

City of Cambridge

MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council June 25, 2001

*Request CM to transfer funds for Cambridge Imps Office,
now in reserve, to genl fund.*

YEA	NAY	ABSENT	PRESENT	
✓				Ms. Kathleen L. Born
✓				Mr. James Braude
✓				Ms. Henrietta Davis
.	.	✓		Ms. Marjorie C. Decker
✓				Vice Mayor David P. Maher
		✓		Mr. Kenneth E. Reeves
✓				Mr. Michael A. Sullivan
✓				Mr. Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
✓				Mayor Anthony D. Galluccio

7 0 2 0
TT m sup vv/7 record. 0-7



City of Cambridge

O-19.

IN CITY COUNCIL

June 25, 2001

COUNCILLOR BRAUDE

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to move the funds which have been held in reserve during the City Council discussion into the FY02 General Fund for the new position in the new office for Citizen Information and Services.

In City Council June 25, 2001.

Adopted by a yea and nay vote:-

Yeas 7; Nays 0; Absent 2.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

D. Margaret Drury

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

SEE COMMITTEE REPORTS #1 & #2

Councillor Sullivan said that the City Council has received memos about this in the past from the Assistant City Manager for Fiscal Affairs, who has informed the Council that such a credit can be authorized.

Councillor Braude asked what the other concerns are.

Councillor Sullivan said that the Council order said that the Government Operations Committee and the City Manager should "explore the creation." There was supposed to be further discussion at the committee, but it did not happen; the funding for the new office just appeared in the budget.

Councillor Braude said that he saw this office as a natural and logical extension of the City Council goal to improve and simplify access to city services. It is not meant to replace any other type of access that citizens now enjoy.

Councillor Sullivan said that the point of entry has always been the Mayor's Office or the City Manager's office. Seventeen people do this job already. He does not see the need for it but he is willing to talk about it.

Councillor Braude replied that when he had been on the City Council for a year, he had to call Mr. Healy during off-hours to get the number to call to find out whether school was cancelled during a snow storm. Many people have no idea where to get information about city services or problems.

Councillor Sullivan said that more detail needs to be worked out, for example, the graffiti hotline already utilizes the 349-INFO number and flyers with that number were just handed out. Ms. Peterson said that the hotline gets about twenty calls per year. It would not be a problem to reprogram the number.

Councillor Sullivan suggested putting the money aside in a reserve fund and having further discussion. He asked Mr. Healy whether he was planning a budget to be amended to change the name of the position in the budget. Mr. Healy said that it not be necessary. He can change a title without amending the budget at any time.

Councillor Sullivan said that other City Councillors will only get the memo with their packet for Monday's meeting, which is not much time for considering the matter. Councillor Braude said that that is as much time as the City Council had to review the Citywide Rezoning package. Surely it is sufficient time to review a four page memo.

Councillor Braude said that his fear is that once the money goes in the trust, reserve, it will never come out.

Councillor Sullivan said that he could hold the committee report on the budget for another week for more discussion in the Finance Committee of this issue. He requested the staff to check on the deadline for the budget adoption. Ms. Carvello informed the committee that June 6 is the final day for adoption.

Mr. Healy stated that it is not a good idea to delay the budget adoption. He urged Councillor Sullivan to go forward with the Finance Committee reports for the May 21 meeting.

Councillor Braude thanked the staff for their work on a fuller description of the proposal. He also thanked those in attendance for their participation.

The meeting was adjourned at six o'clock and ten minutes p. m.

For the Committee,


Councillor Jim Braude, Chair

City of Cambridge

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, RULES

AND CLAIMS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Councillor Jim Braude, Chair
Councillor Henrietta Davis
Vice Mayor David P. Maher
Councillor Michael A. Sullivan
Councillor Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.*

In City Council June 25, 2001

The Government Operations, Rules and Claims Committee held a public hearing on May 17, 2001, beginning at 4:05 o'clock p.m. in the Ackermann Room for the purpose of discussing a proposal in the budget for a new office for citizen information and services.

Present at the hearing were Councillor Jim Braude, Chair of the Committee, Councillor Michael A. Sullivan and City Clerk D. Margaret Drury. Also present were Robert W. Healy, City Manager, Richard Rossi, Deputy City Manager, Lisa Peterson, Assistant to the City Manager and Ini Tomeu, Public Information Officer.

Councillor Braude convened the hearing and explained the purpose. He stated that the meeting was called in response to concerns raised at the Finance Committee budget hearing. He was not present for the initial discussion of the concerns, so he is not sure he knows all of them. It is unfortunate that only one City Councillor who has concerns is in attendance at this meeting. He noted that the City Manager's office had prepared a description of the proposed function of the office, including a suggested name change to the Cambridge Information Center, (617) 349-INFO. Ms. Peterson stated that in putting together this information she tried to respond to some of the concerns raised at the Finance Committee hearings. She noted that that information is included about how the office could serve as an ombudsperson function.

Councillor Braude said that he knew one concern was the need for an ombudsperson and is pleased to see that the issue is addressed in the memorandum.

He also noted that the memo seems to include a description of a function in which volunteers could provide assistance and direction so that people coming into City Hall would encounter a real person who could assist them, as happens at the State House.

Councillor Sullivan said that volunteers also provide information and assistance at the Harvard Square kiosk.

Councillor Braude pointed out that the memo suggests that senior citizens could volunteer in exchange for credit toward their property tax bill.

235

Committee Report #1

Committee Report from Councillor
Jim Braude, Chair of the
Government Operations, Rules and
Claims Committee, for a meeting
held on May 17, 2001 for the
purpose of discussing a proposal in
the budget for a new office for
citizen information and services.

In City Council June 25, 2001

Report Accepted

PLACED ON FILE

See Order #19