

FY25 Shared Budget Priorities

Somerville City Council

7 February 2024

FY25 Shared Budget Priorities Process

Timeline

Individual FY25 Budget Priority Memos

- Due Thursday, March 14 for inclusion in Shared Budget Priorities process
- Due Thursday, March 28 for consideration by Administration

Public Hearing & Publishing of Ballot

- Tuesday, March 19 @ 7 PM (Finance Committee of the Whole - Virtual)

FY25 Shared Budget Priorities Meeting

- Tuesday, March 26 @ 7 PM (Finance Committee of the Whole - In Person)

FY25 Shared Budget Priorities

Categorization Process

- Items from individual budget priorities memos logged & categorized
- Council support staff follow-up meetings with councilors
 - Confirm intent of items with councilors
 - Councilors choose category for items from list or None of the Above
- Google Form created from final list of categories
- Google Form shared with councilors & public at March 19 public hearing
- Final opportunity for councilors to raise issues with categorization

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Process: March 19 Public Hearing

- 7 PM virtual meeting with location for community to access
 - Interpretation services coordinated with SOIA
- Opportunity for public to weigh in before proposed budget is created
 - Proactive vs. Reactive comments
- Consistent with language of proposed charter approved by City Council
 - March 19 vs. “by February 15”
- Two minutes per speaker
- Draft of Google Form categories ballot shared at end of meeting

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Process: March 26 Shared Budget Priorities Meeting

- 7 PM in hybrid format (in-person in Chamber with virtual option)
- Open with reminder from Chair of purpose of meeting
- Waive council rules & approve special rules for meeting
 - Motions for resolutions must follow voting results
 - Supermajority (8 votes) required to approve resolution
- Councilors given opportunity to highlight top priority or two
- Councilors vote on Google Form ballot (10 votes per councilor)
- 15-minute recess

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Process: March 26 Shared Budget Priorities Meeting

- Chair announces results of voting; Clerk displays top categories on screen
- Take up shared budget priority resolutions in descending order
 - Alphabetical order in case of ties
- Discussion of resolution, then voice vote
- After five resolutions, Chair announces next category or tranche of categories, moves to adjourn
- Discussion and/or vote on adjournment determines length of meeting & number of resolutions

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Communications Strategy

- Chair's February 8 communication to council
- Order from Chair at February 22 regular meeting announcing public hearing
- Noticing of March 19 public hearing by Clerk
- Chair has individual conversations with councilors ahead of March 26 meeting to explain process & answer questions
- Follow-up op-ed in local media on results from March 26 meeting