



City of Cambridge

RES 2026-15
FIRST IN COUNCIL
February 9, 2026

COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN
COUNCILLOR SIMMONS
COUNCILLOR AL-ZUB
VICE MAYOR AZEEM
COUNCILLOR FLAHERTY
COUNCILLOR NOLAN
COUNCILLOR SOBRINHO-WHEELER
COUNCILLOR ZUSY
MAYOR SIDDIQUII

WHEREAS: Michael J. Johnston, Esq., will retire as Executive Director of the Cambridge Housing Authority effective February 27, 2026, concluding more than three decades of distinguished public service dedicated to affordable housing and housing stability in the City of Cambridge; and

WHEREAS: Mr. Johnston stands among the Commonwealth's most consequential public housing leaders, having devoted his career to strengthening public housing systems, protecting vulnerable populations, and advancing equitable housing policy in one of the nation's most challenging rental markets; and

WHEREAS: Mr. Johnston began his service at the Cambridge Housing Authority in 1991 and rose through every major operational level of the agency, gaining unparalleled institutional expertise across leased housing, public housing operations, labor relations, finance, and federal compliance; and

WHEREAS: Prior to his appointment as Executive Director in February 2017, he led and expanded the Authority's Federal and State Leased Housing Programs, ultimately doubling their size while maintaining fiscal discipline, regulatory compliance, and a strong focus on resident-centered outcomes; and

WHEREAS: As Deputy Executive Director for Administration from 2008 to 2017, Mr. Johnston played a critical role in budget development, union negotiations, and the successful implementation of HUD's Rental Assistance Demonstration program, preserving long-term affordability for 1,150 housing units; and

WHEREAS: During his tenure as Executive Director, Mr. Johnston oversaw more than \$330 million in rehabilitation investments across ten properties, extending the life of more than 880 housing units and significantly improving living conditions, much of this work occurring during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

- WHEREAS: Under his leadership, the Authority is opening two permanent supportive housing facilities serving up to 90 formerly underhoused individuals and advancing a \$200 million redevelopment initiative to replace 175 obsolete units with 278 new transit-oriented homes built to Passive House standards; and
- WHEREAS: Mr. Johnston is nationally recognized for his strategic use of the Moving to Work Demonstration authority and for founding the Expiring Use Preservation Program and the Sponsor-Based Housing Program, which together have preserved more than 1,600 affordable units and expanded housing opportunities for individuals and families facing homelessness and domestic violence; and
- WHEREAS: Mr. Johnston is a graduate of the New England School of Law, is admitted to practice in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and is a Massachusetts Certified Purchasing Official, credentials that have informed his thoughtful stewardship of public resources; and
- WHEREAS: His career reflects sustained public leadership, policy innovation, and an unwavering commitment to dignity, stability, and opportunity for Cambridge residents; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED: That the Cambridge City Council go on record recognizing and expressing its deep gratitude to Michael J. Johnston, Esq., for his exceptional service to the Cambridge Housing Authority and the people of Cambridge; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution to Michael J. Johnston, Esq. on behalf of the entire City Council.

In City Council February 9, 2026.

Adopted as Amended by a ye and nay vote:-

Yeas 9; Nays 0; Absent 0.

Attest:- Paula M. Crane, Interim City Clerk

A true copy;



ATTEST:-

Paula M. Crane
Interim City Clerk