

CITY OF WORCESTER
MUNICIPAL AND LEGISLATIVE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Monday, August 17, 2026
Esther Howland (South) Chamber
Convened: 5:04 P.M.
Adjourned: 6:54 P.M.

MAYOR

Joseph M. Petty

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairperson Satya B Mitra
Vice Chairperson Gary Rosen
Councilor Morris A Bergman



CLERK OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Nikolin Vangjeli

www.worcesterma.gov

City Hall - 455 Main Street Worcester, Massachusetts

Present Were:

Chairperson Councilor Satya B. Mitra
Councilor Gary Rosen
Councilor Morris A. Bergman

Also:

Councilor John P. Fresolo, who arrived at 5:55 p.m.
City Solicitor Alexandra H. Kalkounis
City Clerk Nikolin Vangjeli
Deputy City Clerk Clare M. Robbins, clerk

1. Virtual Attendee Call-In Information

- a. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 and in order to ensure active, public engagement, the City of Worcester currently allows for both in-person and remote participation at all City Council and Standing Committee meetings. To partake in the meeting, you may attend the meeting in-person within the meeting location, follow the below link to join via Zoom or dial the direct line as indicated. If you join a Zoom meeting by dialing in with a phone number, you can raise your hand by dialing *9.

Municipal and Legislative Operations Committee Zoom Link:
<https://worcesterma.zoomgov.com/j/1614999501>

Municipal and Legislative Operations Committee Zoom Phone Number: +1 646 828 7666

Municipal and Legislative Operations Committee Zoom Access Code: 161 499 9501

2. Approval of the Minutes

- a. Order - That the City Council Standing Committee on Municipal and Legislative Operations hereby approves the minutes of the Municipal and Legislative Operations Committee meeting of May 20, 2026.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra read the item and moved for a roll call vote to adopt the item. Order adopted on a roll call vote of 3 Yeas and 0 Nays

3. Miscellaneous Item

- a. Order of Councilor Gary Rosen, Councilor Morris A. Bergman, Councilor Robert A. Bilotta, Councilor Tony Economou, Councilor John P. Fresolo, Councilor Khrystian E. King, Councilor Satya B. Mitra, Councilor Luis A. Ojeda, Councilor Jose A. Rivera, Councilor Kathleen M. Toomey and Mayor Joseph M. Petty - Request Standing Committee on Municipal and Legislative Operations hold a public hearing to determine the feasibility and advisability of the City Council initiating and/or supporting efforts to review the current modified Plan E City Charter, which was implemented in 1987 and amended in 2022.

9k CC February 3, 2026

In Committee May 20, 2026 - Held

Recommend Hold on a roll call vote of 3 Yeas and 0 Nays (See Item #4a)

4. Communications of the City Clerk

- a. Transmitting an informational communication relative to various options available for making changes to the City Charter.

14b CC July 21, 2026

Chairperson Councilor Mitra read the item and moved to take the item up collectively with Item #3a.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra recognized the City Solicitor, who provided an overview of the processes in place to amend the City Charter, which included what a municipal charter is, a history of Worcester's charters, the process used to adopt a home rule charter, the process to establish and the role of a Charter Review Commission, the process used to adopt a charter amendment by special legislation, methods related to charter amendments, and modern charter provisions.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra recognized the City Clerk, who provided an overview of the process to establish a Charter Review Commission, which also included the process relative to file and run as a Charter Review Commission candidate and the process relative to charter amendments by special act.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra then recognized the following Speakers:

1. Fred Nathan, Worcester resident, spoke in opposition to a charter review
2. Gary Hunter, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
3. Sue Mailman, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
4. Randy Feldman, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
5. Tom Marino, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
6. Steve Hart, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
7. Keith Linhares, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
8. Dante Comparetto, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
9. Francesco Bivona, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
10. Joshua Croke, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
11. Greg Waters, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
12. Jack Murray, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
13. Feanna Jattan-Singh, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
14. Dominick Calsolaro, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
15. Sarah Moore, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review
16. Martha Assefa, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of a charter review

Chairperson Councilor Mitra discussed the required 15% certified voter signatures to establish a Charter Review Commission, charter amendment options that do not require voter signatures such as through special acts, proposed ordinance amendments to amend various roles and responsibilities of boards and commissions, and the roles of standing committees relative to ordinance amendments with the City Solicitor, City Clerk, and Speaker #4.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra brought forth the following Chairman's Order: "Request City Clerk work with City Solicitor to provide City Council with a report detailing City Council's role related to ordinance changes."

Chairperson Councilor Mitra then brought forth the following Chairman's Order: "Request City Clerk work with City Solicitor to provide City Council with a report detailing possible charter changes that could be done without the creation of a Charter Review Commission in addition to charter changes that require approval of such a commission."

Chairperson Councilor Mitra discussed the feasibility of providing a report detailing resident testimony brought forth during Public Participation with the City Clerk.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra brought forth the following Chairman's Order: "Request City Clerk provide City Council with a report detailing resident testimony brought forth at the Monday, August 17, 2026 Standing Committee on Municipal and Legislative Operations meeting."

Chairperson Councilor Mitra recognized Councilor Rosen, who discussed the feasibility of acquiring 20,000 signatures, highlighted the importance of distinguishing the difference between charter review and charter change, a history of past charter reviews, increased public participation due to additional meeting advertisement methods, and the importance of reviewing the charter every ten (10) years.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra recognized Councilor Bergman, who discussed challenges in the city that would not be addressed by changing the form of government, a history of past Municipal and Legislative Operations Committee meetings discussing charter review, the feasibility of placing a non-binding referendum on the next local election ballot to gauge the opinion of the city's voters relative to charter review, highlighted the importance of amending parts of the city's charter as needed prior to finalizing a full charter review, spoke in opposition to the notion of reducing the City Manager's salary for the purpose of making the positions of Mayor and City Councilor full-time positions, and the importance of resident civic engagement and the duty to vote in elections.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra discussed best methods to process a charter review in lieu of collecting 15% of voter signatures to establish a Charter Review Commission.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra then discussed the intended purpose of the meeting as to provide education related to the review process and methods for making changes to the city's charter with Speaker #2.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra recognized Councilor Rosen, who discussed the importance of the City Council going on record to support a charter review.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra recognized Councilor Bergman, who highlighted the need for a non-binding referendum for the next local election.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra recognized Councilor Rosen, who moved for the following Chairman's Resolution: "That the Standing Committee on Municipal and Legislative Operations does hereby recommend and support the efforts to review the current modified Plan E City Charter." – Not Put.

Councilor Rosen then discussed the process relative for residents to start collecting signatures for a Charter Review Commission and a history of the signatures obtained in the 1980's when the process was first initiated with the City Clerk.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra recognized Councilor Bergman, who discussed the need for additional resident engagement to understand the needs of the majority residents in the city.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra recognized Councilor Rosen, who discussed feasible next steps to review the city's charter, that the city's charter has not had a comprehensive review in forty (40) years, reviewing resident testimony and providing City Council with a report detailing feasible charter amendment options based on said testimony with the City Clerk.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra recognized Councilor Bergman, who moved to amend Councilor Rosen's motion to read as: "That the Standing Committee on Municipal and Legislative Operations does here by recommend that the full City Council support all efforts of all residents in reviewing any charter change." – Not Put.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra recognized Councilor Rosen, who moved to hold the motion until the Communications of the City Clerk relative to charter review processes and resident testimony are brought forth to the City Council with the City Clerk.

Chairperson Councilor Mitra brought forth the following Chairman's Order: "Request City Clerk provide City Council with a report detailing the process required to place a non-binding question on the ballot of the upcoming local election."

Chairperson Councilor Mitra moved for a roll call vote to recommend the items be held.

Recommend Hold on a roll call vote of 3 Yeas and 0 Nays

Chairman's Orders

Request City Clerk work with City Solicitor to provide City Council with a report detailing City Council's role related to ordinance changes.

Request City Clerk work with City Solicitor to provide City Council with a report detailing possible charter changes that could be done without the creation of a Charter Review Commission in addition to charter changes that require approval of such a commission.

Request City Clerk provide City Council with a report detailing resident testimony brought forth at the Monday, August 17, 2026 Standing Committee on Municipal and Legislative Operations meeting.

Request City Clerk provide City Council with a report detailing the process required to place a non-binding question on the ballot of the upcoming local election.

- b. Transmitting an informational communication relative to advertisements for the Standing Committee on Municipal and Legislative Operations meeting on Monday, August 17, 2026 related to a discussion of the City Charter.

14c CC July 21, 2026

Chairperson Councilor Mitra read the item and moved for a roll call vote to recommend the item be placed on file.

Recommend File on a roll call vote of 3 Yeas and 0 Nays

5. Communication of the City Manager

- a. Transmitting informational communication relative to a process to establish a charter review commission.

18b CC November 12, 2024

In Committee January 28, 2025 - Held

In Committee May 20, 2026 - Held

Chairperson Councilor Mitra read the item and moved for a roll call vote to recommend the item be placed on file.

Recommend File on a roll call vote of 3 Yeas and 0 Nays