

City of Cambridge

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND RULES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Councillor David P. Maher, Chair
Councillor Anthony D. Galluccio
Councillor Brian Murphy
Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves
Councillor Timothy J. Toomey

In City Council November 18, 2002

The Government Operations and Rules Committee held a public hearing on Thursday, November 7, 2002 beginning at nine o'clock and fifteen minutes a. m. in the MIT Hotel at 20 Sidney Street, Cambridge.

The purpose of the meeting was to conduct an off-site meeting with a facilitator to review the current City Council Goals and to consider changes if necessary in preparing the FY04 Draft Goals.

Present at the hearing were Councillor David. Maher, Chair of the Committee, Councillor Anthony D. Galluccio, Councillor Brian Murphy, Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Councillor Timothy J. Toomey, Mayor Michael A. Sullivan, Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Councillor Marjorie Decker, Councillor Denise Simmons, City Manager Robert W. Healy, Deputy City Manager Richard Rossi, Acting Assistant City Manager for Fiscal Affairs Louis A. DePasquale, Assistant City Manager for Community Development Beth Rubenstein, Deputy Director Human Services Ellen Semonoff, Julia Bowden, Assistant to the City Manager, Mayor's Chief of Staff Kathryn Rafferty, Assistant to the City Council Sandra Albano, City Clerk Margaret Drury and Deputy City Clerk Donna P. Lopez. Also present was Facilitator Robert Miller.

Councillor Maher convened the meeting. He turned the meeting over to Roberta Miller.

Ms. Miller displayed the fiscal year 2002 City Council Goals in the conference room. She engaged the assembly to list the accomplishments in relation to the FY 02 Goals. The FY02 Goals and the accomplishments are as follows:

Goal 1. Provide high quality ongoing services to residents.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Capital improvement
 - Open space, public buildings, sewer, water, roads, and large project review
- Citizen satisfaction (state and federal funds)
- Increase use of web for city services
- Budget – fiscal position

Goal 2. Preserve and expand the supply of permanent affordable housing, supporting socioeconomic diversity.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Housing developed 90 units
- Community Preservation Act funds \$5 M+
- Starting middle income home buying program
- City-wide rezoning
- Planning Board and zoning accomplishments

Goal 3. Strengthen and support public education and other learning in Cambridge for the benefit of residents of all ages.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Start reinvention
- Subcommittee admits to problem
 - Sustaining Community Learning Center
 - After school grant (\$1.2 M Dept. of Education)
 - Literacy (\$1 M from federal government, \$50,000 from state)
 - Youth involvement
 - RSTA
- Better relationship between school committee & city council

Goal 4. Improve and simplify public access to city services and provide more and better opportunities for the public to participate in governing

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Better communication with citizens
- Best public web site award
- Access to city staff

Goal 5. Foster community. Support opportunities for citizens to know each other within their neighborhoods and across the city.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Neighborhood visioning sessions
- City interested in neighborhood planning
- Regular annual events (Go Green activities, Dance Party, award ceremonies, etc.)
 - Support for community groups
 - Police grants for block parties (publish info)
- Parties after rehab of parks – “Chuckles the Clown”
- Easier permitting process for community events and block parties
- Dedications of streets
- Publicizing community events through web site and cable TV
- City Hall lawn usage as exercise area
- Support for Oral History Project

Goal 6.

Support neighborhood preservation and enhancement

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Neighborhood planning studies
- City-wide rezoning
- Open space
- Implementation of planning study recommendations (example: Riverside)
- Larger project review
- Inclusionary Zoning (124 units since passage)
- Affordable Housing
- Community Preservation Act

Goal 7.

Foster creative approaches to traffic, parking and transportation needs of residents and businesses within the context of growing congestion, and the need to improve air quality.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Traffic calming
- Transportation improvements
- EZ Ride Shuttle launched
- Climate Protection Plan
- Beginning conversation: Green Fleet
- Public Works CNG vehicle
- Beginning partnership with universities
- Green Buildings initiative
- 2% drop in citizens driving to work
- Public transportation rider ship up 2%
- Increase in disability taxi fleet
- Incentives to put parking underground

Goal 8.

Maximize the benefits of new and existing economic development and university activities to improve the life of the city.

ACCOMPLISHMENT

- Initiating University Relations Committee
 - Outreach to neighbors
- Landing Noravtis
- Continued expansion of biotech field
 - Biogen Lab for high school students
 - Draper Initiative with CRLS
 - RSTA revitalization
- Support of Workforce Development
- Harvard Summer Academy
- Façade program (6 this year)
- Capital – Cambridge Street, Harvard Square
- Zoning – mixed use

MISCELLANEOUS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Better working relationship – Council/administration
- Better communication

Ms. Miller led a discussion of situational changes that have occurred since the establishment of the FY 02 Goals. Some of the changes that were cited were:

- Vulnerability/terrorism
- Economic down turn
- Rise in domestic violence
- Rise in issues around poverty
- Wage disparity
- Health care
- Job opportunities
- Interest rates
- Federal changes
- More skilled labor out of work making city employment more attractive
- Diversity, social, racial, class and race issues
- Vacancy rates of residential and commercial property
- Less renovation to Cambridge property stock
- Training – RSTA – geared to Cambridge market

City Manager Healy addressed the budgetary situation. There is a danger to the local aid issue for the up coming fiscal year. The additional assistance category was cut by 10 % by the state this year. Cambridge absorbed this cut. Demand and requests versus social services need to be reviewed. It is not good business to have 2,000 empty seats in the schools. More abatements are expected to be filed, he said. He expressed concern for our AAA Bond Ratings as bond ratings have been lowered for cities and towns where additional assistance is in jeopardy of being lowered by the state. High-end residential property have not been impacted; commercial property has been impacted. Mr. Rossi stated that the city would be forced to cut spending. The cost of developing a unit of housing has risen.

Ms. Miller now focused on look ahead to the FY 2004 Goals. She asked for areas where emphasis was needed for FY 2004. The summary of this exercise is as follows:

FY 2004 DRAFT GOAL discussion summary

Community Values remain the same

- o cultural and socioeconomic diversity
- o commercial diversity and vitality
- o a healthy environment
- o the unique character of our city

Subsets of original goals remain the same, but are not included in the following text.

1. Goal: Strengthen and support public education and other learning in Cambridge for the benefit of residents of all ages. Priority votes: 16 total; 7 council (including 2 highest priority votes) and 9 staff votes

EMPHASIS NEEDED for FY04

Fiscal accountability (excess capacity) (12 T: 7c – 2hp; 5s)

Achievement gaps in public schools (12 T: 5c; 7s – 1hp)

Family Literacy and after school programs (7 T: 4c; 3s)

2. Goal: Maximize the benefits of new and existing economic development and university activities to improve the life of the city. Priority votes: 15 total; 8 council and 7 staff votes

EMPHASIS NEEDED for FY04

Improve working relationship with universities (10 T: 2c – 2hp; 8s)

Information on job opportunities (4 T: 2c; 2s)

Diversify economic profile (3 T: 1c; 2s)

Economic development = entrepreneurship (1 T: 1c)

Establish economic development department (1 T: 1c)

Theatre in the economic development mix (1 T: 1c)

Update economic development plan (1 T: 1s)

Artists' live/work opportunities

3. Goal: Provide high quality ongoing services to residents (and) improve and simplify access to those services while providing more and better opportunities for the public to participate in governing Priority votes: 15 total; 6 council (including 1 highest priority vote) and 7 staff votes (including 3 highest priority votes)

EMPHASIS NEEDED for FY04

Capital projects (14 T: 7c; 7s – 1hp)

Fiscal discipline (11 T: 3c; 8s – 3hp)

Increase search capacity of web site (6 T: 3c; 3s)

Improve performance and accountability of Election Comm. (2 T: 2c)

Community policing (2 T: 1c; 1s)

Preparedness; better communication with residents (2 T: 1c; 1s)

Speed of responsiveness to residents (2 T: 2s)

Diversify and improve information sources (2 T: 2s)

Better Web access (1 T: 1s)

Improvement of graphics in all departments

4. Goal: Preserve and expand the supply of permanent affordable housing, supporting socioeconomic diversity. Priority votes: 11 total; 5 council (including 1 highest priority vote) and 6 staff votes (including 3 highest

priority votes)

EMPHASIS NEEDED for FY04

Continued general emphasis (8 T: 2c – 1hp; 6s – 1hp)

Middle-income home ownership (6 T: 5c; 1s)

Family friendly (1 T: 1c)

5. Goal: Public Safety

Priority votes: 9 total; 3 council (including 1 highest priority vote) and 6 staff votes

6. Goal: Racial, Cultural, and Social Tolerance

Priority votes: 7 total; 4 council and 3 staff votes

7. Goal: Foster community. Support opportunities for citizens to know each other within their neighborhoods and across the city.

Priority votes: 4 total; 3 council and 1 staff vote

EMPHASIS NEEDED for FY04

Racial, cultural, social and economic tolerance (8 T: 7c – 1hp; 1s – 1hp)

More activities in parks and Cambridge Common (2 T: 1c; 1s)

More important for people not to be isolated (1 T: 1c)

City-wide scholarship recognition (1 T: 1s)

Support outreach of community groups

8. Goal Support neighborhood preservation and enhancement

Priority votes: 4 total; 3 council and 1 staff vote

EMPHASIS NEEDED for FY04

Encourage community beautification: awards, park plantings(7 T: 2c; 5s)

Passive and active open space (3 T: 2c; 1s)

9. Goal Foster creative approaches to traffic, parking and transportation needs of residents and businesses within the context of growing congestion, and the need to improve air quality.

Priority votes: 4 total; 2 council and 2 staff vote

EMPHASIS NEEDED for FY04

Explore safety of bicycle lanes and bicycling safety (1 T: 1c)

Parking enforcement (1 T: 1c)

Add more benches, promote walking

Encourage energy management in city (1 T: 1c)

Capital Projects Priorities for FY04

Library Sewer & Water

Police Station
CPA Projects
Russell Field
Area 4 open space/Donnelly Field

Agreements

Support Manager's recommendation on School Department Budget
Support Citizens' Advisory Committee on School Improvement
Schedule joint session with the affordable housing trust fund

A lengthy discussion ensued about the achievement gaps and the excess capacity in the schools. Various suggestions were made including an appointed school committee and a citizens' advisory committee. The City Council also expressed its support to the strong message given by the City Manager to the School Committee about the need to reduce its operating budget.

Councillor Maher made the following motion:

ORDERED: That the City Council empower the City Manager and the Mayor to report back to the City Council on the formation of a Citizens Advisory Committee to make recommendations in the student achievement gap and the excess capacity issue.

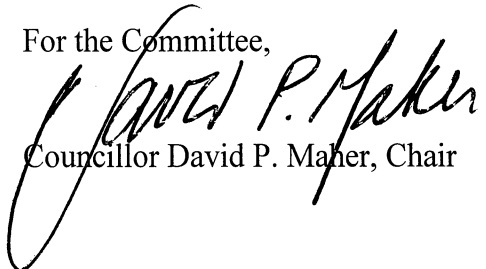
The motion carried on a voice vote of nine members.

A letter was prepared, signed by the entire membership of the City Council, notifying the School Committee of the establishment by the City Council of a goal of achieving excellence in education while promoting fiscal responsibility **Attachment A**. It was agreed that the Mayor would deliver this letter to the School Committee members.

Councillor Maher thanked those present for their attendance.

The meeting was adjourned at three o'clock and fifty minutes p. m.

For the Committee,


Councillor David P. Maher, Chair

City of Cambridge

OFFICE OF CITY COUNCIL

Mayor
Michael A. Sullivan

Vice Mayor
Henrietta Davis

City Councillors

Marjorie C. Decker
Anthony D. Galluccio
Brian Murphy
David P. Maher
Kenneth E. Reeves
E. Denise Simmons
Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.

November 7, 2002

Dear Members of the School Committee:

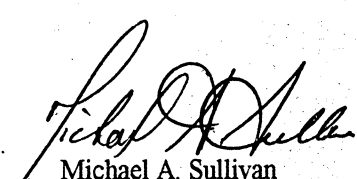
The City Council's Government Operations and Rules Committee (at a meeting attended by the entire membership of the City Council) today discussed our goals for FY 04. Collectively, we agreed to establish a goal of achieving excellence in education while promoting fiscal responsibility.

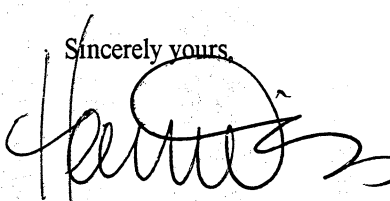
We also agreed to steadfastly support the City Manager's recommendations regarding the upcoming School Department's budget issues. Additionally, the committee members agreed to recommend that the City Council establish an Independent Advisory Committee charged with reviewing fiscal responsibility and achievement gaps.

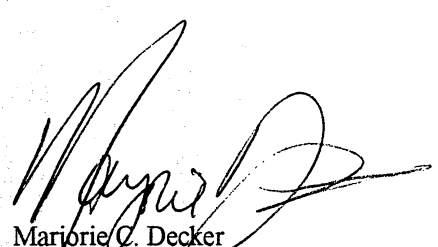
It was agreed that the Independent Advisory Committee would be appointed by the Mayor and City Manager and report back to the City Council.

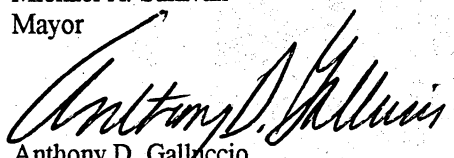
We look forward to working with members of the School Committee and school administration to enhance the educational opportunities for all children.

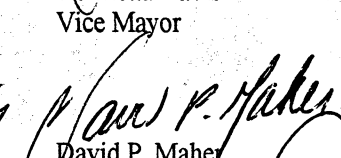
Sincerely yours,

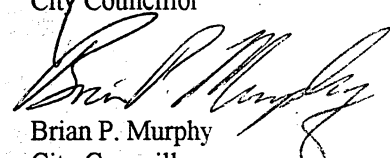

Michael A. Sullivan
Mayor

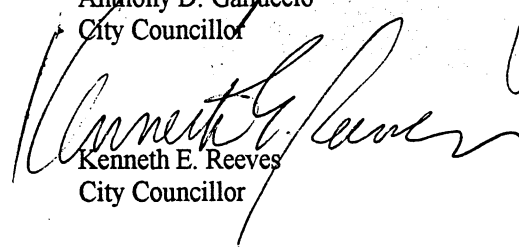

Henrietta Davis
Vice Mayor

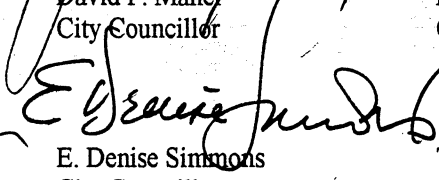

Marjorie C. Decker
City Councillor

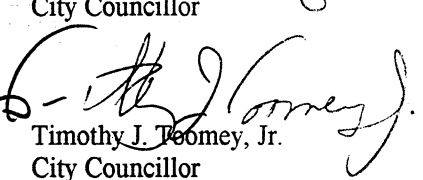

Anthony D. Galluccio
City Councillor


David P. Maher
City Councillor


Brian P. Murphy
City Councillor


Kenneth E. Reeves
City Councillor


E. Denise Simmons
City Councillor


Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
City Councillor





City of Cambridge

O-18.
Amended Order
IN CITY COUNCIL
November 18, 2002

COUNCILLOR MAHER
VICE MAYOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR DECKER
COUNCILLOR GALLUCCIO
COUNCILLOR MURPHY
COUNCILLOR REEVES
COUNCILLOR SIMMONS
MAYOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

ORDERED: That the City Council empower the City Manager and the Mayor to report back to the City Council on the formation of a Citizens Advisory Committee to make recommendations on fiscal responsibility and the achievement gaps.

In City Council November 18, 2002.
Adopted as amended by the affirmative vote of nine members.
Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:- *D. Margaret Drury*

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk



City of Cambridge

O-18.
Original Order
IN CITY COUNCIL

November 18, 2002

COUNCILLOR MAHER

ORDERED: That the City Council empower the City Manager and the Mayor to report back to the City Council on the formation of a Citizens Advisory Committee to make recommendations in the student achievement gap and the excess capacity issue.

S-346

Committee Report #3

Committee Report from Councillor David P. Maher, Chair of the Government Operations and Rules Committee, for a meeting held on November 7, 2002 to conduct an off-site meeting with a facilitator to review the current City Council Goals and to consider changes if necessary in preparing the FY04 Draft Goals.

In City Council November 18, 2002

**REPORT ACCEPTED.
PLACED ON FILE.
ORDER ADOPTED AS
AMENDED. SEE ORDER #18.**