



City of Malden

Malden City Hall
215 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Meeting Minutes - Final Finance Committee

Councillor McDonald, Chair
Councillor Taylor, Vice Chair
Councillor Condon
Councillor Luong
Councillor Sica
Councillor Simonelli

Tuesday, April 28, 2026

5:30 PM

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

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

Roll Call

Present: 4 - Carey McDonald, Ari Taylor, Paul Condon and Jadeane Sica

Absent: 2 - Michelle Luong and Chris Simonelli

Also Present: Council President Linehan, Councillors Colon Hayes, Crowe, O'Malley, Winslow
Maria Luise-Special Assistant to the Mayor
Charles Ranaghan-CFO/Controller
Alex Pratt-Director OSPCD
Jane Ventrone-Deputy Director of Housing and Community Development-via Teams
Carol Ann Desiderio-City Clerk
Prasanna Rajasekaran-Assistant City Solicitor

Councillor McDonald called the meeting to order at 5:41 P.M.
There will be audio and video via Teams for this meeting.

Minutes to be Approved

[231-26](#)

Minutes of April 21, 2026 to be approved.

A motion was made by Councillor Sica, seconded by Councillor Taylor, that the Committee Minutes of April 21, 2026 be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Business

[232-26](#)

Order: The City of Malden file with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development a Consolidated Plan including applications for grants under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 as amended and the Cranston-Gonzalez Housing Act of 1990 as amended to be administered by the Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development for Fiscal Year 2027, including all understanding

and assurances contained therein on or substantially in the form presented to this meeting; and that Gary Christenson, Mayor and Chief Executive Officer of the City of Malden, be and hereby is directed and designated as the authorized representative for and in the name and behalf of the City of Malden to sign and file said plan, to act in connection with said plan, and to provide such additional information as may be required.

Sponsors: Carey McDonald

Attachments: [Mayor's FY27 CDBG Budget Letter](#)
[Proposed FY27 CDBG Budget](#)

Councillor McDonald handed the discussion of the FY27 CDBG Budget to Alex Pratt, Director of OSPCD and Jane Ventrone-Deputy Director of Housing and Community Development.

Alex explained that the FY2027 CDBG budget is similar to previous years, with Congress continuing to level fund CDBG services. The priority balance is lower due to early project completions, resulting in funds being spent closer to their award date which is what we want. The budget includes allocations for affordable housing rehab, public services (with a \$500 increase for the warming center), physical improvements to Willow St. State Park (\$100,000), Linden Park playground upgrades (\$402,000), and ADA pedestrian improvements (\$88,000) which are with the Engineering Dept, with additional funding sought from CPC and state grants. Alex also mentions other HUD grants that are also used for many if not most of our rehab projects such as Healthy Homes Reduction Grant which is proposing a lead grant and their are other federal funds from HUD that go into our rehab programs which go into our CDBG Funds. He wanted to call attention to the admin costs this year because it helps bring funds covering OSPCD staff. Administrative funding covers staff costs, with 75% funded by grants, and includes \$281,000 plus 20% of program income. Section 108 loans are allocated for Riverworks Phase II, Senior Center rehabilitation, and Roosevelt Park, with repayments using CDBG funds and not affecting the city's general budget. We are hoping to get those projects started soon.

Councillor Taylor wanted to verify if these projects put in application with the amounts needed and the location of the project

Alex clarified the application process for projects, which involves a monthly application period and flexibility in funding amounts. We like to let the Councillors when this period is coming up. We have a project month if you have a project you can come up and talk to us about the project but could also come up and talk anytime about projects.

Councillor Colon Hayes asked where can we find the annual reports for these projects

Alex explained the annual reports and draft action plans are available on the OSPCD website there is a section called HUD reports and provides data on funded programs such as the Immigrant Learning Center and all the Malden based programs.

Councillor Colon Hayes asked about the allocation and use of funds for specific programs, including the Meals on Wheels program, administrative costs covering benefits and health care, and the eligibility of CDBG funds for school facilities if any of \$10,000 goes to the Senior Center.

Jane said funds are not allocated for meals at the Senior Center it is a program called Meals on Wheels from the Senior Center where meals go directly to the people at their homes it is separate. The plan does include administrative costs covering benefits and

health care.

Councillor Winslow asked when we talk about FY27 does that mean the funds becoming available is it October 1, 2026

Alex said the FY27 funds become available July 1 through June 30th

Councillor Winslow mentions he has been working with Yem and the MBTA to making some changes to bus stops in Maplewood Square and Jim Tarr has been involved and I know we're sort of under a deadline to get that work done by June 30th and it does involve some ADA work and said he needs to find out if there is any sources or CDBG money left.

Jane explained she has been working with Yem and went over with him how much of these particular funds are left and what may be there so she would be happy to go over it him.

Councillor Winslow also asked if we do not pay interest on 108 loans

Alex explained we do pay interest on 108 loans out of CDBG funds but it is a very competitive rate as it is through the federal government.

Councillor O'Malley said knowing we are having challenging financial times on the physical improvements is any of this money able to be used for funds for school facilities, such as roofs and HVAC.

Alex Pratt clarified that while schools may qualify as low/moderate income, further review of regulations is needed before allocating funds for such projects.

Councillor McDonald said from the Chair they appreciate the continuity here and is glad to see we got funding for the Linden Park playground from CDBG and the CPC grants. Councillor McDonald said one of my questions was this prior committee balance is basically the carryover that we didn't spend correct?

Did you look at spending maybe a little bit more of that on ADA pedestrian improvements to bring it up a little closer to where it was and can you talk about your decision making on that recommendation?

Alex said yes generally when we look at the total entitlement the last time that we have to spend, we know 15% is going to be public services. So then we look at what's left. We generally have not funded rehab at \$100,000. We expect to spend all of that in the coming year and then we look at the second 108 loan payments, which are also fixed and so the flexibility we have after we make those decisions is between the physical improvements category and the rehab categories.

Councillor McDonald said say from my perspective that I think trying to get to a minimum level of ADA funding kind of like you do with the House and rehabilitation trying to get it up to 100 if that seems prudent is something I would support. As you say, those have direct impacts and they're some of the most important impacts for accessibility, for seniors, for disabled Community Center.

Councillor McDonald said their last question is last year we had a conversation about what happens if the appropriation changes. What do you know about what's happening in Congress and the risk in this?

Obviously we had a lot more concerns at the beginning of the Trump administration that this program was going to be targeted. It is statutory. It's been pretty safe in the last year.

We've gotten continuous signs that you know this is not under threat from HUD. So what can you tell us about what's happening in Congress and do we need a backup plan?

Alex last year and I believe the year before we had a continuously planned because the number we were budgeting from was not the approved final number from HUD because Congress had not enacted on a budget. Because they acted on one of their continuing resolutions earlier than expected and it happened to include funding. We got our number the 1,407,608 number that's the final real number. Congress has not finalized it yet, but they appear to be level funded CDBG against for next year.

Councillor McDonald entertains a motion on Paper #232-26.

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

Yea: 4 - Councillor McDonald, Councillor Taylor, Councillor Condon and Councillor Sica

The Finance Committee will have a discussion on the schedule for reviewing the proposed FY27 Annual Appropriation order.

Councillor McDonald presented a draft schedule for budget meetings, including the CDBG budget review, appropriation order introduction, department budget reviews, and public hearings, with plans to finalize and distribute the schedule to all members. Next week we will bring in Chuck, Ron and Dan to have an overview of the FY27 Appropriation Order to talk about income, state assessments and state aid and big picture issues with the budget and big picture trades offs to be made. The next three week the goal is to speak with City Departments and inviting Directors that would want to come in and talk with us and plan to structure department reviews with time slots for directors to answer standard questions, focusing on the impacts of proposed budget cuts and potential strategies for future improvements. They are also aware that other committees may also need to meet so suggested possibly off nights if necessary.

Councillor Sica mentioned on the Committee of the Whole nights if we did not have to have meetings we could possibly fit other meetings in. She feels the ability to have a quorum is better on a night everyone is here anyway.

Councillor Linehan suggest if a meeting is necessary we could schedule it for 7:05 so that committees could reconvene if necessary after the COTW.

Councillor McDonald feels that three weeks of meeting is enough for departments. We also need to host a public hearing for the budget. We will need an update on the Senate Budget and GIC savings and could also hold the public hearing on June 2nd. At the Finance Committee on the 2nd we would be able to propose changes. Carol Ann reminded us that the State gives us a 45 day timeline for the budget once its submitted so where it is submitted earlier this year that would bring us to June 9th in order to comply with that otherwise whatever the Mayor proposed will take effect without our action. We will have to change the Full Council calendar to make that night a Full Council Meeting.

Councillor Crowe asked if the 9th is the final vote is the 16th to late if someone reconsiders.

Councillor Sica suggests scheduling June 11th just in case if needed.

Councillor McDonald read from state law and explained if we vote on the 9th we will have the ability to reconsider on the 16th.

Maria said if you take a vote on the 9th that is taking action within 45 days so you could vote on the 16th if you had to.

Carol Ann likes both Councillor Sica and Maria's suggestions but the 11th would be a safety net if needed.

Councillor McDonald said between when we voted and a submission of request of reconsideration is submitted however, if it fails it stays the same. The only issued would be if someone moves reconsideration and it passes. Between when we pass it and if reconsideration passes we actual reject the budget.

Councillor Taylor feels to air on the side of caution and schedule meetings for the 9th and the 11th

Councillor Linehan will not be available on the 11th.

Carol Ann clarified that remote meeting laws allow for Zoom meetings and that the Pro Tempore can chair if the regular chair is unavailable, ensuring flexibility in scheduling and compliance with COVID-related meeting regulations.

Councillor Winslow discussed the potential for having a Joint R/O-Finance Meeting for changes to the trash fee ordinance.

Carol Ann explained that the current ordinance mandates a referendum for any changes to trash removal fees, raising legal questions about consistency with the city charter and the authority of the Council.

The Finance Chair and Committee Members agreed to postpone discussion of trash fee changes until a future meeting, emphasizing the need for legal review to determine the validity of the ordinance and potential strategies for addressing budget challenges.

Other Business

Adjournment

A motion was made by Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Sica, that this meeting be adjourned at 6:32 PM. The motion carried unanimously.

If you would like to request a reasonable accommodation, please contact Maria Luise, ADA Compliance Coordinator at mluise@cityofmalden.org or 781-397-7000 Ext. 2005

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www.cityofmalden.org/captions