



City of Malden

Malden City Hall
215 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Meeting Minutes - Final Finance Committee

Councillor McDonald, Chair
Councillor Condon, Vice-Chair
Councillor Colon-Hayes
Councillor Spadafora
Councillor Taylor
Councillor Winslow

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

6:00 PM

City Council Chambers
215 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Public Hearing on FY25 Budget

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

[https://cityofmalden.zoom.us/j/97382172873?](https://cityofmalden.zoom.us/j/97382172873?pwd=dVZOVzlaemhPb1VCR2Q4RzI2MGZydz09)

[pwd=dVZOVzlaemhPb1VCR2Q4RzI2MGZydz09](https://cityofmalden.zoom.us/j/97382172873?pwd=dVZOVzlaemhPb1VCR2Q4RzI2MGZydz09)

Passcode: 933304

Or One tap mobile :

+19294362866,,97382172873#,,,933304# US (New York)

+16465189805,,97382172873#,,,933304# US (New York)

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+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)

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Roll Call

Present: 6 - Councillor Carey McDonald, Councillor Paul Condon, Karen Colon Hayes, Craig Spadafora, Ari Taylor and Stephen Winslow

Also Present: Councillors Crowe, Linehan, O'Malley, Simonelli

Zaheer Sammee- Assist. City Solicitor

Charles Ranaghan-Controller

Dan Grover-Treasurer

Maria Luise-Mayor's Office

Councillor McDonald called the meeting to order at 6:06 PM.

This meeting is being recorded by zoom.

Minutes to be Approved

[274-24](#)

Minutes of June 4, 2024 to be approved.

Motion to approve the minutes of June 4, 2024 was made by Councillor Winslow and seconded by Councillor Colon Hayes. All were in favor.

Business

This hearing is for the purpose of receiving public comment regarding the Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Budget.

Councillor McDonald began the meeting by asking Charles Ranaghan, Controller and Dan Grover, Treasurer to give a brief summary of the proposed FY25 Budget.

Charles Ranaghan, Controller said this is a tough budget but we were able to avoid any layoffs. The City is using over \$6.5mill in one time resources: \$4mill of remaining ARPA money in addition to almost \$2.6mill in City Returns. We are maintaining existing resources in the School, Fire, Police Dept and DPW and also able to maintain certain positions being funded through grants. He said it is a level service budget and all the services being offered today will continue being provided starting July 2024 when the new proposed budget takes effect.

Councillor McDonald said in our Finance Committee we met and talked about Revenues and Expenditures overall. We talked about state funds. There is a few hundred thousand more in state school funding this year and we met and spoke with the School Department and talked about ways they are holding open positions or eliminate open positions to avoid layoffs. We met with the Water Department and discussed out Water Sewer Enterprise Fund which is all a pass through from the Water Utility fees that we collect but it is well over \$20mill and is a major part of the budget and part of how we fund our lead service lines removed. We met with Office of Strategic Planning and Development who gave us a list of the grants we have received and the addition of the grant writer has paid off. The Library also gave us a overview of their services and make sure we maintain limited state required library funding. He also noted that we have belabored the issue trash and recycling fees Malden is currently subsidizing the annual cost of our trash and recycling by about \$2mill. When you look at the cost of curbside pick-up and tipping fees it is about \$3.5mill that gap is not getting any smaller. He wanted to flag that we will have to do something about that at some point. He opened up the floor for anyone who would like clarification on any part of the budget process. He also let the public know that all the Finance Committee Meetings recordings are posted online and you can learn more about the Budget on the City webpage with a link called ClearGov.

Councillor McDonald addressed an online question: What is the City and City Council going to do to help find funding sources for our schools and social services that need additional funding? He said that is a great question and this has been a continuous conversation with the City Council. Last year we passed two resolves to address this: one has to do with advocating with the state for changes to the school funding formula especially the expectations of what we can provide locally, the second is about growing our tax base which is part of the Master Planning Process. We also has an open ended conversation with Joint R/O and Finance about ways we could raise additional money. We talked about fees we collect in the City and bring them in line with neighboring communities.

Dan Grover, Treasurer explained the goal is to talk about fees post budget when the meetings resume in the Fall.

Councillor Winslow said there was also discussion of the Municipal Empowerment Act which might have provided other local options for the city to raise local revenue but his understanding is that is not going forward in the current fiscal year. We will not have that opportunity in this budget but we will have continued discussion on that.

Online Question: What is the City going to do with the quality city trash bags if they can't be used?

Councillor McDonald asked the Treasurer if city trash bags are damaged could they be

returned?

Dan Grover, Treasurer explained if the trash bag is damaged and it has not been used but if you put trash in the bag and it ripped we will not accept it. The bags are the same product since the start of the project but over stuffing could cause damage to the bag so he asked constituents to be conscious of that.

Online Question: Would the city consider a composting program Medford just got one and this would help with the trash issue alot?

Councillor McDonald said he doesn't know if we have discussed City funding for a composting program. This past year the City started a private pay compost program and negotiated a low rate \$15/month for weekly curbside pick-up and it definitely reduces the trash we are creating. He is definitely interested in seeing how it works out in Medford. Councillor McDonald opens the Public Hearing portion of the F/Y25 Budget at 6:26 PM. He opened the portion of the Public Hearing for anyone in person or online to speak in favor of the Proposed F/Y25 Budget at 6:28 PM. Going once, twice and last chance. Hearing none he declares that portion of the Public Hearing closed at 6:29 PM. He opened the portion of the Public Hearing for anyone in person or online to speak in opposition of the Proposed F/Y25 Budget at 6:30 PM.

Suzanne Akopian, 15 Alton Street came forward and would like to state she would like to speak against the budget when she has additional time to review and speak in detail at the next Finance Committee Meeting.

Tonight she would like to vote against it.

Councillor McDonald clarifies she would not like to speak today but would like to speak in the future. He clarifies the process this Public Hearing is the time for anyone to come forward to speak for or against with no time restrictions like public comment. Following this public hearing the Finance Committee will take a vote about the budget then it will come back to the Full Council for approval. When it gets back to the Full Council which will be the 18th or the 25th. You would then be able to sign up for Public Comment to speak in person for 2 mins or email the City Clerk by 4PM the evening of the meeting 300 words written online to be read into the record when it gets back to the Full Council Agenda. You can also email any of the Councillors online.

Suzanne Akopian would like to take the liberty address the items she would like to discuss today. The first item is the trash. She worked for a trash company for a number of years. She thinks it would be beneficial to the residents not to have a monopoly but to allow various bids from different companies to get the best price for the residents. When she prepared the pricing between the cities with multiple bids and monopolies there was a drastic difference in price and that would help cut the budget down for our taxpayers. The second issue is the public school system. She feels the quality of education she sees for the schools is hearendous. She would like to see the quality of staff, more educated teachers. She refers to her niece who is eight and attends one of the public schools and does not come home with any homework and also does not get any grades. She would like to see the quality of education improve in our City. She feels so far we are behind and asks the Council to take these two issues seriously because it's impacting our neighborhood and our future and the people we've raised to represent us.

Councillor McDonald thanks Suzanne for sharing and encourages her to reach out to your school committee members if you have input about how the schools are run. The school committee makes decision of how the schools are run we only approve their budget when it comes before us.

Councillor McDonald asked if anyone else in person or online would like to speak in opposition of the budget, once, twice, last chance. Hearing none he declares this portion of the Public Hearing closed at 6:39PM.

The committee continues to discuss the current proposed F/Y25 Budget and any changes the Council would like to discuss.

Councillor Winslow mentioned two things that were discussed with the Mayor and the Finance Team early on was making sure we maintained our language access funding which was originally funded by ARPA and that will be City Funded. The other request was that under ARPA we had funded a coordinator in Engineering to help with our leadlines and we need to continue to have the staff to do that. The Mayor addressed both of those things and incorporated that into the Budget before filing it. Charles Ranaghan, Controller spoke of the Retirement Appropriation. Originally it was scheduled to go up close to 5% which would have been an \$800,000 increase. We have worked with the Malden Retirement Board and the State Retirement Board-PERAC and prepared a new actuarial evaluation done which resulted in a level funding retirement appropriation. We assumed it would be the same amount but it went up by a little. The original number presented in the F/Y25 appropriation order was \$15,438,903 the new number is \$154,150 more than that. We have to amend the appropriation order by increasing it by \$154,150 which we have to pay on July 1st. The senates number for unrestricted local aid increased by more than \$154,000 so it will cover this increase. The Council is only voting on expenditures not on the revenue in the budget.

The following motion was made to amended the F/Y25 Proposed Budget:
Motion to increase under Schedule B the retirement line item by \$154,150 by Councillor Winslow seconded by Councillor Colon Hayes. Roll Call Vote: Winslow-yes Colon Hayes-yes Condon-yes Spadafora-yes Taylor-yes McDonald-yes Passes 6-Yes 0-Nay

244-24

Order: Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Appropriation Order

Sponsors: Carey McDonald

Attachments: [Mayor's Transmittal Letter on FY25 Proposed Budget](#)

[FY25 Proposed Budget](#)

[FY2025 Appropriation Orders](#)

[Controller Handout 52124 FY25 Budget](#)

[Hogan Handout FY25 Budget Expenditures](#)

[Hogan Handout FY25 Budget Revenue Source](#)

[Organizational Structure OSPCD](#)

[OSPCD Grants FY24](#)

A motion was made by Councillor Winslow, seconded by Councillor Condon, that the Order be recommended favorably as amended to the City Council. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yea: 5 - McDonald, Councillor Condon, Councillor Colon Hayes, Councillor Taylor and Councillor Winslow

Nay: 1 - Councillor Spadafora

The Finance Committee will continue with discussions on the proposed FY25 Budget and any other business which comes before them.

Other Business

Tabled Papers

[261-24](#)

Minutes of May 28, 2024 to be approved.

Motion to take Paper 261-24 off the table by Councillor Winslow and seconded by Councillor Colon Hayes. All were in favor.

A motion was made by Councillor Winslow, seconded by Councillor Colon Hayes, that the Committee Minutes be approved. The motion failed by the following vote:

Adjournment

Motion was made by Councillor Winslow, seconded by Councillor Taylor, that this meeting be adjourned at 6:54 PM. The motion carried unanimously.