



# FINANCE COMMITTEE

## COMMITTEE MEETING

~ MINUTES ~

Wednesday, February 23, 2022

5:30 PM

Sullivan Chamber  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139

The Finance Committee will reconvene its February 16, 2020 meeting to receive public comment regarding the City Council goals in relation to the budget and to gather input and discuss priorities on the FY23 budget.

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Dennis J. Carlone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Patricia Nolan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Burhan Azeem	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Alanna Mallon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Marc C. McGovern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sumbul Siddiqui	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
E. Denise Simmons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Quinton Zondervan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Paul F. Toner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Feb 23, 2022 5:30 PM (Committee Reports)



**CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE**

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE, CHAIR

COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN, CO-CHAIR

COMMITTEE MEETING

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

FEBRUARY 23, 2022

5:30 PM, SULLIVAN CHAMBER

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Hi everyone.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Hello. Are we live in the chamber or, or is this private talk?

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** I think we're live.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** You are live.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** The meeting is live, yes.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Excellent. We can't hear you Dennis.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** [laughs] Yeah, I realize that in that case, it's good to see you all.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** [laughs] You too. So nice today.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Spring has not sprung.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** But yes, it's pretty amazing following the -- the CC Tunes of Climate, right? We're supposed to get a snowstorm again on Friday, I think.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Yeah. Six inches. Proposed or predicted.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** Councillor Nolan, the time of the meeting has arrived, and you have a quorum.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you, Clerk Wilson. I will be chairing the meeting as a one of the

finance Co-chairs and Councillor Carlone will be chairing the meeting.

We will be having the Finance Committee will be having next week on the ARPA funds that the city has. And this is a continuation of the meeting from last week.

I call this meeting of the Finance Committee to order. The call of the meeting is to reconvene the February 16th, 2022 meeting, to receive public comment regarding the City Council goals in relation to the budget, and to continue to gather input and discuss priorities on the FY 23 budget.

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, adopted by Massachusetts General Assembly and approved by the Governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation at meetings of the Cambridge City Council.

To watch the meeting, please tune in to Channel 22 or visit the open meeting portal on the city's website.

Today's meeting will be conducted in a remote format.

If you would like to provide public comment, please go to [www.cambridgema.gov/publiccomment](http://www.cambridgema.gov/publiccomment) to sign up. We will hear from public comment tonight and following that, if there's any further discussion of the City Council we will be hearing that and then we will be adjourning.

Uh, Clerk Wilson, could you take a roll call of the members present?

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:**

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Present and audible

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Absent

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Present and audible

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Absent

Councillor Paul F. Toner - Absent

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present and audible

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Present and audible

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Present and audible

Councillor Burhan Azeem - Present

**Present-6, Absent-4.**

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you, Clerk Wilson. And with that, all of today's votes will be by roll call.

I will just talk for just a couple minutes to set the context and remind the Finance Committee and anyone following this of where this meeting fits in our budget process.

To remind people, last year, the Council had talked about and discussed a policy order to hold a public

meeting, where the City Council and the public would get an opportunity before the budget was presented, to weigh in with some input and some thoughts on what that budget might include.

That was a little late in the process, and so the Council and the City talked about ensuring that while it was too late for FY 22 to have a process by which that would be in time for FY 23, which is what we're -- the process we're in right now.

And that's how this meeting started. Councillor Carlone and I, right after the first of the year, reached out to the City and suggested that we have a meeting.

And we started that last week. It, it was certainly an emotional meeting and I think some -- there was some feelings on all sides that we had not quite fully understood or perhaps fully discussed how it is that we ensure that these meetings continue to be respectful as we move forward.

And that, to reiterate to people, the intention is to have a meeting where the City Council, who needs to approve the budget, has an opportunity to discuss how it is that we see our goals and our priorities fitting in to the budget,

and to give some thoughts, again, before the budget is put on the table.

Those meetings have already been set up. We've been in contact with the City starting in May, which at that point, while the City can discuss things, is, is -- follow six months of work by the city to set them down.

And so the idea of this is Councillor Carlone and I explained to City, and I hope all of our counselors agree, it's really a good point and good governance on our part to try to have a meeting a little bit earlier on in the process to ensure that we can hear from the city of how they're incorporating our goals and also give some input into how we hope they get incorporated.

So that is the context for this meeting. The intent is really to hear from the public. And then the council can certainly continue to deliberate on our thoughts as we move forward.

Um, Councillor Carlone will talk also. We had said at the last meeting, we would take some of the input from the counselors and write something up as what we saw as a summary and talk to the city about it after last week's meeting, and then this week's meeting, what we hear from

the public.

So, that was what I wanted to open this meeting with, and turn it over to Co-finance Chair Councillor Carlone.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you Madam Chair. My only comment is that during the discussion last week Mr. Jennings suggested we meet as early as the beginning of the Summer for the following budget, and that, that is when the City administration begins to look at these things. So we will do that. Both Co-chairs are for that very much. Thank you Co-chair, Nolan.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you, Councillor Carlone. We will do that. We promise -- You're all on notice now that either in the Summer, or very first thing in the Fall, we'll be having this kind of meeting again to establish the, the procedure that we all want to -- This is all one city and we're all part of the leadership and we wanna all be involved.

Uh, just a point of information. We will turn to public comment in just a minute. Clerk Wilson, there's a couple of city staff who are attendees, if any of them are, is appropriate, particularly Mr. Jennings or any should be promoted to be panelists to, to weigh in. Happy to have



that happen. I'm not sure what the protocol is for that.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** Councillor Nolan, we've heard from several city staff that they would be present. They, they weren't planning to be promoted. If any --

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Okay.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** -- staff member wants to be promoted, they can raise their hand, use the Raise Your Hand focus feature and we will promote them.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Great. Thank you, Clerk Wilson. And now, unless are there any councillors with questions or clarifications before we turn to public comment?

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Just the obvious Co-chair Councillor Toner is also with us, and I'm sure the Clerk has noticed that as well.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Clerk Wilson, have you noted that Councillor Toner is in the meeting?

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** It's all noted.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. And with that let's go to public comments. Since this is a remote meeting, I don't have this screen in front of me, so I believe it will be called by either Clerk Wilson or our

City Council staff.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** First individual in public comment is Lee Farris.

**UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Of those that are signed up for public comment Lee Farris, Michael Brandon, and An -- Andy Brody are not on the Zoom. Valerie Bonds, please go ahead.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Valerie Bonds, address not provided, emphasized on lack of money to social services despite so much conversation about social emotional learning in our schools. Also questioned the a large amount of money that we're giving to the MWRA for their limited services they provide for us.

Kavish Gandhi, 376 Windsor Street, advocated for significant increased spending in this year's budget to functionally end homelessness in Cambridge. Stated that this year's budget must include solutions that allow for temporary shelter for every unhoused resident of Cambridge.

Annette Oster, address not provided, spoke about Bicycle Safety Ordinance, and questioned about how much money has been spent already and how much is projected to be spent on this. Was also concerned that removal of the

parking has caused businesses to be lose 30 to 50% of their business revenue, and has lowered both commercial and residential property values. Wanted that the City Council to approach urban planning in a thoughtful way that makes good use of city resources and actually provide safe roads while supporting neighborhoods and business districts.

Young Kim, address not provided, urged to include lined items for implementing the cycling safety ordinance in the fiscal year-23 budget and also asked to conduct an independent audit of all the costs associated with implementing the separated bike lanes. Had questioned from the City about the total cost of implementing the Cycling Safety Ordinance, and responsibility of achieving the target.

Christine Jelstrup, address not provided, was concerned of City's resources adequacy, for example, staff to carry out the climate change initiatives and ordinances it is undertaking.

Lee Farris, 269 Norfolk Street, expected an increase in funding for affordable housing for low to middle income group. And also supported the funding for broadband, and universal Pre-K for everybody in the city and she was

disappointed for slow pace of work in this. Advocated more funding for trees on City owned property, as well as having the city move more quickly to 100% green electricity.

Brian Owl, address not provided, suggested a proposal for City Council to take a close look at the scope of participatory budgeting and consider broadening the scope to include things that could require a small amount of staffing for ongoing programs.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. Clerk Wilson. Is that it for the speakers?

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** That is -- That is all we have for speakers.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. And to, to all of the speakers and to anyone listening in who has not spoken and wants to, please feel free to send your comments whether you spoke or not, send them to the council for consideration as we deliberate and think about our work on, and the city, to send it to the city as well for the work on the budget.

Uh, since we've heard from the public the call of the meeting as the Clerk reminded me was really to hear from the public. So any short comments from the council are

certainly warranted. Full deliberation on the budget is not was not announced in the call of this meeting. That was for the last meeting.

Uh, I also want to acknowledge that Vice Mayor Mallon had informed me she -- This is school vacation week and she is away and that's why she wasn't able to join us. And she's certainly reading all the emails we're getting about the budget as well.

And not just to the members of the public, but also members of the council, please send any thoughts subsequent to this meeting very soon to myself and Councillor Carlone in anticipation of us gathering and summarizing that feedback for the city staff.

For now before we close out, I wanted to make sure all other councillors got a chance, if there were just some short comments or commentary on, on this subject I'd like to hear from you.

Uh, Councillor Carlone raised his hand, so if any other councillor is on the call raised their hand, they'll be called on in the order in which I see them. Co-chair, Carlone.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you Chair. One of

the things that the two chairs talked about is perhaps making a list of everything we've heard, including our meeting last week, and trying to prioritize, the whole council, prioritizing those items.

Uh, you know, if there are maybe it's the top 10 or top five, and that way we'll know where we've -- we are, and we can begin perhaps at a preliminary level, begin those projects with even small funding just to get them going.

Um, I don't expect that we're gonna have a large number. I don't think that's reasonable given the date. We -- Councillor Nolan and I did speak to the administration about this, and there there's a fear that, you know, we were gonna come up with 20 items and we want them in this budget, but the things that we talked about last week and what we heard today, you know, what are the real needs as far as our group sees and, and then go from there, even if it's, as I said, preliminary and reemerges in July and August.

Um, that's all I wanted to add Chair Nolan. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** And, and as we discussed to follow on that Co-chair Carlone, is that one

way we can do that is summarize very quickly and very shortly what we heard and then submit it as a communication from us to the council, which means it will be on the agenda for Monday night, and then people can comment on it or not. Councillor Zondervan?

**COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN:** Thank you Ma'am Chair, and thanks for holding this hearing. I, I did wanna comment briefly on the participatory budgeting process. I, I think, you know, there is, there is a lot of good projects that get funded there, but there's also projects that really should be part of our regular budget and, and shouldn't be run through the participatory budgeting at all.

So I don't have a fix, but, you know, I, I think that would be something to look at, is how can we, you know, maybe transition some of these participatory budgeting ideas into the regular budget and say, oh, you know, we should just fund this and, and not force those things to compete.

And then have, you know, other projects where we say, yeah, that belongs in participatory budgeting, because it's, you know, mostly just something extra. So, you know,

again, I don't know what the process is for that, but I think that would be a good topic to, to broach with the [inaudible 00:37:27].

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Yeah. Thank you Councillor Zondervan. Any other counselors? Any other councillors wanna make a short comment or question? Mayor Siddiqui?

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** Um, you know, just wanted, say, recognize that this is the first time we're doing this, and the same with on the school committee side, like, you know, we sometimes have, you know, four or five people participate too more. So you know, I think this is a good idea and, you know, I look forward to seeing how it evolves next, next year. So just wanted to acknowledge both of you for, for doing it, so thanks.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. As you know, the school committee has a long history of doing this a long time, I think, and, and Councillor Toner knows that from his days as a teacher and union leader that there's a long record. So we're learning from that and, and hopefully building on it.

Um, and again, I wanna remind councillors uh, as well



as the public feel free to send any subsequent thoughts to Co-chair Carlone and myself so that we can include them in just a summary of the of this process and so we can improve on it.

And we certainly intend to start this process depending on what the administration says, whether it's in the Summer or the Fall, but certainly to, to make sure that we're included as a council because it's part of our, our role to approve the budget.

Um, in the end, it it's certainly an, an important part of, of what we do and to hear from the public and as the mayor said that, that, that we're, we're all still struggling. Sometimes we hear from hundreds of people on a topic and other times it's a really hot topic and we, we only hear from a few. So we're working on that as well.

Since I don't see any other hands up. If there's no one else with a short comment, then believe it or not my sense is that we will end up adjourning early.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** And closing public comment.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Right? So can we do that in one vote then? Uh, Clerk Wilson?

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** We can do that in one vote.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Or do we just adjourn and then we're automatically closing public comment? Whatever you think makes sense.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** We can do both in one vote.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Move to -- Do I have a move motion to do that?

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** So move.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** All right, Clerk Wilson?

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** On adjourning and closing public comments. Councillor Azeem?

**COUNCILLOR BURHAN AZEEM:** Yes.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** Yes. Councillor Carlone?

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Yes.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** Yes. Vice Mayor Mallon? Absent. Councillor McGovern?

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Yes.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** Yes. Councillor Simmons? Absent. Councillor Toner?

**COUNCILLOR PAUL F. TONER:** Yes.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** Yes. Councillor  
Zondervan?

**COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN:** Yes.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** Yes. Mayor Siddiqui?

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** Yes.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** Yes. Councillor Nolan?

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Yes.

**CITY CLERK ANTHONY WILSON:** Motion passes. Seven in  
favor, two absent.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Great. And thank you  
all the councillors here, but also everyone who, who did  
call in, it's a, I think a really good process going  
forward. So thank you all and goodnight.

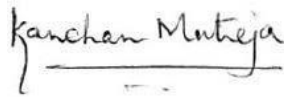
**[GROUP]:** Good night.

**The Cambridge City Council Finance Committee adjourned  
at approximately 6:05 pm.**

**C E R T I F I C A T E**

I, **Kanchan Mutreja**, a transcriber for Datagain, do hereby certify: That said proceedings were listened to and transcribed by me and were prepared using standard electronic transcription equipment under my direction and supervision; and I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript of the proceedings is a full, true, and accurate transcript to the best of my ability.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name this 23th day of January 2023.



Signature of Transcriber