



# City of Malden

Malden City Hall  
215 Pleasant Street  
Malden, MA 02148

## Meeting Minutes - Final Finance Committee

*Councillor McDonald, Chair*  
*Councillor Colon-Hayes, Vice-Chair*  
*Councillor Condon*  
*Councillor Crowe*  
*Councillor Spadafora*  
*Councillor Winslow*

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Tuesday, July 29, 2025

6:00 PM

City Hall, Room #105  
215 Pleasant Street  
Malden, MA 02148

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**Watch the meeting with Teams: <https://tinyurl.com/3e46akxh>**

### Roll Call

*Chair McDonald called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.*  
*Councillor Colon Hayes was in attendance via video call so any votes take this evening were done by roll call vote.*  
*Councillor Condon arrived at 6:17 PM.*

*Also in attendance was Maria Luise, Ron Hogan, Dan Grover, Chuck Ranaghan, Alicia McNeil, Dom Fernamo, Toni Mertz, Councillors Taylor & Linehan and the City's Health Care Consultant from Cook and Company, Susan Shillue.*

**Present:** 6 - Councillor Carey McDonald, Councillor Karen Colon Hayes, Paul Condon, Peg Crowe, Craig Spadafora and Stephen Winslow

### Minutes to be Approved

[325-25](#)

Minutes of June 10, 2025 to be approved.

**A motion was made by Councillor Winslow, seconded by Councillor Spadafora, that the Committee Minutes be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yea:** 5 - McDonald, Councillor Colon Hayes, Councillor Crowe, Councillor Spadafora and Councillor Winslow

### Business

[320-25](#)

Order: The City Council will vote on whether to engage in the process to change health insurance benefits under M.G.L. c. 32B, Sec. 21 through 23.

**Sponsors:** Carey McDonald

**Attachments:** [MGL Ch. 32B, Sec. 21](#)  
[MGL Ch. 32B, Sec. 22](#)  
[MGL Ch. 32B, Sec. 23](#)  
[Adoption of MGL 32B City Council](#)  
[Finance Committee on GIC Health Plans \(video\) July 30, 2025](#)  
[Informational Session on Health Plans-20250612\\_201244-Meeting\\_Recording.mp4](#)  
[Final Paper: 320-25](#)

*Discussion opened with Ron Hogan presenting an overview of the task at hand and a 20-step regulation driven timeline. This document is attached to the history of Paper 320-25, entitled 'Adoption of MGL 32B City Council'.*

*After Mr. Hogan's presentation, those in attendance participated in an extensive Q&A session, the entirety of which may be viewed with the link attached to the history of this paper, entitled Finance Committee on GIC Health Plans (video) July 30, 2025. There is also a link to a GIC information session the administration had with representatives from various employee unions, entitled Informational Session on Health Plans-20250612\_201244-Meeting Recording.mp4.*

*The purpose of Paper 320-25 is simply to vote whether the city wishes to engage in the process to start discussions on joining the GIC. An affirmative vote by the Council does not automatically enter the city into the GIC but rather outlines the process of how to move forward in discussions.*

*The next steps in this process will be for the Finance Committee to determine if they wish to recommend this paper favorable or unfavorably to the Council. A full vote of the entire City Council must be taken as soon as possible given the tight timeline leading up to FY '27. This is not something that can wait until the Council reconvenes in September, therefore the administration is asking for call of the President in August.*

*In 2017 Malden did adopt this statute to enter talks on possible benefit changes. The difference from back then was that the city was looking at remaining self insured but making changes to benefits. The law is not clear if a new vote to adopt the indicated MGL is necessary each time talks are opened. Even if a vote to re-adopt 32B s. 21-23 isn't legally necessary, having the conversation in open session serves as a best practice.*

*IAC - Insurance Advisory Committee. In the absence of an IAC, the Union Presidents, or their assigned designees, will serve as the IAC.*

*PEC - Public Employee Committee, members of this committee are picked by the Unions and this is what becomes the actual negotiating body. Mass State Retiree Association also picks a retiree representative. If the city and the PEC is not able to come to a negotiated agreement, a state review panel will be utilized.*

*The city must show that by going to the GIC there will be a savings of at least 5%. The city is then required to give up to 25% of the total first year savings back to the employees. How the money goes back is negotiable. It may be through a premium holiday, on an HRA debit card, by check, etc.*

*Councillor Linehan expressed concern that insurance rates can be raised mid-year in years when the State makes 9C cuts. It used to be the GIC could make benefit and rate*

*changes mid-year but as of now, legislation does not allow for that. If the rates aren't set sufficiently to cover the cost, the State must come up with a supplemental appropriation and does not go back to the participating municipality to make up the difference.*

*Extra health related benefits now offered to employees by the city are not required to be maintained once moving to GIC. Such programs include the diabetes plan, wellness rewards, fitness reimbursement, etc. Keeping some of these optional programs is something that may be discussed with the negotiation team when distribution of the mitigation funds is considered.*

*For the purpose of employee education, the city will put together a very detailed proposal that reviews benefits, projected costs, and proposed mitigation. Union and retiree representatives are responsible for bringing the information back to their membership. The membership will be in discussion with the PEC but it's the PEC that participates in taking a weighted vote. Retirees get an automatic 10% of the vote. The other 90% is distributed among the other bargaining units as a percent based on the number of benefit eligible members. If this plan moves forward, it will preempt all current collective bargaining agreements related to health coverage.*

*Councillor McDonald asked about experiences had by other municipalities besides the tangible benefits of cost savings such as giving up control of benefit changes and carriers. The GIC offers eight plans of different sizes and networks, location of networks, with different price points making for more choice for employees. Loss of control includes the GIC Commission setting the rates, the benefits, and the carriers, not the city. The vast majority of Medicare retirees are enrolled in Harvard Pilgrim Enhance; GIC offers this same plan. There is a municipal benefit decision guide, which is a 35-page document that shows the various plans and related costs, employees are welcome to review this guide for better understanding of options.*

*Currently there are approximately 45 municipal entities participating in the GIC. There are a number of municipalities that share insurance pools. One such group exists in the Wellsley/Natick area comprised of ten communities. Plymouth and the Cape also have regional pools that those municipalities participate in.*

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

**Yea:** 6 - McDonald, Councillor Colon Hayes, Councillor Condon, Councillor Crowe, Councillor Spadafora and Councillor Winslow

## Other Business

## Adjournment

**A motion was made by Councillor Spadafora, seconded by Councillor Winslow, that this meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote:  
Meeting was adjourned at 7:01 PM.**

**Yea:** 6 - McDonald, Councillor Colon Hayes, Councillor Condon, Councillor Crowe, Councillor Spadafora and Councillor Winslow

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