



SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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~ AGENDA ~

1/30/2025 9:50 AM Nicole Erwin The Full Agenda/Public Agenda has been posted to the web portal.

2/11/2025 3:57 PM Nicole Erwin The Full Agenda/Public Agenda has been re-finalized.

2/12/2025 9:40 AM Nicole Erwin The Full Agenda/Public Agenda has been re-finalized.

2/12/2025 3:31 PM Nicole Erwin The Full Agenda/Public Agenda has been re-finalized.

2/13/2025 8:54 AM Nicole Erwin The Full Agenda/Public Agenda has been re-finalized.

Thursday, February 13, 2025

3:00 PM

Sullivan Chamber

The Special Committee of the Whole will hold a public meeting on Thursday, February 13, 2025 to resume the review and discussion of recommendations from the Charter Review Committee and any additional suggestions from the full City Council pertaining to the Cambridge City Charter. This is a continuation of the public hearing that began on December 9, 2024, that reconvened and recessed again on January 27, 2025.

A communication was received from Councillor Toner, transmitting the meeting agenda.

A communication was received from Councillor Toner, transmitting and updated list of votes taken in Committee as of 01/27/2025.

A communication was received from Councillor Toner, transmitting proposed Charter Changes from Committee members.

A communication was received from City Solicitor Megan Bayer, transmitting a response to elected Mayor options.

A communication was received from City Solicitor Megan Bayer, transmitting the Law Department's response to City Council proposals regarding Charter changes.

A communication was received from Councillor Toner, transmitting Draft Minutes from the December 9, 2024 and the January 27, 2025 Special Committee of the Whole public hearings on recommendations from the Charter Review Committee.



City of Cambridge

COF 2025 #22
IN CITY COUNCIL
February 13, 2025

Special Committee for Charter Review Meeting

February 13, 2025

3:00pm to 5:00pm

1. Public Comment
2. Brief review of current status and Timeline to assure November 2025 ballot
3. Discussion regarding how Mayor is elected
4. Update on proposals concerning solicitor and finance
5. Next and final meeting February 24



City of Cambridge

COF 2025 #24
IN CITY COUNCIL
February 13, 2025

UPDATED LIST ON VOTES THUS FAR (Compiled by Councillor Toner)

I. RECOMMENDED TO THE CITY COUNCIL TO SEND TO LEGISLATURE AND BALLOT

- A. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommends to the full City Council to maintain the City Manager form of government.**

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Yes – 7, No – 2. Motion passed

- B. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion to that the Special Committee of the Whole recommends to the full City Council adoption of modern charter text structure and ask the City Solicitor’s Office to begin drafting language.**

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.

- C. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommends to the full City Council that the City maintain an at-large City Council elected by proportional representation.**

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.

- D. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommends to the full City Council that the City maintain an at-large City Council of nine members.**

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Yes – 7, No – 1, Absent – 1. Motion passed.

- E. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council to create more flexibility and modernize election voting and tabulation methods in charter language and draft language to be developed by the Law Department and Election Commission before a final vote.**

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.

II. SEND TO THE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE FOR DISCUSSION FOR POSSIBLE HOME RULE PETITION

- A. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council that the matter of enfranchising non-citizens in municipal elections be referred to the Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee for discussion and to consider a separate Home Rule Petition.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.
Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.**

- B. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council that the matter of enfranchising 16- and 17-year-olds in municipal elections be referred to the Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee for discussion and to consider a separate Home Rule Petition.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.
Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.**

- C. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council that the matter of moving municipal elections to even years be referred to the Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee for discussion and to consider a separate Home Rule Petition.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.
Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.**

III. SPECIAL COMMITTEE DOES NOT RECOMMEND

- A. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council participation and accessibility of government for all residents by creating resident assemblies.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.
Yes – 1, No – 7, Absent – 1. Motion fails.**

- B. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council public tracking mechanisms of council policy orders.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.
Yes – 1, No – 8. Motion fails.**

- C. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council improving the effectiveness of government through measurable goalsetting.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.
No – 9. Motion fails.**

- D. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council to increase responsiveness and accountability through delineating budget process and priority setting.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.
No – 9. Motion fails.**

- E. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council to enshrine a resident initiative provision.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll
No – 9. Motion fails.**

- F. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council to enshrine a group initiative provision.**

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll

No – 9. Motion fails.

- G. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council that the matter of enshrining a campaign study finance committee be referred to the Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee for discussion.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll
Yes – 2, No – 7. Motion fails.**

- H. Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommends to the full City Council four-year terms for City Council, with elections every two years. (JAN 27 MEETING)**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.
Yes – 0, No – 9. Motion fails.**

- I. Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommends to the full City Council that Department Heads are appointed by the City Manager and approved by the City Council.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.
Yes – 1, No – 7, Absent – 1. Motion fails.**

IV. STILL UNDER DISCUSSION

- A. Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who made a motion that the Committee continue the discussion on changing how the Mayor is elected.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.
Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent - 1. Motion passed.**

WITHDRAWN BY COUNCILLOR SOBRINO WHEELER FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH STAFF

- A. Role of Council in the hiring, evaluation, dismissal of the City Solicitor**
- B. Role of the Council about establishing budget priorities and/or ability to increase or decrease line items**



City of Cambridge

COF 2025 #5
IN CITY COUNCIL
February 13, 2025

Proposed Charter Updates

Submitted by:

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler
 Councillor Nolan
 Councillor Wilson
 Councillor Azeem

- **City Council budget authority**

- *Explanation:*

- Would give the City Council the power to increase parts of the annual budget by up to 10% compared to what is initially proposed by the City Manager—in addition to the Council’s current power to decrease parts of the budget—and as long as the overall budget total proposed by the City Manager remained the same

- *Rationale:*

- Would put the Cambridge City Council in line with the Boston City Council’s budget authority and would give the City Council the same budget authority the School Committee has
- The City Council’s current ability to reduce parts of the budget is ineffective without the ability to also increase funding in other sections
- In Cambridge, residents’ main ability to impact the budget during elections is through the City Council. The mechanisms the Council has to influence the budget are currently not as clear as they could be
- The Council having the power to increase parts of the budget would reduce the likelihood of the Council rejecting a proposed budget altogether, which would cause instability and potential staff layoffs

- *Implementation:*

- Would take effect upon passage for the following budget cycle

- **Solicitor appointed by the City Council**

- *Explanation:*

- The City Solicitor would be appointed by the City Council in a process similar to how the Council currently hires the City Clerk and the City Auditor. The appointment and any reappointment or termination would be the responsibility of the City Council

- *Rationale:*

- The head of the City’s Law Department should be selected by the body tasked with drafting Cambridge’s municipal laws
- The City Solicitor plays an important role in representing City residents and staff and should be chosen by the branch of government directly elected by voters

- A number of other cities including Malden currently have this structure for the City Solicitor
 - *Implementation:*
 - Would take effect upon passage
- **Elected mayor alongside a City Manager similar to Worcester**
 - *Explanation:*
 - City Council candidates would declare on the ballot whether they are also interested in serving as Mayor
 - In addition to appearing on the City Council section of the ballot, these candidates would appear on the Mayor section of the ballot
 - Voters would elect the Mayor via Ranked Choice Voting
 - The Mayor would retain the same powers they wield currently, alongside the City Manager, who would retain the same powers the position wields currently
 - *Rationale:*
 - Having a mayor who is popularly elected—similar to mayors in surrounding communities—would strengthen the mayor’s position in representing Cambridge and speaking on behalf of residents in regional forums
 - Cambridge’s current mayoral system can be confusing for residents
 - Currently, candidates are not asked to explain their vision for chairing the School Committee since it is unclear until after the election who will be potential candidates for Mayor in the following term. An elected mayor would require candidates to explain to voters their vision as chair of the School Committee and lead representative for the City
 - *Implementation:*
 - Would take effect starting with the 2027 municipal election
- **4 year terms, with elections every 2 years**
 - *Explanation:*
 - City Council terms would be extended to four years. Elections would still occur every two years, with five Council seats and the mayor up for election in one cycle, and four seats up for election two years later
 - Other aspects of City Council elections like ranked choice voting and at-large proportional representation would remain constant
 - *Rationale:*
 - Two year terms provide insufficient time for Councillors and City staff to accomplish the work of city government before campaign season begins again
 - *Implementation:*

- Would take effect starting with the 2027 municipal election

2027	2029	2031	2033
5 City Council seats up for election	4 City Council seats up for election	5 City Council seats up for election	4 City Council seats up for election
Mayor position up for election	Mayor position not up for election	Mayor position up for election	Mayor position not up for election

Submitted by:

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler

Councillor Nolan

Councillor Wilson

- **Department heads appointed by the City Manager and approved by the Council**
 - *Explanation:*
 - The City Manager would submit Department Head appointments and reappointments for approval by the City Council in a process similar to how the Council approves appointments to Boards and Commissions
 - *Rationale:*
 - Department Heads play a significant role in collaborating with the Council to achieve its goals and in executing the policies enacted by the Council
 - A number of other cities including Framingham currently have this structure for the appointment of Department Heads
 - The School Committee approves appointments of several director positions including CFO, assistant superintendents, and the head of special education
 - *Implementation:*
 - Would take effect upon passage for new appointments and reappointments going forward



City of Cambridge

COF 2025 #23
IN CITY COUNCIL
February 13, 2025

Megan B. Bayer
City Solicitor

Elliott J. Veloso
Deputy City Solicitor

Kate M. Kleimola
First Assistant City Solicitor



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Office of the City Solicitor
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Assistant City Solicitors
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Sean M. McKendry
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Sydney M. Wright
Evan C. Bjorklund
Franziskus Lepionka
Andrea Carrillo-Rhoads

Public Records Access Officer
Seah Levy

February 11, 2025

Cambridge City Council
Cambridge City Hall
795 Massachusetts Ave., 2nd Floor
Cambridge, MA 02139

Re: Response to Elected Mayor Options

To the Honorable, the City Council:

After the January 27, 2025, Special Meeting of the City Council, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler prepared alternative options for the selection of the mayor and requested input and feedback from the Law Department and Election Commission staff. Law Department and Election Commission staff reviewed the options Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler prepared and provided feedback regarding the implications of the proposals to him and Co-Chairs Siddiqui and Toner. The following options presented in this memorandum reflect the options presented by Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler with incorporated feedback from the Law Department, Election Commission staff, and the co-chairs.

Please note that these options have not been fully studied and that their feasibility and impact on voter behavior is unknown. Additional study may reveal further issues that could not have been anticipated without study and testing. The Election Commission also has not had the opportunity to review the proposals and provide input, depending on the direction the City Council wishes to proceed on this issue. When considering the options, the City Council should consider these overarching questions regarding any potential process.

1. What voting system are you using to select the mayor? Will it be ranked choice, or some other model?
2. How many ballots will be used? Will City Council and Mayoral race be on the same ballot or separate ballots?
3. Will there be an eligibility requirement to be mayor?
4. Will there be term limits for those serving as mayor? If so, what are those limits?

Option #1 - Ranked Choice

Electoral process:

To maintain the ranked choice system to elect the mayor, the election software could be run to elect nine councillors and then rerun to elect a single winner out of only those candidates who are eligible to become mayor. For example, if there are seven (7) eligible for mayor (councillors who have served at least one term) out of twenty-five (25) candidates on the ballot, the software would be rerun using only those seven names. If one of the seven indicated that they did not want to be mayor, then the software would be rerun using only those six candidates who expressed interest in running. The candidate who wins the rerun would be mayor elect.

Eligibility:

Eligible candidates for mayor will indicate they are interested in both seats when picking up nomination paper before circulation to voters. The Candidate must have served at least one (1) term as city councillor to be eligible to be a candidate for mayor. Eligible candidates for mayor will indicate they are interested in both seats when picking up nomination paper before circulation to voters. It is a policy decision for the Council to decide what eligibility criteria to include in the Charter.

Ballot Wording:

The eligible candidates would appear on the ballot with the words “Eligible for Mayor” next to their name and/or words “Candidate for Re-Election” depending on their eligibility. For example, a candidate who served a term, did not run for reelection, but qualifies to run again in the following election cycle would not be a “Candidate for Re-Election.” However, they would be allowed to have the “Eligible for Mayor” wording next to their name on the ballot because they served one term as councillor. It is a policy decision for the Council to decide what eligibility criteria to include in the Charter.

Term Limits:

The mayor may serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms as mayor. After two terms the candidate would no longer be eligible to submit nomination papers for mayor and city councillor. The candidate would only be permitted to circulate papers for city council and appear on the ballot only as “Candidate for Re-Election” to the office as city councillor. Again, it is a policy decision for the Council about what term limits to include.

Implications of Option #1:

By keeping ranked choice voting, it may be possible to conduct city council and mayoral races on the same ballot. However, this would have potential impacts on voter behavior, which is discussed further below. Employing ranked choice could also help to maintain continuity with the City’s proportional/ranked choice voting system with both races.

Option #2 – Adopt Another Process Without Ranked Choice

Electoral process:

The candidate receiving the highest first choice (#1) votes and is eligible to run for mayor and city councillor shall become mayor. Note that this selection method would not select the mayor

by ranked choice. This leads to issues in that you are running two elections with differing methodologies.

Eligibility, ballot wording, term limits:

Process and issues raised would be the same as Option #1.

Implications of Option #2:

Electing a mayor by having the candidate with the highest number of first choice votes conflicts with the City's proportional/ranked choice voting system because you are selecting the person with only the most first choice (#1) votes. As such, you are abandoning ranked choice voting in selecting the mayor while keeping it for selecting the councilors. The effect of Option #2 could fundamentally alter voter behavior in a more pronounced way than Option #1, which maintains ranked choice voting.

Possible Issues with Options #1 and #2

There may need to be separate ballots for mayor and city council races. The city's equipment and programing will need to be studied to determine feasibility.

Having a candidate's vote rank determine their eligibility for mayor could alter a voter's behavior that influences their vote, disfavoring candidates they would otherwise support. (E.g. "I support that candidate for city council, but now I will not rank them high because I don't like the idea of them being mayor.") Will voters feel disenfranchised when selecting a candidate for city council if they feel forced to rank them low because they do not want them to be mayor, or vice versa?

Other examples of possible altered voter behavior: If a voter wants to vote for only non-incumbents, then they will have no say in voting for who will be mayor. Or they will feel obligated to give one of the incumbents a ranking so that they do have a say in mayor, when otherwise they would not rank that candidate for just the city council. Or they might feel they have to give their number one vote to one of the incumbents eligible for mayor instead of a candidate they might prefer who is not eligible for mayor. The possibility of these changes giving incumbents advantages will need to be assessed for potential electoral and legal impacts.

Concerns have also been raised regarding the stipulation that to be eligible for the position of mayor, a candidate must have served at least one term as a City Councilor. No other elected office in the City has had such a prerequisite, which could impose limitations for new candidates, could negatively influence voter behavior, and potentially discourage candidates from running for office.

Option #3 – Alternative Mayor Selection Process Not Codified in Charter

Electoral process:

The mayor would be selected via Option #1 or Option #2, but the process would not be codified in the charter. Instead, the City Council would establish the process via another method, such as policy order, ordinance, the council's rules, or agreement between the


councilors. The City's charter would contain the same language where the city council would select the mayor via majority vote. See Section 97, City Plan E Charter. Additional language would be added, however, authorizing the City Council to select an alternative method for choosing the mayor if they wish.

Implications of Option #3:

Given that the City has never elected a mayor before in a ranked choice election, has not studied full implications regarding the proposal, and has not had the opportunity to meet with Election Commission, election experts, state officials, and the City's equipment vendors to assess feasibility or process, codifying a mayoral change in the charter now without further study could result in the discovery of issues and errors that could not be fixed without amending the charter again. Option #3 would avoid the potential dangers of codifying a process in the charter that has not been studied or tested.

In the event mayoral selection process had major issues, disenfranchises voters, or is legally challenged, it would be easier under Option #3 to revise the mayor selection process without having to amend the charter again. As such, Option #3 does offer a sort of "emergency fallback position," where the city council could choose the mayor from among the members through the traditional way in the event the system does not work or it was forced to abandon the new process. With additional time, the Election Commission could also work with the City's election vendors and ranked choice voting experts to get opinions and run the software with experimental ballots and nomination papers to see the impacts and to prevent voter disenfranchisement.

Very Truly Yours,


Megan B. Bayer
City Solicitor



City of Cambridge

COF 2025 #14
IN CITY COUNCIL
February 13, 2025

Megan B. Bayer
City Solicitor

Elliott J. Veloso
Deputy City Solicitor

Kate M. Kleimola
First Assistant City Solicitor



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

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Franziskus Lepionka
Andrea Carrillo-Rhoads

Public Records Access Officer
Seah Levy

January 27, 2025

Yi-An Huang
City Manager
Cambridge City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Re: Response to City Council Proposals Regarding Charter Changes.

Dear Mr. Huang,

The following is being presented in response to the five proposed changes to the City of Cambridge's charter as presented by members of the City Council. Councillor Toner, Co-Chair of the Special Committee of the City Council, requested City staff provide comments assessing the potential impacts and implications of these proposals. This response summarizes responses from the Law Department, Election Commission, Finance Department, and City department heads who have reviewed the proposals to evaluate their potential impacts.

The City's departments and staff share the Council's goal to strengthen our democracy, create a more inclusive local government, and chart a path toward more transparency and accountability. In this continuous endeavor, City staff appreciate the opportunity to provide their perspective and concerns regarding these proposed charter changes.

1. Proposal for City Council Budget Authority: "Would give the City Council the power to increase parts of the annual budget by up to 10% compared to what is initially proposed by the City Manager—in addition to the Council's current power to decrease parts of the budget—and as long as the overall budget total proposed by the City Manager remained the same."

Impacts: This proposal would fundamentally change how the City's budget process works, with significant impacts to the City's financial stability, ability to support Council priorities, and accountability. The proposal states that this would provide the Council with the same budget authority as the Boston City Council's but does not account for the Mayor's separate political authority and formal veto power in Boston's system. The existing structure where the Council hires, reviews, and can terminate the City Manager provides significant authority to shape the budget through an appropriate governance relationship.

A. The current budget process places Cambridge in a strong fiscal position that enables the City to support the Council's priorities.

- Developing an annual budget is a lengthy, year-round process for the City administration and requires the involvement of many employees with operational, programmatic, and financial expertise. The City Council may not have the time and budget analysis capacity to ensure that budget amendments are fiscally responsible and operationally feasible, or to weigh the trade-offs that come from reducing one department's budget to increase funding in another area.
- The current budget process has placed Cambridge in a strong fiscal position and has given the Council appropriate authority to set budget direction in a responsible, planned, and thought-out manner, resulting in substantial investments in universal preschool, affordable housing, climate, cycling safety ordinance, after-school programs, and much more. The Finance Committee plays a key role in guiding the budget process. Material amendments to the budget have been made during budget hearings based on Council feedback including added funding to the Public Health Department and Affordable Housing Trust in FY24.

B. The City's long-term financial sustainability and credit worthiness is based on consistent and stable financial planning. Significant increases and decreases late in the annual budget process create significant risk.

- The goal of the existing process is to work out funding priorities and City Council interests early in the budgeting process so the City Manager and City staff can assess financial impacts and plan the budget to meet those goals. Significant last-minute changes to the budget undermines the cooperation between the two branches through the budget process and compromises shared governance, transparency, and accountability.
- Significant increases and decreases in the budget by City Councillors would ultimately require a great deal of staff time to reconcile and reallocate, which increases the likelihood that the City will enter the next fiscal year without an approved final budget. This could negatively impact the quality and frequency of services the City provides, due to sudden elimination of programs, personnel, and potentially departments in order to balance the budget. This would also have an adverse impact on hirings and employee retention.
- Decreases and increases totaling 10% of the budget represent a significant and material change. Based on the FY25 Budget, 10% would constitute almost \$100 million dollars that potentially could be reallocated, removed, or canceled if reallocation is not possible. Even at a departmental level, this amounts to millions of dollars. Further, large budget-line items cannot be reduced (e.g., debt service, pension funding, health insurance, collectively bargained salary increases) which means that 10% of a total budget represents a much larger percentage change than it appears.

Additional challenges could occur with the elimination of union positions or contractual obligations without appropriate process, which could lead to union grievances and litigation.

C. A key difference between Cambridge and Boston is that Boston has a Strong Mayor system of government, and the Mayor can veto budget amendments that negatively impact programs and Boston's finances.

- The Boston City Council can override a veto should it be committed to budget changes. In Council/Manager forms of government, City Managers are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the City Council, who can terminate them if they are not responsive. The City Manager has no veto power in the event the Council's proposed changes were not feasible, fiscally irresponsible, illegal, or would otherwise negatively impact programs or core operational functions.

2. Proposal for City Solicitor Appointment by the City Council: "The City Solicitor would be appointed by the City Council in a process similar to how the Council currently hires the City Clerk and the City Auditor. The appointment and any reappointment or termination would be the responsibility of the City Council."

Impacts: This proposal overemphasizes the legislative function of the City Solicitor, who also has significant responsibilities over legal administration, employment and labor matters, litigation, and contracts. The current structure provides an avenue for Council authority through the City Manager and does not risk politicizing the role or undermining the Solicitor's ability to represent the City.

A. The City Solicitor must be able to provide impartial legal advice to both the City Administration and the City Council.

- The larger portion of the City Solicitor's responsibilities are to ensure the City Administration is well represented and making sound legal decisions. While advising the Council on legislation is a critical part of the role, it's important that the Solicitor is hired and managed as part of the City Administration rather than as an extension of the legislative branch.
- The existing system provides significant authority for the Council through feedback and management of the City Manager, especially with the implementation of a rigorous and transparent annual performance review process.

B. Making the City Solicitor position a political hire limits the ability to recruit and retain qualified candidates.

- Requiring the City Solicitor to be appointed and reappointed by the City Council could undermine the ability to attract the best applicants, who may have concerns about the politics of public appointment, re-appointment, and review.

C. The public hiring and approval process could undermine the City Solicitor’s ability to represent the City.

- Approval, reapproval, and hiring process would be public and could not be done in executive session. Opponents in legal cases against the City could potentially glean legal strategies and positions of the City from the City Solicitor’s required disclosures to the City Council.

3. Proposal for City Council Approval of City Manager’s Department Head Appointments:

“The City Manager would be required to submit all Department Head appointments and reappointments for approval by the City Council in a process similar to how the Council approves appointments to Boards and Commissioners.”

Impacts: This proposal would undermine the executive authority and accountability of the City Manager, make the hiring of department heads more political, and make it harder for the City to recruit and hire the best candidates.

A. The current structure provides the Council clear accountability and feedback to the City Manager over department performance.

- Under this proposal, the City Manager would not have authority to hire, manage, and terminate department heads, which would significantly undermine the executive function of the City. This would be less transparent and accountable, and does not represent best practices in governance, particularly for a large and complex organization dedicated to high performance.
- The existing system provides significant authority for the Council through feedback and management of the City Manager, especially with the implementation of a rigorous and transparent annual performance review process.

B. The political nature of requiring approval and renewals of department head appointments by the City Council create barriers to City leadership and staff effectively doing their jobs.

- Fear of losing City Council approval or reapproval could result in reduced candor from department heads on issues facing the City. Department heads could be afraid of performing their duties, even if legally required, if such actions could impact on a Councillor’s interests or constituency.

C. Making department heads political hires limits the ability to recruit and retain qualified candidates.

- Requiring department heads to be appointed and reappointed by the City Council could undermine the ability to attract the best applicants, who may have concerns about the politics of public appointment, re-appointment, and review.

- Requiring appointments would create terms for all department heads, which would potentially create short-term uncertainty and further make leadership positions in the City of Cambridge unattractive.

4. Proposal for an elected Mayor alongside a City Manager (similar to Worcester): “City Council candidates would declare on the ballot whether they are also interested in serving as mayor. In addition to appearing on the City Council section of the ballot, these candidates would also appear on the Mayor section of the ballot. Voters would elect the Mayor via Ranked Choice Voting. The Mayor would retain the same powers they wield currently, alongside the City Manager, who would retain the same powers the position wields currently.”

Impacts: This proposal is similar to how Worcester selects a mayor. However, there are differences, which have operational implications and could lead to discrepancies. The key difference is that Worcester does not have proportional/ranked choice voting. Instead, Worcester has a hybrid form of representative government consisting of at-large and district representation. In Worcester, only at-large candidates can run for mayor.

A. Having the mayoral and city councillor races on separate ballots could cause discrepancies in our proportional representation/ranked choice system.

- Because of the format of the City’s ranked choice voting ballots, the mayoral race and council race would need to be printed on two separate ballots, unlike in Worcester where they are printed on the same page. Voters are not required to vote in any race they do not wish to vote in. For example, in the current systems, some voters only vote for City Council and not for School Committee, and vice versa. Adding a third ballot raises the possibility that voters could opt to only vote for mayor and not City Council and School Committee, or ignore the mayoral ballot entirely. There is therefore a possibility that at the end of an election the voting tallies for City Council and for mayor are materially different.
- If its required that the winner of the mayoral election must also win a City Council seat, situations could arise where a candidate wins the mayoral race but does not win a seat on the City Council, or where a City Council candidate receives the highest number of votes for councillor but does not win the mayoral race.

B. Additional areas for consideration.

- Adding an extra ballot will require additional processing time at the polls, which could discourage voter participation. Voters may opt to leave early or only request ballots for certain races to save time. The extra ballot may also lead to voter confusion.
- Election procedures would need to be updated to account for additional nomination papers for mayor, including separate requirements for nomination papers.

- The City Council may also want to consider additional areas such as term limits and role on the School Committee.

5. Proposal for four-year terms for City Councillors with elections every two years: “City Council terms would be extended to four years. Elections would still occur every two years, with five Council seats and the mayor up for election in one cycle, and four seats up for election two years later. Other aspects of City Council elections like rank choice voting and at-large proportional representation would remain constant.”

Impacts: Staggering the at-large City Council seats into a five seat/four seat cycle results in multiple issues that could potentially jeopardize the City’s proportional/ranked choice voting system. Staggering City Council seats creates different vote quotas for each cycle, leading to a less representative Council, a high likelihood for civil rights lawsuits against the City, and implications for the School Committee.

- A. Cycle One structurally becomes more desirable for candidates, as the vote quota is lower and the Mayor can only be elected in Cycle One.
- Quota in the City’s proportional/ranked choice voting system is determined by dividing the total number of valid ballots cast by the number of positions to be elected plus one and then adding one to the resulting dividend, disregarding fractions.
 - Currently, there are nine City Council seats open every municipal election. Assuming 25,000 ballots were cast, the present quota needed to win a seat on the City Council would be **2,501**. (25,000 divided by 10 (9 seats plus 1), plus 1).
 - Cycle One would have five seats open. Again, assuming 25,000 ballots were cast, the quota needed to win a seat on the City Council would now be **4,167**. (25,000 divided by 6 (5 seats plus 1), plus 1).
 - Cycle Two would have four seats open. Again, assuming 25,000 ballots were cast, the quota needed to win a seat on the City Council would now be **5,501**. (25,000 divided by 5 (4 seats plus 1), plus 1).
 - As a result, it is **harder for a candidate to run for office running in Cycle One and Two compared to the City’s current municipal election quotas.**
 - It is **also much harder for a candidate to win an election in Cycle Two compared to Cycle One.** In fact, a candidate would need to **double** the number of votes needed compared to the City’s current municipal election quotas.

- This structural unfairness is amplified with the Mayor only being elected in Cycle One. No candidate running in Cycle Two would ever have the opportunity to become mayor.

B. In the staggered system, the difference in the voting cycles hinders the system's ability to fairly represent the City.

- Danger of interest groups, political parties, or bad actors attempting to influence the election by making large campaign donations and having favored candidates elected in a "bloc" in Cycle One. If all five seats are won by candidates supported by these interests, they would have a foolproof majority for four years, regardless of who wins in Cycle Two.
- The higher vote quota in Cycle Two favors candidates with more resources and better funding, due to the need to reach out and convince more voters to meet the quota. Minority candidates, new candidates, or candidates with less resources are more likely to lose as a result.
- Staggering the terms would result in a less representative and diverse council. The reason multi-winner ranked choice is called Proportional Representation is because it allows minority groups of voters to be represented in proportion to their share of the electorate. The more elected, the more the body reflects the diversity of the electorate.
 - For example, under the current 9-member system, minority groups can win at least one seat on the City Council with 10-15% of the voters, where they only need at least 10% to reach quota.
 - With staggered terms, this minority group would have no representation, as they would need at least 16.7% of voters in Cycle One and at least 20% of voters in Cycle Two to get even one seat. Majority groups would dominate both cycles in comparison to the current system, and the City Council would be less reflective of the diversity of the voters.

C. There are potential implications on the School Committee, which currently consists of six seats elected at-large with the Mayor as the seventh member and Chair.

- If the School Committee members also have staggered four-year terms, the unfairness issues noted in Cycle One and Cycle Two are further amplified.
 - Currently, there are six School Committee seats open every municipal election. Assuming 25,000 ballots were cast, the present quota needed to win a seat on the School Committee would be **3,572**. (25,000 divided by 7 (6 seats plus 1), plus 1).
 - If divided into cycles, there would only be three School Committee seats open every municipal election. Again, assuming 25,000 ballots were cast, the quota

needed to win a seat on the School Committee would be **6,251** (25,000 divided by 4, plus 1).

- This further increases the importance of the Cycle One election, as the mayor serves as chair of the School Committee. Again, interest groups, political parties, or bad actors could, through campaign donations or influence, have favored candidates win the mayoral race and all school committee seats, giving them a foolproof majority for four years regardless of who wins in Cycle Two.
- D. These issues raise a high likelihood of civil rights lawsuits against the City on the basis that the voting system now perpetuates unfairness towards minorities and candidates with less resources. The City could be forced to abandon Proportional Representation as a result.
- E.g.: Huot v. City of Lowell, 17-CV-10895 (D. Mass. 2017). Minority Hispanic/Latino and Khmer voters sued the City of Lowell, alleging that the City's at-large, one-person one-vote system of municipal elections diluted their votes and prevented their ability to elect candidates of their choice. As part of a Federal Consent Decree, Lowell agreed to abandon the at-large, one-person one-vote system and change its municipal election system to either an at-large, ranked choice voting system or a hybrid at-large/district system. The at-large ranked choice voting system would have allowed Hispanic/Latino and Khmer voters to elect candidates of their choice with at least 10-15% of total votes and nine council seats. With the hybrid at-large/district system, districts are drawn so that some are majority Hispanic/Latino and Khmer.

We will be available to discuss further and answer questions at the Special Committee meeting. Additionally, the Law Department is in the process of incorporating the Special Committee's December 9, 2024 votes into the draft charter prepared by the Charter Review Committee, as well as noting other areas in the draft charter for the Council's consideration, and we will provide the draft charter to the Council after incorporating any additional changes that are voted on at this meeting.

Very Truly Yours,



Megan B. Bayer
City Solicitor



City of Cambridge

COF 2025 #6
IN CITY COUNCIL
February 13, 2025

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE/CHARTER REVIEW
Monday, December 9, 2024 Recessed and
Reconvened January 27, 2025**

ORDINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Councillor Siddiqui, Co-Chair
Councillor Toner, Co- Chair
Councillor Azeem
Vice Mayor McGovern
Councillor Nolan
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler
Councillor Wilson
Councillor Zusy
Mayor Simmons

A public meeting of the Cambridge City Council’s Ordinance Committee was held on Monday, December 4, 2024. The meeting was Called to Order at 1:00 p.m. by the Co-Chair, Councillor Siddiqui. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation. This public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and by remote participation via Zoom.

At the request of Mayor Simmons, Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

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

Present – 7, Absent – 2. Quorum established.

*Vice Mayor McGovern and Councillor Zusy were present in the Sullivan Chamber at 1:05p.m.

*Mayor Simmons went from in person participation to remote at 1:16p.m.

Mayor Simmons offered opening remarks. Co-Chair Siddiqui resumed Chair of the meeting and offered opening remarks and noted that the Call of the meeting was to review and discuss the recommendations from the Charter Review Committee (CRC) and any additional suggestions from the full City Council pertaining to the Cambridge City Charter. Present at the meeting was Megan Bayer, City Solicitor and Elliott Veloso, First Assistant City Solicitor. Tanya Ford, Executive Director of the Election Commission, was present via Zoom.

Co-Chair Siddiqui opened Public Comment.

Robert Winters, Cambridge, MA, offered comments related to the history of the City Charter and suggestions made from the Charter Review Committee.

Co-Chair Siddiqui and Co-Chair Toner shared what the goals and intentions for the meeting were, noting that there have been previous discussions regarding the CRC recommendations in the Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Megan Bayer who reviewed how this Special Committee of the Whole would not be making the final approval of the CRC recommendations but would be making recommendations that the full City Council would vote on in a regular City Council meeting. Megan Bayer explained that during this Committee meeting, the recommendations would be adopted by a majority vote.

Co-Chair Siddiqui shared that the first CRC recommendation for review and discussion would be on the City Manager or Strong Mayor form of government, noting that the CRC did not reach a 2/3rds threshold for either option, but provided their thoughts on the pros and cons of each. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Nolan who shared that she would like to have further discussion on this topic. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner, Vice Mayor McGovern, Councillor Azeem, Councillor Zusy, Councillor Wilson, and Mayor Simmons who shared comments that were in support of a City Manager form of government. Councillor Azeem offered comments that were in favor of having the Mayor be the City Council President with the City Manager form of government. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who offered comments that were in favor of a Strong Mayor form of government as well as more discussion on how the Mayor is elected. Vice Mayor McGovern and Councillor Toner also agreed that there could be more discussion on how the mayor is elected.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommends to the full City Council to maintain the City Manager form of government.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – No

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – No

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Yes

Yes – 7, No – 2. Motion passed

Co-Chair Siddiqui shared that the next item for discussion would be a proposed modern charter overview and if the City Council would want new Charter language drafted. Co-Chair Siddiqui shared that the CRC voted in favor to recommend to the City Council the drafting of new Charter text. Megan Bayer explained that if the Council voted in favor of this recommendation, the Law

Department would review and work on the drafted Charter language from the CRC and come back to the Council with proposed language for additional discussion and review. Megan Bayer noted that the CRC's draft Charter language was part of their final report and can be viewed by the public and Councillors.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion to that the Special Committee of the Whole recommends to the full City Council adoption of modern charter text structure and ask the City Solicitor's Office to begin drafting language.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes
 Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes
 Councillor Nolan – Yes
 Councillor Siddiqui – Yes
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes
 Councillor Toner – Yes
 Councillor Wilson – Yes
 Councillor Zusy – Yes
 Mayor Simmons – Absent

Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Siddiqui explained that the next two topics to be discussed were related to expanding enfranchisement and equity and that the first vote would be on maintaining an at-large city council elected by proportional representation. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Nolan who offered comments that were in favor of keeping proportional representation.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommends to the full City Council that the City maintain an at-large City Council elected by proportional representation.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes
 Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes
 Councillor Nolan – Yes
 Councillor Siddiqui – Yes
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes
 Councillor Toner – Yes
 Councillor Wilson – Yes
 Councillor Zusy – Yes
 Mayor Simmons – Absent

Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Siddiqui shared that the next vote would be to maintain an at-large City Council of nine members. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner, Vice Mayor McGovern, and Councillor Azeem who spoke in favor of maintaining the at-large nine members. Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Nolan who provided comments on why she would be voting against this recommendation by sharing that she believes it would be beneficial to have a combination of both at large and district representation as elected officials. Co-Chair Siddiqui

shared that she agreed with comments made by the Vice Mayor and that she would support maintaining at-large City Councillors of nine members who represent all districts of the City.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommends to the full City Council that the City maintain an at-large City Council of nine members.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – No

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Absent

Yes – 7, No – 1, Absent – 1. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Siddiqui noted that the next three topics that would be up for discussion would be enfranchising non-citizens in municipal elections, entrenching 16- and 17-year-olds in municipal elections, and moving municipal elections to even years. Co-Chair Siddiqui shared concerns about these topics not being favorable at the Legislature and offered the suggestion of filing a Home Rule Petition in the future.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who suggested that it may be better to keep the topic of enfranchising non-citizens in municipal elections for more discussion, with the possibility of pursuing filing a Home Rule Petition in the future. Co-Chair Toner explained that the goal of this Committee is to update the Charter and have changes prepared for the ballot in November, pointing out that this topic may take longer to get results at the State House.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who agreed with comments made by Co-Chair Toner regarding keeping this topic up for discussion and filing a Home Rule Petition. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler shared support for enfranchising non-citizens in municipal elections.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Nolan who shared her support for allowing this to happen but agrees this could be a challenging topic to send to the Legislature. Councillor Nolan agreed that holding this for more discussion would be more beneficial.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Vice Mayor McGovern who shared support for enfranchising non-citizens in municipal elections and believes that they should have a say who represents them in their community. Vice Mayor McGovern spoke in favor of filing a Home Rule Petition and keeping this topic for more discussion.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Zusy who stressed that voting is a privilege of citizenship as well as running and serving in office. Councillor Zusy shared challenges that the Election Commission may encounter if non-citizens were able to vote in the municipal elections.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Wilson who agrees that this should be held for more discussion and shared it would be important to get more feedback from the community.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Azeem who indicated that he believes there needs to be more information and research conducted on increasing franchise in elections.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Megan Bayer and asked if she had any recommendations on how the Committee could move forward with this topic. Megan Bayer offered the suggestion of referring this matter to a different committee for further discussion related to pursuing a Home Rule Petition.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council that the matter of enfranchising non-citizens in municipal elections be referred to the Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee for discussion and to consider a separate Home Rule Petition.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes
 Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes
 Councillor Nolan – Yes
 Councillor Siddiqui – Yes
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes
 Councillor Toner – Yes
 Councillor Wilson – Yes
 Councillor Zusy – Yes
 Mayor Simmons – Absent

Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who suggested that a similar motion be made for enfranchising 16- and 17-year-olds in municipal elections.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council that the matter of enfranchising 16- and 17-year-olds in municipal elections be referred to the Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee for discussion and to consider a separate Home Rule Petition.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes
 Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes
 Councillor Nolan – Yes
 Councillor Siddiqui – Yes
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes
 Councillor Wilson – Yes
 Councillor Zusy – Yes
 Mayor Simmons – Absent

Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Committee members for comments regarding moving municipal elections to even years.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Nolan who spoke in favor of moving to even years, pointing out that it would be better for democracy and could encourage more people to come out and vote if municipal elections were on the same day as state and federal. Councillor Nolan shared concerns about the Legislature not approving this matter.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who shared concerns about moving to even year elections and noted that it could be overwhelming for voters. Co-Chair Toner also shared that local issues that are being addressed by those campaigning for office on a municipal level could get lost due to voters focusing more on state and national matters.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Azeem who offered the suggestion of referring this matter to the Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee for further discussion and provided examples of how this could be beneficial.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Vice Mayor McGovern who shared he would be in favor of keeping this for more discussion and stressed the importance of understanding why more people do not come out to vote during municipal elections and how the City can improve those numbers.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Zusy who offered comments that were in favor of keeping municipal elections to odd years.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler and Councillor Wilson who were both in favor of referring this matter to the Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee for further discussion.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council that the matter of moving municipal elections to even years be referred to the Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee for discussion and to consider a separate Home Rule Petition. Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes
 Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes
 Councillor Nolan – Yes
 Councillor Siddiqui – Yes
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes
 Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes
 Councillor Zusy – Yes
 Mayor Simmons – Absent

Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Siddiqui shared that the next vote would be on creating more flexibility and modernize election voting and tabulation methods in charter language. Co-Chair Siddiqui pointed out that the CRC voted favorably to recommend election procedure language changed to use any new tabulations method, election procedure language be changed to authorize the City to use any voting method of proportional representation, and that the remaining election procedures and relevant laws be compiled, updated, and drafted by the City, Election Commission, and Law Department consistent with all CRC recommendations.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Nolan who spoke in favor of allowing other tabulation methods but should be specific on which methods would be possible.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Tanya Ford who shared that the current language is very outdated and that the Election Commission would be in favor of discussing and proposing changes to the language.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council to create more flexibility and modernize election voting and tabulation methods in charter language and draft language to be developed by the Law Department and Election Commission before a final vote.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes
 Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes
 Councillor Nolan – Yes
 Councillor Siddiqui – Yes
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes
 Councillor Toner – Yes
 Councillor Wilson – Yes
 Councillor Zusy – Yes
 Mayor Simmons – Absent

Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Siddiqui shared that the next votes would be regarding different matters related to participation and accessibility of government for all residents. Co-Chair Siddiqui shared that the CRC voted favorably on the following recommendations: participation in and accessibility of government for all residents by creating resident assemblies and public tracking mechanisms of council policy orders.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner, Councillor Azeem, Councillor Nolan, Vice Mayor McGovern, Councillor Zusy, and Councillor Wilson who are shared they were not in support of creating resident assemblies and pointed out that there are already many advisory

groups and boards that offer opportunities for citizen engagement. Co-Chair Siddiqui agreed with their comments.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who offered comments that were in support of resident assemblies.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Megan Bayer and Elliott Veloso who provided a brief overview of the process on how resident assemblies could be created and examples of how they were created in other communities.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council participation and accessibility of government for all residents by creating resident assemblies.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – No

Vice Mayor McGovern – No

Councillor Nolan – No

Councillor Siddiqui – No

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – No

Councillor Wilson – No

Councillor Zusy – No

Mayor Simmons – Absent

Yes – 1, No – 7, Absent – 1. Motion fails.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Committee members for comments regarding public tracking mechanisms for policy orders.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who shared his support for having this be enshrined in the Charter. Megan Bayer provided an overview of the process the City Council can use if this were to move forward.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner, Councillor Nolan, Councillor Azeem, and Councillor Zusy who offered comments that were not in support of this recommendation. Committee members, including Co-Chair Siddiqui, agreed that there needs to be better tracking mechanisms, but they are not sure if this is something that should be in the City Charter. Committee members also agreed that to move forward with this recommendation, it may be better for the City Council to work with staff on how the current structure can improve.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council public tracking mechanisms of council policy orders.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – No

Vice Mayor McGovern – No

Councillor Nolan – No

Councillor Siddiqui – No
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes
 Councillor Toner – No
 Councillor Wilson – No
 Councillor Zusy – No
 Mayor Simmons – No

Yes – 1, No – 8. Motion fails.

Co-Chair Siddiqui shared the next two matters for discussion were recommendations from the CRC relating to effectiveness of government and included matters regarding effectiveness of government through measurable goalsetting and maintaining two-year terms for City Councillors.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler and Mayor Simmons for comments regarding recommending effectiveness of government through measurable goalsetting. Both Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler and Mayor Simmons agreed that this is a recommendation that should stay within the City Council Rules and not the Charter. Co-Chair Siddiqui agreed with Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler and Mayor Simmons.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council improving the effectiveness of government through measurable goalsetting.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – No
 Vice Mayor McGovern – No
 Councillor Nolan – No
 Councillor Siddiqui – No
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – No
 Councillor Toner – No
 Councillor Wilson – No
 Councillor Zusy – No
 Mayor Simmons – No

No – 9. Motion fails.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Vice Mayor McGovern, Councillor Zusy, Councillor Nolan, Co-Chair Toner, and Councillor Azeem who all agreed that the recommendation by the CRC on maintaining two-year terms for City Councillors should be held for further discussion by this Committee at the next meeting. Committee members shared the pros and cons of both keeping the current two term length and switching to longer term lengths.

Co-Chair Siddiqui shared that the final five recommendations from the CRC would be under responsiveness and accountability. The recommendations included responsiveness and accountability through delineating budget process and priority setting, giving the City Council the power to add or increase line items in the budget, enshrining resident initiative provision, enshrining group petition provision, and a campaign finance study committee.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who suggested that the recommendation on responsiveness and accountability through delineating budget process and prioritizing setting be in the City Council Rules and not the Charter. Co-Chair Toner pointed out that the City Manager and staff offer plenty of access to budget-related topics and the process of starting budget planning has started sooner, which has only been beneficial to the City. Co-Chair Toner noted that by starting the process sooner, discussions can happen to share concerns, suggestions, and priorities ahead of the budget hearings.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council to increase responsiveness and accountability through delineating budget process and priority setting.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – No

Vice Mayor McGovern – No

Councillor Nolan – No

Councillor Siddiqui – No

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – No

Councillor Toner – No

Councillor Wilson – No

Councillor Zusy – No

Mayor Simmons – No

No – 9. Motion fails.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who shared that he would be in favor of having more discussion on giving the City Council the power to add or increase line items in the budget. Councillor Nolan and Vice Mayor McGovern shared that they agreed with holding for further discussion. Councillor Nolan pointed out how the School Committee has more responsibility and authority with their own budget.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who offered comments that were not in favor of this recommendation, sharing that he is happy with the current authority the City Council has with the budget.

Co-Chair Siddiqui shared that, based on the comments made by Committee members, this recommendation would be held for further discussion at the next meeting.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion to extend the meeting by fifteen minutes.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes
 Mayor Simmons – Yes
Yes – 9. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Siddiqui offered comments regarding the CRC recommendation to enshrine a resident initiative provision and what the goal of the CRC was behind that recommendation.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who asked Megan Bayer what citizens can do now through a petition process. Megan Bayer provided an overview of how citizens can file zoning petitions and changes to municipal ordinances. Elliott Veloso provided additional information on how this recommendation is used within towns and town meetings.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Azeem and Vice Mayor McGovern who offered comments that were not in favor of resident initiative provisions, pointing out that Cambridge is a city, not a town, and a recommendation like this may not benefit a city. Co-Chair Siddiqui shared she agreed with comments that have been made.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council to enshrine a resident initiative provision.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll

Councillor Azeem – No
 Vice Mayor McGovern – No
 Councillor Nolan – No
 Councillor Siddiqui – No
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – No
 Councillor Toner – No
 Councillor Wilson – No
 Councillor Zusy – No
 Mayor Simmons – No

No – 9. Motion fails.

Co-Chair Siddiqui offered comments regarding the CRC recommendation to enshrine a group initiative provision and what the goal of the CRC was behind that recommendation.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council to enshrine a group initiative provision.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll

Councillor Azeem – No
 Vice Mayor McGovern – No
 Councillor Nolan – No
 Councillor Siddiqui – No
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – No
 Councillor Toner – No
 Councillor Wilson – No

Councillor Zusy – No
 Mayor Simmons – No
No – 9. Motion fails.

Co-Chair Siddiqui shared that the final recommendation for discussion would be enshrining a campaign finance study committee, which would have the ability to make campaign finance reforms.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who shared he does not believe this is something that should be in the Charter and asked Megan Bayer if the City Council did decide to have a campaign finance committee separate from the Council, would they have the authority to implement campaign finance reform. Megan Bayer shared that there would be no legal issue with convening a body to study the issue, but to make any campaign finance changes that would require action from the State Legislature. Co-Chair Toner suggested that his recommendation could be referred to the Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee for more discussion.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Councillor Nolan who suggested that the Committee could have more discussion on this recommendation but does not believe it should be in the City Charter and pointed out that there is campaign finance limitation language in the Ordinance. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler and Co-Chair Siddiqui agreed that there could be more discussion on this recommendation.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who asked Megan Bayer for clarification on this recommendation if the City Council were to file a Home Rule Petition. Megan Bayer shared that this is something her department would have to look in to further.

Co-Chair Siddiqui recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommend to the full City Council that the matter of enshrining a campaign study finance committee be referred to the Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee for discussion.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll

Councillor Azeem – No
 Vice Mayor McGovern – No
 Councillor Nolan – No
 Councillor Siddiqui – Yes
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes
 Councillor Toner – No
 Councillor Wilson – No
 Councillor Zusy – No
 Mayor Simmons – No

Yes – 2, No – 7. Motion fails.

Co-Chair Siddiqui shared that the Co-Chairs are actively trying to get a meeting scheduled to continue this discussion in January.

**Co-Chair Siddiqui made a motion to recess the meeting,
Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes
Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes
Councillor Nolan – Yes
Councillor Siddiqui – Yes
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes
Councillor Toner – Yes
Councillor Wilson – Yes
Councillor Zusy – Yes
Mayor Simmons – Yes

Yes – 9. Motion passed.

The Special Committee of the Whole went into recess at 3:13p.m.

On Monday, January 27, 2025, the Cambridge City Council’s Special Committee of the Whole that recessed on December 9, 2024, reconvened at 11:00p.m. by the Co-Chair, Councillor Toner. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation. This public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and remote participation via Zoom.

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

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

Present – 8, Absent -1. Quorum established.

*Mayor Simmons was marked present and remote at 12:11p.m.

Co-Chair Toner offered opening remarks and noted that the Call of the meeting was to resume the review and discussion of recommendations from the Charter Review Committee and any additional suggestions from the full City Council pertaining to the Cambridge City Charter. Present at the meeting was City Manager, Yi-An Huang, Deputy City Manager, Owen O’Riordan, City Solicitor, Megan Bayer, Assistant City Manager of Finance, Claire Spinner, Budget Director, Taha Jennings, Assistant City Manger of Human Services, Ellen Semonoff, Executive Director for the Election Commission, Tanya Ford, Assistant Director for the Election Commission, Lesley Waxman, and First Assistant City Solicitor, Elliot Veloso.

Co-Chair Toner opened Public Comment

Suzanne Blier, 5 Fuller Place, Cambridge, MA, offered comments and suggestions related to proposed Charter changes.

Robert Eckstut, 251 Western Avenue, Cambridge, MA, offered comments that were in opposition to the proposed Charter changes.

Marc Truant, 32 Warren Street, Cambridge, MA, offered comments and suggestions related to proposed Charter changes.

Siobhan McDonough, Walden Street, Cambridge, MA, offered comments and concerns related to proposed Charter changes.

Helen Walker, 43 Linnaean Street, Cambridge, MA, offered comments that were in opposition to the proposed Charter changes.

Dan Totten, 54 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge, MA, offered comments and concerns related to proposed Charter changes.

Robert Winters, Cambridge, MA, offered comments that were in opposition to the proposed Charter changes.

Heather Hoffman, 213 Hurley Street, Cambridge, MA, offered comments and suggestions related to proposed Charter changes.

Patrick Magee, Cambridge, MA, offered comments that were in opposition to the proposed Charter changes.

Marie Saccoccio, 55 Otis Street, Cambridge, MA, offered comments that were in opposition to the proposed Charter changes.

Co-Chair Toner provided a brief review of the previous meeting that was held on December 9, 2024. Co-Chair Toner recognized Megan Bayer for clarification regarding initiative petitions in Cambridge. Megan Bayer and Lesley Waxman both shared how the City has the ability to do initiative petitions pursuant to state law even though it is not in the Charter.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Nolan who offered brief remarks regarding updates to the Charter. Co-Chair Toner shared that the goal of the Committee is to assist with the update and modernization of language in the Charter.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who pointed out that there have been previous hearings held before the December 9, 2024 meeting and that this has been an ongoing conversation within the City Council.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who provided a brief review of the five proposed changes that were submitted by himself and Councillors Nolan, Wilson, and Azeem. The proposed changes were provided in advance of the meeting and included in the Agenda Packet. Councillor Wilson suggested that the Committee go through the proposed

changes one by one for discussion. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler reviewed proposed change number one, City Council budget authority, noting that it would allow the Council to collaborate more closely with the budget process.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Nolan for comments related to proposed change number one. Councillor Nolan explained why she was in strong support of this proposed change, while also pointing out that the Cambridge School Committee has more authority as it relates to the budget. Councillor Nolan added that this proposed change would create good governance and provide more discipline to the Council.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Wilson who thanked the City Solicitor and the administration team for their work on responding to the proposed changes and how the Council moves forward with next steps. Councillor Wilson shared her excitement for improving the Charter language, while also pointing out that it will not be a perfect Charter, and more work will continue to be needed. Councillor Wilson offered comments that were in support of proposed change number one, proposed change number three, elected Mayor alongside a City Manager, and shared challenges with two-year term limits. Councillor Wilson also shared how other municipalities have staggered term limits that work effectively.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Deputy City Manager O’Riordan who shared strong concerns regarding City Council budget authority, stressing how important it is to maintain and achieve the balance that is needed for the financial success of the City. Taha Jennings highlighted how the City Council role has been very effective at shaping the budget by having discussions on City Council priorities and goals. Taha Jennings pointed out that the Finance and Budget teams will continue to work with the City Council to achieve those goals financially. Taha Jennings also noted how the budget is developed to support and reflect the priorities of the City Council. Taha Jennings thanked the City Council for sharing so much interest in the budget. Claire Spinner provided additional comments that supported the Deputy City Manager and Budget Director, and highlighted how the budget is a complex, year-round process that involves many employees with financial expertise. Claire Spinner provided a breakdown of the budget percentages and noted where the City Council would not have authority to change and noted that she believes that the current budget process with the finance team and City Council provides more transparency. Ellen Semonoff provided a brief overview of the budget process for DHSP and shared concerns about whether her budget was to change and how that would affect programs.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who shared some concerns with the budget process in the past as it relates to Council priorities being recognized and added that it is important to be more collaborative with the finance team to continue to be consistent with budget efforts. Co-Chair Siddiqui shared that what she heard from Councillors is that there is something missing within the Council relating to the budget process.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Vice Mayor McGovern who shared that there have been examples of when the City has responded to Council priorities and there have been examples where they have not. Vice Mayor McGovern pointed out the importance of stability when talking about the budget and shared a brief overview of how the School Committee addresses their priorities within the budget. The Vice Mayor offered the suggestion of the City putting a certain amount of money

aside for the Council where they would have discretionary power over that amount, and asked the City if that is something that would be possible to do in the future. Taha Jennings responded by sharing the challenges that could arise with putting money aside. Taha Jennings noted that it is important for the City to continue to collaborate and enhance communication with the Council early on in the budget process. The Vice Mayor shared he would not support proposed change number one due to unintended consequences.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Zusy who shared that she was not in support of proposed change number one and believes that the City is doing a good job managing the budget and does not believe that the Council has enough information to alter the budget.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Mayor Simmons who asked Taha Jennings what impact this proposed change would have if the Council were to have more budget authority. Taha Jennings shared how the AAA rating and budget approach could be affected. Mayor Simmons shared concerns about proposed change number one and shared she would not be in favor. Mayor Simmons stressed the importance of community involvement and providing more community engagement as it relates to the budget.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who made a motion to extend the meeting to 1:15p.m.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Yes

Yes – 9. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who made a motion to close public comment.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Yes

Yes – 9. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Azeem who pointed out that many Councillors have shared interest in having more input with the budget and noted the concerns addressed by City staff. Councillor Azeem suggested that proposed change number one be withdrawn, and Councillors work with City staff on a different approach and language to City Council budget authority.

Co-Chair Toner shared that he believes the previous Finance Committee Co-Chairs have been conducting the budget process well and is not in favor of proposed change number one. Co-Chair Toner noted that the Council's role is to give the City Manager guidance regarding the budget and offered suggestions on more community engagement.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who shared he would support withdrawing the proposal at this time and come back to have more discussion. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler noted that the goal of this proposal was for the City Council to have more productive engagement earlier in the process.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Nolan who provided additional information on why Committee members brought this proposal forward.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who withdrew proposed change number one. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler provided a brief overview of proposed change number four, four-year terms, with elections every two years.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Nolan who shared she would be interested in discussing four-year terms further and address how it would be operational and impact future elections.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Vice Mayor McGovern who offered comments that were in opposition to the proposed change at this time.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who suggested that the Committee take a vote on this proposed change and possibly move this for more discussion to the Government Operations, Rules, and Claims Committee.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommends to the full City Council four-year terms for City Council, with elections every two years.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – No

Vice Mayor McGovern – No

Councillor Nolan – No

Councillor Siddiqui – No

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – No

Councillor Toner – No

Councillor Wilson – No

Councillor Zusy – No

Mayor Simmons – No

Yes – 0, No – 9. Motion fails.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who offered an overview of proposed change number two, City Solicitor appointed by the City Council, and proposed change number five, Department Heads appointed by the City Manager and approved by the City Council.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Nolan who shared her support for the two proposed changes, noting that it would be a joint appointment between the City Manager and the City Council. Councillor Nolan highlighted that with the appointment of the City Solicitor, it would promote opportunities for more collaboration with administration.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Wilson who shared that she agrees with the comments made by her Co-Sponsors, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler and Councillor Nolan.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who shared she was in opposition to proposed change number five and would be open to having more discussion related to the City Solicitor.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Zusy who shared she believes it would be a conflict of interest for the Council to appoint the City Solicitor. Councillor Zusy added that both proposed changes would undermine the power of the City Manager and his staff. Councillor Zusy noted that it is the City Manager's job to manage staff while the City Council's responsibility is to set policies.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Vice Mayor McGovern who shared that he would be in favor of having more discussion on the appointment of the City Solicitor and asked the sponsors if the City Council had the power to hire the City Solicitor, would they also have the power to fire them. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler noted that the idea was to have this proposed change be similar to the appointment of the City Clerk and City Auditor and would be in support of whatever the Committee would like as far as the firing process. Vice Mayor McGovern shared that there needs to be a better balance between the City Solicitor representing both the City Council and the City Manager. Co-Chair Toner offered suggestions regarding the hiring process and how the City Council could be more involved. Vice Mayor McGovern shared he would not support proposed change number five.

Co-Chair Toner offered comments that were opposed to both proposed changes and does not believe the City Council should be involved with the hiring and appointment of Department Heads and the City Solicitor.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Azeem who suggested that these two proposed changes not get voted on today.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who made a motion to extend the meeting an additional ten minutes.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes
 Councillor Wilson – Yes
 Councillor Zusy – Yes
 Mayor Simmons – Yes
Yes – 9. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Megan Bayer who provided feedback and clarification to some of the comments made during the discussion. Megan Bayer pointed out all of the work that is done through the City Solicitors Office, noting that there is a lot of litigation that does not directly involve the Council and shared how closely the Solicitor works with the City Manager's Office day to day. Megan Bayer also added that much of the work cannot be openly discussed publicly. Megan Bayer offered the suggestion of the Council having more input on the hiring.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who shared that he would withdraw the proposals and come back with new language to incorporate the suggestions and comments that were brought forward in the discussion.

Co-Chair Toner offered comments regarding proposed change number three, elected Mayor alongside a City Manager. Co-Chair Toner shared what the current role, power, and authority of the Mayor is and suggested that before the next Committee meeting, members can discuss what would be the most effective way to have a better process of electing the Mayor.

**Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who made a motion that the Special Committee of the Whole recommends to the full City Council that Department Heads are appointed by the City Manager and approved by the City Council.
 Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – No
 Vice Mayor McGovern – No
 Councillor Nolan – No
 Councillor Siddiqui – No
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes
 Councillor Toner – No
 Councillor Wilson – No
 Councillor Zusy – No
 Mayor Simmons – Absent

Yes – 1, No – 7, Absent – 1. Motion fails.

**Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who made a motion that the Committee continue the discussion on changing how the Mayor is elected.
 Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes
 Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes
 Councillor Nolan – Yes
 Councillor Siddiqui – Yes
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes
 Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes
Councillor Zusy – Yes
Mayor Simmons – Absent

Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent - 1. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair Siddiqui who made a motion to recess the meeting.

Councillor Azeem – Yes
Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes
Councillor Nolan – Yes
Councillor Siddiqui – Yes
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes
Councillor Toner – Yes
Councillor Wilson – Yes
Councillor Zusy – Yes
Mayor Simmons – Absent

Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent - 1. Motion passed.

The Special Committee of the Whole went into recess at 1:26p.m.

DRAFT