

City of Cambridge

The Human Services and Youth Committee conducted a public hearing on Friday, February 16, 1990 beginning at 12:07 p.m. in the Sullivan Chambers, City Hall.

The purpose of this hearing was to discuss the development of a unified response to meet the employment needs of the youth of Cambridge.

Councillor Jonathan S. Myers, Chair of the above referenced Committee, convened the hearing and introduced the membership of the Committee to those assembled. Councillor Myers stated that it was the desire of the Committee to formulate a unified response on behalf of the Public and Private sector to deal with the development of youth employment opportunities throughout the City.

At this time the Chair recognized Councillor Francis H. Duehay for his opening remarks to the participants at the hearing. Councillor Duehay reviewed the changes that have occurred in the City of Cambridge vis a vis the shifting of employment opportunities in manufacturing to research and development and how this shifting is posing challenges for institutions.

The participants then heard from Councillor Timothy J. Toomey, Jr. for his opening remarks. Councillor Toomey stated it was his belief that only through a collaborative effort between the Private and Public sectors that opportunities could be created and expanded.

At this time Councillor Myers asked the participants to identify themselves and give a brief description of the program(s) they are affiliated with either public, private or quasi.

Councillor Myers then steered the discussion of the participants towards the Cambridge Partnership for Public Education Program and asked co-chairs John Shattuck of Harvard University and Joseph F. O'Connor of Draper Laboratories to brief the Committee on the working of this program. Mr. Shattuck informed the Committee that the priorities of the Partnership were: (1) The Mentorship Program that deals with Children At Risk and is currently established in four elementary schools and deals with one hundred children. Mr. Shattuck also informed the Committee that a pilot program has been established at Cambridge Rindge and Latin as well; and (2) The Adult Literacy Program where English as a second language courses are offered.

Councillor Myers then steered the discussion towards a review of existing program(s) to include both its strengths and its weaknesses and to include a Statement of Needs for each program.

The Committee first heard from Mary Lou McGrath, Superintendent of Schools, who outlined the factors that are associated with the drop-out issue and the belief that employers are interested in employing well educated students and will then train these employees for the present and future.

Mr. Shattuck stated that that Partnership seeks to identify At Risk Students at an early stage in their educational process as well as the right individual to be a Mentor. Mr. Shattuck also stated that finding the right person does complicate the process.

Councillor Duehay, citing his experience with the Mentor Program, also stated his strong support for internship programs and cooperative education.

The Committee then heard from Mary Jane Clancy of the Cambridge School System, who described the Aprentice Program and stated her strong support for Vocational Education. Ms. Clancy further stated that students must be job or work ready when they graduate.

Mr. O'Connor spoke further on Superintendent McGrath's remarks concerning the issue of training by prospective employers. Mr. O'Connor spoke of the need for facility of English, Math and Oral Skills and spoke further on the workings of the Partnership Program.

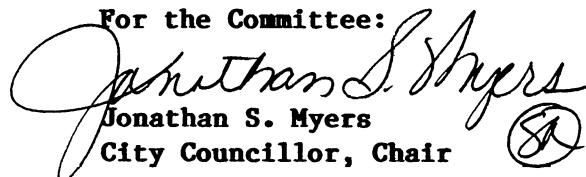
The Committee then heard from Karen Prentice, Director of Vocational Education in the Cambridge School Department, who stressed the need for stronger coordination with the Business Community. Ms. Prentice outlined the present Vocational Education Program as well as pending State Wide Issues in this area.

At this time the Committee heard from Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services, who outlined the lack of availability of structured programs for 4-8 grade age students. Ms. Herold further stated tht the City has begun to address this issue but resources are limited.

Councillor Myers then asked participants to volunteer their talents and expertise in serving on an Advisory Committee and if possible, on the Program and on the Private Working Committees.

The hearing was adjourned at 1:39 p.m.

For the Committee:


Jonathan S. Myers
City Councillor, Chair

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

Comm. from John E. Flynn, Deputy City Clerk, transmitting a report from Councillor Jonathan S. Myers, Chairman of the Committee on Human Services and Youth, for a hearing held on Friday, February 16, 1990 relative to the development of a unified response to meet the employment needs of the youth of Cambridge.

In City Council,

February 26, 1990

Report accepted