but also, um, to sort of be their point person. I can give examples, if needed or if you would like, but, um, that's a basic overview.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Vice Mayor, would you like some examples?

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Um, no. Thank you. I--I think I've worked with, um, Ms. Pensak on a number of examples, uh, in her tenure in this position. And I just wanna recognize the work that she's done here, and how intense that case management is. Um, but I think that this Council had envisioned this position, and you, Madam Co-chair, in your, um, earlier work and--and envisioning this position, that it would be more of the pos--the policy, the systemic review, those best practices.

Um, I, I do find it shocking, how, um, how much time it takes one person to actually move somebody from

homelessness into a unit. And, um, the more, uh, filled out this--this department can be, I think the more effective we will be, especially, as I said, during this pandemic, and what it is going to do to a lot of our residents who are gonna start experiencing some extreme housing situations.

So, I would love, if--if Maura was able to move into more of that policy, and systemic review, and best practices, and have some real support to do that intensive case management work that we've all seen, um, her do over the past year, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

So, I just--uh, I really wanna thank Maura for the--the work that she's done, and I hope that we can--and--and quickly find the support for her so she can, um, start implementing some policies, so there doesn't need to be some of this intense case management that--that happens now. Um, so I guess moving on to the Office of Equity and Inclusion, through you, Madam Co-chair, to the City Manager, um, there is a position, one of the 25 positions that's currently planned, um, but not going to be filled until potentially, April of 21, with a salary, uh, and benefits of 200--almost \$250,000, to provide for additional leadership for equity and culture.

And that this position will further promote an equitable and engaged workforce, so employees can do their best work and make a difference for the people and communities that Cambridge serves. There was not a lot of description of what this person, um, will be doing, and uh, it's quite a large salary for, um, for not having that description.

I was just wondering, uh, if Betsy could give us a fuller picture of what that looks like, um, what that person's, uh, responsibilities will be, and what they hope to accomplish. And, uh, I--I think it'll be important for the Council to know, you know, especially if we start prioritizing, which are the 25 positions, um, we wanna move forward first.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Um, thank you, Madam Vice Mayor. Ms.--madam.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: I just wanna--uh, through you--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale, you have the floor.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: --Madam Chair. So, this is all part of our commitment. It's a separate

division in Betsy's. But Betsy can talk on it, Lisa can talk on it, and I can talk on it. The one thing we've realized is that, you know, Betsy's done a great job. Sheila Keady has done a great job, and the City's moved incredibly, uh, forward in this direction. But we felt we needed another position as well, to really take it to a different level as well, as everyone else has a lot of things on their plate.

So, this is a--another high level position we have not determined. Again, I know it was important to put the position in, but we've not fully defined all the roles of this position, other than to say, uh, "It will be an important part of us moving forward." And, uh, Lisa's played a leadership role as well as Betsy and Sheila, in this.

So, what I'd like to do is have Lisa say a few words, then have Betsy, and then hopefully that we can go from there, if that makes sense. So, Lisa, do you wanna start and then we can turn it over to Betsy?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Ms. Peterson, are you available?

MS. LISA PETERSON: Yes, I am. Can you hear me?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Yes. Does every--can everyone hear Ms. Peterson? Ms. Peterson, you have the floor.

MS. LISA PETERSON: Good. Thank you so much. Um, I'm happy to talk about this position. Um, as the City Manager said, I think, uh, it was very important for us to put the position in the budget, and we still have, uh, some, uh, details of it that still need to be worked out.

But clearly what we felt was necessary, was additional--was a--a senior leader in the city that is, um, in the manager's office, that's really building on a lot of the good work that is happening in the city, in the City Manager's Office, in Equity and Inclusion, in a number of departments, you know, Department of Human Services, the Police Department, the Library, Community Development.

That have all really begun or really led, in the case of, uh, Human Services, in particular, led in these efforts. And we really feel like, in order--I feel very strongly that, in--in order to be able to really move equity, and inclusion, and culture, to the next level, and really think about it as a whole system, is that we really need a person who's res--one person, full-time, responsible

for really working collaboratively with departments to align our policies, and practices, and programs citywide, to fulfill our vision of workforce, equity and inclusion.

Um, and there's a number of things. You know, developing pathways for internal advancement, understanding barriers to advancement with particular attention to the experience of Black, Latinx, Asian, person with disabilities, and different age groups, gender, and sexual orientation. Um, working to evaluate our organizational structure, practice, policy, culture, um, implement promotion practices tailored to the need of our organization.

Um, strengthen procedures for getting help at work, clarifying reporting processes and mechanisms, coaching leaders and managers, uh, working on better metrics. Um, these are all areas, as you're hearing them, there has been work in a lot of these areas that the city's doing. And with that, we need to centralize it and even be stronger in some of these areas. So, I would say, um, you know, since it really impacts, I think, all that we do in the city, it's a very important position and a very important role.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Madam Vice Mayor.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you, uh, Ms. Peterson. And I certainly don't think that this is not a worthy goal and we should be focusing a tremendous amount of effort in that area. I guess my question was really around what the work of the Office of Equity Inclusion has been doing so far.

Um, you know, my other questions that I had sent to the City Manager and the co-chairs, was around some of the objectives and measures that, um, have been in the budget book for a few years, um, what type of progress are we making? Um, it just seems like to have two high-level people working on this particular area, which is critically important.

And as you mentioned, there's tremendous work happening in various departments like DHSP, the Police Department and others. Um, I just was confused that we were gonna have two very high-level people working on this, and unlike what we just talked about with the Housing Liaison, where we're just ask--asking for support staff, um, for someone who is doing the work.

So, I just--I had a lot of questions around--'cause we haven't had a lot of conversation at City Council, around

the Office of Equity and inclusion, and--and--and staffing needs. Um, so I guess I was a little caught off guard, and I'm not sure if my colleagues were as well. But I did have questions specific to some of the objective and measures.

Um, you know, last--one of the--number two was a complete revamping of the city's affirmative action plan, reorganize the affirmative action committee and outline roles in advancing city, um, diversity, and equity, inclusion goals. So, this was an objective last year.

I'm curious when that would be, um, completed, in terms of number three, "Provide customized training for boards and commission members to facilitate outreach." You know, how would that be done? How are these being prioritized? We have over 50 boards and commissions.

Um, there was a survey of boards and commissions to gain insight on the demographics, uh, coming out of the Madam Co-chairs, uh, Civic Unity Committee. What was done that--with that report? It was completed. Um, what are we doing with that? So, I guess, I--I have a lot of questions around adding another high-level position, and when it seems like some of the goals and objectives of this department, um, are kind of not moving in lockstep with,

um, the yearly goals.

So, I'm--I'm not sure who wants to speak to that, but those are the questions I have around this office. And adding in a, you know, a--an over \$200,000 a year position, for, as I mentioned, a very lofty goal. And I think we should be focusing a lot of our energy and effort in this area. I just--I worry that about having two high-level positions in some of the work, just doesn't seem to be moving forward.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Madam Vice Mayor, if I can add my voice to this conversation. Um, I think you-- when I saw your questions, I--I was really on board with what you had to say, and I certainly agreed with it. And as someone that has probably taken a bit of a deeper dive in-- into this particular area, um, I share your concerns and your questions.

And so, I'm--my answer is probably a non-answer in some ways, in that, um, part of this could be--I think you and I could have an offline conversation about it, so that I can give you a little bit more from my perspective, about what I think the City Manager's thoughts are and Ms. Peterson's thoughts are around this. I--I share your

concern. And we have not had any committee meetings in a long time in--of--and this is nobody's fault.

Uh, and--and so one of the things that I was going to do, um, and if with your indulgence, would do, is to take some of the questions--this doesn't answer your specific question of the 250, per--per se, write this minute. But I do look to the--to look to having a meeting where we could have an in-depth conversation from a--not only from a sort of procedural, uh, perspective, an organizational perspective, but then to--from a budget perspective, some of what we would like to see move forward, um, in this particular department, and maybe in the broader sense, in the personnel area. I don't know if that helps you at all, but I wanted to weigh in a little bit to give you--shed a little light on the--the path.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Well, thank you, Madam Co-chair. It does, um, not totally help. But I do think that having a further conversation, uh, about what we're trying to achieve here, uh, with the personnel that we have and the personnel that we're hoping to hire, and--and really looking at--at our goals, and--and having SMART goals and achievable goals that, um, we have the right

personnel to do. So, I, I guess I look forward to having a further conversation. I think, um, it would've been helpful to have before today. But I agree with you, that, um, we haven't had committee meetings and that is nobody's fault. Um, you know, COVID seems to have taken over everyone's lives and--and we have been focusing a lot of effort and--and attention to it, and I agree that that's where we should have been. But here we are today looking at position. So, thank you and I look forward to having a further conversation and thank you for the--um, thank you for the indulgence.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Madam Vice Mayor. Anything you wanna follow up on, otherwise I'll move to your colleague. Do you yield--are you yielding the floor?

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: I am yielding the floor. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Oh! Thank you, Vice Mayor, uh.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Through you, Madam Chair, I just wanna--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: I just wanna make sure, if Betsy wants to add anything, I know she had some of the questions. And I think I would just follow up by saying that, I think when it's all said and done, Vice Mayor, we'll be all on the same page. I think this is a work in progress, but I under--I appreciate your comments. But I think when it's said and done, working with Councillor Simmons, we'll be heading in the right direction.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. DePasquale. Ms. Allen Ross, do you like to lean in on this conversation?

MS. ALLEN ROSS: I would. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you Councillor Mallon.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Vice Mayor Mallon.

MS. ALLEN ROSS: Vice Mayor Mallon, I'm sorry. And thank you for the opportunity to be heard and to hear from you. Um, so when it comes to diversity, equity, and inclusion, we do feel that the city is unambiguously moving in the right direction. Perhaps, um, some might say--um, originally, we always sat--stated that we wanted to move with all deliberate speed.

From the tenor of, uh, Vice Mayor Mallon's, um, question, I understand that she may be thinking that we need a little more speed. But let me, um, speak about what we've been doing. I know these are unprecedented times with great challenges for everyone.

However, I think we've also seen how when a pandemic is layered over, entrenched inequality and systemic oppression and racism, the ramifications of that on people of color, uh, individuals with disabilities and people of advanced age. And--and this work is more important and more urgent than ever. And we do have to keep forward momentum to ensure that the doors of opportunity are opened to every single person in the city. And so, let's speak about--we do feel that we have a sound and effective strategy that is showing good results, uh, currently.

And so let me speak about some of the things that we have been doing. Uh, we have to speak specifically about the recruitment, hiring and promotion project, that, uh, Vice Mayor Mallon alluded to.

This is a--a independent, external, multi-method assessment of what is happening in the city around recruitment, hiring, and promotion, and this does tie in

into her other, um, concerns. And so, with that assessment, in my conversations with our consultants, to, uh, get ready to give you an update of what's happening, um, we have a number of things I'd like to mention.

Based on the conversations in the survey that we did, in my conversations with, uh, Pamela Coukos of Working IDEAL, uh, the data revealed that we have narrowed the gap in gender parity. We have--our most recent hires have been more racially and more ethnically diverse.

From 2018 to 2020, the proportion of American-Indian, Alaska native, Asian-Americans, and Pacific islanders, and Black employees, that proportion has increased. Um, city employees are reporting high levels of satisfaction with their jobs, which speaks to our culture and our climate. Employees are rating the culture highly positively. And after hearing me and others, and the City Council emphasized for years, that DEI, diversity, equity, and inclusion, that principle is the responsibility of every single employee. 85% of our managers believe that DEI is and should be a part of their job.

And so, we have benchmarks and metrics showing that what we've done from 2018 to 2020, is working. And so, we

were moving methodically and systematically, to build foundational--foundational elements to bring this work to the fore. And so now that we have done that, it is my belief that we can now move more of in a deliberate haste, uh, type. Still careful, but speeding up. Because we have put together the elements to really push things forward.

And so, specifically, the R HP project that I'm managing, the consultants are working on a trend analysis report for us, of what's happening in the country--I mean, in the city, around recruitment, hiring, and promotion.

This project, we have an opportunity with that--that project to be trailblazers in the way that we do these three functions. Specifically, about the, um, additional leadership position. Um, we have been engaging in leadership training. And so, for the past two years, 2018 to 2020, we have been training a cohort of leaders and managers to be able to understand the role of identity, the role of race and structural racism, and leading with empathy to lead a diverse workforce.

And so, these managers in cohorts have been leading bi-monthly, for half a day, um, getting training specifically targeted to how you resolve conflict, how you

look at your own identity. And so, getting back to COVID-19, we know that just like the health impacts have been disproportionate, deadly, and devastating on African-Americans and other communities, such as individual with disabilities, and women, and people of advanced age, so too will be the economic fallout of this pandemic.

And so, we have to move forward to keep those doors open. And so, to the extent that we've all tried to wrap our arms around all of the different pieces, it would be helpful to bring on additional help. I have been asking for additional assistance. There is an OEI coordinator that's covered on in my office. Uh, I know that the consultants are gonna recommend an analyst. And so, all of that would be coming to the floor in FY-21. So, I will stop for now.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you so much. Uh, Vice Mayor Mallon, are you there?

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Yes, I'm here. And thank you, um, to Betsy. Um, and like I said, I--I look forward to having a fuller conversation about what this position looks like and how we will be utilizing it to, um, enhance, uh, our workforce and make sure that we have the diversity that we need, but also that we're supporting our workforce.

Um, you know, some of these works, I haven't heard about. And so, uh, you know, I--I guess I--I have a lot more to say, but I will yield the floor to my--to my colleagues, and--and say that I look forward to having a further discussion about this.

MR. TAHA JENNINGS: Uh, thank you, uh, Vice Mayor. Uh, I think the next person in queue, correct me if I'm wrong, uh, Mr. Clerk, is, uh, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, after which we have Patty Nolan. Councillor Patty Nolan. So, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Through you, um, I'm gonna ask about the housing position. Uh, again, the case manager, uh, and the City Manager's Housing liaison, uh, first, I just wanted to echo Councillor, uh, Mallon's point, that I think this is gonna be crucial, uh, especially in the next year, as we see increased levels of housing, uh, instability.

I think we, uh, as a city should be--have an office of housing stability, like Somerville and like Boston do. And it--uh, having one, uh, could be really critical, uh, and in the additional staff that they have. It's great that the city is putting, uh, add--additional funding towards

affordable housing, doubling the fund, uh, over two or three years. .

Uh, but we really do need that case management, that support staff, uh, both for the individuals, uh, who are experiencing housing stability, and to do some of the--the policy work that, uh, Maura Pensak talked about, as well as some of the data collection, to help us understand, uh, where displacement is happening, where rent increases are happening the fastest, where we're seeing the most evictions, and what we can do about it as a city.

Um, so the specific question for the--the new, uh, position on case management, uh, is, if, uh, the city has looked at, uh, hiring folks who have, uh, language capabilities? I know that something may--they do in Somerville, uh, is have case managers, uh, who speak Portuguese, or Haitian Creole, or Spanish. And I'm wondering if that's something that's going to be looked at, uh, in the new case manager position?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Uh, it--it certainly can be, and I think it's a good suggestion. We can have the job description, but that's gonna be something that we

could take into consideration. Uh, we do that with a lot of our positions, and I--I don't see that change. And Maura, any comment?

MS. MAURA PENSAK: Uh, sure. Um, thank you. I totally agree. I think that's in--uh, incredibly helpful and important to consider. Um, I also want to, uh, just clarify that this position, um, is very much an intensive field-based position, which is different than a lot of case management positions, um, which are kind of more office-based and, uh, referral, uh, kind of service and basic overview. Services will be really interacting, uh, in-person, doing home visits, et cetera, with someone.

So that's another piece of what we need, is someone with that experience. And certainly, if we could find someone with that experience, uh, with, uh, language capacity, that would be ideal. Uh, and then one other comment I want to make was, I appreciate, um, Councillor, uh, Sobrinho-Wheeler's, uh, hope for the housing--Office of Housing Stability, and I--I just wanna reiterate something I've talked about before.

That I think Cambridge is very unique, uh, in its model, in that we have a decentralized Office of Housing

Stability, by, uh, by adding this position to work very closely, uh, with CDD Housing Division and DHSP, especially multi-service center.

Um, and that's something that I look forward to kind of deepening in rolling out a sort of our model and how that looks. So certainly, by adding capacity, but not recreating a whole another department. Because I do think we have--um, we have a decentralized model that is a coordinated, uh, injury agency model.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Sobrinho-Weaver--Wheeler.

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: Great. Thank you. That's it.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: You--are you yielding the floor?

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: I do, thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor. Councillor Nolan.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you, Chair Simmons, and the city leadership, and my colleagues, once again, for asking important questions. Um, I will be relatively quick here. I didn't pull this item, although I

have a number of questions.

One suggestion, which I think gets at some of what the--the Vice Mayor was, uh, speaking to, is that many of the objectives and performance measures, particularly in this section, read more like a job description than actual performance measures. Very few of them are SMART; are specific, measurable--um, particularly, the SM of the SMART, uh, which is the acronym, is also, uh, achievable, relevant, and time-based.

They're not often time-based. And in particular, it'll be very helpful to have in all sections of the budget, what is in some of the sections of the budget, which is a comparison of, "These were last year's goals. This is the actual, um, measure of how we measure ourselves against those goals.

And therefore, based on that and our, um, hope for next year, here are, uh, next year's goals." And I--and I-- I think with that missing from a number of areas of the budget, it's very difficult for us to understand how it is that we can learn from where we either missed the mark on the goals from last year, or if we exceeded them or met them.

Then that would lay the groundwork for an understanding of why it is that we believe the goals for next year will be met. I think, um, and maybe because I'm new to this budget, I really appreciated. Um, when I was reviewing it as a resident, those very specific, uh, elements of the budget that had specific goals that you could measure against, and I think here for some of these departments, it's--it's hard to get that.

So, I'm not sure if we can do that in time for this year, but I would really appreciate it if we could have a move towards every single element, having those SMART goals in place. So, I'm not sure if that's a question, so much as a hope, and an aspiration, and a comment, and I hope we're working towards that.

One question I had, and I'm not even sure if this is the place to--to ask it, so, uh, Chair Simmons, let me know if--if this is more appropriate, another area, on--under another department. But since what is mentioned under the Executive Leadership is that, "This coming year we'll see the negotiation for the new, uh, cable franchise."

The question of Municipal Broadband and where that comes up, uh, of course, was, um, maybe part of

understanding what it is that we ensure if we do cable negotiations, that we anticipate, uh, a possibility of Municipal Broadband. I'm not sure.

I know that's a capital, uh, expenditure. I know we'll be hearing from IT, later today. But since it was mentioned under the Executive Leadership, I'm--I'm curious as to whether that topic should be addressed here or whether it would be better placed in a different, uh, section.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Uh, Mr. City manager, and I'm not--I don't know what the budget question is in that. I may have misheard it. But let me just ask the City Manager, do you wanna take this up into--in IT, rather than right now?

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Uh, we can lead you, and Eddie's here. We can talk about it in the manager's office, we can talk about it at IT, we can talk about it in capital. Uh, whatever the Council prefers, we can--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Do you want me to make certain decision?

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Maybe, it may be co-- capital, but, uh, I'm willing to do whatever we wanna have the discussion. I know Mr. Gianetti is here as well.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Lee Gianetti is here and I don't--is he--is his--do we require him beyond that? Because then let's do it now while he's hearing, that way he can take his leave.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Okay. So, he'll be here. But Lee, do you wanna come up?

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: And Chair Simmons, my specific question on that is, uh, where--where the funding is for the feasibility study for Municipal Broadband?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you Councillor. Ms.--Ms. Ross. You--Ms. Ross.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: I--I guess, Lee, let them clean that up well.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: We have to take a little, uh, disinfecting moment, Councillor.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: So--so while they're cleaning the table as we try to do some line shifts here. Oh, thank you. Uh, so there is no money right now in the budget for a Municipal Broadband study or system. Uh, Mr. Gianetti can go over the specifics.

But we have been working on this and collecting information, and 96% of the data we collected say that

internet is available in their households. And I think that's an important factor. So, uh, Lee can, go over some of the specifics. Uh, we are working with the school right now to address some of their concerns, and I think we can come up with solutions that work on that. But, uh, at the numbers we looked at to spend a million dollars, roughly on a study, for a system based on what we believe, is not gonna bring the benefit of the cost for the city, and we have a consultant who we worked with closely with this. This is not in the budget. It will be something I am not recommending, and Lee can get over the specifics far better than I can.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Gianetti, you have the floor.

MR. LEE GIANETTI: Thank you, Madam Chair, uh, through you. So as the manager mentioned, we don't have, uh, money now, specifically to study Municipal Broadband System. But as you know, we've had a digital equity study going on for-
-um, since July. And I think one area where both, uh, the manager and probably the Council are clearly aligned, is around making sure that we address the digital divide in the city.

Uh, and that's really what the focus of the, uh, study has been about. You know, looking at, uh, broadband access, affordability, digital skills, and device ownership. Um, we kicked off the study last July. Uh, in the fall, we did a citywide mail survey. Uh, so this was a randomized survey. An actual paper copy went to households, uh, we received those back, uh, at the end of October.

In November and December, everything was coded and analyzed. Uh, during that time, our consultants were also going through and conducting data analysis on FCC pricing and service data, consumer pricing. Uh, we were speaking with Comcast, about current utilization of their Internet Essentials program, uh, having deep dive discussions with the school department, about, uh, the data that they have, uh, to figure out some of the issues that are going on within schools, school families, um, particularly with the focus on families, um, that are on the lower end of the income scale, uh, collecting market research.

And during this time, also, we were planning for the second part of the study, which comprised tasks related to doing one-on-one interviews, uh, with a randomized group of people that, uh, we identified as being impacted so we can

take a deeper analysis and understanding of what was sort of, um, emerged out of the Cambridge Pacific, um, survey. That was--

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Can I have a point of information? Uh, I--I'm happy to have the digital equity.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Please state your point of information.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Yes, I'm happy to have a report on the digital equity study. But this is a budget hearing and I really--I, I don't--I--we have many, many departments to come, and we have--I know the Council asked for a report on the digital equity study.

I, I just wanna understand if that's what we're getting now, or if we're actually focusing on the budget question of how it is that we can move forward with something that has been passed five times unanimously by the City Council, of doing a feasibility study through Municipal Broadband.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: So, to you, Mr. Gianetti and/or Mr. DePasquale, and, and correct me. So, my colleagues said, "This is the budget hearing." I have to hold you to the same standard.

Please answer the question in the context of the budget. Mr. DePasquale says you didn't--you didn't think you saw a room. I don't know why I'm getting feedback. You didn't see where--you were not so poised to put it in the budget.

Mr. Gianetti is giving us an overview of, um, I'm not sure what. So, can you, Mr. Gianetti and/or Mr. DePasquale, specifically ask--answer my colleague's question, is, where's the money?

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: So, I, I think what we are proposing, is what we feel is a better proposal, and that's what I'm recommending, and Lee is summarizing that. There is no money for a broadband study, uh, at this point in time, nor do I see one coming.

As we stated earlier, with concerns on tax bills, concerns on free cash, concerns on financial position of the city, I--I, at this point in time, did not put that in this budget. If we did decide to do it, it would be a free cash separately. But at this point in time, I--I'm not making that promise.

And I think Lee has come up with some thoughts in working with the school, and the mayor, and vice mayor, how

we can address what we feel as the appropriate measures to be taken.

But, uh, at this point in time, in the middle of COVID-19, I am not making commitment to make this type of an investment, based on what our consultants had told us, based on the people we have spoken to.

And I think Lee was just trying to say that, we are address--taking this very seriously. We are working with the school to address their concerns, and that's the approach we are taking at this point in time.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Okay. Thank you, Mr. DePasquale. So, uh, Ms. Nolan, before I turn the floor to you. Um, it sounds like, to me, that the City Manager is saying that it's not an align item in this budget.

Mr. Gianetti wanted to explain what they were seeing as a alternative to that. I respectfully request--uh, suggest two things. One, and I don't know whose committee this would fall into, that we have a committee hearing on--on this.

Uh, I think there's sufficient pushback amongst the colleagues. I am with you. I do hear my City Manager and I do respect him, but this is where--this is one place that I

share your concern, and me and the City Manager do not agree, and we agree on a lot.

So, uh, with that, Ms. Nolan, I don't know where you wanna take this. My recommendation is, I think this is gonna be something we're gonna have to go to the mat on, and we might wanna do that. Uh, a committee hearing--a committee hearing may be the more appropriate place to have that.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Uh, through you, Madam Chair. That was one of the recommendations Mr. Gianetti was gonna propose with our consultant, but we didn't--he didn't get to finish.

And I understand the difficulty of combining budget statements with this. But we are in agreement, if that's what the Council would like to do, we would be happy to have a consult--a discussion, and bring in our consultant to talk about the concerns that we have along with the consultant.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Nolan.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Yeah, I'm happy to have that conversation. I don't understand why we wouldn't be moving forward. This predates me. This has been four years

in the making. This--I have seen no consultant report about this issue.

Yes, it's digital equity, and yet everything we saw from an expert report from several years ago. And I know you, uh, Chair Simmons, has heard from many people across the city, that while we can address a digital divide, it really seems this is pretty short money, to understand if we can address it once and for all, on a long-term basis.

And over a five to seven year period, this should actually cost the city exactly zero money, if it turns out that the feasibility study says we would go forward with Municipal Broadband.

So, I personally think, while we can put it off, I don't understand why? I--I would really be hesitant to put it off beyond the budget hearing, because this is the time now, when for very short money, to address a critical issue.

We can find out if it makes sense. This is not saying, "Let's do it." This is saying, "Let's find out from a clear public process of a report that will be made public by folks who have expertise in this, whether it makes sense for us to move forward." But I agree with you. Now's not

the time to hear the report on the digital equity and to move forward. I certainly yield the floor on that.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: I, I would just add, Madam Chair, I don't wanna go back and forth here.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Yeah, I would respectfully ask that--that we not keep coming back and forth on this. You've made your statement. My colleague is very--I'm getting--my colleague's very clear, where she stands on this. I stand with her on this, but I don't think we're going to answer it now. But please know that this is not going away.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: I agree.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Very good. Ms. Councillor Nolan, further this inquiry.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Not on this matter. Thank you, uh, Chair Simmons.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor Nolan. We're going to now move to Councillor Zondervan, who will be followed by co--uh, my co-chair, Councillor Carlone. Councillor Zondervan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Co-chair. I will say, I--I find this a little bit confusing. I

would, um, appreciate if we could try to stay more, uh, on topic, in terms of which departments and areas we're discussing, at which point.

Um, so I--I do wanna agree with my colleagues who've spoken before, uh, both on the Housing Liaison position. I, I think it's really critical that that is, uh, funded immediately. And, and so again, I--I'm not fully understanding, and--and I'm certainly not on board with this approach of saying, "All new positions are not funded until April."

It, it doesn't make sense to me, that we would be voting on a budget that doesn't really tell us, uh, which of those positions are and which ones are not going to happen. So, to my mind, that particular position, uh, should be fully funded in the budget, and--and we should be, uh, working to hire that person, uh, right away.

Um, similarly on the equity and inclusion, I, I think it's really important work. It's being done there and we do need to deepen our investment in it.

And, and again, right now, I feel like we don't really know where that--where that stands, and whether that position is or is not going to--to happen, and I feel like

we don't, uh, fully understand it even.

Um, and on the digital equity study, I'll address that more later. Um, but, uh, again, I agree that, you know, we haven't really gotten sufficient updates on that process as it went along, and so we're really at--at a disadvantage, in terms of understanding what the findings are and--and why the decision is being made the way it is.

Um, my specific question on the budget is on the, uh, Executive, um, Division in Leadership, where on--on page V-16, I noticed that the headcount is going down from 10 employees to nine, but the budget overall is actually increasing by \$100, 000.

So, I'm just trying to understand what--what's going on there for reducing the size of the--of the staffing, why is the budget going up?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Is that going to be--um, are you directing that to Mr. DePasquale, Ms. Allen, or Mr. Jennings, Councillor?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Uh, Mr. DePasquale, I believe, through you, Madam Co-chair.

MS. LISA PETERSON: I think, one, I, I can answer the question. This is Lisa Peterson. I can--I can answer the

question.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Okay, Lisa, you have the floor.

MS. LISA PETERSON: Yeah, there was a position of assistant to the City Manager, which was, uh, Taha's previous position, that was vacant, that we have moved to equity and inclusion, and that is the senior manager. So, we've reduced the position there and it's in equity--um, is that correct, Taha?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Jennings, you have the floor.

MR. TAHA JENNINGS: Thank you, Madam Chair, through you. So, there was some movement of positions within the City Manager's Office. It's all under the executive umbrella.

So, some, there were--last year there was a new assistant to the city manager position added, and I believe forward--moving forward, um, that position was gonna be re-categorized into a different kind of division or cost center within the executive office.

So that's where some of the numbers may go up or down, but, uh, the overall--and the overall budget for the

department may still rise. So, it's really about moving positions around within the whole executive office.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Ms. Peterson, did you wanna add something?

MS. LISA PETERSON: No. I--I'm going to, um, I think I will agree with what Taha said. There's been a number of movements that are happening, in terms of, across these call centers.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan, do you wanna follow up or, uh, is that sufficient for you at this time, the response?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Uh, thank you, Madam Co-chair. I, I guess I--I still don't understand it, but it--but we probably won't sort it all out right now.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Can I just jump one in, Madam Chair? Uh, if you go to the position list, which is on Section 2-38, it'll just show by department, and it will show the executive department total positions is the same. It was just--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Section two--

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: --system of movement in the, uh--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Would you say that again, Section 2, where?

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Section 2 talks about the positions, and the numbers will match, that there is no decrease in the total number of staffing positions.

MR. TAHA JENNINGS: Right. Because if you actually look at the Housing Liaison budget, they're shown as zero positions in FY-20, because, uh, that position came on board within this fiscal year.

And I believe that was one of the previously assistant to the city manager positions that was created within leadership, and so that decision was made last year to do that, but it happened within fiscal '20. So, it's shown as up one position for FY-21, and the leadership cost center is shown down one position.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Uh, thank you, Madam Chair. And--and that part, I--I do understand that--that you're just moving them around. But--but I guess the part that I'm still not understanding is, if--if you're reducing that, um, leadership division by one employee, but the budget for that division is still going up by \$100,000, so

how does that--

MR. TAHA JENNINGS: So, I think if you're referring to the numbers in the budget book; in the actual budget book, uh, you're looking at FY-20 projected versus FY-20 budgeted. And the projected number, uh, is affected by vacancies and things like that.

And when we budget a position, we budget--if it's vacant, we budget at the full kind of salary and at the highest step level. Once it's filled, it may not be at that step level. So, the projected number is really hard to compare, without some of that context to the budgeted number for the following year.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Also, Councillor, through you, Madam Chair. The--I believe the position that we've talked about, the non-position in the--the new creation is in that division.

So therefore, it's not listed as a position yet, 'cause we haven't finalized it. But that's the extra money that's in the leadership budget. The culture and the--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan, does that help you follow the money? Don't think so--

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: A little bit. I, I,

I appreciate the, uh, the explanation. It, it does--it does help a little bit. I'm not all the way there yet. But, uh, I'll, I'll yield the floor for now. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor Zondervan. Uh, Co-chair Carlone, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I, um, have no questions, but just to comment on broadband. And the last vote was unanimous on the Council, and if the numbers indicate it doesn't make sense, let those numbers come forth.

But the problem is, a monopoly is a monopoly even under contract to the city, and one can see what's happened with telephone companies competing against each other. And, um, the costs for broadband are just increasing and many people are thinking of dropping it, and that would be a shame.

And COVID-19 highlighted how important it is to have a system that immediately, uh, connects with everyone in the city. So, I just wanted to concur with my fellow councillor's comments, and, and I agree with my co-chair. This is an issue that will continue. Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Co-chair, Co-Co-chair Carlone. Is there anyone else? Councillor McGovern, would you like to speak on this?

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: I just will add my voice to the chorus. Um, you know, I--and I said it in my opening remarks, I was disappointed to see that there wasn't money allocated for this study. And, um, it doesn't mean that there aren't things happening, but it--what's happening isn't--doesn't seem to be addressing what the Council and many in the public are asking for. So, I won't--I will stop there.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor McGovern. Is there anyone else that wants to speak on Leadership, Equity, and Inclusion, or the Housing Liaison?

MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI: Councillor Simmons.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mayor Siddiqui, you have the floor.

MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI: Thank you. I'll be very brief. Uh, I wanted to comment really quickly on the Housing Liaison, um, description and the--the performance, uh, objectives and performance measures.

You know, I think having worked with one of this last

few months, uh, you know, the--the tremendous work that she does, uh, and how many folks we've been able to help. You know, I guess think about the--the first few weeks in January, with the normally app situation, uh, there's a lot of things that don't go mentioned and don't go highlighted.

Uh, and there's just so much tremendous work. And so, I think, uh, I'd love to talk to Maura, uh, in the future, about some of the objectives and, uh, performance measures, and have them be similar to, um, the multi-service ones, which are on V-154. Uh, I think it'd be great to think through, you know, how many people we are helping, um, through your work, uh, from displacement, uh, how many trainings, uh, you are able to do.

There's so much work that you've done so far, and with hopefully additional staff, uh, I think, uh, this is a, you know, key area for us to highlight for--for our residents, uh, and all the amazing work that's done. So, I look forward to discussing more, uh, on those--those specific goals and--and objectives, because I think there's, uh, opportunity to, to, to do that. Uh, that's all I had, uh, but I agree with the--a lot of the--most of all the comments that my colleagues have mentioned. Thank you.

MR. TAHA JENNINGS: Thank you, Mayor. The Mayor is yielding the floor. Is there anyone else that wants to be heard on this item? Seeing, seeing none, I'm going to--

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Madam--Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you. Are we covering the diversity?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Yes.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Um, section of diversity committee?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Yes. We're taking up Leadership, Equity and conc--Equity and Inclusion, and the Housing Liaison. Councillor Zondervan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd asked a question about the, um, diversity, uh, committee, which, um, is on the 20. And this is where, uh, we had several cultural celebrations--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Yes.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Last year, including, uh, for Caribbean Heritage Month in June, and obviously, that's not going to happen this year. Um, and even the--the carnivore, uh, in September may not happen,

uh, depending on how things go.

So, I guess the question here is, you know, how are we envisioning spending this budget, um, for the rest of this year and going into next year, to make sure that we are celebrating, uh, the different cultural heritages in our city, uh, even in the time of--of COVID?

MR. TAHA JENNINGS: Mr. DePasquale, uh, Councillor Zondervan is asking, how are we going to utilize the Diversity Committee's--the Diversity Committee's budget, Councillor Zondervan, or the diversity efforts that we do across the city, or are you taking that all together?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Uh, no, I--I'm speaking specifically to this, uh, Diversity Committee budget of about \$20,000.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Too specific to the budget, Councillor, um, Mr. DePasquale.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Through you, Madam Chair. It's a great question. It's an employee led diversity committee, uh, that does events. Uh, obviously, we increased the money this year due to the importance of these events.

However, based on what's going on with COVID-19, right

now, I'm not sure what we'll be able to hold or not hold. But we are still working with our committee. Uh, we put the money in there, that hopefully will allow us to do this.

But at this point in time, we were limited to 25% capacity in the building, and limited to how many people we can have. There are limitations on what we can do.

So, we are prepared if things get better, to get this committee going and hold events, and we've, like I said, increased the money. But at this point, uh, we're in a little bit of a situation where we almost have to wait to see what is needed, and I don't know if Lisa wants to add anything.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Ms. Peterson, do you wanna add anything?

MS. LISA PETERSON: Um, the only thing that I would add, as--as the manager said, that this is an employee led, uh, committee, uh, dedicated, dedicated people. And I think that we find a way--if--if at any point the resources are not enough for the committee's work, uh, we find a way and we will find a way to support the work we're doing, uh, within our city workforce. This is particularly for money for within the city workforce, as opposed to public

celebrations that might be for broader celebrations.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Ms. Peterson.
Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam
Co-chair, and through you, uh, my thanks to the manager,
uh, for this allocation. And--and I know you appreciate
that it was increased.

Um, I guess I--I would suggest that, perhaps there are
ways to utilize these funds, uh, virtually, so that we can
still have some celebrations, uh, online.

And again, you know, this all speaks to the huge
importance of making sure that everyone does have access to
that, uh, channel. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Uh, thank you,
Councillor Zondervan. I would just say I concur with that,
Councillor, that, although we cannot have in-person, um,
celebrations or acknowledgement, it seems to me, that we
should be able to find a way on some level or designate
some staff person.

We'll leave that to you. But please consider, you
know, if we can Zoom the Finance Committee meeting and the
Council meetings, I--I--we should be able to find a way to

have that same level engagement. And people probably would really need that, the staff--it keeps the employees engaged, I would say.

So, uh, Councillor Zondervan, thank you for that question. Um, we'll--your--we will yield the floor. My question, if there's any other people that would like to speak on--any other members of the Finance Committee that would like to speak on the items of Leadership, Equity, and Inclusion or the Housing Liaison?

Hearing none, I'm going to then move, I do have one question through you, uh, Mr. City Manager to, uh, Ms. Allen and/or Ms. Keady Rawson. Uh, in the--under the Mission and Services section, the document states, "Some of the fiscal '21 expenditures reflect expended efforts for employee training and development."

And we are--uh, I've always asked this, and this may be more of to you, Mr. City Manager. I can--I find it disconcerting, how hard I have to look to find the aggregate figure. Now you spoke, now maybe I missed it, uh, you know.

I--it's a very thick document and there's, uh, a lot in it, so maybe it wasn't easy to extrapolate. I know that

you mentioned, early in your budget overview, how much money is going to training.

But I would like my finger to be able to do the walking to one spot and--and find it. What I could not find, Ms. Allen's department at all, I don't know what I was doing wrong. I found diversity, I found personnel. I don't know what Ms. Allen's department is called, but I couldn't find it.

And so, I can't--what I'm trying to find out is how our money is being spent on--on diversity and inclusion. If anyone had time to watch the news this morning, I hope you-- I hope we all were as--as impaled as anyone can be at the action of a dog walker in New York City.

Now we're not New York City, but we are Cambridge, and Cambridge is a co--a microcosm of the world at large, and we certainly have our social ills. We are not that far away from a major suit that we paid out, maybe over a decade ago. So, I'm very concerned, are we putting our money in a place where we are doing training?

I wanna know how much money--what--how much money-- what is the FTE for every employee getting training? And then are we doing post and pre-assessment? So how are you,

when you came in and now, are you any better at this juncture?

Uh, you talked about the goal of training, but it's not easy. And this is--this is a budget question in the context of, "We commit ourselves to diversity training and cultural competency training."

But I don't know how we follow the money saying that, "We spent \$4 million, we trained X number of employees, that that's what this cost was, and the outcome was this." And that's just impossible to find. And so, my question, I guess if Ms.--Ms. Allen could answer it, is what is the FTE, you know, what is the estimate FTE we are spending on diversity training? And this is the short answer.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Let me try to jump in and I can have Sheila and Betsy follow. But one of the things, and it doesn't get into detail, is on Section One, page 41 and 42. We consolidated our spending at a high level to show what the city's spending.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: V-41 or V--

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: I-41 and 42, and it's \$5.4 million, and it's broken up by department. Now, specifically the details--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: I forward you--

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: --of that information. We, we could talk about it when we get to the budgets. But we had--this was one of the areas that we knew we needed a consolidated spending on, and this is one of the new features in the budget. But I know, is Sheila still here?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: This gets us a little clo--

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: It's, it's, it's, it gives you a summary, not the detail level. But I can have Sheila talk about some of the details that are on the personnel budget page as well, that might be helpful, so--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: And not only--I mean, and this is--and I don't know how I missed this, but I did--I did not, uh, see it. But I'm glad that this, we're getting there, then I'll say. We are getting there, we're not there yet.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Yes.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: And I, I just know in a city that is so resource rich, there has--this should be, and there is no acceptable answer as to why we're not better at this.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: That's off. If it's okay with you, Madam Chair, I'll have Sheila just go over some numbers. Does that make sense?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Yap.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Okay. Thank you.

MS. SHEILA KEADY RAWSON: Good morning.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Is it still morning?
Yes. Good morning.

MS. SHEILA KEADY RAWSON: It's still. Um, so thank you very much. Um, I know you had some questions about the numbers of employees. I can speak to the numbers, um, in terms of the personnel department budget.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Speak right into the mic please.

MS. SHEILA KEADY RAWSON: Sorry. Um, I can speak to some of the numbers in terms of the personnel department budget. Um, we trained over 400 employees prior to, um, the COVID um, pandemic event.

Um, we had intended to train several more this spring. Um, we were bringing back the SOGI training; the sexual orientation and gender identity training, which was very, very successful over a year ago.

And so, we are re-partnering with the Fenway Institute to bring them back, and we'll be bringing them back, um, now hopefully in the fall. Now the--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Keep the mic in front of you. Sorry. Thank you. I know it's hard, but you also have a mask on, so mute your voice.

MS. SHEILA KEADY RAWSON: Um, in terms of, um, some of the things that we're planning for the next upcoming year, um, we are working on a supervisory development program, which is designed to help new managers, in particular, build skills to effectively lead and direct their staff.

Um, this will come with, um, as you mentioned, metrics that will--will be, um, having pre and post, um, surveys. Prior to when people start the class and when they end the class, um, we'll ask--also be asking training participants to work with their managers, to try to put tools and measures in place to help, um, measure how things are going and changes that are occurring.

Um, we'll be, um, utilizing class assignments, peer coaching, um, and other training evaluation programs. We're also working with our IT department to put a learning management system in place, which can better track some of

these, um, pieces.

Um, in terms of, um, the Cambridge Equity and Inclusion Initiative, um, Beth Rubenstein mentioned, um, a few minutes ago that we had started that with one cohort. We have expanded two more cohorts to that, which are, um, doing coursework in, um, cultural identity, structural racism, leader expec--leadership expectations, interpersonal aggressions, and we'll be continuing to expand that as well.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: So, I guess my long and short question to you--to you all, that sounds very good. I'm looking for an easy way to see that. And I'm also looking for, "If we're spending X dollars, what's the outcome? What--where do we expect, where are we now, where do we expect to be at the end of this training?"

I--I'm very appreciative to hearing that we're having training that's gonna be able to reduce our cost to train other people to do it for us, and how much that's gonna cost us, so that we know as a City Council, "Are we making the appropriate pro--appropriations to get the work done in the correct and long-standing way?"

So, not now, 'cause that's not the--the purpose of

this hearing. But I will be looking for, by way, the Civic Unity Committee, the same report that you gave me verbally, I wanna see that in writing. I wanna see the goals, I wanna see the initiatives, I wanna know the cost per individual, so that this Council can make an informed judgment on two levels.

Are we spending the right money in the right places, and do we have the proper policies enforced to support the work that's being done? Is there any further discussions on this matter?

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Madam--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Hearing none, then I'll-

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COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Oh! Councillor Toomey, yes.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Just for--uh, if there's no further questions on the executive.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: These are on these topic areas of--yes, Executive Leadership, Equity and cons--and Inclusion and Housing Liaison.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: So, if there are no

further questions on the Council, I would, uh, move that we forward the Executive Leadership, Equity and Inclusion, Housing Liaison, uh, portion of the budget, to the full City Council, with a favourable recommendation.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor Toomey. There's a motion on the floor to pass the following line items department's, Executive Leadership, Equity and Inclusion, and Housing Liaison to the City Council, with a favour of recommendation. Mr. Clerk, would you call the roll

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Yes-8, No-0, Absent-0, Present-1. Motion Passed.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. At this time-

-

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Madam Chair, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Toomey.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Just to continue, uh, uh, before we go on, uh, recess. Uh, at this point, I would like to also move to the full City Council, the favorable recommendation, all those departments that were, uh, not pulled. So, in the--if I--I will read 'em off, and if I'm--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Please, Councillor Toomey.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Uh, the Mayor's Office, DGVPI, City Clerk's Office, Employee Benefits, Purchasing, Auditing, Assessing, Law, Emergency Communications, General Services, Reserve, Animal Commission, Electrical, Fire Department, and Election Commission.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: And please add Treasury Review.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Sorry, Madam--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Treasury Review. It's

right after Assessing, Treasury Review. You, you missed it. So, I'm just putting that in front of you as well, is one of the departments right after Assessing, comes Treasury Review. I didn't hear you call.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Oh! Treasury, Treasury Revenue.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Revenue. I'm sorry. Okay. I didn't read either. Okay.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: So, I believe all of those have not been pulled, and I just figured we can clear them.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: You're absolutely correct. And thank you. There's a motion by Councillor Toomey, to adopt the--the recently called to department, to be put forward to the City Council with a favorable review. Matt, Mr.--Mr. Clerk, would you please call the roll?

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Yes-8, No-0, Absent-0, Present-1. Motion Passed.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. The noon hour being upon us, we will take a brief break. After which we will take up Public Information, Tourism, City Council, Financial Administration, Personnel, Information and Technology, Police Department, Traffic, Parking and Transportation, Inspectional Services, and the License Commission.

We will start right at one--one o'clock, at which time we will wipe the room down at this point. So, for those of you that don't need to be in this room, please allow the staff to come in and wipe down. We are appropriate.

We are in recess. Mr. DePasquale and Mr. Kale, and Mr. Taha Jennings, Mr. Jennings, would you--if you would step away from your table so we could be wiped down? And I would say that some of those chairs would have to be wiped down 'cause people were sitting in random spots.

Are you ready to rock and roll? Is it good? Where did

we leave off? So, we're at public information. The time of the recess having expired, we'll call the Finance Committee meeting back to order. Uh, we wanted to take care of a few housekeeping matters.

Uh, Mr. Clerk, I believe we--we need to go over some of the items that were brought forward for forwarding to the City Council. We may have missed a few. Would you please call what those were and then please call the roll.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: I believe that we are--there are two items that were not referred, which is, uh, budget and reserve until the Council and Council would've to make a motion to refer those items to the City Council with a favorable recommendation.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: So, Councillor Toomey moves that. We also add--I heard reserve, what was the other word, budgeting, budget?

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Budget and reserve.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Budget and reserve be passed--forwarded to the full City Council with a favorable recommendation. Clerk Wilson, please call the roll.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes
Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Absent
Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes
Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes
Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes
Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes
Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present
Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Present

CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON: Yes. And I see Councillor McGovern has just, uh, popped on the Zoom. Councillor McGovern. How do you vote on forwarding the items called the budget and reserve to the full City Council with a favorable recommendation?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor McGovern?

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Yes.

CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON: Yes. So, the motion passes with eight in favour and one present.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. So, we will continue with the items before us in--in this budget hearing. There are 10 more items for us to go through, and the next one will be Public Information Office, which is, uh--and the--that was, um, the person

that I have that had pulled, this was Vice Mayor Mallon, uh, is our public info--okay, he's there. Thank you. So, uh, Vice Mayor.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you, Madam Co-chair through you, um, to the city manager and his team. I had a couple of questions for the Public Information Office in regards to the budget, um, and some of the performance measures. So, performance measure number two states that the 311 CRM System, um, is going to begin procurement.

I had questions about this because we've been talking about this, um, since I've been on the council, and I'm sure before, uh, have, so I'm curious what starts. What does, uh, begin the procure--procurement process mean? Have we already sourced a CRM System over the past three years? And when will we see a full implementation of, um, Cambridge's Customer Relationship Management Program?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Gianetti, you have the floor.

MR. LEE GIANETTI: Thank you. Through you, Madam Chair. So, Councillor, as I've previously stated, our CRM, uh, approach is really about building a program, not necessarily just a system. So, um, back in 2018, when this

first came into, uh, my budget, we started trying to hire a full-time position, uh, which we ultimately hired, uh, July one, 2019.

Uh, during FY-18, we worked with the Government Performance Lab at Harvard to help us frame out what an RFP for a system would look like. But a part of that process was mapping out what we were trying to accomplish.

And as you know, something that's critically important to the city manager is customer service. So really, our approach to a CRM Program is making sure that the people and processes are as efficient and as coordinated as they possibly can so that we can respond to our residents.

It's not necessarily solely focused on do we have a particular piece of technology. Uh, currently, we don't have a single source system, but we have various elements of it. We have SeeClickFix, which we currently use for inbound service type requests.

We're using, uh, our Smartsheet System now to be able to track email requests that come in that don't necessarily go to just one individual, so that we can have a workflow related to it.

So, Dan, over the past year, has been going through

talking with departments, looking at what does great customer service to them look like? Where are some of the gaps? Where do we need to sort of go?

So, as much as we can use in-house systems, that's the approach we've been taking. Um, we now have our RFP pretty much done. It's confirmed whether or not we're gonna put that out given COVID-19. I'm not sure. But we have the tools here to keep moving forward. So, as I said, we've been using Smartsheet internally.

Um, that is a system we've been using for our senior calls that we've been making. So, we may have the tools internally that we don't need a single solution that does everything, but really will end up procuring a system that will fill in gap areas, uh, for us. So, I don't know if that answers your question or not.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Vice Mayor Mallon.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Um, thank you, Madam Co-chair through you to Mr. Gianetti. I mean, I think that this COVID crisis has really laid bare a lot of, um, gaps in our communication and our customer relationship management with our residents where we had to fill in those gaps based on--in very quickly.

Um, and I know as you mentioned earlier, uh, your office has been working on this since 2018. I guess I--what I'm asking, and I think what I asked last year, um, during the budget process was, when will this be complete?

Will we see, uh, a next year's budget, um, a continuation of the procurement process as a--as an objective? Or will--will we be at this place next year? And it will be off the table from the PIO standpoint?

MR. LEE GIANETTI: Um, the two points from the system perspective, it--it may be completed, but from the program perspective, this will be ongoing. So, it doesn't go away. The bringing in the technology is gonna--not gonna solve the gaps that we've been going through, identifying that we've been working to resolve.

One of the issues I brought up is, you know, departments at an individual level do a phenomenal job with customer service and responding to questions and concerns that are completely within their department.

For the more complex questions, it's easy for things to get lost just through email. So, that's where we're developing our internal tracking systems, which can either be done through a Smartsheet sis--uh, Smartsheet System, it

can be done through a CRM.

So, it's really more, we wanna make sure that we're missing--we're not missing any of the areas, um, that we need to improve on, and that we can use either existing or we can procure a system, um, that will help us better manage it.

So, David earlier mentioned about letters going out to manufacturers, into hair salons as part of our COVID-19 mailing. That is not one area that we have all of these consolidated, but through this process, we're now taking those lists, building our database, so that we'll be ready to go in the future to have these types lists.

So, it's not really about a particular system, it's more about the process and us starting to consolidate and being, um, more centralized in some of the broader communications techniques that we're using.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Um, thank you. I, you know--I don't wanna belabor this point, but I do think, you know, the--one of the things that was really great about our response, the city's response, is having the community food line, right? The--a dedicated number where people could call when they need a specific thing.

And I think that lots of our residents, if they're in the know around SeeClickFix or many of the other ways that you've just mentioned, to get in touch with our, um, city leadership or they happen to know somebody, I--I think there is a desire among the Cambridge residents to have one place to go, um, when they have questions or if they have concerns or if they need something.

So, that is kind of where I was going in terms of, you know, asking when we will have a full distribution of a CRM system that is widely available. People know about it, it's very easy to remember.

Um, so I am looking forward to, uh, you know, I--I understand it's gonna be ongoing work, but I would love to see next year in the budget when we are sitting here, you know, making sure that we have all of--everything in place.

Um, because it's been a few years now. And I think that it's a really, really important thing to have a strong customer relations management system that can be easily accessible to all of our residents. Not just somebody in the know, not just somebody who speaks English. Something very quick, something very easy.

Um, so I just have one other question for, uh, PIO and

that is, um, I thought it was really interesting, and I actually really appreciated, uh, that there was, uh, objective in the budget in this particular department related to COVID and a look back, um, that, you know, you guys, your number four was evaluate lessons learned from the COVID-19 emergency communications efforts to expand and realign.

So, since this, um, evaluation can't really be a self-evaluation, I'm just wondering if we've engaged outside partners to do this and, um, what that might look like, and is that something that we could be taking as a model going forward? As we--as we really start to think about doing a look back on all of our, um, responses to the COVID crisis, whether it was communication, whether it was to homelessness, whether it was, you know, to the many, many myriad of ways that we, um, responded to this crisis or didn't respond. So, I'm just wondering what partners, um, you are thinking about working with and--um, to do this work.

MR. LEE GIANETTI: Um, thank you through you, Madam Chair. Um, this was a late addition to, um, my budget. It's something I felt very, very, uh, strongly about. And this

is really--my intent is to focus on our communications aspect. Um, and I viewed this very much as an internal and external sort of exercise.

Internally, we have lo--learned a lot during this process about different ways we can structure our work, where some of our gaps are. Uh, we've instituted many new programs that we have not, uh, had before, especially our commitment to translation, our, you know, multilingual programs that we're now putting out.

Just big communications areas that we've looked at individually at the department level, but haven't really fully coordinated citywide. So, I want to have that look back. And then I think once this starts to subside a little bit more, I think looking at how effective we were in letting the public know the information that they needed to know, were they able to find information, how we were doing is another element I don't fully have flushed out at this point, um, what that will look like and who will engage.

But I think the public part--the public part will need some outside partners to sort of help us. We will have an opportunity in, uh, the fall when the biennial, uh, resident survey is done, again, for us to gather some data.

But I think focus groups, conversations, um, it--it's a really--it's a great opportunity for us to see the areas that were effective and that we can expand and areas that didn't work out quite as well, that we can also really grow.

And then most importantly, figure out what did we miss? So that we can, you know, better prepare not only for future emergency things, but how can we embed this, uh, in our ongoing communications with our residents.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you. Um, Madam Chair, through you to Mr. Gianetti. I couldn't agree more. And I am, um--like I said, I really appreciated you putting this as an objective in, um, your department budget.

I think it's critical, particularly around communication. And I'm excited that you're looking to outside partners to really flesh out this work so that we are prepared for whatever the next emergency, um, will be. Because there will be another emergency.

We've got climate change issues. We, we might, you know, have another pandemic. We--we really don't know. And I think having, um, those fully fleshed out challenges and where we were strong and how to make a blueprint for moving

forward. So again, thank you for putting that in there. Um, I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Madam Vice Mayor. We'll now have Councillor Zondervan followed by Councillor Nolan. Councillor Zondervan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Chair through you to, um, Mr. Gianetti Um, so I--I did see, well, I--I guess I'm asking about the, um, digital equity study. And--and we started talking about it a little bit, uh, earlier, but in--back in November, 2018, there was an appropriation of 150,000 from free cash to support a 12 month digital equity research initiative. And that also announced the creation of a new digital advisory board.

Um, so that's already almost a year and a half ago, and we haven't really gotten an update on where that is. You started giving one earlier, I don't--not necessarily asking for one on the floor, but--but I am asking, is there additional funding for this? Is this an ongoing, um, process or--or do we expect this to be wrapped up this fiscal year and to get a report on it?

MR. LEE GIANETTI: Through you, um, Madam Chair, uh-- chair, um, the appropriation that went up in the fall of

2018 was allow us to put the RFP, the contract was awarded to CTC, I believe it was in late June of, uh, 2019. And this study actually kicked off, uh, July one, um, 2019. So, the 12 month clock, uh, we started, um, in July of 2019.

Uh, pre-COVID we're expecting to have this wrapped up by this upcoming July, but the past three months, um, this has been a little bit on hold, um, in some of the tasks we're gonna have to change.

So, I'm expecting that there'll probably be a two or three month, uh, delay beyond what I originally thought due to the, uh--uh, time that we've been in, uh, COVID for the past three months.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Okay. Thank you. And--and is there additional appropriation needed, or--or this is still covered by the original 150,000?

MR. LEE GIANETTI: It's still covered by the original. Um, there will probably be additional monies once we have a roadmap and we have some strategies, uh, in place. But, um, we don't need any additional money for, uh, the study itself.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you. Um, and

my next question is on the census. So, I was speaking to someone in the Census Bureau, and they alerted me that Cambridge just a little bit behind the rest of Massachusetts.

Um, we are seeing, um, as people have mentioned, disparate impacts of COVID-19 on, uh, communities of color and Black communities, the Haitian community. There's lots of different pockets of, uh, communities in Cambridge that are very difficult to reach.

And it's really important that we have--make sure that everybody's counted, uh, especially, now because we're gonna need even more help than before. Um, also are unhoused. So, are we putting extra money into the budget to, um, do census outreach? How--how is that, um, being planned out?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Gianetti.

MR. LEE GIANETTI: Uh, through you, Madam Chair, we didn't request additional money. As you know, we had a pretty robust, um, plan in place for, uh, the census. And right before COVID started, we had just hired the census outreach workers. They had been trained, uh, the next phase that was gonna be taking place was for people to be out in

the squares.

We had kiosks to really help people fill out the census, which census day was on, uh, April 1st, you are right that we are slightly behind at this point, uh, with the state average. I believe Massachusetts is at six point, uh--62.2 for, uh, those that have self-responded. And we're at 59.2 right now. But the census goes out through, um, October 31st. That's the absolute last, um, day.

As of now, I don't know whether that's gonna change. Uh, and the Feds will do a big push between August, uh, 11th and October 31 to reach out to non-responders. Hopefully, as we start to reopen, um, we'll be able to get back to some of the activities, but we're gonna have to evaluate what we can do in terms of social distancing, uh, and further pushing.

But, uh, Dan Rivero and, uh, my office, who's been really leading all of the senses, outreach, the preparation, the translation, the marketing we've done up till now is looking at, uh, what is it that we can be doing between now and the time the census comes in, uh, with, um--with folks, given the restrictions that we have with, uh--uh, COVID-19.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Chair, I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Gianetti. Councillor Nolan.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Hello. Thank you so much. I appreciate, um, the opportunity to talk a little bit about this. I am following up on, um, something that the Vice Mayor Mallon that I completely agree and support the idea that you all are taking the initiative and having a retrospective look at, uh, what it is that this past year has shown us that is wonderful. Is--is the click-- SeeClickFix under this department, or is it another department?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Gianetti.

MR. LEE GIANETTI: Uh, through you, Madam Chair, this is a tool that's used across the city. So, Dan Rivero in our office, uh, does the primary management of the overall system, but it is managed at a department level, uh, in terms of how folks are responding.

So, it's a shared sort of service between DPW, our other ones, um, I believe the budget item actually lives in

DPW's, uh, budget for it. But Dan really has been the one that's been going through monitoring, looking at process improvements.

Um, we've started building out internal performance dashboards and holding smaller meetings to really start to drill down on individual categories to make sure we can find where there might be bottlenecks, there may be challenges in responding to some of the requests.

So, it is a, uh, multi-department sort of, uh, effort when it comes to SeeClickFix. But Dan has been, uh, working on the day-to-day management and compliance in terms of people completing their tasks.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Nolan.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you. I asked because it's certainly, it, it seems to me that's one that is a key way residents across the city actually do interact with the city and interact with the council and expect to get a response.

So, I don't know if this is the, um, appropriate place to ask that that--those metrics about how it is that those requests are filled would be really good to have out. Maybe--maybe they have been out, but I've looked for them

and I haven't been able to find them.

I, I think it's--it's part of that whole question of evaluating our communications, um, which would also be good for us to proactively understand, for instance, City View Weekly, I certainly read it. Is--is that the best way for us to be getting information out to the city?

Um, but SeeClickFix is something I've heard people, I know I've reported, and you're back in a day, and other people, we a couple times as a council have gotten a message from someone saying, "I've reported this three times to SeeClickFix and--and haven't gotten it."

And then in terms of the--the customer relations, the CRM element of our management of our city, that seems to be a--a key area. So, if this is not the--the place to lodge that--that comment and note that, then maybe I could be advised to--to put it somewhere else.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: It is appropriate question to ask, but this is not the context because it's not nothing--now ledge. You can frame it in--in the context of the budget, but it is important. And what--this is what happens oftentimes, as we're talking about the budget, we talk about items that are important that we should bring

up.

And so why we--I would respectfully, advise you to ask for a committee hearing, and then we can flush this out more thoroughly, specifically to--to your needs. Uh, but you still have the floor, if there's another question, you have Councillor.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Um, no, I--I do, I--I note that we already talked about this under the executive, but it was the, um, Mr. Gianetti, you answered the question about the Municipal Broadband Task Force, because in--it was actually within this department with the PIO office on the budget, talking about the Municipal Broadband Task Force in, uh, 2016.

So that's now four years ago. And once again, I will say in the context of the budget, I expect to see and will work very hard to ensure that we actually follow the recommendations of that expert panel. We certainly follow the recommendations and are told we really should listen to experts in other areas.

This is an area where the expert panel is exceedingly clear that we should move forward, and the council is too. So, I hope on--on funding that as we move forward, all of

us, uh, can move on--on that particular issue in the context of the budget.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Councillor Nolan, uh, is there a question that you wanna follow up with that, or are you yielding the floor?

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: I'm yielding the floor. Thank you, Chair Simmons.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor. Other questions, Councillor Carlone and Co-chair?

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Um, just an observation. I had to look up what PIO was and CRM was. Now, you know, I might be a little slow, but I hate acronyms, especially, when we're talking to people who are--aren't in the field. And I'm thinking of the public, um, now, rightfully, when you wrote about it, you spelled it out and then put in parentheses CRM.

But, um, today we didn't do that. And, uh, it's just a little confusing. And it isn't just your department. I think it's funny that it's Public Information Department, but it's in general.

We take it, we all do it. And I--I think from a public point of view, we have to be very careful. I thank you for

all your work. I know you are deeply committed. It's just an observation. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Co-Chair Carlone. Is there others that want to be heard on this item? Hearing none. I'd like to entertain a motion to forward Public Information Office to the full Council, Co-chair, Carlone introduces a motion to forward the Public Information Office to the full Councillor with a favorable recommendation. Clerk Wilson, would you please call the roll.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Present

Yes-8, No-0, Absent-0, Present-1. Motion Passed.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

Our next item before us is the Office of Tourism.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Through you, Madam Chair. Can I just confirm that Robin's on the phone, Robin.

MS. ROBYN CULBERTSON: On the phone.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Okay. Thank you. Sorry.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Okay. All right. So, uh, the ex--the next item before is the Office of Tourism. Uh, the council that pulled this item is Councillor Zondervan. Councillor Zondervan. You have the floor.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Through you, um, I guess, I was a little bit confused. The fiscal year, 20 projected budget, this is on page V-27 as all zeros, but if I compare to the FY-19, it looks like about a--a hundred thousand dollars increase for FY-21.

So, the question is, what, what are we using those funds for? And, you know, how--how do we factor in the expected, uh, revenue, um, reductions from--from COVID-19 in this area? We've talked about the hotel tax revenues likely being had down. So how, how do we factor that into this budget?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Ms. Culbertson, you have

the floor.

MS. ROBYN CULBERTSON: Thank you Madam Co-chair, um, Councillor Zondervan, I, um, uh--a lot of this money will be probably, um, used for what we initially put it through.

And I'll run through the items quickly, but, uh, we will be redirecting some of our funds to stamp, uh--to max out our marketing efforts that we're using with other organizations.

The Greater Boston Region, uh, the State Region are all planning, um, to re-work their messaging, to try to get some business back in the rest of this year. They're looking, um, if all goes well, uh, but the COVID--if we don't have a--a second round, that things will start to pick up. It's looking very, um, optimistic actually, for November and December right now, for hotels.

But they're not really gonna see a full impact of that, um, building process for probably 18 months to two years they're saying. So, it's gonna be a ramp up period and we have to redirect our marketing efforts, um, to react to that.

Uh, as far as the increase that you were questioning, um, we had--before COVID hit, we had planned to do a

complete web redesign, um, for about, I had in here for 35,000. We have some funding from--from FY-20 still for that as well.

Uh, we wanted to add another full-time staff member. Um, we need all new computers in the office by all new, I mean three 'cause there's only three of us. Um, and then we had put aside some money for some special events that have since cancelled.

Um, but they are rescheduling for later in the year, so we're hoping to still get that in. It's just gonna be a very busy second half of the year. So, all of that totalled to 115. I have an itemized listing. I'm happy to share if you like.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Ms. Culbertson. Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you. I--I would appreciate the--the list, but you don't have to read it out. Um, we can receive it over email if that's easy enough. Um, and--and so why do we have \$0 for the FY-20 projected budget? I didn't understand that.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Ms. Culbertson.

MS. ROBYN CULBERTSON: I, I'm not--are--are you

referring to what's in the budget book? I'm not really, um, uh. I'm not sure.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Yeah, page V-27.
Yeah.

MR. DAVID KALE: So, Madam Mayor, I mean Madam Chair.

MS. ROBYN CULBERTSON: I don't really have control over how that does that.

MR. DAVID KALE: That's--that's us.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: So, I believe, uh, Councillor Zondervan, maybe Mr. DePasquale or Mr. Kale can speak to this. Either of you can have the floor.

MR. DAVID KALE: Sure. The projected number should be what was budgeted and fiscal 20, um, it should not be zero should be for what is budgeted because we basically, make the allocation to the tourism office at the beginning of the fiscal year. So, we will amend that in the adopted budget. So, it should not be zero.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Do you have that information Councillor?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Okay. Thank you. And yes, thank you. And--and could you tell me, I mean, I guess it's roughly \$500,000 or so.

MR. DAVID KALE: Uh, it is, uh, the same as fiscal 19, I believe \$417,000.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Okay. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Are you yielding the floor Councillor or do you have another question?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Yes, yes. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you Councillor Zondervan, is there anyone else that wants to be heard on the tourism budget?

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Madam Co-chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Vice Mayor Mallon.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you Madam Co-chair through you. Um, I had a question for the city manager on that allocation, the 115,000 because on page I-14, it is part of the significant budget modifications that the 115,000 would not be paid until possibly April of '21. Um, is that--is--am I reading the budget book correctly? That that allocation is also on hold right now that Ms. Culbertson is talking about marketing effort, uh, I-14.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: I-14.

MR. DAVID KALE: Through you, Madam Co-chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Kale, you have the

floor.

MR. DAVID KALE: So again, we--this is an allocation directly to the Office of Tourism. So, it isn't necessarily a city position 'cause the positions really report to the Office of Tourism.

So, that really is a contractual type of item. So, um, we would, uh--if approved, we would make that allocation to the Office of Tourism at the beginning of fiscal year.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Vice Mayor Mallon.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you. So, through you, to Mr. Kale. Because it's not a budget position, it's an allocation. It can go at the beginning of the fiscal year, even though it's on the budget modification sheet as a call out.

MR. DAVID KALE: It's an increase to the, um, budget and that's why we called it out. But in terms of the allocation to the Office of Tourism, it's really a, uh--a grant agreement, if you will, to the Office of Tourism.

And, uh, that's why they control the positions and how they spend the money. So, it's an increased allocation to achieve the things that, uh, Ms. Culbertson outlined a few moments ago. So, we would anticipate that that money would

be given to the Office of Tourism at the beginning of the fiscal year.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Through you, Madam Chair, this is confusing. Vice Mayor so I can understand. So, the significant budget modifications are all the increases in the budget where there is discrepancy in terms of this number. 99% of it is, this shows the full cost of the positions in those are budgeted for three months.

So almost anything that's non-position related, would be happening as it's stated in here. Items that is related to a specific position, those are the ones that are in discussion. So that's the difference.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Vice Mayor.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you, um, through you to the City Manager, that's actually very helpful. I had a--a number of other questions on non-position, um, related expenses that are on this budget modification.

So that's helpful to know that the tourism office won't have to wait until April, um, to receive these, uh-- these funds that I think will be very, very critical for us as a city as we move into, um, reopening and what post COVID looks like and how the tourism office can play a huge

role in, um, our economic recovery.

I know that Ms. Culbertson has been meeting monthly with the, uh, t--Team Tourism, um, the economic development division of CDD and the Arts Council. And I think, you know, Ms. Culbertson has been critical on the Small Business Recovery Advisory Committee.

And I would--I would love if, um, you know, instead of T going forward it would be, uh, B or something to include business. 'Cause I think those four, um, pillars are going to be the most crucial part of our economic recovery, uh, for the city of Cambridge.

And having Ms. Culbertson as part of that is, um--and these funding allocations, I think, um, I'm glad that we're moving forward with them. So, thank you, Madam Chair. I yield the floor.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Uh, through you, Madam Chair, I wanted to respond by saying, uh, 'cause one of the questions earlier was about the hotel/motel.

When we increased this budget, we weren't that concerned about the 40% reduction, but even when we knew the reduction was coming based on the importance of keeping this industry going, we felt more important than ever that

we needed to keep that money in there and it would be part of our overall pitch.

So, uh, we did do the increase, but it at the end determined that we needed to keep that increase going based on the difficulties this whole industry is facing.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Vice Mayor, do you yield the floor?

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Yes, Madam Co-chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Co-chair Carlone, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you Madam Chair. Um, I've said in the past, and uh, I know Robin knows this better than anybody, that tourism is either one, two, or three industry in 45 of the 50 states.

And when I think of hotel use in Cambridge, I think more business than tourism. So, is there a breakdown? Do we know how many tourists actually come here versus business people?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Ms. Culbertson.

MS. ROBYN CULBERTSON: Um, through you Madam Chair, um, I--I'm sure that some numbers do exist through the US Travel Association. I'm happy to try to pull some of those

together.

Would you want Cambridge specific because it's-- sometimes it's difficult to separate out the Boston Region since we technically come under the Greater Boston Convention Visitor Bureau, but I'm certainly happy to track down those numbers and get back to you on that, but--

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: I--I--I would say whatever's available, I'm not gonna ask you to--to break down numbers that are difficult to break down. The reason I'm asking is assuming that's true.

And I believe in Massachusetts it's two or three, I'm not sure the largest industry. Three. Thank you. Um, I know people complain about tourists in Cambridge, but as alluded to by you and the Vice Mayor, it--for many small businesses, um, they're very, very important and a strategy beyond economic development that really is city master plan.

It--it seems to me, uh, a tourism input is absolutely critical, especially, when you program it in a way that it reinforces public life for the average citizen in Cambridge. So, um, I hope that's in your future to participate in such an effort.

And, um, the other thing that I wanted to mention, I'm drawing this out 'cause I'm trying to think of what it is now. Um, I'll pass for now. Um, Madam Co-chair, I--I didn't write it down.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Co-chair Carlone yields the floor, Council Toomey, the floor is yours.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just follow up on Councillor Carlone's comments about the tourism, just to comment, just--just to show the, the loss of tourism in the City, uh, Square.

There would use to be, at least, 10 full size buses that would be--be bringing tourists in. There were no buses in those locations at all for the past couple months. So, it is a huge impact on the loss of tourism revenue to the city.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor Toomey. Councillor Toomey yields the floor. Is there anyone else that wants to speak on this item?

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Oh!

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Carlone. Yes.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Yeah, I do--I do remember now, I realize given, uh, the change in plans

through COVID and construction at the kiosk is likely not to be completed in the next fiscal year.

I--I'm hoping that tourism has a strong role in the future life of the kiosk. Um, are there any plans for that? I know there was discussions, but are there plans for your active use of the kiosk.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Ms. Culbertson.

MS. ROBYN CULBERTSON: Though you, Madam Chair. Um, Co-chair? I--we have--we were very involved in all the pre, um, construction meetings and--and we're talking about relocating the booth to a temporary, which was supposed to have happened this past April. Um, and clearly it did not.

But yes, that is one of the reasons we wanna move quickly on getting this website. We're, we're road mapping to see what our needs might be to--to have a, if nothing else, um, a virtual presence there to be able to manage some of the tourist information virtually.

So, we'll, uh, have the utmost area to use that as best as it can be for community type, uh, gatherings and things when that ever happens again. And also, um, we're-- we're discussing about the management and our having a voice on that.

That's another reason I wanted another full-time person because we--we just don't have enough people to go around at the moment. And I think it's gonna take quite a bit of oversight once that happens. But even though I think once the construction happens, they said it would be about 18 months to two years, um, down the road.

So, we've got a little time to plan for it, but if we don't have the infrastructure ready to handle it, uh, it'll be a mess. So yes, we--we are hoping to have, um, a big role in that. And, um, going forward, we'll certainly keep you posted.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Well, I--I hope you do have a big role and I hope there's actually a staff member because nothing replaces a dynamic person sharing information. Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Co-chair Carlone. Co-chair Carlone yields the floor. Councillor Nolan, you have the floor?

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you, Chair Simmons. I just want to follow up on, uh, partly what Councillor Toomey indicated with the loss of tourism it-- and I don't think it's been mentioned as much.

Do we know how much of that is also related to the fact that our universities emptied out and certainly the, um, reports from both Essential Square bid and the Harvard Square Business Association was that much of the tourism that Cambridge sees as a result of visitors to our universities to MIT or to Harvard or to Leslie.

And do we have a sense of the budget impact of that? Do we have to reach out in different ways to that community? Is the tourism office looking into that as part of their--their new role? Because we don't even know what that university will look like in the fall.

Um, we're hoping by next spring it will be sort of, but certainly this fall, all the higher educations are saying that their, uh, operations are gonna be totally different. And I would imagine that that has a big impact on our, um--our tourism as well.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Ms. Culbertson?

MS. ROBYN CULBERTSON: Yes, through you, um, Madam Co-chair, um, we--I've been in close touch as you know, we have both Harvard and MIT have representatives on our Tourism Board.

So, we've been in close touch with them to see what

that might look like. There's no doubt that it has a huge impact on, um, particularly the foot traffic that the small businesses see. And it's come up quite a bit on our Small Business Advisory Committee.

So, we're working with the universities and trying to, um, as of last night, uh, Harvard is still trying to work out their plan a--about trying to get some students back in the fall, but I'm not sure how, you know, how many and which classes.

Uh, so it's gonna be a gradual climb. Recovery is just, um, uh, it's--it's gonna be down, um, in the student area as well and we'll stay in touch with them. We're on top of it as much as we can be. So, as soon as it does we'll, um--we'll mark it to those people as well.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Nolan?

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Yes. Thank you. And it's--it's obviously, the students, but the tourism for the parents and the families and uh--and visiting students, they're now--they don't come in to visit the campus. They're a virtual tour.

So, it's that element of our city will have a big impact as well. It would be great if in the next year, as

you sort this through, I echo the, um, request for information about how much we know of our tourism comes from those different sectors, the university sector, the historical tours, because many people come to the Boston area because of our role in the, uh, independence, uh, war at the, in the 1700s.

And then there's the business community and the convention center. It'll be really good to get a sense if you have that already, to just report it out. I think it will then allow us on a budget perspective to understand how we can allocate the dollars better to ensure that those elements, whether it's coming from again, the universities or the business community or historical visitors, how we can more effectively increase that, um, and--and get that hotel occupancy up to where we would all like it to be.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor Nolan, is there anyone else that wants to be heard on the Tourism Department's budget?

MS. ROBYN CULBERTSON: Madam Co-chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Yes

MS. ROBYN CULBERTSON: It's me, Robyn. Oh, sorry.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Ms.

Culbertson, please state your question.

MS. ROBYN CULBERTSON: Through you. I didn't have a question. I just wanted to--I--I didn't wanna forget. I just wanna thank, um, the City Manager and the Economic Development Department and everyone who has, um, been so good about jumping on calls with me and the hotel general managers and the restaurants.

Uh, I think communication has--has meant more to them than anything because they're in a panic. And at the early stages in particular, they were, they were not sure what was happening.

And the communications that have come out of the city directly to them where they can see faces and have someone talk to them, uh, and listen and try to help them, has been, uh--an enormous good. That I think is--is pretty exclusive to Cambridge from what I've seen. So, I just Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Ms. Culbertson. Any more discussion on the tourism budget? Hearing none, if you could entertain a motion.

On a motion by Councillor Toomey to forward the tourism budget to the full Council with a favorable

recommendation, Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Yes-8, No-0, Absent-0, Present-1. Motion Passed.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. We now move to the City Council budget. This item was pulled by Councillor Zondervan, Councillor Zondervan. You have the floor. Ms. Stefan, you can stay where you--where you are, please.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Co-chair. My question here was around the, um, positions of the aids. So, I believe they're going to become full-time, but, uh, this is also delayed until April under the current plan.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Through you, Madam Mayor. I can then--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan, the City Manager's going to address that question. Mr. DePasquale, you have the floor.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: As I've tried to say on all these positions, we have budgeted them true--as if they were gonna stop by taking an outage on April. We will review them all and then determine working with the department heads.

When's the appropriate time to start? So, it could be July, it could be August, it could be April, it could be not at all. That's just how we've put this budget together.

We're reviewing all 25 positions that were not budgeted. All these eight are a little different in my mind because they're not new positions. They're going from 30 to 37 and a half, but they would all be part of the review process.

But I would look at these eight a little differently because they're not going from zero to 37 and a half. They're going from 30 to 37 and a half. But we have not determined when or what time, uh, they would be starting,

but we would be having conversations and put that into work with all the other City Department positions.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. DePasquale, Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you. I--I appreciate that answer. I, I guess, I still don't understand how we are supposed to evaluate this budget if we don't know which positions will and won't actually happen. And, you know, that's just, uh, a concern that I have.

I'm not asking for a further answer on that right now, but I--I do understand why you're doing that. Um, but it--but I do find it challenging to--to vote on a budget that does not, um, tell us what's actually going to happen in--in terms of these positions. I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor Zondervan, Councillor Nolan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you. Uh, Chair Simmons. Uh, this is, uh, a point of information to you as Chair. I'm not sure if this is the place to ask this question. Is it related to the City Council? But it's more of a longer term question.

Uh, for, I, I believe it's three years now, perhaps started by, uh, you, uh, Chair Simmons to have the appropriation for ensuring goal number nine on the City Council goals is that the City Council will be able to effectively do our job.

And for three years, there's been discussion of ensuring that all city councillors have an office in, uh, City Hall, since we are not really effectively able to do our jobs as well. So, I'm curious as to whether this would be the place to ask about that or if it would be more on capital budget, which we come to next week.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Uh, through you, Madam Chair, I would say capital budget.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Capital budget. If you could hold that, thought.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: I cert--I certainly will. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Okay.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Is there anyone that--else wants to be heard? Co--uh, Co-chair Carlone, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to bring up the positions that will be phased in hopefully, in the next year. I assume as you think about it, you will let us know.

Uh, these three positions are moving forward for these reasons. We're gonna hold back on these others. So, it's not that we're gonna be in the dark. We're gonna be updated as time goes on and needs continue.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: I will be happy to do that and give reasons why we've moved it at this time. I have no issue with that. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Any other discussions or questions relative to the City Council budget? Ms. Stefan, is there anything you'd like to add as a part of the City Council budget?

MS. STEFAN WOLKENHAUER: I have nothing to add. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Ms. Stefan. If there's no further discussion, I would entertain a vote on--a vote from Councillor Tooney--Toomey to move forward

the City Council budget to the full Council with a formal recommendation. Clerk Wilson.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes.

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present.

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes.

Yes-8, No-0, Absent-0, Present-1. Motion Passed.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Clerk Wilson.

The next item before the Finance Committee is the Finance Administration. Finance Administration was pulled by Chairman Carlone and Councillor Nolan. Chairman Carlone, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Um, these questions, um, I had the privilege of talking to, uh, Mr. Kale earlier. Um, but I--I think they're interesting for everyone.

Um, the small one is under finance, there's increased tuition assistance of 20,000. I assume that's pre-K, but I don't know what else the tuition would be. Could you let us know what the tuition is?

MR. DAVID KALE: Through you, Madam Co-chair to Councillor Carlone. Um, in the personnel budget we provide for tuition assistance and professional development activities, some of which are contractual. So, that basically, is to provide, uh, increased cost and opportunities.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Well, that's great. It-it didn't say that, so I was just wondering what it was. And the other one, uh, we did discuss, and that is that the finance department has a very high ordinary--other ordinary maintenance, about 50% of salaries, whereas, some department sits less than 10%. Could you tell us what that is, what that covers?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Kale.

MR. DAVID KALE: Through you, Madam Co-Chair. Um, again, this is, uh, through a variety of, um, uh, supplies and services. So, I'll just go through some of the highlights in, uh, the finance admin budget, there's \$1.4

million, and that houses the money that the Council has approved in, uh--during the fiscal year and prior budgets for the school breakfast program for \$160,000.

Um, our, um, memorandum of understanding with the Central Square bid as being part of the district for 143,000, um, the MBTA Pass Program, we basically reimbursed the school department, uh, for the Pass Program that you approved last year.

Uh, it al--also includes \$376,000 for the cost of our, um, independent audit that's required to do every year. Uh, in addition to that, in this year, um, we've rolled into this budget \$107,000, which Council approved in fiscal '20, uh, to support the Central Square bid cultural district, uh, events, as well as an additional \$250,000 to support, uh, the recommendations contained in the mayor's--our task force, um, uh, recommendations for \$250,000.

Um, in addition to that, the IT budget has \$4 million, uh, primarily to support repairs and maintenance, which includes software mason--maintenance and license agreements that we are required to, uh--uh, enter into for various pieces of software that we have, um, equipment maintenance and server maintenance and backup services.

So, uh, that's, that's the good chunk of what's in the IT budget, as well as, um, um, uh, computer supplies. And for personnel, um, that is a--a, uh, almost a \$900,000 component in supplies and services.

And again, that, uh, is contained of citywide staff development, as well as, collective bargaining cost and arbitration cost. And general services, which is almost \$400,000, uh, is for mailing postage, um, uh, telephone related cost and assessing, uh, is about \$600,000.

And that basically, deals with support for when we get into cases with taxpayers that go to the Appellate Tax Board for outside, uh, appraisals consultants and research. So again, uh, even though it looks high, uh, it's primarily in the admin budget in IT, and then some larger amounts in personnel, general services and assessing.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Uh--uh, Madam Chair, I--I would just suggest that anything over a certain amount of money, there's an asterisk and it says what it is. Um, it--it could be anything if it's not stated and what you've stated is all good programs.

Um, and I was impressed, but from a pub--from a public document point of view, I don't know what that figure is

over a certain amount. It would just be helpful, certainly, the large--the larger numbers. But thank you. That was very helpful. Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Council--Co--Councillor Carlone. Councillor Nolan, you have the floor. Councillor Nolan?

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Yes. Thank you. Chair Simmons. We're talking on finance administration, is that correct, so the overall budget?

MR. DAVID KALE: Um, excuse me, through you, um, Councillor, um, I think Councillor--Councillor Nolan, Councillor Carlone's question is, the overall finance budget is basically has \$7.7 million in supplies and services, which is basically half of the total salaries.

And so, his right inquiry is, what--why was that number higher than maybe some other budgets? And I just did an overview of what's contained in the supplies and services.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Yeah, I--I just because personnel and IT come next, so I just wanna make sure, I just had one question related to--on just the Finance Administration, correct? Okay.

Um, and my questions, uh, several of them have already been answered so I don't have to, uh, ask them again. I had asked for that chart showing the overall, uh, impact of COVID-19, which was supplied to us yesterday. I really appreciate that. Um, one thing I'm, I'm--has been interspersed through many of the comments here, but seems the appropriate time to ask is in the context of the budget, we have heard that there are some contingency planning in place.

For instance, the City Manager mentioned there could be as much as \$15 million in revenue that we won't see, in which case we'll have to adjust the budget. We've already adjusted the budget with the expectation that many of the, um, positions that are anticipated will not start for a while.

I agree with all my colleagues, that the ones that have been mentioned, the Housing Liaison, uh, some of the aid, some of the others really should be started earlier in the year rather than later, and perhaps not fill some of the open positions.

Um, but a more specific question is, do we actually have a specific contingency plan in the case of less

revenues or higher expenses? Um, whether a department review would be warranted or have we already done that work in the past?

Uh, typically, in a budget you might say, "Well, if, if we see higher than expected, this is what we might spend on. And if we see lower than expected, this is where we'll save money."

Do we actually have that plan in place, and will we see it as part of the budget, or is that something that's still in formation and is it something that we—um, how should we approach that?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Kale.

MR. DAVID KALE: Through you Madam Co-chair. So as our normal practice, we monitor our revenues and expenditures, um monthly, if not more often, and we look at vacant positions, and we do an evaluation.

This coming up fiscal year, we will, uh, clearly have more and more frequent attention and more, uh, in-depth analysis above vacancies and when they get filled, um, that are currently budget, not the new positions.

Same for other supplies and services. We will monitor as we are now between now and the end of the fiscal year

expenditures to make sure that, um, if, um, beginning in July, the economic picture does not look, uh, as good as we hope it will be, that we have plans in place to, and this is what we do normally.

So, this isn't anything new. Uh, all travel and training components are approved by the City Manager's Office. All equipment purchase are approved by the City Manager's Office. Uh, so we will have processes in place to make sure that vacancies are reviewed before they're posted and filled.

The same thing for large purchases, to basically make sure that they're reviewed. Um, and that is something we do as a matter of course, um, but it will be, have special attention paid to it, uh, beginning at the COVID and continuing through fiscal '21, just to make sure that we don't over expend our budget or we spend monies that we may not have in revenue.

Or frankly, it allows us to come back to you in September when we set the tax rate to maybe have some other recommendations where we can make amendments to the budget 'cause we've held positions or we've held, uh, uh, supplies and services.

And the City Manager already mentioned some areas that we're looking at in terms of employee benefits. So, I guess, the overall picture is, this is the way we do business anyway, but it will be a special focus, uh, uh, just because of the things you just mentioned about potential revenue shortfalls.

CITY MANAGER LOUIS DEPASQUALE: Uh, through you Madam Chair, I think David said it best. It's almost the way we do business anyways. Uh, we know when we have to put-- tighten the constraints in but we review 'em constantly and we have already this year put somewhat of a hiring freeze in place.

We've already--Mr. Kale approves every PO for the month of starting mid-April over \$5,000. It has to go through him. So, we know how to tighten when we have to, we work closely with the department in making those decisions.

But we'll be monitoring even a lot closer than usual, come July this year, than in most. But we will have something in place, so we will not be caught off guard to say, "It's now halfway through the year. We need to do something traumatic as we do it." We'll do a gradual if we have to, so that you have very limited impact.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. DePasquale. Councillor Nolan.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Yes, thank you. And, and as was said, this is not just for this coming year, but since many of the lagging indicators financially, whether it's valuations, whether it's long-term business planning, may not even hit us until, uh, 2021, 2022.

And the more we can anticipate that in advance, uh, obviously, the better shape that future budgets will be in. And my question is not just about the open positions, but also understanding and being thoughtful and nuanced about understanding that it may be we should fill some of those positions, but that others may be restructured in the future to ensure that we're delivering services as effectively as possible.

But we've been in a situation in the last 10 years when we really haven't had to do some of that belt tightening, which means it's--it's just good practice. I'm glad to hear about and I look forward to hearing more of the details as we move forward with that planning. I yield the floor. Thank you, Chair Simmons.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor

No--Nolan. Councillor Zondervan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you Madam Co-chair, uh, I had basically the same question is Council Carlone and specifically, on the, um, Finance Admin budget, which has gone from 314,000 in fiscal year '19 to almost a million projected in fiscal year '20 to 1.3 million in fiscal year '21.

And I, uh, appreciate and, and I think understand, um, Mr. Kale's explanation for that. And I agree with my colleagues that it would be helpful to have that explanation in the budget book so that we can understand it, um, without having to ask these questions. I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Is that a statement Councillor Zondervan, or are you looking for an answer? Were you looking for a response?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Yes. Thank you. No, I'm all set. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Okay, Councillor Zondervan yields the floor. Is there anyone that I've not heard from? Mayor Siddiqui, do you have a question on this item?

MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI: No. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Vice Mayor Mallon. Vice-
-Vice Mayor Mallon.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: I'm all set. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Sobrinho-
Wheeler.

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: I'm all set as
well. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor McGovern.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: I'm good.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: This is just checking to
make sure you're not asleep. COUNCILLOR Toomey, Chairman
Carlone. Can I entertain a, uh, um--on a, a vote by
Councillor Chairman--Co-Chairman Carlone, to move this
department fi--uh, where are we? Financial Administration
forward with a favorable recommendation to the full City
Council, Clerk Wilson.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll.

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Yes-8, No-0, Absent-0, Present-1. Motion Passed.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you Mr. Clerk. We now move to the personnel department. This was pulled by Councillor Nolan. Councillor Nolan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Sorry, I just, um, had this is on personnel.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Personnel.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Yep. I--I just, uh, wondered on this--on these measures for, um, us ensuring, uh, an open, accessible, responsive applicant intake.

Do we also understand how it is that we retain people and we provide them with the personal feedback, whether it's on the effectiveness, as I believe you mentioned, um, chair Simmons before, the effectiveness of our personnel training, which is really important to having a--a city that retains the best employees we have because that certainly relates to a budget.

If we don't have to, um, if we retain our--our employees and we can train them, then we don't have to, um, uh, have turnover in a--in, in any area.

So, I--it's a relatively quick question of, I didn't see mention of how it is that we're measuring our retention and, and effectiveness of our trainings.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Ms. Sheila Keady Rawson, the floor's yours.

MS. SHEILA KEADY RAWSON: Um, through you, Madam Chair, um, yes. We take retention very, very seriously. We, um, do offer many, many trainings and we do, um, as I said in my earlier answer, um, work to make sure that the effectiveness of the trainings are, um--are there and we are also looking to implement a learning management system, um, to--to assist in that effort as well.

Um, I would say that generally speaking, our turnover is pretty low, um, given the size of our, um, employee population and the majority of it, 50% of our turnover tends to be retirements as opposed to people leaving the city, um, for other, um, opportunities.

Um, we are, um, in fact, in--working on developing a, um, supervisory development program, which I mentioned a

little bit earlier, which, you know, given the fact that um, we do have a demographic that is aging, um, especially, in many of our senior leadership positions, really working on putting together programs that will build bench strength and hopefully retain some of the talent that we have.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Nolan.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you. I'm set.

That was a quick question.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor Nolan. Councillor Nolan yields the floors. Is there someone else that wants to speak on the personnel items? Councillor Toomey, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: No, Madam Mayor-- Madam Chair, Councillor Nolan has any further questions or you--I do for this--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: If you could hold--if you could hold your motion Councillor Toomey, uh, through to Ms. Sheila Keady Rawson, just a few questions. So, in reading the budget book, there is mention of pay equity, and we all know that pay equity was started because the governor put in a bill that wouldn't affect, I wanna say 2019, asking cities and towns to make certain benchmarks to

make sure that women in particular were all people were paying any--equal pay for equal work.

My question to you is that the only mention of pay equity and the funds going toward it was just sort of in and we are working towards pay equity. What I would like and I think this council needs to know is what funds are being directed toward pay equity? In what ways, to what purpose, and what are the outcome?

Pay equity is not something that we need to hire a committee for. Uh, pay equity is not something that is new to us because this goes back to 2018 and I don't see any clear vision. You know, that it is said, Mr. Sheila--Ms. Keady Rawson, you know, if you don't know where you're going, any train will get you there.

So, I just wanna know where we're going and when we can expect some visual or written outcomes with those dolls attached saying, "So, in this department, this is what we saw." I don't wanna name in the department and this is the money we allocated toward that. And this is the outcome and this is now how this, this department looks. And that hasn't, hasn't, um, come to us. And through, uh--to you Mr. DePasquale, as a patient--as patient woman as I am, I am

losing my patience around this.

Now, I know COVID-19 is thrown a, um, wrench into everything. So, I'll ask the question this way. Prior to COVID-19, what results and what was the financial impacts on that prior to us sort of going into this COVID-19 tailspin?

MS. SHEILA KEADY RAWSON: Um, thank you for the question, Madam Chair. Um, you have been a leader in terms of pay equity, um, and we have taken that very seriously. Um, one of the things we have formally done is joined the Boston's Women's Workforce Council and this past fall we participated in their--all of their workshops in terms of wage equity and wage equity studies, and also participated in their, um, I think, it's every two-year wage gathering, um, uh, data analysis using their tool. Um, did find some areas that needed to be addressed and did address those areas.

Um, as you said, it is an area that needs constant work and we always need to be focusing on moving forward because it's very easy to slip back. Um, we have set aside \$20,000 in terms of technical assistance for the upcoming fiscal year. Um, should we need to use that for particular

areas.

We have narrowed gaps--when we look at our 10 year look back. We have narrowed gaps in several of our areas, um, but still have some work to do in the areas of professionals and paraprofessionals.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: So, my question to you, or through you--through you, Mr. DePasquale, to Ms. Keady Rawson, the council doesn't know that and we--because there has been no ongoing reporting at all. And it's important for us to know because we are only one successful lawsuit from what we paid a decade ago, and we probably still paying dividends on that settlement to this date. So, you say there's \$20,000 for training. I'd love to know what that training's supposed to do and what the outcome is. You say you're going to, you join the Boston Women's, I'm sorry, I didn't write it down.

So, I don't remember what exactly what it was. What is the outcome? I wanna connect our dollars to our outcomes and those outcomes should be working in such a way that we should be able to go to our dashboard and see some appreciable diff-- an appreciable difference in the City of Cambridge.

The city that applause--applauds and lodges itself as taking on the difficult issues should not be in a place where we are underperforming. So, I, through either you, Mr. City Manager, I'm just looking for how we--how are we using our dollars, particularly around pay equity 'cause we are three years--two years. We are two years in. Ms. Rossing. Katie Rossing.

MS. KATIE ROSSING: Yep. Um, so as I said, we are part of the Boston's Women Workforce Council, and so we do--are using their tool to, um, to assess some of the, um, the gender, um, equity issues that occur in our wage scales.

We also have eight collective bargaining agreements up for, um, renewal this June. And one of the main focuses of collective bargaining moving forward, we'll also be to address pay equity issues in those particular units. Because many of, uh, two-thirds of our employees are part of collective bargaining agreements or covered by collective bargaining agreements. So, we do need to use those tools as well.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Okay. This is just the beginning. I think there's a lot more attention that needs to be--be given to this particular area. I will yield the

floor on the questioning in this line, but please know, Mr. City Manager we'll be coming back through the Civic Unity Committee. I'll be looking for--I'll be asking hard questions. I'll be looking for firm coherent, precise answers.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Through you, Madam Chair, I know all the time you've spent on this three career, and especially as mayor. I know we're making progress, but I think we should give you an update of where we are and address your concerns and figure out how we're gonna address 'em as quick as possible. So, I'll be happy to work with you in that meeting. I know Sheila and Lisa's been involved, but we'll be happy to see what else we can do to get it better.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. DePasquale. Is there anyone else that wants to speak to this issue, Councillor McGovern?

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: No.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Vice Mayor Mallon.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: I'm all set. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler.

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: I'm set as well.

Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mayor Siddiqui.

MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI: All set. Thanks.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: No thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Did I miss anyone?

Hearing none.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Um, Madam Chair, um, I just wanted to say, uh, I'm sure everyone on the council fully supports your statements and if you want a gray-haired older guy to be with you at any time, um, no question. Thank you for bringing it up.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: We don't discriminate.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: I thought that was gonna be me council, but we will do it together.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: So, uh, Co-chair Carlone offers a motion to bring forward the personnel budget with a favorable recommendation to the full city Council. Mr. Wilson, Clerk, would you please call the roll.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes
Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes
Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes
Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes
Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes
Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes
Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present
Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Yes-8. No-0. Absent-0. Present-1. Motion Passed.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you Mr. Clerk. Our next department that will be coming for us this afternoon is Information Technology. Information Technology was pulled by Vice Mayor Mallon and Councillor Zondervan. Vice Mayor Mallon, you have the floor.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you, Madame Chair. Through you, um, to the city manager and his team. I'm not sure who's gonna be answering these questions 'cause I see his chair is empty. Um, but I did have a quick question about, uh, 13% increase, um, in salaries of about \$600,000 and \$500,000 in other ordinary maintenance in this budget with the same FTEs as last year.

And I didn't see any IT positions or programs in the

significant budget modification section. So, I'm curious what is accounting for this increase? Other departments like Law and Personnel have significant increases as well, but there are positions or programs listed, uh, in the significant budget modifications.

So, this is over a million dollars of sort of, to Councillor Carlone's point earlier, um, when there are significant, uh, increases without an asterisk and without any explanation, it makes it really difficult when you're going through the budget book to figure out what accounts for these things. And, um, I would say moving forward it would probably be a good idea just, as Councillor Carlone mentioned earlier, to make sure that these are in the budget book, not just for us, but for, you know, residents who are reading the budget book as well. So, if somebody could speak to the increase in what accounts for that in the IT Department, that would be great.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Can I jump just jump in this--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale, before you jump--

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: I'm sorry.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: --both feet into the answer. If you just take a moment because Mr. McCormick-- Patrick McCormick is new to us, to brief introduce him. So, Mr. D, if you could sort of formally and formally introduce Mr. McCormick and then answer the question.

MR. MCCORMICK: Okay. Uh, good afternoon, uh, co-chairs, councillors. Um, thanks for having me. This is, uh, it's been six weeks since I joined the city as, uh, CIO and IT Department director. Uh, and I just wanna say it's--it's been great to--to join, uh, an incredible team in the IT Department who I believe, um, everyone is aware has done outstanding job, particularly during the--the COVID crisis, and all of the IT tools that have been essential to ensuring that our workers can deliver services and that public can access important information, uh, as well as services available to--to the public, small businesses, and residents.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: So, specifically to Vice Mayor Mallon's question. Mr. McCormick, you have the floor?

MR. MCCORMICK: Yes. Um, so, uh, there are two new positions, but I will start by saying that, um, and, um, perhaps, uh, Mr. Kale and the city manager will wanna weigh

in, but it may have been an oversight that this was not, uh, highlighted in the Significant Budget Modifications section. I'm not sure about that. But, um, there are two new positions. Uh, one, they're both senior, uh, management positions. One is a physical security, the other's network engineer.

Actually, I shouldn't say they're senior management, but they're important positions. Um, and those, uh, two new positions, uh, total approximately \$328,000, um, including benefits and base. There are also increases, uh, in cola, um, and insurance and settlements that add up to approximately another 130,000. And--and there are some other contributing factors, but primarily it's those new roles, um, that have added that cost.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. City Manager, Mr. Kale, do you wanna add anything?

MR. DAVID KALE: No, that primarily covers the increase in the salaries, which is the two new positions. And, uh, cost of living, which is contained in all the budgets as well as, uh, any increments that existing employees receive plus increases infringing benefits. So that pretty much covers the, um, five to \$600,000 increase.

And then I'll let Mr. McCormick briefly describe the increases in OM, um, with regard to increases that we were, um, uh, put into the budget for the IT Department. Pat.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. McCormick, you have the floor.

MR. MCCORMICK: Certainly. So, there were some expenses that added to the, uh, other ordinary maintenance, um, particularly around software maintenance, um, in a variety of different applications, enterprise applications that the city used.

I won't go through the entire list, but, um, there is, uh, some costs associated with, uh, the Airbnb registration, um, a Gov QA program, an on base program, and a number of others. So--so those, uh, as well as moving a couple of items between different departments, um, added up to those additional expenses.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Further answers, before I take it back to the vice mayor?

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Can I just follow up one of the questions that--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: --given Carlone and

the Vice Mayor has mentioned. So, in terms of OOM account specifics, uh, traditionally in budget documents, we have highlighted increases only on the significant modifications. Uh, but I think what I'm hearing today is if there are larger OM accounts, maybe we can have a section similar to significant budget modifications. We would just call it significant OOM accounts that we just have the dollar amount and some general highlights of what goes in there. That could be a separate section.

Same way as this is with departments listed and just kind of get into some detail. We've never done that. It's really not a GFOA guideline, but I can appreciate where everybody's going with this.

So let us take a look at adding a section, or a page or two that I think would address large OOM numbers, and we can discuss what that dollar amount should be 'cause we have a pretty good size budget. But these are great questions that are really lost if you're looking at a budget book. And I'll be happy to work with David and Taha to see if we can try to figure out a better way of illustrating some of those costs.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Vice Mayor.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you Madam Co-chair, and through you, um, to the city manager. I think, you know, even just a sentence or two in the--the narrative just to let us know what those OOM increases are, just so we don't have to ask these questions on the floor.

Um, and I wanted to welcome, uh, Mr. McCormick. I've only seen you, uh, on emails, but, so welcome to the city. We look forward to working with you.

Um, I think my last question/comment is, I'm disappointed that the increase in the OOM of \$500,000 doesn't include that municipal broadband feasibility study, um, and the RFP. So, I guess I'm not really sure where to go from there because it does seem like that \$500,000, which is a sizeable amount, is going to other, you know, updates and--and Airbnb registration updates.

So, I guess, um, you know, when we're thinking about the budget and we're thinking about where we're spending our money, um, this is a place where I think several of my colleagues mentioned it earlier, I didn't get a chance to, but, um, this is where I would've hoped to have seen, um, that allocation and not funding to do the, the municipal broadband feasibility study.

Because, uh, as we've seen, um, you know, even during this COVID pandemic, uh, many of our students are left behind, many of our residents are left behind, many of our residents are financially-- were financially struggling to--to make the payments for their Comcast, their internet. I mean, yes, 96% of our residents may, um, be connected. Are they connected at the expense of other things?

I know many, many families who make very, very hard choices on paying rent, eating food, getting medical care to ensure that they are up and running online and connected so that their kids can have access to the internet. That 96% is just a data point. Um, we need to do more for our residents, and this pandemic has--has laid that there. So, I'm disappointed not to see an allocation, uh, in this budget for that report.

Um, and as I mentioned earlier, I think many of my colleagues have--have already brought it up, so I won't belabor it, but I did wanna bring that up during this conversation about the information technology budget. Thank you. I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Vice Mayor Mallon. Um, vice Mallon--Vice Mayor Mallon yields the

floor. Next in line actually is Councillor Nolan, who had signed up and then Co-chair Carlone. Councillor Nolan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Um, Madam--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Yes, sir.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Was it--

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: I had full department.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Let me look. I may be wrong. Thank you. You're absolutely right. So, Councillor Zondervan, and then Ms. Nolan, and then to you. Councillor Zondervan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Um, so, first of all, I wanna again echo my colleagues' comments that, I mean, this crisis really has shown the importance of our ability to move a lot of our activities online. If--if we had been hit with this type of pandemic, you know, 20 years ago, 30 years ago, we would not have been able to respond in the way that we did because we simply wouldn't have had the technological capability to move so many of our activities online,

including even conducting these meetings.

And, you know, to not acknowledge that and, and to say that, you know, we--we don't need to address this problem in a more fundamental way is--is just really unacceptable, uh, for all of us and--and very disappointing. And so, building on that theme, I guess, and--and I had similar questions about the FTEs, but it sounds like there are two additional FTEs, so maybe that's just a minor typo in the budget book.

Um, but in terms of the--the software, I know that we have to get an additional or a different version of Zoom in order to conduct, uh, city council meetings. So, what, again, what kind of impacts do we anticipate here of this pandemic in terms of our budget, if we have to conduct more and more of our activities, uh, online, possibly for the next couple of years while we await, uh, hopefully a vaccine being developed?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. McCormick, Mr. Kale, who would be appropriate like to answer that?

MR. MCCORMICK: Okay. Certainly, uh, Councillor Zondervan, um, absolutely we've been responding to the need for public meetings, particularly for the city council, but

for other bodies and will continue to do so as more of these meetings come out online. We don't expect, uh, things to go back to normal exactly anytime soon. So, we are-- we've been purchasing additional licenses and going through the business requirements of different public meetings to ensure we have the right sort of licenses.

Um, I will just say, without getting into detail, the--the cost of these licenses are not exorbitant. They're not--they're not very high. Much of the work has to do with just getting, um, getting the technologies lined up and folks trained and, um, feeling comfortable with the technology.

So, um, we're still getting our hands. I think to your point around the full cost, that is to say the full, um, set of licensing that'll be required for how long. But I would say, and I'll, uh, yield to Mr. Kale and the city manager, um, it's--it's not looking like an enormous impact at the moment in the budget.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Kale, you have the floor.

MR. DAVID KALE: Uh, through you Madam Co-chair to Council Zondervan. Um, again, I think you are right. We

were making progress on utilizing Teams, which is the Microsoft product to do, um, Zoom meetings. Uh, but basically is a, uh, um, our internal, uh, operating procedure more or less in terms of using Teams for internal meetings.

And I think, uh, the training that the IT staff has done to get up, uh, people up to speed on that has been tremendous. And, um, I think we've been able to mobilize our ability to, uh, while folks have been not able to come to work to have them to operate, uh, remotely in an effective way.

So I, again, I would just say that, uh, Patrick has joined us, but I would say that, uh, as I said to him, uh, when he took over, we have, uh, two very skilled assistant directors, Mike Dugas, um, and Eric Belford, but also a skilled team that has allowed us to, uh, take the technology requirements and being able to have the city function and have folks to operate remotely and to utilize the technology, um, whether it's Zoom or Microsoft Teams, uh, to allow meetings to occur and to allow conversations to occur. And again, um, uh, we are also working, making sure that we develop policies so that, uh, we utilize the

right technologies as we move forward in terms of, uh, um, remote participation.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Kale. Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you Madam Chair, and thank you for those answers. Um, I'm not entirely sure if this goes here, but I believe I read about additional accessibility, um, technology and I was wondering if that would include a, uh, looping technology system.

We've talked about this, uh, earlier in the term to assist, um, people who have, um, difficulty with--with hearing. And, um, I understand that we have implemented closed captioning now for our meetings, which is great. Um, but I was wondering about this particular technology, whether we are looking to--to purchase that and install that anywhere,

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. McCormick have the floor.

MR. MCCORMICK: So, um, and--and I may need some help with this 'cause I don't have the full, uh, grasp. We have implemented the so-called CART technology, which has

allowed voice to text, um, for the city council meetings and that's proven effective. I'm not sure about the looping, um, technology. We may, I think, um, Lee Gianetti will have some comments about that.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Gianetti, you have the floor.

MR. LEE GIANETTI: Through you, Madam Chair. On the IT department, and I don't know the final, uh, disposition had engineers in looking at all of our, uh, public meeting rooms to see what it would involve to install looping technology.

Some rooms are simpler than others, but that has been done. I don't know, uh, what it was and they were working up final estimates on what it would be involved in.

MR. MCCORMICK: Frankly, uh, that was being done, um, when we sort of shut down in March. So, I know that, uh, the assessment has been done. Um, we can follow up to see if in fact we got the cost estimate, but I know that was a priority that we were working on, um, uh, right in March. So, we can follow up about where that actually is fallen. But I know that we will intend to do it, um, once we get the pricing and the technology requirements.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Kale.
Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you. I yield
the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan
yields the floor. Councillor McGovern.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Aye. Sorry, didn't know
I was next. Um, welcome Mr. McCormick. Uh, so we have
talked a lot today already about sort of our frustration
and disappointment around the, um, the--the money not being
in the budget for municipal broadband. And I know that it,
like many things, crosses many different departments. We
talked about it in the Public Information Office, um, IT it
would encompass a lot of other departments as well.

Um, but, you know, in looking at the IT, uh, page in
the budget book, uh, there are four objectives, uh, laid
out. The--the first one, um, is focused on key initiatives
outlined in the three year IT strategic plan that was
listed as number one. And then number three was streamline
and enhanced services, transparency, and access to
information to improve residents interactions with the
city.

Uh, I think the vice mayor put it really well. Um, you know, in terms of number three, you know, it's not just that we know that most people have access to the internet. They have it on their phones, right? And so, it's not really about that, but it's about, uh, reliable access, affordable access, um, and that there is a much broader gap. And so, I don't know how we streamline and enhance services transparency and access to information when we can't get reliable, affordable access to everybody.

And I don't know how we have a three year strategic IT plan that doesn't include, like, I looked at that too, that doesn't include looking at municipal broadband. So, um, I guess I don't really have a question, but, um, Mr. McCormick, I'm gonna apologize to you now because, you know, we haven't formally met, but I'm gonna do something I really haven't done before, which is not vote to move this forward with a favorable recommendation because until I see some money in there to look at this municipal broadband, I can't--I can't just keep talking about it and not seeing any action. So, um, thank you. And I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Uh, thank you Councillor McGovern. Councillor McGovern yields the floor. We'll now

hear from Councillor Nolan, and Councillor Nolan will be followed by co-chairing Carlone. Councillor Nolan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you, uh, uh, Chair Simmons. I had--had a couple questions that have already been asked and answered by my colleagues. Just to remind people, part of the reason it was not clear that positions were being added is because there was a presumably a typo on the page saying that there was not an addition of new positions. So, I was glad to hear that that 600,000 extra dollars was in fact two new positions. We need to make sure that that book is corrected or asterisk at least to, so that we can understand what is there.

Um, I hope--there's two things. One, I hope this is an area that we are also, uh, looking at, um, other towns and what they've been able to do in providing a, in this fast world--fast moving world of information technology to keep up with things. I noticed that this is one area where the City of Cambridge has far more staffing and spends far more money than many other cities our size.

So, I would be very interested in understanding if, as we go forward with, I believe there was a reference to, uh,

using other city database for best practices for us to--us to understand how we can improve those services, uh, given the amount of people and resources we have available. I too was disappointed, obviously, to--to not see the municipal broadband here. This is an area of the budget. I just cannot move forward, uh, vote favorably on something that is so critical to our city. I will be voting no on this element of the budget. I believe it has provided us with the department, uh, a lot of, um, strength as a city as we move forward.

But this--this to me is something that is critical for us to be able to meet our goals as a city to bring us into the 21st century. Once again, we're not talking about making the vote to actually spend and do the broadband, which I think we should do. And by the way, cities that have done it have actually recouped their investment in less than 10 years.

This is not something that you spend and you don't get back. But at least the feasibility study, it seems for a whole host of reasons that we really do need to at some point, uh, vote our value. So, I will be voting no on this, uh, subject to the--this department. Thank you.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Through you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale.

MR. LOUISE DEPASQUALE.: I just wanna repeat that. I know there is a great concern over this, but we have contacted many cities. Most cities have not paid this over 10 years. They are not similar to the City of Cambridge. So, if we choose to go forward with this, we must do it in a way that people understand it.

And I really don't think it's being discussed fairly of what the financial impact of this is. So, we will discuss it, but this is not something that's easily paid back. And I just think to hear that over and over again when we are, deal with our consultants who say that's not the case, is unfair to me and the city.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you, Mr. DePasquale.. Councillor Nolan, do you yield the floor or you have another question?

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Yes. No, I, understand. Just to the city manager's point, this is a difficult situation. I just still stand. It would be great to have a third party objective assessment about where it is that we

could move. So, um, this is, uh, simply--simply that it's not questioning something other than really paying attention to the expert, uh, panel that was set up four years ago and all of you followed up on before I even join the council. Thank you. I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Councillor Nolan. Councillor Nolan yields the floor. You'll now hear from co-chairman Carlone followed by Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler. Co-chair.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. Um, on the issue that was just discussed about a third party study, uh, I mean, if the city has already done this, we should see that. If not, we have to seriously consider it, because there is an issue in the city. As to another acronym, OOM, Other Ordinary Maintenance that was discussed earlier.

In most cases, it's simply a footnote, I would think. But in perhaps Finance Administration, where it's really a number of good programs, I would highlight it, not in a footnote, uh, even if it's another sheet. And I just wanted to welcome Mr. McCormick. Uh, you probably should have come a month or two from now. But, uh, as far as the budget

meeting, but, um, we do welcome you here today.

MR. MCCORMICK: Thank you.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you. Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Are you yielding the floor? Okay. Chairman Carlone yields the floor. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Uh, I had one of a specific question about internet access. Um, just to first talk a little about municipal broadband, uh, 'cause I do think it is worth, uh, belaboring the point a little bit, uh, that we have a lot of residents without internet access right now. It's something that folks are depending on for work, uh, for social lives, to reach family, to get, uh, their doctor.

Um, we've seen other cities do this. Uh, the budget is, uh, around a billion dollars with the capital expenditures. Uh, the feasibility study would be a million dollars, which is much less than 1% of that. I think it's, uh, something we should see in the budget. Um, it's also just clear from a government point, um, the council is the only elected body in the city, uh, should be the council that's setting policy. And so, when the council says this

is a priority, we should be seeing progress on this.

Um, the question I had, uh, was on specifically, you know, if, uh, there isn't anything in, uh, municipal broadband in the budget right now. I'm also gonna be voting no on this item and--and against the budget as a whole. Um, but on the, we, the policy order a couple months ago, uh, asking, uh, city manager to look at what we can do to expand, uh, internet access in the meantime, to sort of look at what the school district is doing in terms of, uh, Wi-Fi hotspots, uh, thumb drives.

Uh, uh, we had--had a call, uh, talking with Verizon, with Legi and Eddie and the mayor's chief of staff. Uh, is there anything in the budget, uh, for looking at hotspots or--or things like that to expand, uh, internet access in the meantime for the next fiscal year?

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Uh, Mr. Gianetti can talk about the specifics, but we are currently addressing funding sources to address it that we don't believe needs to be in the budget, that it'll come from a supplemental appropriation while we wait.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Gianetti, do you wanna speak on this? Mr. McCormick, please don't share this

here, Mike. It hasn't been wiped down. Mr. G Lee, go over there please. Untouched by human anything. Thank you.

MR. LEE GIANETTI: Thank you. Through you, uh, Madame Chair, we've been, uh, working with, uh, Comcast. They have a new, uh, program for sponsors to help, um, any organization to be able to help fund internet essentials for folks at home. So, we were exploring that last week. Had a call with them on Friday, and we should have, um, more information coming out on that within the next week. But it's in collaboration with the schools.

The schools have been very successful and I give Steve Smith a lot of credit for, um, being able to procure a lot of hotspots before the pandemic really, uh, happened. Um, as councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler knows on our call with Verizon, their supply was just not anywhere, um, available, uh, for additional hotspots.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Please sit back 'cause the wind's blowing into the mic. Sounds like you're outside.

MR. LEE GIANETTI: Um, the supply of hotspots, uh, during this pandemic have not been available. Um, so we're now looking at the next longer term. Uh, one of the things

that has really come out of the school program is the hotspot is for one device being able to connect, so just the students device. So even for households that didn't have internet at home, um, that hotspot was not helping the whole family.

Um, so this way through an Internet Essentials program, uh, it's--they've increased their speed. It's now true broadband. We'd be able to support qualifying families, uh, to be able to get the service at home.

Um, Patrick and I have been having conversations with the Housing Authority, um, over the past, uh, probably about month and a half now, uh, about what it is as we're coming out of this that we can do to really support them and figure out what the specific needs are, uh, with families there, because we know, uh, based on our data that it's really our older residents and our lower income residents that don't have internet access.

Um, some of that is attributed to, you know, one not being able to afford, but we also know with some of our older, it's not knowing how to use technology. Um, early on in this, when we were speaking with the Housing Authority about how we could really push either Internet Essentials

or the Lifeline Program, uh, which is done by the, uh, Federal Communications Commission, the FCC, um, on our seniors, there was concern about letting people into the buildings.

Um, so now that, that's gonna start going up, 'cause the seniors were really a high risk population. But during this, we've been pushing out information on Internet Essentials to the mailer we did to all our seniors. We talked to them about the Lifeline Program, which they can use for either broadband or for a telephone.

So, during this, we've been trying to push as much as we can. And now I think we're able to take the next step where, uh, there'll be a mechanism for us to further assist families in actually getting and, uh, paying for Internet Essentials for the qualifying, um, people in our city. And we know, uh, based not only from Comcast, but from our own, um, data that there's very low utilization, um, of the program.

Some of that is marketing, and I think some of it is also prior barriers that were in place that made it difficult for people to sign up. But we're trying to work through, um, how we can make it easier. And Comcast has

relaxed a lot of the previous restrictions that they've had. So that's, uh, one thing that we're working on for the immediate future.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: And I would just add, we've been in constant communication at these meetings with the mayor as well, facilitating on the city and school site

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler.

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: Thank you. I yield back.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Further discussion. Ms. Siddiqui, did you wanna weigh in on this?

MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI: Yeah, I'll weigh in. Uh, you know, I think this is, you know, I respect, um, my colleagues in voting on this. I'm gonna be voting yes on this, um, in that, I think with what's happening and with what, um, is coming up ahead on--on COVID, um, related expenses, there's a lot of unknowns. What I think I would appreciate from the city manager is more of a, you know, why no to municipal broadband right now.

Um, and you've laid out some of those points, but seeing some more, um, you know, just facts to--to, you

know, as you've mentioned, you know, other cities who've-- who we think have done municipal broadband, you know, in your view, maybe that's not municipal broadband. So, I really do want more of those details. Um, and I think it's important that we have them.

I think, um, in these conversations around the digital divide, there's a lot of unknowns still. And I think the more we can share with the council, um, on that, I think, um, you know, we have to get those details out. Uh, and on the school's front, I know it's the priority of the school committee as well, uh, to focus on, you know, as we go through remote--remote learning, how we bridge the gap. 'Cause there is indeed a gap. Uh, and, uh, you know, I think this is, we--time is of--of the essence on this.

So, I think, you know, I--I want to see municipal broadband happen. Um, and, but I also, you know, I think there--we are in some unknown, um, we're in unknown times. But with that said, just some more background and data on the subject of municipal broadband and how the city has, you know, what exactly we're thinking and--and the reasons of no, uh, to back us up. I think that's really important. So that's--that's all I'll say.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Uh, thank you Madam Mayor. Just a quick question, Madam Mayor, to you, do you-- do you know, or can you share with us the estimated cost, the hotspots are costing the School Department District per household? Do you know the city--

MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI: Yes. Yeah. So, each hotspot is about, it's \$40 per device,

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: \$40 per device.

MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI: So that's about per month. I think we have 400 students with the hotspots. And so, they had, you know, it isn't expected--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: It's ahead of it. I don't know. Patty, mute your phone please. Go ahead-- Continue Madam Mayor.

MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI: So, it's \$40 per device and it's a monthly--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Per device. Okay. Thank you, Madam Mayor. Are you yielding back the floor?

MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI: Yes.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. You have Councillor Toomey, did you want to weigh in on this at all? Did--did, uh, council, I think Councillor McGovern wants--

does Councillor McGovern wanna speak again or no?

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: I do. Just real quickly.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mm-hmm.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: I just wanna, 'cause I wanna be fair to also to the folks who--who are supporting municipal broadband. I wanna be just really clear. I want the study. I want to know if--if municipal broadband is financially viable or not, or is there some other way to do it. So, you know, I don't--I don't know how we can say it is or it isn't until we take this next step.

So, I appreciate, I'm not saying that there isn't work being done, Mr. Manager, but this, I don't know how anybody can say yes or no until we do this work. So, I'm just being really clear. I'm not saying, yes, we're gonna plow ahead and do this, but I'm also not saying we shouldn't. And we need this next step. And that's what I'm advocating for.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Uh, through you, Madam Chair, all I would ask is that you give us a chance to have a hearing. Let us hear from--from our consultant on why we don't think a million dollar investment at this time is to write, leading to a billion dollar investment in the middle of the financial situation that we're in. And if the

end, we'll let that person discuss why we don't agree with, and we'll talk to one another.

But I do think we were hoping to have a presentation, Lee had it pretty much worked out. And through no one's fault, we were a victim of COVID-19. It did take us longer than we had anticipated, but our consultant is pretty firm on the fact that they're not recommending this. And they could be wrong because other people feel they are.

But I do think for a million dollars, we should hear from our consultant on why this is not the best investment for the city. And if at the end we disagree, we disagree. But I think to put a million dollars up on a billion dollar operation without at least letting us present that case with the consultants, and I'll take the blame for not having done that earlier, but it is in the middle of the COVID. I would hope we would at least get that consideration.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: And I, and Madam Chair through you, yes, I absolutely have that consideration. But this also, you know, and again, I don't wanna be argumentative, but this--this has been talked about long before the COVID crisis. And we often release reports and

then we can have a meeting to discuss that report later. And I think it goes to the mayor's point of we're sort of working it in this vacuum of no information.

We're being told the consultant said this, but we haven't seen anything. We're not sure. So, you know, I hate, and--and as I said at the beginning, I don't think I've ever voted against a departmental budget at a budget hearing.

And I feel like if that sends the--I've been trying to send the message in a lot of other ways to get this information, and if this is a way to do it. Um, and I'm happy to have that meeting. I want that meeting. I wanted that meeting a year ago. So that's my position. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor McGovern, do you yield the floor--Are you yielding the floor?

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Yes, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Councillor Zondervan, the floor is yours.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to, um, support my colleagues. I'll also be voting no. And, you know, we can't really say that-

-that this is a billion dollar project that we're discussing without a study. We can't even say that it's gonna be a million dollar study.

Um, we've invested \$150,000 in a digital equity study. And, you know, I started working on that with the city manager at the beginning of my term, uh, two years ago, two and a half years ago.

So, we've had a lot of time to look at this problem, and now it's really become clear how important this is. And there may well be other ways to address it besides, uh, a massive capital investment. But we don't know because we--we haven't looked at it. I've--I've become aware of--of some technologies called mesh networks that may be able to address some of the concerns that we're dealing with, uh, for far lower costs than--than we were initially thinking.

So, it's just really important that we look at this problem with an open mind and not, um, assume that it's going to be a massive expense even to do this study, let alone to--to address the problem. I mean, if we're--if we're right and 96% of the city has, uh, broadband access of some kind, and we're looking to cover the other 4% and maybe, you know, uh, expand that a little bit, there may be

ways to--to do that without a massive capital investment that--that people had previously been imagining.

So again, it's just really important to look at--at this problem and be creative and figure out how we can address it, because it's really, really, really essential now that we address it and that people can have, uh, access to the internet. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Are you yielding the floor Councillor?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Yes, Madam Chair. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you Councillor Zondervan. Councillor Zondervan yields the floor. Is there any more discussion on this item? Hearing none,. uh, to you, Mr. City Manager. I certainly respect your passion on the--on this item and the difficulty that, I'll speak for myself, I see myself in.

So, I live in a neighborhood that has poor access to technology. I hear from schools and other individuals that talk about they can't do the lessons because they don't have credible access to--to internet.

My own experience, and, you know, to our CIO of the

MIS Department, Mr. McCormick, I went from having to make an appointment to get internet so I could be on the city council. And it taken two days to be able to--to just be able to plug it in. But we had to do all these other things to get it done because of where I live and the type of building that I live in.

So, I can feel it very personally. And, you know, I could have gone other places to get credible and accurate and viable, um, internet, but I would much prefer it to be in my home, sheltering in place and keeping myself in. Then by keeping myself safe, my family's safe. So, what you hear is the frustration for those of us that are down on the ground, interacting with families all the time, saying, in a city like ours, why can't we have more reliable, uh, internet?

So, we are all frustrated. We all have to get less angry and get more definitive and focused on what is the problem. If it's not broadband, then what is it? Because it can't--it is just hard to be in a city that is as resource-rich as ours, and--and not have every person that wants it able to get it.

With that, I yield the floor. I will close this

discussion. And is there a motion to--is there a motion to send it with a favorable recommendation? You vote however you want. Yes, I understand. Okay. So, uh, Councillor Carlone it's gonna gonna offer a motion that we send the information technology budget to the full city council with a favorable recommendation. Clerk Wilson, would you please call the roll

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - No

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - No

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - No

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - No

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: - Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler Jivan - No

Councillor Toomey J Timothy - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - No

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Motion fails. Yes - 3. No - 6

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you Mr. Clerk. We now move to the next item to be pulled as Public Celebrations. Public Celebrations was pulled by Councillor Zondervan. Councillor Zondervan, we're waiting for the

department individual to come in to speak.

Welcome, Mr. Uh, Jason Weeks. Jason, we--we welcome the head of the Arts Commission here. Councillor Zondervan, you pull this. So, I give the floor to you. Councillor Zondervan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Chair, and through you. Um, looks like a substantial increase in this budget, which, um, I welcome. But it--but again, I'm confused because I'm not seeing an increase in the number of staff. Uh, this is on page V-45. So, if we can, uh, get an explanation on what is contemplated in terms of the increase and whether this, um, staffing of--of five people being maintained is accurate.

MR. JASON WEEKS: Uh, thank--through you Madame Co-Chair, and thank you for the question Councillor. Uh, the increase, uh, it comes out of working with, uh, the Mayor's Arts Task Force and, uh, Vice Mayor Alanna Mallon, and also working with City Administration to try and increase the amount of money we have to grant directly to artists, to individual artists, to creative partnerships, and our local arts organizations. So, we've added just about \$300,000 to the budget in the OOM section to be able to accomplish

that. And that will augment our traditional grant making activities to allow that to happen.

Uh, there's also, uh, some money there to support the Annual Cambridge Arts River Festival, which I think many people have seen. We trans--we were able, because we had money this year, to pivot very quickly and do a Cambridge Arts Stream Festival so that we could still continue to employ the artist, we could still continue to present the work, but do it in new digital and virtual platforms, both with live streaming and recorded material, and video galleries, and lifting up our local restaurants and retail districts. So, we were able to pivot very quickly with that money in place as well.

And then the last piece of that has to do with our Creative Marketplace Program. And that program in particular offers professional development for individual artists, where they're able to work in cohorts, to learn from one another, to learn from professionals in a variety of different, um, uh, uh, variety of different topics that will help them better understand and recognize their role as small business enterprise in the city and part of our innovation economy.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: So--so can I--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor--

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: --just jump in?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: --Mr. DePasquale.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: --Madam Chair. So, if you go to page I-14, uh, the Mayor's Task Force on Arts made a lot of recommendations that we were closer with the Mayor, the Vice Mayor, and the committee to, uh, address in this budget.

And, uh, in there is the extra 160,000 and the extra 176,000 that are highlighted in those Public Celebration divisions. We took a look at what the taskforce felt the needs were. We know in the past how much concern the council has had over these type programs and thought this would be a significant, uh, increase to the areas that the council felt we needed to address. I wanna thank Jason for his leadership on this as well.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale. Mr. Kale, did you wanna add to this?

MR. DAVID KALE: Please, may I, um, Co-chair finance. Um, so just to be clear, the--in the Public Celebrations under Significant Budget Modifications, uh, it does include

the, uh, position of Chief of Arts and Cultural Planning. And, um, that position, again, like the other ones we talked about, isn't reflected in the FTE because it's only funded for, uh, three months out of the 12th.

So, we did add a division within the Public Celebrations budget called Arts and Culture, and that's where you see the \$176,000. 'Cause again, as we noted in the budget, we funded fully the position and we took the savings and we took the savings in a central budget.

So therefore, we fully funded the budget of the position within the Public Celebrations, Arts and Culture, but we took the savings in the central Lay's budget in the Employee Benefits section.

So again, um, this is one of the extra positions we've added to the budget that right now is scheduled to be filled in April of 1. It is listed under the budget, uh, Significant Budget Modifications. Uh, but again, it's not reflected as a position because it's only funded for three months. But it, uh, if it does continue in fiscal '22, it would be in fully funded, it would be a position reflected.

So again, we have added a, uh, new section within Public Celebrations called Arts and Culture. And within

that there is a Chief of Arts and Cultural Planning position, uh, that is funded, uh, in the totality, but in fact, uh, a net of only three months in, uh, April, May, and June of fiscal '21.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Kale.
Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam, Co-chair. I appreciate that answer and that explanation. And--and I guess, you know, again, I just have to say it's very confusing to look at this budget and see a \$200,000 increase in the salaries and wages, but no increase in the FTEs. And--and again, I understand the explanation, but it--it's just very confusing to do it that way.

If the position is in the budget, then it should be listed as--as a budgeted employee on this--on this line item. And, you know, again, if you're not hiring the person until April, that's a separate discussion. But--but if there--if there are positions in the budget, then we should be able to tell from this page that--that that is in fact the case.

Um, my second question is about specific, um, celebrations. Again, Caribbean Heritage Month, which we

haven't been able to celebrate properly this year, but--but is that in the--in this budget for next year, um, Indigenous People's Day, uh, Carnival and similar to River Fest, what are we doing to have some of these celebrations virtually, uh, online if we can't have them in person?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale to Jason.

MR. JASON WEEKS: Sure. Through you, Madame Co-Chair, uh, to the Councillor. Uh, we are learning very quickly, of course, you know how to do this work and partnering with folks like CCTV, others in the community that have been doing digital and virtual work for, you know, years and decades in some case, but are right on the edge of, you know, how to do this well, how to do it effectively and efficiently.

And so, we are trying to learn ourselves, um, how to do this so we can also extend that to our grantees, to the other organizations in town, uh, so that they can effectively do that as well.

And I think, you know, with the added funding that we have now to make grants, I mean we'll go from making less than a \$100,000 in grants to making a quarter of a million dollars in grants, which can support far more types of

activities along the lines of what you're describing. So, I think we have that opportunity there. You know, I also know due to the great work of the council, you know, a million dollars from the Community Benefits Fund was identified.

And I'm hopeful that we can see some of that money flow to our arts non-profits as well, many of whom create the type of work that you're specifically talking about and present that to our community.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Weeks.
Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you Madam Co-chair. I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Is there anyone that wants to be-- Co-chairman Carlone, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm thrilled with this increase, and I think any city that wants to think of itself as great, arts have to flourish in it for children, for everybody. You know this, I'm not saying anything new.

And I actually would love to have an arts perspective, even in our own city streets upgrading. Uh, to make a point, the banners that we accept are too small, they're

too stayed. Your mask alone would be a better banner, uh, than anything there.

So, I would love to see the presence of the Arts Council keep expanding. And, uh, um, so I'm thrilled with the work done to date by the Mayor's committee, the Vice Mayor. And, um, I think any livable city has a strong art space. And--and thank you for all you do, and thank you Mr. Manager. Thank you, Madam.

MR. JASON WEEKS: Madam, Co-chair, if I could provide a quick response.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Yeah, go ahead.

MR. JASON WEEKS: I just wanted to, through you, please. I just wanted to add that this is more connected to the work through the Capital Program of the city. But we just put out a request for an artist to design a mural for the construction scrim over several years, or during the project development at the Harvard Square kiosk.

And that follows up on the--the giant mural, the 300 foot mural that we did along the construction scrim with the Cambridge based artist to represent Cambridge down the entire length of the Charles River, uh, from the boathouse all the way to the Museum of Science.

So, we're constantly trying to figure out how to integrate those projects, but more importantly, the thinking and the practice of our artists into those projects. Even when they're long-term temporary, but also in situations like our Sidewalk Poetry program. You know, we were just about to launch our exhibition of Sidewalk Poetry in five years of that with a thousand plus resident poems that we now press into the sidewalk in partnership with the library and the Department of Public Works.

So, we've also taken that digital as well and celebrate one of those poems every single day during this time to try and add, you know, not only a creative and a cultural touch, but also lift up the voice of our residents when we can't physically get together and we have to distance during this time.

So, I think, you know, we're constantly thinking and working with the city manager and his team and our fellow departments, and trying to figure out how do we make sure that artists are involved in all of our decision making in all of our programs. So, I appreciate--I appreciate the comment. Thank you, Madam Co-Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you Mr. Weeks.

Further.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Madam--Madam Co-chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Uh, let me just check in with, uh, my co-chair. Are you yielding the floor?

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Yes.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Vice Mayor Mallon, you have the floor.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you Madam Mayor, and through you, uh, to the City Manager and to Mr. Weeks. I did wanna say, um, I'm so thrilled to see this allocation, uh, on the--on the budget. Um, for, as Mr. Weeks mentioned, you know, the increase in the amount of grants that we are able to give to Cambridge artists came up as a big thing during the Arts Task Force that we--we only had \$90,000 that we granted out to artists and arts organizations every year.

This allocation of \$160,000 will bring us to quarter of a million dollars to grant out to artists and arts organizations over the next year. This is gonna be critical as this sector of our economy, uh, has been devastated and will continue to--to be so.

There's also a \$250,000 allocation to the Central

Square Business Improvement District for the cultural district for programming, which will also boost our economy while also allowing our artists to--to do their work and--and make sure that our residents have access, uh, to those programming, um, the arts. It's gonna be critical.

Uh, there's also a, you know, position that was put on hold that was a big, uh, factor in the Mayor's Arts Task Force. We had, uh, a number of recommendations. It's not for, uh, the council to decide which ones of those are gonna be implemented first. I think Councillor Carlone mentioned that he would like to see artists more embedded in the city.

One of the recommendations was an Artist in Residence program, um, for our city departments to look at things like that. Look at how our--our street artwork is, um, being presented, how we are thinking about banners and scrim, and--and looking at every opportunity to make sure that the arts are vibrant here in the city.

Um, I just wanna point out that, you know, I think there's been a lot of conversation, um, in the region and nationally about how arts are an extra, um, during this covid crisis. The art is the thing that got us all through,

right? Whether you watched your favorite performer online every day, you binge watched a Netflix show, you watched the Symphony Orchestra from your house.

Um, the arts are really what got us through, and it is going to be incumbent on us, um, to make sure that we uplift and support them as we come out of this. Because as you all know, arts and celebrations, uh, are in phase four of the reopening plan. That's--that's way down the line, and it's going to be too late unless we make the significant investment in our arts community.

Um, so I want to challenge us to not think about arts as an extra when we think about, um, the positions and this funding moving forward into fiscal year '21 and beyond. Um, if you look at, there was a 2015, um, report, the Arts and Economic Prosperity Report for Cambridge.

Uh, the arts bring 6,000 jobs for our Cambridge residents and 98 million worth of income to residents and revenue to Cambridge. This is a tremendous, uh, economic driver and it's going to be critical to our economic recovery for us to be supporting the arts so that we can bring that economic recovery back to the city of Cambridge.

So this Chief of Arts and Cultural Planning, uh,

position I understand is on hold. I know that we are all making very hard choices, um, about our--our budget and a lot is unknown, but I do wanna say here today that, um, I wanna challenge us to not think about the arts as an extra, but rather an economic driver, um, here in the city and, um, something that employs a lot of our residents.

And, um, so I don't necessarily have a question. I did wanna make that statement. I wanted to thank the City Manager and Mr. Kale, um, for and--and Lisa Peterson, um, and Jason Weeks for really coming together and putting together a package that will support our artists over the next fiscal year and hopefully moving forward.

So, I yield the floor, but I just really wanted to express my heartfelt gratitude to everybody that's worked so hard on this for the last year. Uh, I really appreciate it. I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Vice Mayor Mallon. Vice Mayor yields the floor. Is there any other discussion on this item?

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Real quick, Madam Chair,

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor McGovern.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Yeah, I just wanna, um,

thank the, uh, City Manager and--and Mr. Weeks as well. I also wanna thank the Vice Mayor for--for chairing that task force, uh, last term. It's nice to see, um, those recommendations being implemented.

And I just--just wanna say in general, although we've had some, you know, tense moments during this conversation, this is, I often bring this up is every--every year we have, when we talk about the arts budget, um, we're--we're talking about increases.

And again, I just wanna, you know, this is, uh, there aren't, probably aren't a whole lot of cities in the Commonwealth or around the country that are--that are talking about this, uh, increasing public art and-- and support for artists, uh, during this time. And I think it's another example of, um, our fiscal responsibility and putting money behind things that we really value.

And I think the Vice Mayor said it perfectly and, um, you know, art is a--it's, uh, it's not an add-on. It's-- it's a driver for our economy, it's something that brings revenue to our city. Uh, and I'm glad we're putting money behind it, but I'm also glad that we're in a position to put money behind it 'cause most cities, uh, are not having

this conversation right now. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Councillor McGovern. Are you yielding the floor?

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Yes.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Um, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Nolan, Councillor Toomey, do either of you wanna speak on this?

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: No. Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Did he say yes or no? No. Okay. Hearing no additional comments, I would like to entertain a motion to pass this for the favorable recommendation. Is there a motion on a motion by Chairman Carlone to pass Public Celebration's budget on to the city council with a favorable recommendation. Mr. Clerk, please call the roll.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Yes-8. No-0. Absent-0. Present-1. Motion Passed.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Uh, thank you. The next department that will be voted is, uh, before us, thank you, is the Police Department. This department was pulled by Councillor Zondervan. Councillor Zondervan, give us a moment just to do our obligatory sanitation piece and then you'll have the floor. I wanna welcome Commissioner Bard, Councillor Sobrinho--no, Councillor Zondervan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Co-chair, and through you to the police chief. Um, my question is around anti-bias training and how much we are spending on that and how we are measuring effectiveness of it.

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: Okay. Uh, through you, Madam Chair, to the Councillor. Um, so, uh, as you'll see listed, our--the total amount for our Procedural, uh, Justice section is about \$390,000. But the figure that we put up front that see--that seeks to account

for it, it represents a conservative estimate of the total expenditures aimed at, uh, promoting anti-bias and diversity, both internally and externally in the community.

So, it includes, um, that entire call center at the Procedural Justice Center. It includes a percentage of time spent preparing and implementing, uh, recruitment, uh, and promotion of efforts such as when our personnel director or our public information officer or other staff members attend various events and promote the department and recruit and diverse--for recruiting diverse individuals is about \$60,000 for that.

73,000 is a percent of the time that the staff, uh, spend doing community outreach, promoting diversity and anti, uh, bias, such as the work that Kess and Green and Adam Patton does, including work with our multifaith community, minority communities, and our immigrant populations, also in the schools.

The largest number in that, uh, million dollar figure is about \$430,000 as a percentage of the time spent by, um, on programs in our family and Social Justice section, um, particularly by our Youth Resource officers.

Uh, time spent on programs such as the Hip Hop

transformation work at our youth centers, um, doing the various many mini basketball tournaments we hold, uh, for Boys and Girls Empowerment Camp, uh, the Girls Taking Action Program and the My City My Voice Program.

Um, \$13,000 of that total is a percentage of time spent on a partnership with BARCC, which is the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, um, for training for police officers to work with victims of sexual violence who are disabled.

Um, about \$30,000 of that in total is a percentage of staff time spent attending weekly or monthly meetings with the various, uh, commissions and community groups that we serve as members of, or liaisons to, um, including Human Rights Commission, uh, the LGBTQ+ Commission, the Family Policy Council, our Senior Policy Group on Homelessness, the, uh, Community Engagement team, the Council on Aging, and the Commission for Persons with Disabilities, and the Women's Commission.

Um, even \$12,000 of that total is a percentage of the staff spent analyzing hate crimes. So, um, when you add these things up, that \$1 million, uh, total represents a conservative estimate. It also includes things like a percentage of the professional standards budget.

I believe about 10% of that budget on our work with the Police Review and Advisory, uh, Board, uh, and then 222,000 under that number are for annual trainings aimed at annual, uh, anti-bias campaigns, such as Critical Incident Training that we--that address as cultural awareness, uh, responding to individuals with developmental disabilities, responding to veterans, and responding to individuals with psychiatric conditions.

Our trauma-informed law enforcement training, which has elements of anti-bias training, um, our unconscious bias training, which will be mandatory FY-'21, uh, in our in-service training.

And it's, uh, also required through the MPTC Commission this year. And then training conducted by our gay officer--by the Gay Officers Action League and our Recruit Academy. Um, and, uh, we worked with the LGBTQ+ Commission to enhance that training.

Some other, uh, trainings that we have that supplement our anti-bias training, but that aren't included necessarily in that total. Um, and, you know, I can't reiterate that when it comes to training on anti-bias and associated issues, you really be hard pressed to find the

department that, uh, anywhere that reaches the level of trainings that we provide.

So, this year, um, we--as mentioned in our key initiatives, we ended up being the only department in the country to provide training on historical injustices and present policing.

Um, that training is led by the Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project, the Institute on Race and Justice, and the George Ruffin Society at Northeastern University. The training was designed to generate, um, a deeper understanding of the dynamics of the police's role in historical racial violence as it contributes to intergenerational trauma in certain communities.

Um, we had a 12 hour ICAT training that has elements of anti-bias. Our entire brand new Cambridge Police, Northeastern Regional Academy is run on the foundations of procedural and social justice.

Um, in calendar year '19, first round was in fiscal year '19, and the second round was in fiscal year '20. We were blessed to have, uh, implicit bias training. It was provided by, um, to our officers by Dr. Mahzarin Banaji, uh, Professor of Psychology over at Harvard University.

She's the premier renowned subject matter expert in bias testing.

Um, we--with our permission, Dr. Banaji used the training opportunity, uh, with CPD as a basis for a new study. Um, one of the conditions of that training was that it had to be voluntary. Um, but understanding how important that training is and understanding that we work collaboratively with partners, we also, um, one of the first things I did was call the Assistant City manager for Human Services and make her aware of it. And I believe she sent her entire leadership and supervisory team to it.

Also, um, we allowed Harvard PD and the MIT PD to participate in the training because they train with us annually in all of the trainings that we do. But only CPD officers were the subject of the study. So, um, that, I don't even know if that completes all the anti-bias efforts that we have in, uh, the city.

But that's--and I mean, in the department, but that's a good synopsis of it. And once again, you be hard pressed to find a department anywhere more committed to anti-bias training. I think we're really leading the way in those efforts.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Commissioner, Councillor.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Co-chair, and through you. Thank you to the commissioner as well. Um, that is a very impressive list, um, and I do appreciate it. How--how do we measure progress? How do we know that this is all helping to reduce bias in our police force?

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: I'm--I'm sorry. I had a hard time hearing his question. Did he say, how did we--how do we measure--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: How are we measuring-- I'm sorry, I didn't mean to scream. How are we measuring bias? Correct, Councillor? How are we measuring bias?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: I thank you. I meant how- how are we measuring progress--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Progress? How are we--

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: --in our anti-bias, uh, efforts?

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: Gotcha.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: How are we measuring progress in our anti-bias efforts?

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: Through-- through you, Madam Chair, uh, to the Councillor. So, yeah, that's important. We--we train at museum, but then it's like, you wanna ask the question, uh, how does that training impact your actual interactions with individuals? So, one of the benefits of this study conducted by Dr. Banaji is that there's a pre-test and there's a post-test. So, you get an idea of how much--how impactful the actual training was

Um, coming online soon fully will be, um, our Office of Procedural Justice. And one of the main, well, the main focus of that, uh, unit or that office is to measure what, if any, differences exist and how we treat individuals across races.

So, um, those are some things that we're looking to, we're actually doing and have far, uh, advanced very far in the pipeline to do the measure, to make sure that, um, our training actually manifests itself in our interactions with Citizens

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Co-chair, and through you, thank you to the police chief. Um,

I would be very interested in seeing the results of those studies and--and your evaluations, uh, as well internally. So, I hope that we can, uh, get regular updates on those efforts and, uh, certainly appreciate them. And we can also, uh, do some of that through--through committee hearings once we get those going in. Uh, thank you again.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Are you yielding the floor, Councillor?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Yes. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillors Zondervan yields the floor. Councillor McGovern, are you there?

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Yes. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: You have the floor.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Thank you. Through you, Madam Chair. Um, thank you, uh, Commissioner Bard, and thank you for, uh, all that you and your officers, um, have been doing during this--this time. Um, two quick things, and you--you sort of touched on this, I think, um, just a minute ago.

But in terms of the training, um, the bias training, you know, sometimes, you know, we do a lot of professional development in schools. I do--I have to do hours of it to

keep my social work license. Um, and you go to these trainings and you learn some stuff, and then you kind of go away.

And if there's no follow up or retraining or someone kinda making sure you're implementing what you learn, sometimes you--you fall back to your habits. So, are these trainings sort of one off kind of trainings or are they over a long periods of time? What's sort of the follow up to make sure that, you know, what folks learn in these trainings are being--is being reinforced?

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: So, uh, through you, Madam Chair. Um, Councillor McGovern, thank you for that question. And yeah, so it touches on what I, uh, my last half of the answer to, uh, Councillor Zondervan. Some of 'em are one-off trainings, like the Historical Injustice and Present, uh, Policing Project training.

That's a one-off. Um, but, uh, other--other--other, excuse me, I used to be able to talk. Other trainings are, uh, thematic and--and we, uh, make it our point to have some anti-biased training outside of what's addressed through the municipal--outside of what's acquired by the

Municipal Police Officer's Training Commission.

So, like, for instance, just to go back a few years. If you look at 2016, our anti-bias training was fair and impartial policing. 2017, it was critical incident training. 2017, it was implementing Procedural Justice. 2019, it was that 12 hour integrating communications and assessing tactics training was dealt in anti-bias.

This year, 2020, it was the historical injustice and present policing project training, um, from the various institutions at Northeastern University. And next year, uh, beginning in January, it'll be unconscious bias. So, it's a--it's a continual theme throughout the department.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Thank you. And for, so, you know, it's great that this is, it's sort of built into the culture now. And, um, but if you're an officer who just joins the force, you know, this year and you didn't get those--those trainings from years before, do you get some kinda--do you get caught up to speed? Do you have to take them? Is it, um--

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: Yes. So, the-- the good thing is, is that we started our own police academy. It's the Cambridge Northeastern Regional Police

Academy. And so, it's ingrained in you from day one at the police academy where our entire focus is Procedural and Social Justice.

So, these trainings are, you know, you get them, you get indoctrinated with 'em, and then as during your yearly inservice, and I like to think every day through practice, they're ingrained in you and drilled in you in the department.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: And do these trainings, um, are they gender bias too, or--or they cover things other areas besides race?

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: Yes. I'm a part of the training administered by, well, a couple of them, the department's training and also, um, particularly, and--and I'm sure it's in several others, but the Gay Officers Action League, uh, training, there's a section on--on gender bias and--and identity bias and they're--so it's covered, gender bias. Yes.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: And lastly, thank you. And--and I think you're right. I think we're doing a lot of things and you know, I don't obviously have intimate knowledge of every police department around the country,

but, um, I'm sure we are well out in front.

Um, and that also, that leads me to the next question around the Office of Procedural Justice. And I know there's money in here, um, to, uh, an increase, uh, in, around, you know, 80, \$85,000 or so. Um, tell me where that stands and--and what's the hope to, uh, where we're gonna be with, with the dashboard, and, um, because that's also some ground-breaking work that we're doing and--and how--when's that gonna come live?

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: It is. So, uh, yeah, thanks for that question again, uh, Councillor, through you, um, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Yes.

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: So, you know, I'll start by saying a lot's been done since the council authorized the budgetary increases to allow me to erect the Office of Procedural Justice. I know it seems like a lengthy time, but, you know, understand, it's been far longer than that for me.

The main reason I wanted to start the Office of Procedural Justice was to address two main areas where, in my opinion, you know, so the most distrust between law

enforcement and minority communities, and those are race and transparency.

So, the Office of Procedural Justice is gonna take those two issues and deal with 'em head on. And it's gonna do so in a way that's overwhelmingly protective of the public, but then also simultaneously fair to the officers that are involved.

So, the method--the methodology here is proprietary, but it's, uh, different than what's commonly used throughout most of the departments. And trust me, I've studied, you know, the 18,000 police departments in the country. I've studied how the vast majority of them measure, uh, racial disparities and disparate impact if they measure at all. And I find that most of the metrics that they use are, let me just say, less than meaningful.

So, um, while no method is perfect here, the metrics that are used by the Office of Procedural Justice, they get around some of the shortcomings, but at the same time being protective of the public while being fair to the officers.

So, so far we've created the Office of Procedural Justice. Um, uh, pointed the--created the position of Deputy Superintendent of Procedural Justice and the

Procedural Justice Informatics Analyst.

Um, the Deputy Superintendent of Procedural justice is one of the more powerful positions in the department, and as much as it serves as our Civil rights officer, and it also serves as the compliance officer for the entire department.

We developed the metrics to determine if a disparate impact exists, um, during vehicular stops. We reformatted our basic electronic data collection efforts, uh, to gather all of the necessary information we weren't doing that at first.

Um, and we've also, um, even though it's moot now, we developed a Public Facing, uh, Procedural Justice and I'll explain why it's moot a little later. Um, we've done several other internal things to get the process moving.

Uh, it's no secret, um, that we ran into a couple of, uh, problems, but we are seeking a remedy. We discovered along the way that the records management system that we were using, uh, it couldn't adequately be configured to conduct a necessary analysis automatically.

And, um, so, and then also we discovered that some prior records may not have been accurately recorded because

of a loophole that was created when more than one citation was issued, or if a warning and a citation was issued at the same time during the same encounter.

So, um, understanding the importance of it, we receive permission from the city manager to replace the existing RMS, I don't know if I said Records Management System before, but that's what I'm--that's what I'm referring to when I say RMS. Um, and there have been calls to replace it.

It's a system that we've been using for about 25 years now, so you can understand that. So, this required that the public safety information and technology that they had to, um, seek RFPs and then conduct a computerized dispatch and a Records Management System, uh, study that took several months.

The next part was after PSIT did that, then we had to, um, find a vendor capable of meeting our needs, and then we selected the vendor. Uh, if, you know, I gotta speak to the tedious process and the enormous amount of back and forth that goes into determining how all of these work proceeds that have been developed over 25 years will be switched to a different platform, um, particularly when you think of

how highly customized the old one was or is.

So, I can't thank Director Giacobbe and her team enough, Director Al and her team and my staff enough. Um, there's been hundreds of conversations with us, the vendors and, you know, to get this work done.

So, you know, I'm happy to say that we're at the very final stages of, uh, completing a statement of work and entering into a contract. So, our next steps would be to actually execute that contract, come up before the council for an appropriation to pay for that contract.

And then, um, you know, the vendor has already committed to open a Procedural Justice Portal or module as early as possible in the implementation stage. So as soon as they can go live with it, they will, even if the rest of the RMS isn't fully operational.

Um, after that, you know, then it's about accumulating enough data for it to have a statistical significance. And, um, you know, that may take a little bit of time.

But I know that it's taking time. But when it's functional, it's gonna be the only one of its kind and I hope that it'll start, um, a better way of doing things as it, uh, pertains to, you know, determining whether

disparate impacts exist on how we treat individuals or different races. But I can tell you that this type of transparency exists nowhere.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Well, I'm, thank you. And I, you know, I've been excited about this since you first, uh, announced it and--and put it forward. Um, and, uh, and so I thank you for that and--and it'll provide some important, uh, important data.

I just, um, when, in preparation for the meeting, when I went and looked for the dashboard and just kind of to see sort of what was up there, it's not terribly easy to find.

Um, you know, I have to go to the Commissioner's Office and then scroll down, and then--So when we get it up and running, maybe make it more prominent on the site make easier for people.

And I would-- are--are the plans for us to get some kind of, is it just gonna be to create the dashboard or will we be getting annual reports of the information delivered in some other form, or are we gonna be responsible for going to the dashboard and accumulating all that information ourselves?

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: So, uh,

through you, Madam Chair, to you, uh, Councillor. So, the benefit of this, and the real secret here is the realtime transparency. So, I can produce an annual report, like you'll see most of the departments doing, like this department did years ago.

But the--the benefit here is that you can go any time of day and get a near realtime analysis of what, if any difference exists and how we interact with individuals of different races.

Also, um, the--that was the main purpose, but the vendor was actually able to add some interactivity with it, you know, using some, um, what I call important metrics, but less than ultimately meaning for metrics like, you know, you'll be able to interact with some population, uh, benchmarking activities.

So, you can see how each individual race fairs when they encounter, you know, when they're stopped by Cambridge Police Department, that type of thing.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor McGovern. Are there any other questions from members of the

finance committee?

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Madame Mayor--Oh, Madame Chair?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Vice Mayor Mallon, you have the floor.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you, Madam Co-chair through you to the city manager and the Police Commissioner, I'm, uh, glad to hear that the dashboard is imminent. Um, because I do think, uh, as you mentioned earlier, it is the number one indicator of whether or not trainings are working, right? So, you know, how--that is how we're gonna be measuring whether or not there are trainings that are working down to the particular officer.

So, um, getting that up and running has been, I know, a priority of your office. And I, uh, am really excited about being the first in the nation in having this type of transparency among our police officers and our police force.

Um, I'm just, I guess, really antsy to get it going 'cause I feel like we've been talking about it for so long. Um, and I know that there have been some many hiccups along the road. Um, so it does sound like it's imminent, so I'm

excited about that.

Um, in terms of, you know, unconscious bias training, implicit training, um, any type of training for your officers, thank you for, um, pointing out that the study, the implicit bias study done by Dr. Banaji, um, she had stated that it had had to be, uh, voluntary. I was worried about the 40% number.

And knowing that this type of training, particularly in our front facing organization like the police department, uh, should not be, um, voluntary, but rather mandatory.

So other than this training that she did on, um, implicit bias, are the rest of the trainings that are required--are, you know, offered by the police department, like the upcoming one on unconscious bias, are those mandatory,

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: Uh, through you, Madam Chair to, uh, Vice Mayor, yes, they--they are mandatory. And let me just go back a little bit. Um, I think we were being very conscious about, um, placing FY-'20 stuff forward in the book.

So, I think that was the second round which occurred

in FY-'20, 40% got trained. But in the first round, it occurred in FY-'19, which literally was just early June, so right before FY-'20, another 40% got trained there.

Um, so I think we were just trying to be, uh, just, you know, as transparent as possible about what actually occurred in FY-'20. But yes, the training had is--was--had to be voluntary in order for it to be, um, not be a factor in the study.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Vice Mayor.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you--Thank you, Madam Chair, through you. I mean, I'm glad to hear that, you know, they're normally mandatory because I think it's not always the 80% that we're trying to make sure that we're training, but it's that 20% who aren't coming to the table.

And, uh, particularly after, I mean, I feel like we could say this almost every day across the country, but the video that we saw in Minneapolis with George Floyd yesterday, I mean, these types of trainings for police departments are critical. They need to be mandatory. They need to be happening all the time.

And as Councillor McGovern said, you know, um, how do

we make sure that our new recruits and our cadets are getting caught up on some of these trainings once they, um, come along.

So, one of the other questions that I wanted to ask was around, um, the Planning Budget and Personnel Department of the Police Department has an objective to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the department's recruitment efforts.

Um, I'm curious about the racial and gender backgrounds of the new recruits that went through the new academy as well as the police cadets. And what are we intentionally doing as a police department to do that deep recruitment and retention of officers of color and--and female officers?

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: Uh, okay. So, uh, through you, Madam Chair. Um, Vice Mayor, the cadets that we've hired, we've only hired one round so far. Um, we started off with six, we're down to five.

But for a good reason, one female officer was ready to enter the police academy. So, after a short stint in the, uh, cadet program, she is in the academy, and she's set to graduate, um, when we come out of the COVID crisis in June

of this year.

So, of the six, we had two Hispanics, two African-Americans, two Caucasians with the one female who, uh, will be a police officer in the next few weeks. There were over 30, uh, diverse applicants of the current Cambridge police officers, meaning the recruit officers that we have in the police academy right now, who should also gradu--who should graduate in 2020 like I just said. Gender-wise, there were nine males, three females.

Race-wise, there're six Caucasian, three African-Americans, one Hispanic, two Middle Easterners. Um, that doesn't include two officers. So, there were cohort of 14 hired. 12 of 'em entered the police academy.

Two of them were already police, municipal police academy trained officers, and one was a Hispanic male and one is a Hispanic female. So, they've went through their field training process and they're already serving, uh, the community in here in Cambridge.

Of those currently going through the hiring process, um, we've whittled down it--we whittled it down to 18 candidates. So, of the remaining candidates, we'll have four females, 14 males. Uh, race-wise, there are six

Hispanics, eight Caucasians, and four African-Americans.

We continue to engage in marketing and outreach, uh, for the recruitment of diverse communities. We enlist the support of faith communities, student organizations, alumni associations, charitable and social organizations, uh, the state's Human Resources Department.

We participate in job fairs, particularly a big one with the Middlesex Sheriff's Office. We use the job connectors at MIT, uh, the Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women, the Massachusetts Association of Women and Law Enforcement, the Massachusetts Association of Minority Law Enforcement Officers, um, whoever you can think of, community organizations like Margaret Fuller House, our Community Engagement team.

We also continue to offer some unique employment and volunteer programs designed specifically to attract young, uh, residents who are interested in public safety careers. The four primary programs are, we already talked about the cadet program, but then we have our Youth Public Safety Academy, which combines police, fire, and EMS. We have the Explorers Program, which targets younger children.

We have the, uh, Youth Police Academy, which there is

also a Youth Fire Academy, and that targets 14 to 18 year olds. And then, um, yeah, those are the four programs.

We launched the recruitment website. It features important dates, frequently asked questions, breaks down the, uh, examination and selection process. We highlight our recruits at the city managers roadshow, um, command staff, our officers, our professional staff, continue to attend cultural events throughout the city, and use these as an opportunity to promote the department. Um, we host information sessions. Um, we invite diverse members of the community.

We participate in, uh, uh, Girls Sports at Danay Park-Girls Sports Day at Danay Park, and, uh, also our Youth Boxing program, which we have a lot of females who, uh, uh, participate in that program. We men our prospective candidates from diverse communities.

We offer training and fitness and academics to help them get through any barriers or hurdles they might have. We, um, uh, our youth resource officers, in addition to serving as role models, they also provide recruitment information to, uh, the individuals and the students that express interest in law enforcement careers.

We attend, uh, many, uh, information sessions and employment fairs throughout Cambridge. Uh, the last one we had was at the Community Center on, uh, Calendar Street. And then we have, uh, in-person Meet Your Local First Responder, uh, days, where we partner once again with Police pro, um, EMS, I mean, yeah, police pro and emergency communication, excuse me. So, we do, we've been just expanding our efforts.

We've seen, and we've seen some gains too. We, uh, during my time here, I've seen modest gains, but I've seen female officers go from 9% to 11%. I've seen a number of minority officers go from 34% to 37%.

We've increased our, uh, multilingual officers. I've seen his Hispanic officers go from almost 8% to, um, closer to 11%. So, we--we've seen some--some gains. We, you know, we're not where we wanna be, but we're--we're doing better.

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: Thank you.
Commissioner Bard. Vice Mayor Mallon.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you, Madam Co-chair, through you and to the commissioner. Um, I'm actually happily surprised to hear some of the numbers from

the recruit, the most recent recruitment class.

Um, and to see that we are making some gains, I think it's, uh, critical, uh, to be recruiting a much more diverse police force. And thank you for, you know, all of those recruitment efforts that seem to be paying off.

Um, I think my, this kind of leads into my next question, which, um, you know, a million years ago when we went to the National League of Cities in March, uh, one of the--one of the presentations I saw was around mental health and first responders.

Uh, it was gonna be something that I was gonna bring back and bring to you and really talk about what kind of programs we have supporting our--the mental health of our officers. Um, because they did talk about it as a recruitment tool, um, that many officers have lots of choices of where they can go.

And this is a big topic of recruitment and retention, um, among police officers. And it's unfortunate. I think that I feel like I got sidelined because just looking and reading at some of the literature around mental health supports and what our first responders are gonna need after this crisis is over, um, is significant.

So, I didn't see anything in the budget specifically around, uh, mental health and how we are going to be supporting our first responses, and specifically in the police department, um, after the COVID crisis and moving forward, um, both, you know, obviously for their mental health.

Um, but also it is--it is a way to recruit particularly women. Um, so if you can speak to some of the mental health supports that, um, you've been thinking about, um, and if--if it's not something that's on your mind, I'd love to, you know, think about it for moving forward.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Uh, Commissioner Bard.

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: Through you, Madam Chair, Vice Mayor, yeah. Oh, it's--it is definitely something that's on my mind. It's definitely something that's on the forefront of my mind. We're kinda held out as a national model in the, uh, way we handle, uh, basically the supportive infrastructure that we have for Officer Wellness and, uh, Safety. We are frequently asked to present at conferences, the most recent one being last year at the, uh, International Association of Chiefs of Police

Conference on Officer Wellness and Safety.

So, I'll start by saying we--we already have a vast array of supportive infrastructure. Um, we have a Peer Support and Resiliency program, a regional crisis incident stress management, uh, team, a trauma-informed training, and a crisis and intervention training that speaks to, uh, officer, helps deal with Officer Wellness.

One of the things during this crisis that, um, we started up is something that we went back to something that we used to do as a department. We started a virtual mindfulness initiative. And mindfulness meaning self-care, self-health, and self-wellbeing.

So, we, uh, there's a daily mindfulness live Zoom session offered by, um, Dr. Barbara Hamm. She's a licensed clinical psychologist. Um, and she runs the Transformative Action Project. It's my understanding that some years ago, the department, um, you know, played a role in it and used it, and now, you know, we brought it back.

So, um, on one of the videos, Dr. Hamm, she reviews a four step mindfulness process, um, that offers officers support in how to deal with intense emotions that they might, uh, feel at any time, particularly during this

crisis.

Um, personally, I believe that in a time of crisis that it benefits the psyche for--for us to hear from our leaders. So, from the very start of this crisis, I've been using, uh, a daily email briefing or update to communicate with staff, you know, just keeping 'em updated on things to help support 'em. But, you know, not only what's going on in the city, but also additional resources.

Um, I also believe that it does, um, them good and help with the psyche that they see their leaders on the front lines with 'em. So that's why when their shifts change, um, to work longer days than leadership did too. So, you know, we wanted to know that--we wanted to let them know that we're in this with them.

We continually remind officers about the Peer Support and Resiliency program. We remind them of the counseling services that we have available through the Chaplains program. Um, let's face it, many of my staff, many of us have policed through a crisis, but the nature of a pandemic is completely different because, you know, it calls into question a great concern for your physical health and that of your family and loved ones.

So, we continually stress the availability of public safety, uh, testing at Gillette Stadium, um, to further peace of mind. We went through great lengths with the city manager to, and the Assistant City Manager for Finance and Deputy Pauline Wells, and my department led the charge for the whole city. But we went through great lengths to secure lodging, uh, for our first responders that they needed to be away there from their loved ones during this crisis, um, so that they can perform their duties. And it's just Officer Safety and Officer Wellness is just, it is--it is a prominent concern, always at the forefront of our--of what we do.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Commissioner Bard. Vice Mayor Mallon.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you. Um, I would say that, you know, you hit the nail on the head that this COVID pandemic has really, um, brought officer wellness, uh, to the forefront. I think there's a lot of concern for their families. I think there is a lot of concern for their own safety. Um, there's been a lot of unknowns. People are working very long hours.

One of the things that was discussed at the---the

panel discussion in DC was, um, uh, many departments across the country are doing a mandatory checkup from the Neck Up, which is a telehealth--mental health telehealth checkup for their officers on a regular basis. It's somebody that they trust. It's not a peer, um, a program where they may not feel like the--the peer person that they have been paired with, um, is somebody that they trust or, um, can unload on.

Um, it's something that I think we should think about, um, some kind of telehealth checkup from the Neck Up and just make sure that people are checking in with somebody. I mean, this is--this is a really tough time for so many people. I mean, I don't wanna discount how many the general population is having a tremendous difficulty with mental health. Um, but these essential frontline, um, public safety employees, um, I think it's critical.

And I think there is gonna be some fallout, some trauma, um, that we need to be cognizant and aware of, um, and make sure that we're caring for their safety and their wellbeing. Um, so I would love to talk a bit that some point with you. But, um, thank you for--for talking to us about what mental health supports are there, and I'm

appreciative of your daily check-in with your--with your team. 'Cause I think that, you know, that is something that's so important for your mental health, is getting that communication, having that tie to somebody who is that empathetic voice, somebody who's talking to you, um, about leadership and what, um, what they're experiencing. So, I appreciate you doing that as well. And, uh, I yield the floor. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Vice Mayor Mallon. We now go to Councillor Nolan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you, uh, Chair Simmons. I was, uh, my questions were partly answered already by, uh, the Vice Mayor and, uh, Councillor McGovern. I appreciate all of the work that this critically important, uh, department does and the range of initiatives.

I did have one, uh, additional follow up in the area of the family and social justice. There's, um, the objectives and measures are quite affirming of what I experienced when I was on the school committee about the Diversion program to ensure that we're reaching out to at risk youth and also supporting families.

It really is a holistic, comprehensive approach in a way that is a model for, uh, policing that is not really policing, but is really, uh, in the--in that area of public safety, which has been an incredible asset to, um, and help and support to families across the city.

I was curious as to whether that kind of, uh, performance measures and monitoring, if--if the commissioner feels that he has enough support in order to have that kind of specific understanding of goals for the rest of the department and if he has the processes and if he needs any other support in that area in order to ensure that we are able to, uh, set the goals and then monitor them.

I guess there's a dashboard that I haven't been privy to yet that maybe will answer some of these questions. But I wanted to both thank him for that kind of specific, uh, feedback to the public on what it is that that department has been able to do and understand if that is something that the rest of the department is looking at as well.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Commissioner Bard.

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: Through you, Madam Mayor. I--I hope I can answer your question,

Councillor. So, um, just one of the things that Family and Social Justice section, that didn't come about overnight. That's been the, you know, that's built up great momentum in inertia for--for the last 12 years, started under Commissioner Haas. And it's an excellent, um, and all of its initiatives are excellent.

What I did, when I created the Family and Social Justice section was I took all of those, uh, programs that were already available, mostly already available in the department, and they were fragmented and I put them under one umbrella, so that we could, from one place look at all of the programs that would benefit--benefit, uh, people who would be more benefited through a social justice approach rather than a criminal justice approach. And took them, 'cause they were, you know, fragmented throughout the department, answering different bosses, and we just put them under one umbrella.

What we did was the--the Safety Net Collaborative, which is, um, the marshaling of resources that provides wraparound services to, not just a child who shows troubling behavior or criminal behavior, but provides wraparound services to the entire family.

Um, what we were able to do was take, uh, a clinical psychologist who we had on contract part-time and hire that clinical psychologist, Dr. Jamie Barrett, full-time, um, with the department. Uh, so, you know, and it was a real quick conversation with the manager, um, said, listen, the next evolution of this is to bring this garden--He--he obviously could see the importance of it and--and did it, uh, uh, right away.

So now we have Dr. Jamie Barrett as a part of the Family and Social Justice section running the Safety Net Collaborative, which we also, um, which also is a national model. And we also get, um, pulled to present on that at a lot of different, uh, conferences and not just police conferences, but education conferences and--and such and so forth, because it--it truly is a unique program.

But, um, I actually lost my train of thought on one of the things I wanted to say. But, so what we would do is you would hear, even in my three years here, "Okay, so how do you go about starting a safety net program from A to Z?" And, you know, here it kind of came about incrementally.

So, what we were able to do with Dr. Barrett was able to do, because he's been affiliated with the program from

day one, was to produce a manual.

So now we have that manual. So, we got that blueprint on if your department is interested in, you know, doing these wonderful things for kids and--and mentoring children through a case management system throughout their life trajectory, here's--here's a manual on how to get it started and how to--how to do it. Here, it developed incrementally, that incremental wisdom. We--we got the blueprint now. So, and, uh, I think, I hope that answers your question.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Commissioner Bard. Councillor Nolan.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Yes, that's exactly the--I know the trajectory of this, uh, kind of program is far-reaching comprehensive. It's been in the works for years and I also really appreciate your bringing it together and being very articulate about how it is that we need to provide a range of services and bring them together in order to be more effective.

And it's almost as though that can be, uh, deployed or used in the rest of the department as well in terms of public safety, um, and, uh, making sure along the way that,

uh, as the Vice Mayor Mallon pointed out, that the critical need for your staff as well to be in a position to have the support they need in order to provide this kind of, uh, all around services to families. I really appreciate it and I'm glad that it's continued to grow and develop. I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor Nolan. Is there anyone else that wants to speak on the police department's budget? Ms. Siddiqui?

MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI: I'm all set. Thanks.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler.

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: I'm all set as well. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Co-chair Carlone, do you wanna say something on the budget, Police Department's budget?

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you. Um, just some quick comments. It's, um, wonderful to have somebody who loves what he does in a very difficult job. And we have a number of people like that in Cambridge. And, uh, you took that on very quickly and I think you could probably

talk about anything that's happening in the department.

And it's not a budget question, but it's related, please let me stretch this. COVID-19 affecting the number of police. Do we have a statistic? I mean, you're out there, all your department's out there. Has it been bad or are the numbers under control?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Commissioner Bard.

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: So, through you, Madam Chair, uh, Councillor if—if what you're asking me is, we've had two officers test positive and we've had to, I wanna say quarantine about 16 officers for various lengths of time due to, um, close contacts.

The two officers who tested positive, um, I believe we're pretty sure that they caught it from a family member who was positive. But two positives and I think 16 quarantine or so. And we've had a bunch of officers go up to Gillette Stadium for the public safety testing and a bunch of negatives. So, is that—is that what you were asking me?

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Yes. And the two are doing all right, I hope?

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: Uh, through

you, Madam Mayor, uh, I mean Madam Chair, they, uh, they're—they're back to work. They've been back to work sometime.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: That's great news. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you Chairman Carlone. Councillor Toomey, do you have anything you wanna ask? Does anyone that has spoken or not spoken want to add anything? Uh, hearing none. Commissioner Bard, the questions I would've asked, you've answered and then some.

So, I wanted to say, uh, thank you. Clearly we could probably just have a talk with your department alone, and maybe that's something that we certainly should do.

I commend you on all the fingers you have in all the different pots and the work that you've done, particularly the one that is proactive rather than reactive. 'Cause so often we feel like we're catching up and not thinking forwardly.

One of the things with this new training that you've been doing, and because you've been so proactive, have you found that cities and towns have been asking you to present to them, and is that a revenue opportunity for us?

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: Um, through-through you, uh, Madam Chair. Um, I don't know how much of a revenue opportunity it is. Um, there definitely is an opportunity, and yes, cities and towns and, uh, the various think tanks like the Police Executive Research Forum and the, uh, International Association of Chiefs of police and Chief Police Associations invite us to, uh, present and let them know all of the things that we have going on here in Cambridge.

And, um, to the extent that, you know, we can be helpful and they can model 'em, we always are. I don't know that it's necessarily a, uh-

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: I'm just thinking entrepreneurial.

POLICE COMMISSIONER BRANVILLE G. BARD: I don't know that it-

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Because, uh, we do so much—we do a lot of good work. And I know we're often asked to—to do trainings and things of that nature. And I often think those things that we are good at, do we find a way to get something back for that other than the feeling of appreciation for having done that.

But I'm happy to hear what your-your department is doing. And I see this as an opportunity perhaps when we have the next civic unity meeting, to have an opportunity to talk more about what your department is doing so that the city council can be more up to date with the level, the depth and scope of the work that you're doing.

Hearing no, uh, additional conversation or-or questions from the-from the Finance Committee, Councillor Toomey moves to forward the Police Department's budget to the entire city council with a favorable recommendation. Clerk Wilson, would you please call the roll.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Present

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Yes-7. No-0. Absent-0. Present-2. Motion Passed.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Clerk Wilson. Our next department that's coming before us this afternoon is traffic and parking. This department was pulled by a number of different councillors, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Carlone, and Councillor Zondervan.

So, we'll start with you Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler. You have the floor. And welcome to Mr. Bard. Not Bard, you know who you are. It's long afternoon. Councillor, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Um, had a couple questions about streets. Um, the first was, uh, about safe street infrastructure. Uh, Cambridge has longstanding support, uh, for safe streets and residents that depend on them. Uh, I thought the information at the beginning of the budget was really helpful, uh, and showing, uh, in section two that more than two thirds of all our residents, uh, don't commute to work by car. They walk or they bike or they take public transit.

Um, and as you know, we've been working on, uh, an ordinance about protected bike lanes. Uh, it was paused because of the pandemic. Uh, but I hope we can see progress on safe street infrastructure like this even before the

ordinance passes.

Uh, which will hopefully be, uh, early this summer. Uh, especially as we've seen more residents biking, uh, because they're trying to avoid, uh, crowds on public transit. Um, can we expect to see progress on adding bike lanes over the summer? And can you talk about what funding there is in the budget for this

JOSEPH BARR: Sure. Through you—

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Barr.

JOSEPH BARR: Thank you, Madam Chair, and through you. Um, so we have, um, in—in our budget proposal, which was obviously developed, uh, prior to, or generally developed prior to the current situation, uh, becoming a serious as it is.

Uh, we've, um, included funding to continue to make progress, uh, and hopefully accelerate progress on, you know, a variety of initiatives related to safer streets and also to, um, just generally promoting sustainable transportation infrastructure.

Um, and so, um, I, um, you know, obviously we're in the midst of a difficult situation on the revenue side. So I think we have to be a little bit cautious about how we

think about proceeding, um, 'cause these types of initiatives both cost, uh, money, but also, um, you know, potentially remove revenue in the form of, uh, reducing meter and ticket revenue. So I, so I think we're—we still remain extremely committed to the goals, uh, and we intend to make progress on our bicycle network over the course of the summer.

We have, um, multiple projects that we hope to get implemented this summer. It's a little challenging, uh, as we start to figure out how we can do community engagement in this new world and how we can make sure that our residents are—are properly informed of what's coming. Um, but I do think that we are, we do remain committed. Uh, we do remain a little bit cautious, as I mentioned, in terms of how we can proceed.

Uh, but we do want to continue to make progress on projects like, uh, Intermountain Auburn Street, which has been discussed for a while, as well as, um, additional projects on Mass Av and other parts of the, uh, and, you know, other places around the city. Um, and I'm not sure if you were speaking specifically about kind of those types of projects or also about shorter term initiatives in response

to the current COVID-19 situation.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Does that speak to you Councillor?

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: That was actually my second question, uh, Madam Chair was, uh, about those shorter term. Uh, the first part was about the longer term projects and, you know, if we're gonna see on some of the streets that are outlined in the ordinance which is currently tabled, uh, progressed on the second part, uh, was about these shorter, uh, street questions and just how we're thinking about reorienting, um, transportation given the COVID crisis.

For the—the two thirds of our residents who don't commute by car, uh, we may see fewer people taking public transit as a result. Uh, what kind of, uh, funding there is for this three orientation on city streets? Uh, I know there's a special council meeting on Thursday, uh, that's hopefully going to address this. But if, uh, you could talk a little bit now about, uh, how the Traffic and Transportation Department, uh, is thinking about it and—and what funding there is for it.

JOSEPH BARR: Uh, sure. Through you, Madam Chair. So,

um, I think, as you sort of alluded to, I think the most important thing to think about in the context of this is the—the threats that are potentially posed to this progress we've made on promoting sustainable transportation.

And as you mentioned, I think there's gonna be increasing concerns for some—for some period of time about the use of public transit.

Um, and what we don't wanna see, 'cause it doesn't really work in terms of our transportation infrastructure or our sustainability and environmental goals, is, you know, significantly higher percentages of people, uh, driving to work alone, which, you know, in the immediate short term, you know, because the occupancy of buildings is low and because the, um, just the number of people who are going to work is low, it won't, you know, sort of cause ridiculous amounts of traffic congestion. But in the long—longer run, I think that we really need to guard against that.

So again, that's one reason why we're continuing to pursue, um, the longer term projects. But I would say in the short term, we're definitely, uh, and we'll obviously we'll talk more about this at the special council meeting

on--on Thursday, uh, and we'll have some more details to share at that point.

But, you know, we have been thinking about this internally, uh, for, um, several weeks as the manager mentioned in last Monday's, uh, council meeting, uh, and trying to come up with at least the beginnings of a--of a plan, um, that we can implement quickly.

Um, and--and maybe, you know, in line with what some of our neighbors are doing, um, to be able to provide, you know, starting with providing additional space for physical distancing.

I think that's our--our number one priority is giving people safe in a variety of different ways, that you can define safety in a lot of different ways, but safe ways to walk and bike, uh, around the city, uh, particularly given the traffic volumes are--are lower while still accommodating emergency vehicles, still accommodating the deliveries that many people are getting even more of these days. Uh, and also, you know, maintaining access, uh, for local residents.

So again, we'll--we'll go into some more details on that, but we have been kind of, um, thinking about this

for—for some time and trying to get um, plan ready that we can present to the council, uh, now that sort of the time has come for those conversations.

Um, but I think it, um, and then, sorry, beyond moving beyond that, in terms of just the purely being about physical distancing, we've—we have been in discussions with the local businesses through the Small Business Advisory Committee and other venues sort of building out of that with Cambridge Local First and others to talk to them about what kinds of changes to our street scape would be supportive of their needs as they sort of start to reemerge from their—from their lockdown.

And I guess, um, we've been trying to be extremely, um, deferential to what they think actually makes sense, what they think is a need that will help them.

So, we've put in a number of restaurant pickup zones in response to requests from businesses. Uh, but as we grow beyond that into additional, perhaps into dining areas, into areas where, uh, people can, uh, you know, pick up from retail stores, what have you, again, I think we—we don't wanna, I'm not the retail business expert.

Um, you know, we have some folks in house who can talk

to that. But then I think, you know, the business associations and the businesses are really the ones that can help us understand sort of what their needs are and what will actually help them, as opposed to just being a nice sort of PR thing for us to say, "Hey, we did this thing." And it turns out that that wasn't actually the thing that they needed.

Um, that said, we do wanna help them understand what the types of improvements could be, so they're not just sort of, you know, many of these businesses may not know what's possible when you use your street space more creatively. So, we wanna help support them with information, um, and, uh, resources, but also, like I said, take our lead from them.

And then I think the final piece of the puzzle is really thinking about, kind of more about mobility, particularly as the, um, more and more people do start to go back to work and travel around and have other things they need to be doing rather than just sort of staying close to home as they have been for the last couple of months.

And in that mode, I think our biggest focus is, um, on

the transit piece of things and the bus network ,and trying to make the bus network operate a little bit more efficiently, um, so that those buses can be less crowded because they're more reliable and they're traveling, um, a little bit faster.

Uh, so again, we'll have more details on that, uh, to talk a little bit more about it and get into it in more detail on, on Thursday. Um, but that's kind of the basic outline of—of where we're headed.

And I think, um, you know, like I said, I hope that the—the both that you'll sort of see some of the fruits of our labor, but also give us input 'cause we are very much looking for feedback in terms of where we go next, uh, to make sure that our streets are being as responsive as possible to, um, to the needs of the community in general as we try to recover, uh, from—from the situation.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you Mr. Barr.
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler.

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: Thank you. I yield back.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Through you, Madam Chair. Can I just follow up with one point?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. DePasquale.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Thank you. I think Thursday will be a very positive meeting, but I do want to add that there is some real concerns about addressing major capital construction that we had talked about, uh, throughout the last few years that we thought we'd get. Uh, the Parking Fund revenue directly lost 20% we're projecting for this year. So, when parking fines and garages are lost, we have about a \$5 million loss. Uh, hopefully that won't be as great next year, but you know, the fund balance has gone from 12.9 to 9.8 with what we're projecting.

So, we may have to look at a slowdown of some of our infrastructure that we were talking about. Now, I know that's gonna be difficult, especially with the discussion of by governance, but I do wanna address the fact that on a financial pitcher, Parking Fund was probably hit harder than the whole General Fund combined.

And it's something we need to look at, because it will have long range implications on our structuring and how, if we wanna use this fund, we're gonna have some difficulties in whether or not we feel we can move some of the infrastructure cost to taxes is a not a discussion for

another day.

But I wanted to mention we did not do a fund analysis on the Parking Fund like we did in the General Fund earlier today. So, I just wanted to bring that point up, and David and Joel are working closely to see how we can address that in the upcoming years.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. DePasquale. Anything else from the table before I— Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler yields back. Councillor Carlone has the floor.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you, Madam Chair. And uh, thank you Mr. Barr for your openness and willing to be a team member. Um, because the public sector, the public domain is a team effort and you recognize that. Um, I'm sure you recall that when Brattle Street and Cambridge Street Cycle lanes went in, there was, um, number of people who reacted negatively.

And as I recall, the city was gonna do a study evaluating it, which might include some refinements. And I'm just curious, is that being implemented? Uh, it's been a few years. Um, is that in the next year? Uh, when do we get the—the findings?

JOSEPH BARR: Sure. Um, through you, Madam Chair. So, we—they say there were two sort of evaluation efforts that came out of those two projects. One, uh, both projects did have, um, evaluation sort of done of their sort of general effectiveness, uh, and any issues that resulted. And I would say particularly in the case of Brattle Street, we did make, um, changes.

They were subtle but—but significant to change the width of some of the lanes and move things around, particularly in response to concerns about snow clearance and other street maintenance issues.

Um, so, you know, we have tried to sort of make changes as time has gone by, I would say Cambridge Street, there's been fewer adjustments, although there have been a couple of, you know, parking spaces sort of moved around a little bit to, uh, improve the safety of certain turns and kind of minor changes like that.

And then we've also played around a good amount with the, um, the type of flex posts we're using or the type of separators we're using, um, to look at ones that are removable, ones that were temporary.

And we sort of, I think come back to the idea, um,

after much experimentation of something more permanent as-
as the best solution for that. I know that some people, I
know you particularly, um, Mr. Co-chair have, um, concerns
about the aesthetics, uh, of some of those. And-and I think
we are looking at over time a better products to be able to
use for those, um, to do that separation.

Um, and there's actually a competition going on right
now called the, uh, Build a Better Barrier, um, that maybe
you'd wanna submit an idea for even, uh, that, um,
organization called Team Better Block, it's teamed up with
Spin, which is a scooter company, to run this competition,
um, that will-that's soliciting, as we speak, ideas for
sort of better barriers, whether that's more functional,
whether that's better aesthetics, whether that's, um,
better protection. There's all kinds of ideas out there.

So, um, I'm actually, um, serving as a judge on the
panel for that. So, I'll get an opportunity to sort of see
what the, the best ideas are out there. So, I think we do
recognize that there are further tune-ups needed and we are
looking for ways to make that happen, um, going forward.
Um, I guess the other piece, and I'm happy to share the
specific links to the evaluations that were done, um, you

know, later today, um, with you or the—or the entire council.

The other piece, and I believe you received a communication about this earlier this year, we did do this analysis with, um, the, um, Consensus Building Institute, I was gonna get their name wrong there for a second, of looking at the community process 'cause that was also a concern.

Um, and they, um, issued some, some, they went through and interviewed a bunch of people, many—many of you, I believe, and issued some findings on that we've, like I said, I don't remember the exact date, but I believe it was in sometime in January or early February that that was shared with—with you. Um, and happy again to share it again if need be.

Um, and I think out of that, there were some recommendations for in process improvements, many of which we had already implemented as we've gone through other projects. Uh, but also the idea of creating a sort of, I don't know what the right word is, a group that could meet to talk about further process improvements around quick build infrastructure projects.

Um, I would say that that's obviously a challenging thing to think about convening that group right at this moment, but I think it's something that, you know, if the community and the council are interested in us pursuing that at some point, that's certainly something that we're still, um, open to.

Although again, I think we've taken into account many of the lessons learned, uh, many of which have come from members of the council in terms of how, you know, things to focus on with our outreach communities to make sure we've spoken to, uh, and different ways to get the word out to make sure that people aren't as, you know, surprised as they might have been on Brattle Street or on Cambridge Street.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Well, I'm a little surprised that we haven't seen the studies findings on the design as simple as they are, but it might make sense to have a summary on your website, and now we learn to do it this way or whatever the difference is.

As far as, uh, the painted asphalt with posts, um, we have a problem with trees and roots and having a plant strip rather with curbs, enhances a place and doesn't make

it look like industrial parking lot. Um, and it looks more like a place, uh, and there are many more benefits from vegetation and cooling and actually separation of bikes from cars with a curb instead of a post that bends.

And I hope we start leaning that way. I get that you wanna do it initially with paint and posts, but as time goes on, when these become truly safe bikeways, it should be permanent. It should look like it can't be taken out tomorrow. And that's what it looks like in most cases, um, especially in commercial areas, um, where you want to enhance. And I'll just throw it out as an example. There's a little planted i'land on Mount Auburn Street next to the coffee, um,

JOSEPH BARR: Darwin's?

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Thank you. And it isn't much, it's a crosswalk, but it feels like something important as opposed to traffic and, um, it-it's just an example. But I do wanna thank you for your openness. You've been that way since the start and you've really tried to integrate different points of view and I'm sure you'll integrate mine a little more now that I've said that. No, I'm kidding.

JOSEPH BARR: No doubt.

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE: Uh, uh, yeah. Thank you. Good answer. So, thank you for what you're doing, Joe. Thank you Madam Chair. I yield.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Carlone yields back. Councillor, I believe Councillor Zondervan is next in queue or Councillor Nolan? Councillor Zondervan, you're--

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: --next in queue. You have the floor,

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, and through you, um, to Commissioner Barr. So, um, I guess I'm really concerned about the--the revenue shortfall that--that you mentioned as well as the city manager and how that impacts our ability to complete some of these projects even once they are already in the pipeline.

So, are we thinking about ways to raise, um, revenues there? I mean our overall, um, parking is, or car storage, as I like to call it, is awfully, uh, cheap. And--and if that's what stands in the way of us putting in place much

needed, uh, safety improvements then, are we thinking about potentially increasing some of those fees to make up for-- for the shortfalls that we're expecting?

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Uh, through you Madam Chair, and I'll let Joe follow up. We are having numerous discussions on potential revenues, but as we stated earlier, with taxes, this is a difficult time to put increased fees on our residents. So, we're taking a look at that. We're taking a look at could there be some property tax, uh, moving from non-public, uh, traffic money to taxes and other city departments.

We're also looking at the potential slowdown in some capital, but these are in discussions. I think we've met probably half a dozen times, David, Joe, myself, about how to address this revenue short fall in the upcoming year and in the future. And we'll continue to work on that.

But as you said earlier, these are difficult times to raise taxes or fines or fees. So how you balance what we can raise versus what services we provide is something we spend a lot of time on and something we are in discussion with pretty regularly. But I don't know if Joe and David wanna add anything,

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Barr. Mr. Kale, do you wanna add anything?

JOSEPH BARR: I guess just, um, quickly through you Madam Chair. Um, I would say that, you know, when we were-- when we went into this budget season, we were--we were thinking about, um, meter rates, uh, in different locations. Um, and then everything that's happened has happened.

And I would say that, um, you know, I really would want to see how parking demand and just the economy in general recovers, you know, in the next few months, at the very least.

Um, right now, you know, we don't have partly anyone parking at our meters, obviously, and we're not requiring payment or doing enforcement that will change in the, I would expect in the not too distant in future.

Um, but you know, the theory of sort of raising parking prices is based on the idea that you're, you know, managing demand. And if the demand remains low, then I think we'd be sort of, you know, shooting ourselves in the foot, in the short term, at least if we were to raise prices now.

So again, I, you know, not, I personally am not averse to the idea of looking at that more in the future. I just think, like I said, I'd want to be, have a little bit more knowledge under our belt of how things recover, how demand recovers over the next few months before we make any, you know, more, I mean, nothing's permanent, but before we make any, uh, active decisions about making changes, um, to our current rates,

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you. And--and that makes all, all makes, uh, good sense to me. I think, you know, to the extent that we can charge, um, more for people who are parking in our garages and things like that where it's not impacting our residents that much, um, I think it would be good to look at that and--and obviously we have to balance that with the demand and--and what, you know, does that reduce, um, the number of people who come in. But I appreciate, uh, that--that we're looking at that option at least.

So, um, going back to the, um, bicycle safety ordinance and obviously we haven't been able to move that forward because we're not having, uh, committee meetings

other than this one. Um, but could we move ahead with--with some of the, uh, initial studies, for example, for Mass Av, um, North Mass Av or some of these other segments so that we don't lose time, um, or, you know, don't lose more time, um, from this COVID crisis, um, delaying the--the facets of the ordinance.

JOSEPH BARR: Um, through you, Madam Chair. So, I would say the answer generally is yes, we are--we are trying to do that. Um, obviously subject to some of the, um, you know, concerns that the manager raised in terms of, you know, kind of the--the budget situation over the next year or two, um, and seeing where that leaves us.

But--but nonetheless, these are as, uh, in a way as Councillor Carlone was saying, you know, these are not tremendously complicated or tremendously expensive projects. They're, you know, part of the whole purpose of doing--taking this quick build approach is to be fast and, but also, uh, less expensive.

Um, and so I think we--we can continue to make progress on these without, you know, having to spend, you know, millions and millions of dollars necessarily. Um, I think that the--the one constraint right now is just again,

figuring out how do we do community engagement, um, in this environment.

And I think it's one thing for a project like Intermountain Auburn Street that I referred to earlier, where we've already had multiple meetings. We sort of know who, in general, who our stakeholders and interested parties are, and we can kind of go back to them in a, in, you know, perhaps electronically and using tools that are available to us right now.

Um, I think it's more challenging to think about launching a completely new, uh, project and making sure that we've engaged the right members of the community and given them ways to participate that are accessible and safe and all the things we would want to have for that process.

But I think, you know, we are having internal discussions about how that will work, um, you know, building on some of the tools that the council and others have been using, uh, and trying to figure out the right way to approach that.

So, I think we are--our intent is still to make progress on these projects. Our intent still is to implement, um, more than one bicycling safety project this

summer and and fall. Um, we just have some, you know, procedural and technical challenges we have to get past as well as some financial challenges as well. But I think, you know, I don't think that we're in a situation where we can't get anything done. We just have to be cautious on a couple different fronts.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you Mr. Barr.
Councillor Zondervan?

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor Zondervan yields the floor. Councillor Nolan, you make take the floor.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Uh, thank you, Chair Simmons. Thank you Commissioner Barr and city manager and everyone who has weighed in on this. I very much look forward to the discussion on Thursday when it sounds like that's when we'll be having, uh, an understanding of a plan moving forward for the bicycle plan and the safe streets or the slow streets, um, which of course is we all know who follow the COVID-19 cities across the country are implementing.

And, um, the council has talked about implementing across the city. I, um, understand there's a, um, issue perhaps with the funding, uh, for those infrastructure projects. I look forward to having a summary of that.

The city manager indicated it hadn't been in the notes yet, but they've anticipated as much as a \$5 million loss or 20%. It would be good to understand how that would play into our expectations for next year since we literally have collected zero the last couple months.

So that would represent, um, just on the basis of having completely closed off and not even charging any parking as much as a 15% drop. So, if our revenues have dropped 20%, there's no reason to think there wouldn't at least be some recuperation of that in the future unless I misunderstood the discussion of where that \$5 million loss was coming from. And in any case, if it's better for the city, we still should move forward.

I have a question about whether the planning and the funding is in place, if part of that planning is around the future of e-bikes and the longer term future of, uh, driverless cars and how that factors into our planning. Is funding part of the--the funding for our own studies and

planning include that discussion or is that a separate thing from the planning that we are putting in place now and anticipating, uh, funding for the next year?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Barr.

JOSEPH BARR: Uh, through you, Madam Chair. So, and this is a--this is probably a question that's better directed towards staff from Community Development at next week's hearing, but, um, the, uh, Environmental Transportation Planning group and Community Development has been doing the, um, new mobility or no, yeah, new mobility blueprint study for a little while.

We're looking at a range of issues around, you know, all those topics that you just mentioned, autonomous vehicles, um, micromobility, electrification, uh, and other topics. Um, and obviously that process is a little bit on hold like everything else. Um, but I know that we've, my department's been involved as well as other city departments, uh, but the study is being led by Community Development staff. So, um, I know they're working on it, but in terms of getting a status update, I'm sure that Iram would be able to provide some additional information during next week's hearing.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Nolan.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you. Yes, because it could be that if we get rid of or have fewer demand for some of those parking spots, but we put in electrification, we can charge not only for parking, but for producing electricity. Those of us, like myself, who own an electric car, would love to have lots more of those across the city.

So, it might actually not be a revenue loss, but a revenue generator. Not to mention that restaurants that use that spaces might actually produce more in revenue, uh, by using them, uh, given the meals tax.

Um, another question, which may or may not be in your department, and I will follow up then with Community Development on, specifically on the e-bikes planning and funding. On Blue Bikes, do we have fence related to that and do we have, um, a clear understanding of where it is that that either generates revenues or doesn't generate revenues or cost the city or what--what is the role of next? I may have missed it in the budget book, but I didn't see, uh, a reference to that. And I know the city has had certainly some involvement in that.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: This is--this is

another example where things can be confusing between community development and traffic, but that'll be part of the budget as well.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Okay.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor are you yielding the floor?

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Yes. Thank you. Thank you, Chair Simmons.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor. Vice Mayor Mallon, you have the floor.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you, Madam Co-chair, and through you to the city manager and to Mr. Barr. I had, um, questions. My neighborhood is very curious, um, when the Inman Square reconstruction is going to start back up again and whether or not there will be an expedited timeline.

Um, and if there are any budget implications of that, I know that, um, this has been put on hold, like all the construction due to the pandemic, however, um, we are about to have a quadruple whammy, um, in Inman Square of an economic, uh, recession, um, and a huge construction project.

So, I'm wondering, do we have plans to expedite the timeline? Is there a budgetary implication and what other things are we thinking about for the businesses and for the neighborhood to remediate, um, what's coming?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Barr.

JOSEPH BARR: Uh, through Madam Chair. So, um, I guess, again, I hate to sound like a--like I don't know what I'm talking about, but the specifics of the construction timeline are really something that DPW would be more familiar with. Um, and I can certainly make sure that they're aware of the question to be able to answer, uh, again, during next week's hearing.

I would say two things. One, I mean, I know Horizontal Construction as Street Construction as sometimes referred to, will be starting up again soon. So, anticipate that in general the Inman Square project would be--would be moving again, um, in the--in the not too distant future.

Uh, and then just in terms of what we can do for the businesses, um, we have spoken with, um, Jason, uh, a little bit in the context of some of the street changes and we're certainly we've have a few ideas for not sort of revolutionary things but, you know, changes to some loading

zones, moving things around a little bit to enable more things on the street if that's what businesses are looking for.

Um, so we are coordinating with him directly in terms of any--any other supportive measures that we can do, uh, as they try to deal with the general situation as well as the specifics of, you know, the--the Inman Square Construction project,

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Uh, through you Madam Chair as well. I know this has come up at a small business association and Matt Nelson brought it to my attention. We've brought it to the attention of Public Works, and I don't have an answer for today, but by the capital budget we should be better prepared to answer that question 'cause it is something we are discussing on how we can, if possible, move that work up a little quicker and what impacts that would have.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. DePasquale. Vice Mayor Mallon.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you, Madam Co-chair, and through you. I appreciate it. It's definitely on my list of things to talk about in the DPW, um, Department

pool and as well as Capital Budget.

But I guess specifically around, um, street scopes and what we could be doing for the business community, I want-- I just wanna talk about, um, ways in which all of our departments can be thinking about how to support our business community through this going to be a very, very tough time as well as thinking about how we're gonna move the tremendous number of bicycles that we're gonna need to move through that intersection.

Um, and thinking about how we're gonna move people. Um, as you said earlier, Mr. Barr, what we don't wanna have happen is that people opt out of public transportation and into their cars 'cause they only have that one, uh, option.

I know a tremendous amount of people have purchased bikes in the last two months. I think people are ready to get on them. I think we need to figure out during this construction how to move them through that intersection quickly, um, and provide the infrastructure, uh, in Inman Square for there to be bike parking so people can spend their dollars in Inman Square, um, at the coffee shop, at, you know, the restaurants, at the businesses that are open there, the pharmacy, um, all of the, just making it very

easy for people to stop while they're on their bikes, on their way home or way to work. Um, really be thinking critically around how we can support our businesses.

Um, so I guess that's more of a comment than a question. Just, um, maybe talk a bit a little bit about if you've thought about how to think about, um, bike lanes through that intersection based on what I think is coming for us, which is either a whole bunch of cars or a whole bunch of bicycles. And I think we all can agree that a whole bunch of bicycles is the better way to go as long as we're providing them a safe way through.

JOSEPH BARR: Um, sure. Um--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Barr.

JOSEPH BARR: Through you, Madam Chair. So, um, just in terms of the bike parking specifically, 'cause you had mentioned that we have been looking into purchasing, this is a smallish thing, but purchasing additional bike parking corrals of the type that we install, like outside this building and in various locations.

So that if we do need to provide additional bike parking or for that matter, one of the things that the Inman Square Business Association mentioned was, well,

maybe we need to move some bike parking so that a business can have a sidewalk cafe or a street cafe, but we wanna not lose that parking. We just wanna have it not right at that spot on the sidewalk. So, we are looking into that piece.

In terms of, uh, I would agree, we definitely wanna see the bikes, not the cars. The cars won't work, the bikes could work. Um, particularly if the facilities are there. Um, I don't, unfortunately I will--I'd say I don't have a great answer for you at this moment only because it really depends on the construction staging plan as we move through the project.

I mean, obviously we intend to continue to safely accommodate cyclists through the construction process. That's always a, you know, requirement for any city construction project.

But I think we'd have to go back and think a little bit with DPW about, um, two things. One, you know, are there ways to further enhance that as part of the construction management plan and the traffic management plan? And then is there any, you know, if we're unable to feel like we can create additional capacity through the square, is there some other means we can find, you know,

that might not have been something we would've thought about prior to COVID-19.

But as we're thinking about the whole topic of, you know, using our streets differently in this moment, you know, maybe there's something that I don't have something that's popping into my head immediately and it's--it's complicated by the fact that we're also at the city border, but, you know, Somerville's in exactly the same boat and they're doing the same things.

They're a little ahead of us, but we've been in contact with them. So certainly, if was a question of trying to coordinate something with Somerville to make, you know, a better route, um, that that's something we could certainly look into.

So, I think we just need to, I mean it's a--it's an-- it's an important point. Um, and you know, obviously Beacon Street and New Hampshire Street are already, you know, the--the most heavily used by corridors in the area and that would only grow under that scenario.

And so, it's an interesting point that we need to really think about, is there something additional we need to do there? But obviously we're constrained by the

requirements of the construction and we don't want to do something that makes the construction more challenging and therefore drags out the schedule, obviously to your earlier point.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Vice Mayor Mallon.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON: Thank you, Madam Co-chair. And so yeah, I'm--I'm glad that you're thinking about this and I do wanna challenge us to work with DPW on that construction cha--you know, the staging plan and also working with our regional partners. I know you and I have talked about how, um, you know, Somerville and Arlington and neighboring communities are also opening safer, healthier streets. Um, and how can we connect that network?

Um, and I look forward to having the conversation on Thursday 'cause I do think it will be robust. And I think this actually intersection and thinking about how Somerville abuts, uh, Cambridge at that point and really being strategic about how we're gonna move people through that intersection safely, um, is gonna be really key.

So, um, that was my only question for, um, Traffic and Parking. Um, and again, thank you for your work. Uh, I look forward to seeing what we've got going on on Thursday, so I

yield the floor. Thank you, Madam Co-chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Madam Vice Mayor. Has any--does no one else signed up in the queue? Did--Oh, she did. Okay. Uh, Councillor Nolan, before we come back to you, let me just see if the Mayor, Councillor McGovern or Councillor Toomey wanna speak on this item. Madam Mayor?

MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI: I'm all set. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor McGovern.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: All set.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Toomey. Councillor Nolan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you. Since I couldn't ask my other questions, I realized there was one, or I will ask them at the appropriate time in appropriate department. Uh, related to what one of the issues that the Vice Mayor raised about additional parking.

We did pass an order, again, in the--in the PC era, pre-COVID, about taking any parking median meter in the entire city, whether it is currently used or not, and putting a bike ring on it, which means that you don't have to dig up into the concrete, you don't have to pour

anything.

There are cities that already do this, and I'm curious as to what the status of that is. We haven't gotten a report and it seems that it would both save money and also take away from some of the concerns of restaurants and others that by putting in a parking post only that it takes up the sidewalk, which, if we're envisioning that that will now be used by retailer restaurants. This seems like a good, uh, time to ask for an update on that and whether we've moved forward on that.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: In the context of the budget?

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Of the budget, because that would--it would be a cost, but it would be a cost savings. If--if we have in the budget to put in some additional bike parking, this possibly could actually save money and produce the same amount of, um, of availability spots for--for cyclists.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor. Mr. Barr.

JOSEPH BARR: Um, through you, Madam Chair. So, I don't have an update on that. I can try to get one and, uh,

provide, we can see--find out where the response is at. Obviously there's been a lot going on. Um, I know that there are some concerns about the placement of meters in relationship to the sidewalk edge is one of the issues.

Um, but again, you know, it might not be something we would consider ideal under--under normal circumstances, but perhaps in this moment it's worth taking a look to see, well, is this something that's worth doing in the scenarios that you just described.

And so maybe, again, we might not be--it might not be an ideal solution, but it might be a reasonable solution, you know, to address the situation we're in right now. But I'll get an update.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Yep. Thank you. As a-- as a cyclist, I use them all the time anyway and it would be much handier if we were able to do it in a way that would enable two bikes to do that. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: You're very welcome. Hearing no further discussion on this item, I would like to entertain a motion to favorably send this on to the Council, with a favorable recommendation. Councillor

Carlone and Co-chair wants to forward this item, which is the--where are you? Traffic and Parking Department onto the City Council with a favorable recommendation. Clerk Wilson please, call the roll.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler Jivan - Yes

Councillor Toomey J Timothy - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Yes-8. No-0. Absent-0. Present-1. Motion Passed.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you Mr. Clerk. The next department before the Finance Committee is Inspectional Services. Inspectional Services was pulled by Councillor Toomey. Councillor Toomey, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Thank you, uh, Madam Co-chair. Um, appreciate all the work, uh, Inspectional Services has been doing in the past year, um,

in terms of the, uh, trying to control the rodent infestation, um, throughout the city. And as you saw what my question was--is what the status of the city, um, buying every resident, a very secure, uh, trash, um, bin to prevent rodent infestations like go to municipalities.

Some has done this, I think Watertown has done this. I know that we were--City Manager's said, you know, we were considering that. Um, and in the last two days, and we all know it's a very serious problem.

And, uh, the ISD personnel have been out there. They're holding neighborhood meetings. They are really working with the residents and it's issuing citations, um, which is really, really great. But in the last--on May 24th, on Forbes Newspaper and on May 25th on The Guardian, I guess, is a newspaper just doing some research.

What--all these restaurants shut down and our pe--and--and people not eating out and everything, the food source for these rodents has dwindled exceedingly. The two newspaper articles that I have has made it clear that--that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is now--is warning that there's been an--dramatic increase in rodent activity as the rodent search for these new sources of

food.

With the d--dwindling food supply for these rodents, what has taken place's been documented in the large dense cities, that these rodents are you--exhibiting a very aggressive and unusual behavior, including turning on themselves and other animals.

These articles, and it is very disturbing reading what these articles are saying of what's happening with the-- these rodents and what could be happening. But they're definitely becoming more aggressive as they're searching for food. And I submitted this question last week before--I just read those articles today.

Um, so I'm really concerned for the general public, um, that this increased rodent activity, especially, I mean, it's two articles in two days, so it's becoming a problem. They do cite like New York, Chicago, but Cambridge is very dense too.

And I just wanted to make sure that it--we have to be even more aggressive with the rodent controls, with people probably securing their trash, everything else. But beyond that, even when--because that has hap--you know, when that happens, with dwindling food supplies, all these

restaurants are closed, how do we somehow, eliminate a lot of the--you know, they're turning on each other and they're turning on their young. So, it is very disturbing to read these articles, but this is something, I think, public has to be aware of.

And I think the city, again, looking at--as we did with the, uh, recycling bins, you know, to get--to issue every resident a very secure, um, trash receptacle, I think is very, very important. Especially, this time, as in--we don't know how long these is written, you know, they're disturbing articles to read and what could be coming and--and--and I just wanted to get that out there.

And I--and I appreciate all the inspectors that are out there doing the--the work, but, um, I--I just know if the manager of the--Mr. Manager has any comments on this, but I--I believe I sh--sent to, um, Owen and someone to the Inspectional Service and the manager, you know, these articles. Um, it's not a very pleasant picture that's coming. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: So--so in the context of the budget, it sounds like Councillor Toomey is asking it--are--is that something that we could feasibly support?

Which is these recept--I know we've had this conversation and years ago it was much worse than it is now. So, what would be some of the financial impacts if--if we were to try to do something like that?

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Uh, through you, Madam Chair and Ranjit, you can follow up, but, uh--and working with the restaurants, especially, during the closing as you--have you seen, you know, rats? Probably, about three, four months ago, I actually--but the manager's office, uh, is a--is a point to trying to address this issue because it was getting worse and worse and we can see it.

And we have made progress and we have a rat team and we've got \$70,000 in additional road and control efforts in this year's Inspectional Service budget. Uh, but barrels are really important. Uh, as we were talking about our financial position, it came up 'cause our plan was to come up for this in September. You know, would this be something that might not make the cut?

But I think as we've seen, uh, as the conditions get worse through all the efforts we're putting in, it's money well spent, because otherwise, it's gonna cost us more

overtime and everything else. So, I've talked to the commissioner, I will get an update on where we are with this, but our plan would be to still invest in the barrels for--for next fiscal year.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Toomey.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Yep. Thank you, um, Madam Co-chair. Again, it--it's the issuing of--of the--these barrels. We have to, you know--we're going through one pandemic now. The reality is these rodents carry disease also, and we don't wanna see that proliferating either. So, it's very, very serious with--with reading the--these articles.

And this is coming from the Centers of Disease Control. Um, so I just want us to be out there at the forefront and making sure that this is on everyone's, uh, agenda as we move forward. But I appreciate all the work that Inspectional Services have done, working with the--the residents, uh, to, uh, try to abate this problem. But I think, we--potentially it's gonna get even worse. So, I'm just getting that out there. Appreciate it.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Through you, Madam Chair. Maybe I--let me talk to Owen and before next Tuesday

we could come up with some sort of timetable to let you know where we stand with that. But we will get it done.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Uh, thank you Mr. City Manager. Councillor, are you yielding the floor? Councillor Toomey yields the floor. Councillor Nolan, your next, you may take the floor.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you. I, um, was curious in terms of how Inspectional Services is doing given the, uh, backup and backlog that this department has, um--is at the forefront of us as we reopen construction and whether this, um--I know what--this is about next year's budget, but I also wanna understand and make sure that this year's budget is in a place that they have the--the support that they need and the staff they need and the funding they need in order to move forward as expeditiously as possible to determine whether the construction plans that are being filed, which include the COVID-19 safety plans are in order so that those who are able to move forward and have plans that meet the criteria that we've established can move forward as quickly as possible.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Uh, through you, Madam Chair, and I'll start and Ranjit can jump in. Great

question. And they have worked hand in hand with us through this whole, uh, construction committee of the 22 people, two members of the ISD team are in.

I think we have to remember that, as I've stated often, our buildings are closed, but people are working in--Inspectional Services has been one of those departments that has really not been closed. The--it's just been the building.

And one of the things that we've been out daily with our inspectors, but also internally, we had many conversations about getting ready for this and there was a backlog to get ready for this. I believe we're almost caught up with the incredible work of this department. But one of the biggest concerns was as we opened this and say we're open for business, we had to be open for business. And Ranjit's done a phenomenal job assuring us.

And I think David's also been a--a point person with this to make sure we are ready. Uh, and I just can't thank Ranjit and his team CC and all the inspectors enough because if there's a--many departments have stepped up.

But one of the unsung heroes during this whole process has been the work of inspectional. And uh, we are ready for

the construction situation. But I'll let Ranjit follow up, but I really want to thank that department. I also want to thank David, who's been working closely with Inspectional on these procedures and Matt Nelson.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. Ranjit.

MR. RANJIT SINGANAYAGAM: Yep. Through you Madam Mayor--Madame Chair. We have hired two part-time employees and--and, um, intern. Intern is going through all the COVID plans right now. And the--one of the part-time building inspector will be coming June 1st.

We are doing all inspections for COVID-19, uh, inspect compliance and also we are getting another part-time employee for the road control. So, the--meanwhile, we also trying to post for new positions, which had been delayed because it's, uh, situation. But hopefully, we'll get all that squared away very soon.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor Nolan.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Yes, I appreciate that. And I understand the department had its hands full already. There's so much going on and so many inspections needing to happen and this additional, uh, COVID-19 additional

documentation falls not only on the folks doing the construction work and filing those plans.

But obviously, our staff we're relying on them to make sure that that--those safety protocols are in place and are followed. So, I--I appreciate that. And--and if there are any additional resources that are needed to ensure that we can move forward safely, um, of course, you--I expect that you'll let us know.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Absolutely.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you--thank you Councillor. Any other questions?

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: No, I yield the floor. Thank you. Council--uh, Chair Simmons.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Uh, just to our clerk 'cause we are--it's 5:54. The meeting--the call in the meeting was till 5:00. Do we need to have a--a vote to extend the meeting?

CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON: Yes, you should. Yes.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: So, I suspend the rules before? Do we need to suspend the rules before?

CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON: Yes.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Okay. Um, Mr. Clerk,

would you--

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: Madam Chair?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Yes.

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: I just, um--I have to leave at 5:00. Um, we have a little bit of a family thing going on here that I--I need to deal with. So, um, I will--I will leave now and not vote on it.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: That's great. Fine.

COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER: Yeah. Thank you all and thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Duly noted. Uh, Mr. Clerk, I'd like to, uh--through my Co-chair move suspension of the rules to extend the meeting 15 minutes.

CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON: On extending the meeting to 5:15.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Yes

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Yes-8. No-0. Absent-0. Present-1. Motion Passed.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Now, do we have to actually have another vote, or is that sufficient? Okay, thank you. So, we heard, uh--the next person to speak is Councillor Zondervan. Councillor Zondervan, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Through you, I noticed in the budget book, um, what appears to be a--a significant revenue shortfall for the ISD Department, uh, on the order of \$16 million. Uh, I don't know if I got that right. Um, so how do we make up for that projected revenue loss?

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: I'm not sure where you are. What page the Inspectional Services Department is the leader of allowing us not to have, uh, a loss. Uh, what we do is we take conservative projections, but one of the reasons that we are in the position we're in is because we have always kept the inspection of building permits number at a reasonable number.

And then that has helped supply the city. So, we are slightly behind what we received last year in building permits, but we'll crack the 30 million mark. And that's one of the reasons why, when we spoke earlier about the fact that even though we have a short fall of \$6 million in some of our revenues, uh, the reason we are 26 to the good is primarily to the building permits.

Uh, so again, we always take that conservative this year more than ever, but we-- that's unbudgeted revenue loss. So, uh, again, it will not have any negative impact in terms of the budget. If anything, it'll--it'll allow us to address some of the other shortfall that we have to take care of this year. Uh, building permits continues to be an incredible, uh, revenue producer for the city.

And, uh, obviously, having Harvard and MIT is two of the larger users of those permits have played a--a major impact to that. So, it is a little confusing, uh, but in terms of the budget, it's consistent to where it's been.

But in terms of the revenue, we're having another good year. Uh, we are about 12 to 13 million dollars more in building permits this year than anticipated. And I would assume hopefully we would, again, well succeed the budget

that's in this year's budget.

MR. DAVID KALE: Through you Madam uh, Chair. I think what Councillor Zondervan is saying is the Inspectional Services Department collects more revenue within their budget by a significant amount of money. So, that's a credit to taxes. So that's why you're seeing the negative if that's what you're referring to.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan.

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you. I--I appreciate that. Um, yeah, so the--the last column, this on page V--V-68, um, shows the F--FY-'21 budget and it shows 17 million for licenses and permits compared to FY-'20, projected 33 million FY-'19, actual 37 million. So--so my read of that is--is that we're anticipating at least \$16 million less in revenues here.

Now, I--I do see that, um, you're only crediting 13 million, uh, to the taxes, but--but nonetheless, that's 16 million that we received this year that we are presumably, not expecting next year.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Uh, Councillor, that's--that's a budgeting situation. That's not a revenue situation. One of the ways we replenish free cash is by

keeping our building permits substantially, around that number.

And then if we have a good year, which we have in the past, uh, that 10, 12, \$15 million over budget would offset some of the free cash expenditures. And so, we are not projecting building permits to be down. We're actually, budget to budget I believe, has increased. Building permits are very close. So, uh, no, it--it's just a projected versus the way we budget.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Zondervan.

MR. DAVID KALE: Through you, Madam Co-chair. So again, one of the things that the manager talked about this morning was the fact that because we've had good--a good--another good year for building permits, that's one of the free cash replenishments of revenue.

So, again, we don't fully budget, um, what we actually collect, and that's intentional just because we're trying to be conservative in the sense that we don't want to over project a revenue.

But Inspectional Service, uh, permit fees have exceeded what we've budgeted and--and in the last couple years when we've gone for the tax rate, um, in the fall,

that's one of the areas that we take a look at that we may make an adjustment.

So, again, it's not fully budgeted what we actually collect from the, uh--based upon the prior year of the current year projected. It's--it's what we need to balance the budget at this point in time.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you Mr. Kale.
Councillor, are you--

COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Chair, that's all. Yes.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Councillor Zondervan yields the floor. Is there any more discussion on this item? Hearing none. Councillor Toomey offers a motion to pass forward the in Inspectional Services budget with the favor of recommendation. Mr. Clerk, would you call the roll.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Yes-7. Present-1. Absent-1. Motion passed

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Uh, thank you Mr. Clerk.

The last department for this afternoon is the License Commission. The License Commission was pulled by Councillor Toomey. Is there someone from the license-

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: I believe Nicole is on the phone.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Oh, Nicole-

NICOLE: I am.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: It's been a long day. I'm glad you're still on Nicole.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: We saved the best for last my dear.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Welcome.

NICOLE: Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Councillor Toomey, pulled this item. Councillor Toomey you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Thank you, Madam

Co-chair. Uh, just two--two issues. The, uh, first, I wanna thank the License Commission, the Con--Consumers Council, you know, we have the semi-annual shredding day. I would just ask if there's a--the License Commission and the manager can look at expanding that to several times a year in different parts of the city.

And certainly, I think, a lot of people are at home now looking to get rid of a lot of stuff in this, especially, the shredding of personal information, uh, is very important.

So, I just would ask if we could look at increasing that in different sites in the city. I believe it's just, um, down in front of the City Hall now, but I think other people would probably like to benefit from that service also, the other, uh, question I have was about, um, especially, for the restaurants with, uh, having out--outside seating. Um, as we know a lot of these restaurants, um, they're gonna have diminished, um, capacity, uh, when they're--reopen.

And I just asked that the License Commission, um, worked with a lot of the restaurants. Again, I happen to have been--been in Harvard Square last week and I ran into

one of the co-owners, Lawrence from Daedalus, and he mentioned about closing, like I believe, Arrow Street, so they can have outdoor seating there.

So, hopefully, we can work with a lot of small businesses to see what avenues we can have to--to help them, because clearly what their diminished, uh, seating capacity, uh, is gonna be very difficult for them to--to, uh, survive. So, I'm just looking to see what--what out--how we can do more outdoor seating even on the streets.

And my other one quest--point is, and I don't need the answer now, but I think is--which we could look to see if it's possible for a lot of these, especially, the small restaurants only have a beer and wine license. And I was wondering if there's a way to help them survive that we can expedite, you know, if they so choose to have a full liquor license because clearly the, uh--the liquor aspect of it, uh, revenue is more substantial than with--from the food.

So, I'm just looking at different avenues if the--those are two, um, things that we can look at to help the small--small restaurants. So those--those are my only two points and--and hopeful we can--the License Commission, I know the--everyone's working with the--my colleagues are

working with the small businesses to assist them. So, those are just two ideas that I had. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: So, are you looking for an answer to that as it pertains to the budget Councillor?

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: So, mark--I'm just throwing those out for them to further--

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Something for you to consider as you make your final--

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: I also think, through you Madam Chair, that Joe Thursday, we'll have some information on that as well to talk about how we've been discussing it with small businesses. So, I think we'll have some more information then. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you. Uh, does anyone want--else wanna speak on the License Commission's budget? Hearing none, Councillor Toomey wants--oh, I didn't say. Okay. Councillor Nolan.

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Thank you. Just a quick follow up to Councillor Toomey's, uh, question and it's in line with a response to COVID-19 that I know, uh, yourself, uh, Chair Simmons and Vice Mayor Mallon and the Mayor have been working on in terms of fees to restaurants as they

reopen.

Is that something that's included in this budget that I noticed the, um--the revenue side is actually, even in terms of licenses and permits. Is this the area where we might expect to see something different as they take that into consideration? Whether we would allow, uh, certain restaurants in particular to--to lower their--their fees and licenses as they operate?

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: To the City Manager.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Uh, Nicole, I could speak and if you wanna speak as one member of the License Commission. We certainly think that's a possibility, but I don't wanna speak for the License Commission. So, I don't know if Nicole-

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Madam Commissioner, do you wanna speak to this?

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Sure. Uh, through you, Madame Chair. Um, so it is the--the numbers that you're seeing are numbers that are projected based on the current licenses that we have for most of the businesses that you're looking at those license fees are collected mostly in November of the previous year.

So, November, 2019. Um, some licensees, as you know, paid the half alcohol renewal fee, uh, which will be due, um, pursuant to state law in terms of what we're looking at and what our numbers will look at for next fiscal year. It is something that is being discussed, um, internally in terms of what we can or cannot do.

And it's obviously something that will be put before the Board of Licensed Commissioners, um, for a vote, um, for next renewal season. Uh, we just have to look at, you know, certain aspects of the law and make sure that we do everything in accordance to not to.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Uh, through you. Madam Chair.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Mr. D.

CITY MANAGER LOUISE DEPASQUALE: Uh, one of the things I mentioned very early on this morning was the fact that we know that there are revenues in our budget that we're probably gonna be short on. And there are some other revenues that we hope to do with our restaurant and small business community that we will be able to absorb.

So, you are right. This is a budget that we would absorb the increase or the--I mean, the decrease once the

License Commission if they chose to rule to lower that money. But we have that and we've been talking about that and we're comfortable with that if that happens.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. DiPasquale. Madam Commissioner anything you wanna add?

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: Uh, yeah, I just wanted to say in terms about what Councillor Toomey mentioned in terms of the shred day, that is something that has been considered in the past and I know the Consumer Council is looking into it. So, we will certainly continue with that. Um, and I know we had gotten some questions before the hearing in terms of whether we would do something like Boston for outdoor seating.

And I just wanna mention really quickly that the, uh, streamlining process that Boston implemented, uh, as a response to COVID-19 we already have in place. Um, we already have the one-pager in Viewpoint that gets reviewed by multiple departments. I think the--and we don't make licensees go talk to the, um, Neighborhood Association before they can even file with us.

So, some of the hurdles that were reported, uh, that Boston took care of, we--they don't exist in Cambridge. But

we're certainly speaking internally with other departments for when the issue comes up as to expanding into outdoor areas where, you know, either private or public. Uh, we are certainly speaking internally to make sure that we do the process as quickly and as streamlined as possible.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor Nolan, anything else?

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN: No, that's exactly--I want us to be able to do everything we can. Even if it means, uh, that this particular budget expectation might be a little bit lower. I--I think I'm certainly supportive of that and encourage all of us to do whatever we can to support those small businesses through this, uh, means. Thank you. I yield the floor.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Councillor. Any other discussion on this item--on this department? Hearing none, we'd need a--a motion to forward their--so my Co-chair and Councillor Carlone wants--moves to forward the budget of the inspection--what is it? License Commission. Thank you. Forward to the City Council with a favorable recommendation. Clerk Wilson, please call the roll.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Yes-8. No-0. Absent-0. Present-1. Motion Passed.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

This concludes the May 26th Finance Committee meeting. All departments have been forwarded to the Council with a favorable recommendation, with the exception of the IT Department. Our next meeting of the Finance Committee will be June 2nd at 9:00 AM here in the chamber.

Thank you for all of you that have already sent--what departments you want pulled, but if you've not, you still have time. We're--the Co-chair and I are also, again, asking you if you can bring your--get your questions forward--forwarded to those--to the City Clerk and--and City Manager. It--it just helps to have a better and more

productive conversation.

To my Co-chair, did he wanna have any, uh, remarks? Okay. Hearing none. I just wanna remind you that we also have the School Department's budget coming up. That'll be coming up on June 3rd. The budget book should be available electronically in a few days and then a hard copy not le--not--shortly thereafter. With that, I'll entertain the motion, which will be a roll call to--so--to adjourn.

COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.: Motion to adjourned Madam.

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: So, on a motion by Councillor Toomey to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting, Mr. Chair--Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Absent

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Yes

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

Yes - 8, No. - 0, Absent - 1. Motion passes.

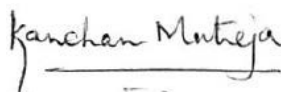
COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS: On--on a roll call vote of the--of the Finance Committee. This meeting is adjourned. Oh, thank you.

The Cambridge City Council Finance Committee adjourned at approximately 5:15 pm.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, **Kanchan Mutreja**, a transcriber for Datagain, do hereby certify: That said proceedings were listened to and transcribed by me and were prepared using standard electronic transcription equipment under my direction and supervision; and I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript of the proceedings is a full, true, and accurate transcript to the best of my ability.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name this 23rd day of December 2023.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kanchan Mutreja". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Signature of Transcriber