

City of Fall River Massachusetts

Office of the City Clerk

INÊS DA SILVA PAULINO LEITE
CITY CLERK

CHELSEA PACHECO
ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

MEETING: June 30, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.
Council Chamber, One Government Center

PRESENT: President Cliff A. Ponte, presiding;
Councilors Shawn E. Cadime, Joseph D. Camara, Michael G. Canuel,
Michelle M. Dionne, Paul B. Hart, Christopher M. Peckham, Sr.,
Linda M. Pereira and Andrew J. Raposo

ABSENT: None

IN ATTENDANCE: Mayor Paul E. Coogan
Ann O'Neil-Souza, Interim City Administrator/Chief of Staff
Emily Arpke, Director of Financial Services
Kenneth C. Pacheco, Chief Operation Officer, Fall River Public Schools

President Ponte called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. with a moment of silence followed by a salute to the flag and announced that the meeting may be recorded with audio or video and transmitted through any medium.

1. Citizen Input Time
Collin Dias, 560 Ray Street – School Transportation and CFO
Mayor Paul E. Coogan, 90 Williamson Street – Budget
Vice President Dionne and Mayor Coogan discussed previous meetings between the City Councilors and members of the Administration regarding the location of funds for the City Council's outside legal counsel as well as upcoming discussions related to School Transportation costs. Mayor Coogan explained that there will be an introductory meeting on July 1, 2026, with the new Chief Financial Officer of the Fall River Public Schools and that School Transportation costs will be addressed during this meeting. Mayor Coogan emphasized that he was confident in the total funding listed in the revised Fiscal Year 2027 General Fund appropriation order.

President Ponte suggested that this discussion be continued but that the Council move on to item 2 on the agenda and requested that Mayor Coogan remain for the budgetary discussions to answer questions.

PRIORITY MATTERS

2. Mayor and revised Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Municipal Budget
 - General Fund Appropriation Order

Vice President Dionne explained that various meetings were held between the Administration and individual City Councilors related to the budget. Vice President Dionne also provided detailed information regarding the development of a compromise between the City Council and the Mayor in the form of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which would ensure that the City Council would have direct access to the funds for outside legal counsel services, without any interference from the Law Department. Paul E. Coogan, Mayor, agreed with Vice President Dionne's summary of the conversations and stated that he had offered to prepare a 1/12th budgetary appropriation but was informed by the Council President that the budget would be approved so long as the MOA was finalized. Vice President Dionne emphasized that, while Corporation Counsel was willing to sign the document for form and manner, he was not willing to sign the document as an agreeable party and that this is a barrier to achieving the compromise developed between the Councilors and the Mayor.

Councilor Cadime expressed appreciation for the Mayor's attendance but emphasized that the City Council has not been rejecting the previous budgets only because of the location of the funds for the City Council's outside legal counsel, and that there are other concerns within the budget as well. Councilor Cadime explained that he has no confidence in Corporation Counsel and is concerned that a legal opinion regarding the City Council's jurisdiction to object to tonight's topic was provided, as it is an incorrect interpretation of the action taken by the Council on previously submitted budgetary appropriation orders. Mayor Coogan explained that he had requested the legal opinion and shared it with the City Councilors. Vice President Dionne stated that, while various line items may have been approved during deliberations, both proposed budget appropriation orders were rejected and the item before the Council this evening is a new item, subject to an objection. Councilor Cadime stated that he had spoken with an outside attorney during a Committee on Ordinances and Legislation meeting and was advised that the City Council held the "power of the purse" in relation to various matters and that the rejections of the previous proposed budgets were reflecting the concerns of the City Councilors.

Councilor Cadime and Mayor Coogan discussed the MOA and the concerns of Corporation Counsel in relation to the signing of the agreement outside of confirming its form and manner. Mayor Coogan stated that there are state statutes that limit the Law Department's capability to participate in this matter, as it may expose the taxpayers of Fall River to costs of legal claims. Councilor Cadime expressed concern regarding Corporation Counsel refusing to sign any document that is presented to him in relation to funding for outside legal counsel, including previously submitted resolutions, a proposed ordinance and this MOA. Mayor Coogan clarified that some portions of the drafted MOA were written by the Director of Human Resources, as well as the Council President, and that the Administration was still willing to work cohesively with the City Councilors to achieve a compromise.

Councilor Cadime also expressed concern regarding the School Transportation line item within the newly proposed budget, as the total presented by the Administration in comparison to the School Department's data did not match and had a difference totaling nearly \$1,000,000. Councilor Cadime also stated that the lack of communication between the Director of Financial Services, the City Council and various departments has resulted in various types of discrepancies between presented proposed funding, and necessary funding requested by the related department heads, such as a total of \$450,000 for buyouts for retirement within the Fall River Police Department budget. Councilor Cadime emphasized that his concerns included multiple factors, not just the \$40,000 allocation for the City Council's access to outside legal counsel.

Councilor Cadime stated that the City Councilors should not rush through the budgetary approval process and should be thoroughly reviewing all aspects within the document. Emily Arpke, Director of Financial Services, stated that the newly submitted appropriation does include an increased total for the Police Department's buyouts for retirements and Mayor Coogan explained that the Administration has been working on all suggestions and recommendations presented to them by the City Council over the past month. Councilor Cadime stated that he has no confidence in the Law Department as a whole and that he would not be supporting this newly revised budget.

Councilor Peckham requested additional information regarding the City's access to funding under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and expressed concern regarding the Administration's ability to balance the City's budgets within the upcoming fiscal years. Ms. Arpke provided information regarding the use of one-time funding to balance the budget and stated that, while this action is possible, there would be large amounts of funding cuts throughout various departments. Councilor Peckham and Ms. Arpke also discussed the debt payments related to the new Diman Regional Vocational Technical High School and the use of Free Cash to cover other areas of the City's budget. Mayor Coogan stated that the Stabilization Fund has more than adequate funding and that he is confident that any unanticipated expenditure could be covered with these reserved funds. Ms. Arpke agreed and stated that there is currently \$22,000,000 in the Stabilization Fund and provided a total debt service amount of almost \$13,000,000 anticipated for Fiscal Year 2028. Councilor Peckham expressed concern regarding the need for more growth and Ms. Arpke stated that City revenue and increased tax payments would result in higher growth projections. Councilor Peckham again expressed concern regarding various funding sources that have been inconsistent, such as the state excise tax revenue related to regulated adult-use cannabis sales, and stated that with the debt for the new Diman Regional Vocational Technical High School and the recent loan order to purchase the former Bishop Connolly High School property, the City is exceeding a reasonable amount of debt.

President Ponte asked if there are any structural deficits within the revised budget and Ms. Arpke stated that she was not aware of any at this time. Ms. Arpke also stated that the excise tax revenue related to adult-use cannabis sales will be received in a more regular manner going forward. Councilor Peckham and Ms. Arpke discussed the purchase of the former Bishop Connolly High School and Councilor Peckham asked if the Director of Financial Services had supported the decision to purchase the property. Ms. Arpke stated that her job duties do not include providing opinions on City purchases and consist of providing information as to whether the required funding for said purchase is available for use. Councilor Peckham expressed concern that there are no definite answers being provided for the future budgetary status of the City, and Ms. Arpke explained that budgets are based on financial projections therefore definite answers are not yet available.

Vice President Dionne and Ms. Arpke discussed the ongoing solid waste collection contract, the planned expenditure for this contract and the possibility of changes to the total cost for the City. Ms. Arpke explained that the contract will be based on the amount supplied in the contractor's official bid and that the contract cannot be finalized until the budget is approved by the City Council. Ms. Arpke clarified that the budgetary appropriation order can be amended in the future after adoption, if needed. Ann O'Neil-Souza, Interim City Administrator/Chief of Staff, stated that the City Auditor can guarantee twelve months of payments for the contract, but that the legal document cannot be executed until the budget is passed by the City Council. Vice President Dionne stated that she had confirmed there would be no interruption to solid waste collection services if the budget was not approved prior to July 1, 2026, as a thirty-day extension has been applied for the current contract pending budgetary approval. Ms. Arpke emphasized that the

burden of a 1/12th budget would be placed upon each department head, as they will need to perform additional financial planning for the month of July and Ms. O'Neil-Souza stated that the City is prepared to operate on this type of budget for no more than ninety days. Vice President Dionne stated that she is confident that the budget matter will be reconciled within the next three months.

Vice President Dionne and Ms. Arpke also discussed the use of McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act funding and Commonwealth Special Education Reimbursement Program, commonly known as the Circuit Breaker Program, which provides financial assistance to public school districts to offset the cost of special education services. Ms. Arpke stated that both are potential funding sources for the School Transportation budget. Vice President Dionne stated that the funding must only be utilized for eligible special needs transportation and Ms. Arpke agreed. The Director of Financial Services explained that this would cover almost \$9,000,000 of the transportation cost total, as many services are provided to students with special needs. Vice President Dionne emphasized the need to include the School Committee and School Department in these discussions.

Councilor Peckham and Ms. Arpke discussed the pending MOAs for the Police Department, Fire Department and Fall River Teamsters Local 251. Ms. Arpke stated that there is \$600,000 set aside for anticipated agreement costs, but there are no specific amounts available yet as the negotiations are ongoing.

Councilor Canuel expressed concern regarding the lack of documentation regarding the revised budget, as he was unable to access the new pages until late in the day prior to this meeting. Ms. Arpke stated that she had distributed the pages on an earlier date but apologized for the delay. Ms. Arpke explained that the drafting of the revised budget began on Thursday and the turnaround time for printing and merging all the new pages was very limited. Councilor Canuel stated that he is not comfortable voting upon an item that he has not yet thoroughly reviewed. Councilor Peckham expressed concern regarding the Administration's lack of preparation to discuss budgetary matters in depth.

Councilor Canuel stated that the discrepancies between different submitted School Transportation cost totals has made analysis of the budget challenging. Councilor Canuel also expressed concern that the Administration would not be meeting with the School Department's new Chief Financial Officer to discuss this matter until July 1, 2026, and stated that various email requests from City Councilors and School Committee members have not been addressed in a timely manner. Mayor Coogan explained that there is a \$900,000 discrepancy between the Administration's total and the School Committee's total for School Transportation costs and stated that they are working diligently to correct this difference. Councilor Canuel and Ms. O'Neil-Souza discussed the use of Circuit Breaker funds to offset the transportation costs and Ms. O'Neil-Souza clarified that the total listed within the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) budget proposal does not include future changes to school districting or bus routes. Councilor Canuel stated that he is not confident that the changes to the school bus routes will have a positive financial effect on the City.

Councilor Canuel also made remarks regarding the City Council's power to object to this matter and expressed concern that the legal opinion provided by the Law Department was an overreach of executive power as the opinion was not solicited by the City Council.

Councilor Camara stated that the legal opinion provided to the Councilors is not an agenda item and that the discussion should remain focused on the budgetary matter at hand. Mayor Coogan stated that he had requested the legal opinion from the Law Department and shared the document with the Councilors once it was received. Councilor Canuel emphasized the need for mutual respect between the City Council and the Law Department and stated that the City Council needs easy access to legal information.

Councilor Raposo stated that he had requested additional documentation regarding School Transportation data numerous times without timely responses and had only received one data sheet made by the Chief Financial Officer of the Fall River Public Schools. Mayor Coogan stated that he was unsure if the accounting methods used to obtain that data were adequate and reiterated that he will be discussing future processes to calculate the totals when he meets with the new Chief Financial Officer on July 1, 2026. Councilor Raposo and Ms. Arpke discussed the methods used to determine the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act funding available, as previous fiscal years show an unchanging total of \$1,000,000. Ms. Arpke stated that she is currently researching this matter and will discuss this financial concern with the new Chief Financial Officer of the Fall River School Department. Councilor Cadime stated that the School Department has not been responding to the City Council in a timely manner with various financial data requests and Councilor Raposo agreed. Mayor Coogan stated that there are various forms of data provided by the School Department that need further research as well, such as the lack of a surplus listed for both the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act funding and the Circuit Breaker Program line items. Councilor Raposo asked about the amount provided during Citizens' Input Time by School Committee Member Collin Dias, which totaled 5%, and Ms. Arpke stated that she is still waiting for more information from the School Department to confirm their percentage calculations.

Councilor Camara stated that City Councilors who do not agree with the provided legal opinion do not need to follow the advice given and that all City Councilors can obtain third-party opinions from a private attorney on their own behalf.

Councilor Cadime asked if the new contract for School Transportation was available for review. Ms. Arpke explained that the City has received a copy of the contract and clarified that the 5% potential increase referenced during Citizens' Input Time was not included as an escalator clause. Councilor Cadime stated that, ultimately, the budgetary decisions on this matter are the responsibility of the Administration and expressed concern regarding the lack of dialogue with the School Department. Ms. Arpke explained that the contract has line items labeled as "not to exceed," but no total costs are provided and that this has created challenges in relation to proper budgeting for this expense.

Councilor Cadime stated that the School Department began their discussions regarding the FY27 budget in December of 2025 and expressed concern regarding the breakdown in communication between the Administration and the School Department. Ms. Arpke explained that, if there are discrepancies between the proposed budget and the actual total cost, an appropriation order will be submitted to amend the budgeted total in the future. Councilor Cadime asked if there were any other line items within the budget that could end up with significantly different totals once FY27 begins. Mayor Coogan stated that the only other line item that could have a much larger total would be the Health Insurance costs.

Councilor Pereira asked if the Chief Operating Officer could provide any additional information. Kenneth C. Pacheco, Chief Operating Officer, Fall River Public Schools, stated that he doesn't have much information regarding the specifics of the contract, but that he can confirm that there is a 5% escalator clause in the contract that was submitted.

Vice President Dionne and Mayor Coogan discussed the data that was supplied by the Interim Superintendent of Fall River Public Schools. Mayor Coogan confirmed that, while a different official sent the email, the financial data was created by the former Chief Financial Officer of the Fall River Public Schools. Vice President Dionne and Ms. Arpke discussed the City's calculated amounts, which are still pending, and that the Interim Superintendent's correspondence showed the presence of an escalator clause with a total cost of \$16,365,943.12, as of June 3, 2026. Vice President Dionne explained that the budget could have been amended to reflect this total. Mayor Coogan and Ms. Arpke explained that they need to discuss this matter with the new Chief Financial Officer, as the total cost includes purchase orders and encumbrances, not total amounts spent.

Councilor Peckham stated that the Director of Financial Services has not provided any definite answer regarding this matter. Mayor Coogan and Councilor Peckham discussed the various budgetary meetings that have taken place without complete information being provided. On a motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to adopt a vote of no confidence on Emily Arpke, Director of Financial Services, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Raposo voting in the negative.

A motion was made by Councilor Cadime and seconded by Councilor Camara to take line A1-I4 together and reject all line items. A brief discussion was held between Vice President Dionne, Councilor Cadime and the City Clerk regarding the best method to vote upon the appropriation order. The City Clerk advised the Council to vote on each line individually to ensure no question of the City Council's intent when voting on the appropriation order. Councilor Cadime withdrew his previous motion.

On a motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was unanimously voted to vote on the appropriation order by line item.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item A1 for Mayor, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item A2 for Mayor, Expenses, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item A3 for City Council, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item A4 for City Council, Expenses, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item A5 for City Clerk, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 7 yeas, 2 nays, to reject line item A6 for City Clerk, Expenses, with Councilors Camara and Hart voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item A7 for Elections, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted to reject line item A8 for Elections, Expenses, with Councilors Camara and Hart opposed.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted to reject line item A9 for Veterans' Benefits, Salaries, with Councilors Camara and Hart opposed.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted to reject line item A10 for Veterans' Benefits, Expenses, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira opposed.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted to reject line item B1 for Administrative Services, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira opposed.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted to reject line item B2 for Administrative Services, Expenses, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira opposed.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item B3 for Judgements and Claims, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item C1 for Financial Services, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 7 yeas, 2 nays, to reject line item C2 for Financial Services, Expenses, with Councilors Camara and Hart voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item D1 for Facilities, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item D2 for Facilities, Expenses, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item E1 for Community Maintenance, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item E2 for Community Maintenance, Expenses, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item F1 for Community Services, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 7 yeas, 2 nays, to reject line item F2 for Community Services, Expenses, with Councilors Camara and Hart voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item F3 for Community Services, Transfers, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 7 yeas, 2 nays, to reject line item G1 for School Appropriation, with Councilors Camara and Hart voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Raposo and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 7 yeas, 2 nays, to reject line item G2 for School Transportation, with Councilors Camara and Hart voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 7 yeas, 2 nays, to reject line item G3 for Education Assessments, with Councilors Camara and Hart voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Camara and seconded by Councilor Pereira, it was voted 3 yeas, 6 nays, to approve line item H1 for Police, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the affirmative and the motion failed to carry.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item H1 for Police, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item H2 for Police, Expenses, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item H4 for Harbor Master, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item H5 for Harbor Master, Expenses, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Camara and seconded by Councilor Hart, it was voted 3 yeas, 6 nays, to approve line item H6 for Fire & Emergency Services, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the affirmative and the motion failed to carry.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item H6 for Fire & Emergency Services, Salaries, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Camara and seconded by Councilor Hart, it was voted 3 yeas, 6 nays, to approve line item H7 for Fire & Emergency Services, Expenses, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the affirmative and the motion failed to carry.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item H7 for Fire & Emergency Services, Expenses, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item I1 for Debt-Service, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item I2 for Insurance, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item I3 for Pension Contributions, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Peckham and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reject line item I4 for Reserve Fund, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Councilor Cadime and seconded by Councilor Pereira, it was voted 7 yeas, 2 nays, to reject all funding sources with Councilors Camara and Hart voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to reduce the appropriation order total to \$0, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham, it was voted 6 yeas, 3 nays, to adopt the appropriation order, as amended, with Councilors Camara, Hart and Pereira voting in the negative.

A motion was made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham to approve a continuing 1/12th appropriation budget.

Councilor Cadime stated that there was no 1/12th budgetary appropriation order before the City Council for approval. Councilor Pereira also clarified that this budgetary appropriation will go into effect automatically. The City Clerk stated that the next step of the process is for the Mayor to submit a 1/12th appropriation order and suggested that the City Council could send a letter to the Mayor requesting such submission.

On a motion made by Councilor Pereira and seconded by Vice President Dionne, it was unanimously voted to send a letter to the Mayor requesting that a 1/12th budgetary appropriation be submitted to the City Council, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part of these minutes.

Vice President Dionne requested that the City Council still vote to approve operating under a continuing 1/12th appropriation to avoid any issues related to this matter.

A motion was made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Peckham to approve operating under a continuing 1/12th appropriation budget. On a roll call vote, Councilor Cadime voted in the affirmative, Councilor Camara objected and the motion was laid on the table in accordance with the Charter.

On a further motion made by Vice President Dionne and seconded by Councilor Pereira, it was unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:24 p.m.

List of documents and other exhibits used during the meeting:

Agenda packet (attached)

Legal opinion from Assistant Corporation Counsel Gary Howayeck regarding the City Council's ability to object to the second revised proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Municipal Budget General Fund Appropriation Order

A true copy. Attest:


City Clerk

In City Council, July 14, 2026
Approved.



City of Fall River Massachusetts
Office of the City Clerk

INÊS DA SILVA PAULINO LEITE
CITY CLERK

CHELSEA PACHECO
ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

July 1, 2026

The Honorable Paul E. Coogan, Mayor
City of Fall River
One Government Center
Fall River, MA 02722

Dear Mr. Mayor:

At a Special Meeting of the City Council held on June 30, 2026, and under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 32, on a motion made and seconded, the line-items within the appropriation order for the second revised proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Municipal Budget were rejected and reduced to \$0.

The appropriation order was subsequently adopted, as amended, 6 yeas, 3 nays, with Councilors Joseph D. Camara, Paul B. Hart and Linda M. Pereira voting in the negative.

Enclosed please find the amended appropriation order with a listing of the votes taken for your consideration.

In light of this rejection, on a further motion made and seconded, the Council voted unanimously to request that a 1/12th appropriation order be submitted for the month of July.

Sincerely,

Inês da Silva Paulino Leite
City Clerk

/spl

cc: City Council President
Interim City Administrator
Director of Financial Services



City of Fall River Massachusetts
Office of the City Clerk

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INÊS DA SILVA PAULINO LEITE
CITY CLERK

CITY CLERK
FALL RIVER, MA
CHELSEA PACHECO
ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

JUNE 30, 2026, AT 5:30 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ONE GOVERNMENT CENTER

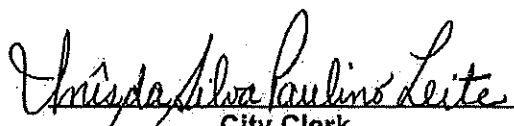
AGENDA

1. Citizen Input

OTHER POTENTIAL MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON:

PRIORITY MATTERS

2. *Mayor and revised Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Municipal Budget
 - General Fund Appropriation Order


City Clerk

ADA Coordinator:
Gary P. Howayeck, Esq. 508-324-2650

One Government Center • Fall River, MA 02722
TEL 508-324-2220 • FAX 508-324-2211 • EMAIL city_clerk@fallriverma.gov



PAUL E. COOGAN
Mayor

**City of Fall River
Massachusetts**
Office of the Mayor
RECEIVED

2026 JUN 26 P 2:11

CITY CLERK
FALL RIVER, MA

June 26, 2026

Inês da Silva Paulino Leite
City Clerk
One Government Center
Fall River, MA 02722

Madam Clerk:

In accordance with the provisions of Section 3-6 of the City Charter and Chapter 2 Section 55 of the City Code, I hereby request that a Special Meeting of the City Council be scheduled for Tuesday, June 30, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Government Center.

The purpose of this meeting is to act on the revised General Fund appropriation order for the Fiscal Year 2027 Municipal Budget, which has been revised to address the Council's concerns.

Councilors who cannot physically attend will be allowed to attend remotely consistent with the Massachusetts State Remote Participation Policy (M.G.L. c. 30A and 940 CMR 29.10).

Sincerely,


Paul E. Coogan
Mayor



PAUL E. COOGAN
MAYOR

RECEIVED

2026 JUN 26 P 2:53

CITY CLERK
FALL RIVER, MA

City of Fall River
Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor

Honorable Members of the City Council,

The Fiscal Year 2027 SECOND REVISED Proposed Municipal Budget is hereby submitted for your review and approval. The General Fund is being submitted for appropriation in the amount of \$483,305,786, which is a 4.8% increase from the Fiscal Year 2026 Revised Budget. The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Enterprise Fund has been approved in the amount of \$16,894,935, which is an increase of 2.5% from the Fiscal Year 2026 Revised Budget. The Sewer and Water Enterprise Funds have previously been approved for appropriation with a combined total of \$48,559,989, which is an increase of 1.2% – the approved orders and supporting detail have been included.

The total General Fund increase can be attributed to a few very specific categories: State mandated Net School Spending requirements, Solid Waste expenses, the Diman Regional Debt Assessment, Health Care, the annual Pension assessment, and cost of living adjustments to salaries and expenses. These increases are being added to the base budget and will at a minimum be maintained, however we are expecting more normalized increases in these lines in the subsequent fiscal years.

The revenue projected for the FY2027 General Fund Local Receipts is about 87.4% of the Projected FY2026 receipts, in line with DOR's recommendation of no more than 90% of the previous year's actuals. Through State Aid, at the Senate's Proposed budget, we are anticipating an 7.9% increase from the FY2026 budget.

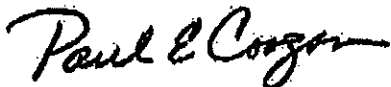
Prior to this fiscal year, the goal was to increase the Free Cash certification to rebuild our General Fund Stabilization balance. Great progress has been made, with a current balance of \$22.7M, and anticipating ending the year with a \$22.9M balance. While there is still more work to be done to meet the State and National standards set for General Fund Stabilization balances, we feel it is at a comfortable enough level to shift our focus to allocating funds to these other large financial matters for the next several fiscal years. By returning to zero-based budget practices, while continuing to keep capital expenditures and one-time purchases out of the General Fund budget and being less conservative on revenue budgets

- we are anticipating Free Cash Certifications return to previous values of \$3-8M after FY2026. Given the level of uncertainty surrounding Federal funding, which would also impact State funding local municipalities, the Administration and Finance team is committed to leaving the current General Fund Stabilization balance at this level, only utilizing the funds as a last resort option. In turn, it is our intent to use future surplus strategically for capital expenditures, rebuilding the Employer Health Care Trust fund balance, and to cover the increasing State mandated Net School Spending requirements, Solid Waste expenses, the Diman Regional Debt Assessment, Health Care costs, annual Pension assessment, and cost of living increases. We are committed to working hard on improving the City's financial plans and practices with the City Council, to not just keep the City afloat but to keep us moving forward.

Through this Budget we reaffirm our continued commitment to education, public safety, and serving the needs of the citizens of Fall River. This Budget represents a collaboration between all City Departments and our Finance Team to review budgetary requests and maintain an increase in the Tax Levy of not more than 2.5%.

Budget development is an important process that takes much time, analysis, coordination and teamwork to get to a final product. We thank the City's Department Heads, Division Managers, and School Department leadership, who have worked seamlessly with the Finance Team and Administration to make this possible while still providing their daily services to the community.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul E. Coogan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" being the most prominent.

Mayor Paul E. Coogan

BE IT ORDERED, that the Annual Budget for fiscal year 2027 from various funds, is \$483,305,786 of which the amount of \$471,510,187 be raised from ordinary revenue and municipal receipts for appropriation as follows:

A. for the purpose of GENERAL GOVERNMENT

1. from the General Fund, for MAYOR, Salaries	\$	308,507	
2. from the General Fund, for MAYOR, Expenses	\$	20,250	
3. from the General Fund, for CITY COUNCIL, Salaries	\$	258,664	
4. from the General Fund, for CITY COUNCIL, Expenses	\$	170,700	
5. from the General Fund, for CITY CLERK, Salaries	\$	381,990	
6. from the General Fund, for CITY CLERK, Expenses	\$	35,875	
7. from the General Fund, for ELECTIONS, Salaries	\$	366,576	
8. from the General Fund, for ELECTIONS, Expenses	\$	104,300	
9. from the General Fund, for VETERANS' BENEFITS, Salaries	\$	299,611	
10. from the General Fund, for VETERANS' BENEFITS, Expenses	\$	1,651,055	
			\$3,597,529

B. for the purpose of ADMINISTRATION

1. from the General Fund, for ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES, Salaries	\$	1,520,877	
2. from the General Fund, for ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES, Expenses	\$	3,632,805	
3. from the General Fund, for JUDGEMENTS AND CLAIMS	\$	350,000	
			\$5,503,682

C. for the purpose of FINANCIAL SERVICES

1. from the General Fund, for FINANCIAL SERVICES, Salaries	\$	1,868,324	
2. from the General Fund, for FINANCIAL SERVICES, Expense	\$	344,990	
			\$2,213,314

D. for the purpose of FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

1. from the General Fund, for FACILITIES, Salaries	\$	1,009,797	
2. from the General Fund, for FACILITIES, Expense	\$	2,181,465	
3. from the General Fund, for FACILITIES, Capital	\$	-	
			\$3,191,262

E. for the purpose of COMMUNITY MAINTENANCE

1. from the General Fund, for COMMUNITY MAINTENANCE, Salaries	\$	5,558,125	
2. from the General Fund, for COMMUNITY MAINTENANCE, Expense	\$	17,891,532	
3. from the General Fund, for COMMUNITY MAINTENANCE, Capital	\$	-	
			\$23,449,657

F. for the purpose of COMMUNITY SERVICE

1. from the General Fund, for COMMUNITY SERVICES, Salaries	\$	2,883,156	
2. from the General Fund, for COMMUNITY SERVICES, Expense	\$	672,631	
3. from the General Fund, for COMMUNITY SERVICES, Transfers	\$	30,000	
			\$3,585,787

G. for the purpose of EDUCATION

1. from the General Fund, for SCHOOL APPROPRIATION	\$	212,582,416	
2. from the General Fund, for SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION	\$	12,350,048	
3. from the General Fund, for EDUCATION ASSESSMENTS	\$	10,225,442	
			\$235,157,906

General Fund

Appropriation Order

H. for the purpose of COMMUNITY PROTECTION

1. from the General Fund, for POLICE, Salaries	\$	24,767,158
2. from the General Fund, for POLICE, Expenses	\$	2,130,062
3. from the General Fund, for POLICE, Capital	\$	-
4. from the General Fund, for HARBOR MASTER, Salaries	\$	4,500
5. from the General Fund, for HARBOR MASTER, Expenses	\$	31,000
6. from the General Fund, for FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES, Salaries	\$	19,695,445
7. from the General Fund, for FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES, Expenses	\$	1,187,798
8. from the General Fund, for FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES, Capital	\$	-
		\$47,815,962

I. for the purpose of OTHER GOVERNMENTAL EXPENSES

1. from the General Fund, for DEBT - SERVICE	\$	13,719,946
2. from the General Fund, for INSURANCE	\$	52,402,162
3. from the General Fund, for PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS	\$	44,747,127
4. from the General Fund, for RESERVE FUND	\$	603,013
		\$111,472,248

TOTAL GENERAL FUND OPERATING BUDGET

\$ 435,987,347

CHERRY SHEET ASSESSMENTS

\$ 47,318,439

GENERAL FUND OPERATING BUDGET

\$ 483,305,786

FUNDING SOURCES:

from Diman Stabilization Fund	\$	4,000,000
from Surplus Revenue (<i>Free Cash</i>)	\$	150,000
from the EMS Rate Revenues for INSURANCE	\$	1,447,435
from the EMS Rate Revenues for PENSION	\$	1,692,975
from the EMS Rate Revenues for OTHER INDIRECT	\$	928,980
from the Water Rate Revenues for INSURANCE	\$	618,839
from the Water Rate Revenues for PENSION	\$	1,195,932
from the Water Rate Revenues for OTHER INDIRECT	\$	813,438
from the Sewer Rate Revenues for INSURANCE	\$	154,615
from the Sewer Rate Revenues for PENSION	\$	292,624
from the Sewer Rate Revenues for OTHER INDIRECT	\$	500,761
from Ordinary Revenue and Municipal Receipts	\$	471,510,187

GENERAL FUND OPERATING BUDGET

\$ 483,305,786

General Fund

Budget Summaries

	FY2025 Actuals	FY2026 Revised Budget	FY2027 Proposed Budget	FY26 - 27 Change %
RESOURCES:				
State Aid: Education	209,841,480	237,491,701	258,259,675	8.7%
State Aid: General Government	31,656,722	31,961,565	33,153,795	3.7%
Tax Levy	140,712,858	147,514,364	152,943,136	3.7%
Local Recelpts	32,210,245	29,030,646	27,153,581	-6.5%
Indirects	7,056,189	7,191,921	7,645,599	6.3%
General Fund Stabillization	1,530,284	-	-	0.0%
Surplus Revenue (Free Cash)	16,933,488	7,236,000	150,000	-97.9%
Other Sources	131,176	-	-	0.0%
From Diman Stabillization	-	600,000	4,000,000	566.7%
TOTAL RESOURCES FOR APPROPRIATION	\$ 440,072,442	\$ 461,026,196	\$ 483,305,786	4.8%
EXPENDITURES:				
General Government	3,041,313	3,772,181	3,597,529	-4.6%
Administrative Services	4,518,044	5,419,467	5,503,682	1.6%
Financial Services	2,052,353	2,223,748	2,213,314	-0.5%
Facility Maintenance	3,037,769	3,361,119	3,191,262	-5.1%
Community Maintenance	17,519,789	21,698,919	23,449,657	8.1%
Community Service	3,746,017	4,011,963	3,585,787	-10.6%
Public Safety	44,441,663	47,764,020	47,815,962	0.1%
Education	191,127,725	220,067,446	235,157,906	6.9%
Debt Service	14,665,634	14,402,321	13,719,946	-4.7%
Insurance & Other	48,752,540	50,690,149	52,402,162	3.4%
Pension Assessment	40,693,939	43,299,321	44,747,127	3.3%
Reserve for Employee Benefits	-	288,185	603,013	109.2%
Transfer to Stabillization Funds	3,750,000	-	-	0.0%
Other Amounts to be Raised	177,018	-	-	0.0%
GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS	\$ 377,523,805	\$ 416,998,839	\$ 435,987,347	4.6%
STATE & COUNTY ASSESSMENTS	\$ 39,479,742	\$ 44,027,357	\$ 47,318,439	7.5%
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS & ASSESSMENTS	\$ 417,003,547	\$ 461,026,196	\$ 483,305,786	4.8%
BUDGET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$ 23,068,895	\$ -	\$ -	0.0%

General Fund

Resources for Appropriation Summary

	FY2025 Actuals	FY2026 Revised Budget	FY2027 Proposed Budget	FY26 - 27 Change %
State Aid: Education	\$ 209,841,480	\$ 237,491,701	\$ 258,259,675	8.7%
Chapter 70	202,331,603	230,788,276	250,598,336	8.6%
Charter Tuition Reimbursement	7,509,877	6,703,425	7,513,101	12.1%
Offset: School Choice Receiving Tuition	-	188,289	148,238	-21.3%
State Aid: General Government	\$ 31,656,722	\$ 31,961,565	\$ 33,153,795	3.7%
General Municipal Aid	29,342,937	29,665,709	30,411,182	2.5%
Veterans Benefits	1,201,951	1,166,032	1,166,188	0.0%
Abatements: Vets, Blind, Spouses	453,129	465,300	559,133	20.2%
State Owned Land	658,705	664,524	680,794	2.4%
Offset: Public Libraries	-	336,814	336,498	-0.1%
TOTAL STATE AID	\$ 241,498,202	\$ 269,453,266	\$ 291,413,470	8.1%
Tax Levy	\$ 140,712,858	\$ 147,514,364	\$ 152,943,136	3.7%
Real Estate and Personal Property Taxes	139,588,687	147,514,364	152,943,136	3.7%
Tax Liens	1,124,172	-	-	0.0%
Local Receipts	\$ 32,210,245	\$ 29,030,646	\$ 27,153,581	-6.5%
Motor Vehicle Excise	9,774,198	9,700,000	10,000,000	3.1%
Meals Excise	1,860,102	1,800,000	1,800,000	0.0%
Room Excise	150,147	125,000	125,000	0.0%
Other Excise (Boat)	10,326	10,000	10,000	0.0%
Cannabis Excise	1,720,694	1,650,000	1,700,000	3.0%
Penalties and Interest	1,244,629	1,100,000	1,000,000	-9.1%
Payments In Lieu of Taxes	549,148	500,000	525,000	5.0%
Solid Waste - Other	350,481	625,000	350,000	-44.0%
Fees	1,624,288	1,617,700	1,533,000	-5.2%
Rentals	92,947	91,641	88,641	-3.3%
School	98,054	90,000	50,000	-44.4%
Library	19,840	16,000	17,500	9.4%
Cemeteries	89,740	89,000	89,000	0.0%
Departmental Revenue	976,980	859,250	863,000	0.4%
Licenses and Permits	2,895,583	2,582,055	2,383,440	-7.7%
Fines and Forfeitures	1,608,689	1,600,000	1,709,000	6.8%
Investment Income	6,773,492	4,475,000	3,250,000	-27.4%
Medicare Reimbursement	1,943,672	1,450,000	1,450,000	0.0%
Miscellaneous	427,235	650,000	210,000	-67.7%
Other Sources	\$ 25,651,137	\$ 15,027,921	\$ 11,795,599	-21.5%
Indirects	7,056,189	7,191,921	7,645,599	6.3%
General Fund Stabilization	1,530,284	-	-	0.0%
Surplus Revenue (Free Cash)	16,933,488	7,236,000	150,000	-97.9%
Other Sources	131,176	-	-	0.0%
Diman Stabilization Fund	-	600,000	4,000,000	566.7%
GENERAL FUND RESOURCES TOTAL	\$ 440,072,442	\$ 461,026,196	\$ 483,305,786	4.8%

General Fund

Appropriations & Assessments Summary

	FY2025 Actuals	FY2026 Revised Budget	FY2027 Proposed Budget	FY26 - 27 Change %
General Government	\$ 3,041,313	\$ 3,772,181	\$ 3,597,529	-4.6%
Mayor's Office	318,868	329,843	328,757	-0.3%
City Council	409,823	424,740	429,364	1.1%
City Clerk	400,444	422,081	417,865	-1.0%
Elections	441,084	482,037	470,876	-2.3%
Veterans	1,471,094	2,113,479	1,950,666	-7.7%
Administrative Services	\$ 4,518,044	\$ 5,419,467	\$ 5,503,682	1.6%
City Administrator	205,687	180,750	179,057	-0.9%
Human Resources	297,016	349,204	356,175	2.0%
Management Information Systems	2,754,795	3,222,553	3,524,425	9.4%
Law	1,004,808	1,216,961	1,094,026	-10.1%
Judgements & Claims	255,739	450,000	350,000	-22.2%
Financial Services	\$ 2,052,353	\$ 2,223,748	\$ 2,213,314	-0.5%
Director of Financial Services	201,119	145,500	148,000	1.7%
City Auditor	361,962	363,920	433,670	19.2%
Analysis & Compliance	78,046	118,881	-	-100.0%
Purchasing	86,039	147,186	224,737	52.7%
Assessors	517,060	534,087	542,919	1.7%
Treasurer	365,335	388,919	404,837	4.1%
Collectors	442,792	525,254	459,152	-12.6%
Facility Maintenance	\$ 3,037,769	\$ 3,361,119	\$ 3,191,262	-5.1%
Director of Operations	144,754	144,200	144,200	0.0%
Facilities	2,893,015	3,216,919	3,047,062	-5.3%
Community Maintenance	\$ 17,519,789	\$ 21,698,919	\$ 23,449,657	8.1%
Streets & Highways	3,483,486	3,532,550	3,514,965	-0.5%
Solid Waste	9,983,187	13,562,248	15,231,270	12.3%
Parks	1,372,212	1,550,661	1,600,709	3.2%
Cemeteries	389,424	516,177	442,776	-14.2%
Trees	455,713	470,756	389,221	-17.3%
Snow Removal	504,649	526,243	526,243	0.0%
Traffic & Parking	1,036,089	1,229,938	1,419,545	15.4%
Engineering	295,028	310,346	324,928	4.7%
Community Services	\$ 3,746,017	\$ 4,011,963	\$ 3,585,787	-10.6%
City Planning	164,961	261,371	238,220	-8.9%
Inspectional Services	809,098	894,413	913,459	2.1%
Health & Human Services	827,318	877,585	911,286	3.8%
Library	1,944,640	1,978,595	1,522,822	-23.0%

General Fund

Appropriations & Assessments Summary

	FY2025 Actuals	FY2026 Revised Budget	FY2027 Proposed Budget	FY26 - 27 Change %
Public Safety	\$ 44,441,663	\$ 47,764,020	\$ 47,815,962	0.1%
Police	25,767,486	27,446,227	26,897,220	-2.0%
Harbor Master	14,144	36,300	35,500	-2.2%
Fire	18,625,602	20,242,618	20,841,929	3.0%
Emergency Management Agency	34,431	38,874	41,314	6.3%
Education	\$ 191,127,725	\$ 220,067,446	\$ 235,157,906	6.9%
School Department	174,845,378	197,716,795	212,582,416	7.5%
School Transportation	11,012,522	13,238,739	12,350,048	-6.7%
Vocational School Assessments	5,269,825	9,111,912	10,225,442	12.2%
Other Governmental Expenditures	\$ 108,039,132	\$ 108,679,976	\$ 111,472,248	2.6%
Debt Service	14,665,634	14,402,321	13,719,946	-4.7%
Health Insurance	39,231,962	48,041,747	49,685,710	3.4%
Transfer to Health Trust Fund	7,000,000	-	-	0.0%
Other Insurances	2,520,578	2,648,402	2,716,452	2.6%
Pension Assessment	40,693,939	43,299,321	44,747,127	3.3%
Reserve for Employee Benefits	-	288,185	603,013	109.2%
Transfer to Stabilization Funds	3,750,000	-	-	0.0%
Other Amounts to be Raised	177,018	-	-	0.0%
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	\$ 377,523,805	\$ 416,998,839	\$ 435,987,347	4.6%
State and County Assessments	\$ 39,479,742	\$ 44,027,357	\$ 47,318,439	7.5%
County Tax	740,838	781,755	801,454	2.5%
Mosquito Control Projects	141,339	147,255	151,493	2.9%
Air Pollution Districts	24,482	25,421	24,022	-5.5%
RMV Non-Renewal Surcharge	434,360	434,360	323,380	-25.6%
Regional Transit Authorities (SRTA)	1,656,759	1,698,178	2,322,260	36.8%
Offset: Public Libraries	-	336,814	336,498	-0.1%
Special Education - Chapter 71B	31,659	32,926	80,114	143.3%
School Choice Sending Tuition	2,397,390	3,062,687	3,223,605	5.3%
Charter School Sending Tuition	34,052,915	37,844,775	40,392,111	6.7%
Offset: School Choice Receiving Tuition	-	188,289	148,238	-21.3%
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS & ASSESSMENTS	\$ 417,003,547	\$ 461,026,196	\$ 483,305,786	4.8%