



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, January 13, 2026

6:00 PM

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

Watch the meeting with Teams: <https://tinyurl.com/ybxywk2n>

Roll Call

Present: 6 - Carey McDonald, Ari Taylor, Paul Condon, Michelle Luong, Jadeane Sica and Chris Simonelli

Also Present: Council President Linehan, Councillors Colon-Hayes, Crowe, O'Malley, Winslow
Maria Luise-Special Assistant to the Mayor
Carol Ann Desiderio-City Clerk
Christopher Mooney-Assistant City Solicitor
Daniel Grover-Treasurer
Ron Hogan-Strategic Planner

Councillor McDonald called the meeting to order at 6:09 PM.
There will be audio and video via TEAMS for this meeting.

Minutes to be Approved

[473-25](#)

Minutes of December 9, 2025 to be approved.

A motion was made by Councillor Condon, seconded by Councillor Simonelli, that the Committee Minutes of December 9, 2025 be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[34-26](#)

Minutes of December 16, 2025 to be approved.

A motion was made by Councillor Simonelli, seconded by Councillor Condon, that the Committee Minutes of December 13, 2025 be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Business

[434-25](#)

Order: That during the City of Malden Special Municipal Election to be held on February 10, 2026, the following debt exclusion ballot question be included:

Shall the City of Malden be allowed to temporarily assess an additional \$36,000,000 in real estate and personal property taxes through a debt/expenditure exclusion, for the specific purpose of paying for the construction of the Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational Technical School, for which the monies will be used for the fiscal years beginning July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2052?

A yes vote would support a temporary increase in real estate and personal property taxes beginning with fiscal year 2027 (07/01/2026 to 06/30/2027) until fiscal year 2052 (07/01/2051 to 06/30/2052).

A no vote would make no change to the current tax structure.

Sponsors: Ryan O'Malley, Karen Colon Hayes and Stephen Winslow

Attachments: [FW override general question concern for tonights meeting to be entered into record](#)
[434-438 Public Comment](#)
[Estimates for \\$5.4 and \\$8.2](#)
[Final Paper: 434-25 Debt Exclusion Ballot Question - Voke](#)

Councillor McDonald explained we are discussing Paper 434-25 Voke debt exclusion and we are able to discuss this paper tonight in this session because we are just in the first month of this session and we have not taken the vote on which Papers to bring forward. We are hearing this paper tonight in committee and on the floor in hopes of coming to a decision on this paper so that the Clerk's office can move forward with preparation of the ballot for the Special Election on March 31, 2026. The floor was turned over to Councillor O'Malley for a brief explanation of the Paper.

Councillor O'Malley explained that the debt exclusion proposal aims to cover the capital costs of building a new school, which would alleviate over \$1,000,000 from the annual budget and comply with legal requirements for capital improvements. The proposal was considered as a stopgap in case other override measures did not pass, and would not cover increased operating costs associated with the new school. This would just cover the debt we are required to pay for the Voke not the increased costs we will be facing when it comes to their operations which are the costs of running the school which will be increasing. This is to defer the capital costs to build the school over the next 20 years. If we were to take action on this paper we would have to update the date we picked in March and he is here to answer any questions. He mentions the Treasurer also has information about the tax impact of what it might cost the average homeowner which is a range or a ballpark figure.

Dan Grover provided a breakdown of the annual tax impact for various property types, based on a \$39,734,470 which is actual liability, estimating costs such as \$62.86 for a median-value home and \$93.24 for a single-family home, with the surcharge applied annually through 2055. The amounts could fluctuate depending on the city's share of school enrollment and other factors.

Councillor O'Malley asked if he is saying we aren't locked in when they decided to build it, every year our share of paying for the building changes.

Ron they have an additional capacity of about 200 kids with the new school if a disproportionate number of those students come from Malden our ratio of the overall debt will go up.

Councillor McDonald clarified this is discussion of the debt exclusion which is different from a operating override in that the operating override raises the amount of taxes we raise in an on going way and the debt exclusion is a charge separate from what is in that override limit.

Dan said it would be in your tax bill but would be added in by the Assessor

Councillor Simonelli asked Councillor O'Malley if he was looking to add this to the ballot of the Special Election with the override

Councillor O'Malley said yes and we are trying to get the information for the City Clerk to be able to move forward with the ballot with this vote

Councillor Simonelli expressed concerns that adding the debt exclusion question to the ballot alongside other override questions would confuse voters. He would suggest tabling the paper but he is not for adding this to the ballot for the Special Election. In the long run he supports looking into this but not at this time.

Councillor Condon he asked Ron how he feels about it does he feel it would burden the constituents

Ron said the docketing of this creates awareness around something that will force us to have a discussion about this going forward when we are looking at debt for anything is it something that could be funded through the general fund. He feels it creates the awareness that the discussion of what we are doing for borrowing can be absorbed in to the tax space that being said he feels three questions is overwhelming or confusing. They are two of one nature and one of another and can be confusing.

Councillor McDonald will ask for a recommendation in this Committee on this tonight vote it up or down but to send it to the floor for discussion where we can vote on this with the Full Council, table or place it on file.

Councillor O'Malley thanked everyone involved the Finance Committee and the Administration for giving him the respectful dialogue of this and having the opportunity to present it however it goes he is ok with that he would like it to be on the ballot it is a good example of even if we have different opinions we can still have dialogue and discussion of it if this comes up in the future.

Councillor McDonald stated that from the Chair before the override question discussion this would have been a great idea as Chair we needed to deal with the override questions before we brought this up this and also agrees with colleagues however it could be revisited in the future if the financial situation changes or if the override fails.

Motion was made to report this paper out unfavorably to the Full Council by Councillor Sica and seconded by Councillor Simonelli. Roll Call Vote: Condon-yes Luong-yes Sica-yes Simonelli-yes Taylor-yes McDonald-yes
6/0

A motion was made by Councillor Sica, seconded by Councillor Simonelli, that the Order be recommended unfavorably to the City Council. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[487-25](#)

Order: The Finance Committee will vote whether to go into Executive Session with Legal Counsel in accordance with Exemption One, Massachusetts General Laws

Chapter 30A Section 21(a)(1), and Exemption Seven, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A Section 21(a)(7), to comply with or act under the authority of any general or special law, specifically to comply with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A Section 23(b), to act on the pending Open Meeting Law Complaint filed by Brian DeLacey of 1 Earl Street on December 12, 2025 against the Finance Committee of the Malden City Council related to the December 9, 2025 duly posted Finance Committee meeting. And if so allowed by the Committee, to admit the City Council.

(Roll Call Required)

Sponsors: Carey McDonald

Attachments: [Finance OML Response 11326](#)

[Final Paper: 487-25 Executive Session DeLacey OML on Finance](#)

Councillor McDonald clarified this not a vote to go into executive session we voted not to go into executive session to address the paper. This is the Paper which in regards to the open meeting law complaint, filed by Brian Delacy, alleged that the Finance Committee violated the law by discussing alternative amounts and ballot wording not explicitly listed on the agenda during the December 9, 2025 meeting. We are coming back to receive the report from the legal department which we asked them to prepare. This is addressed to the Finance Committee so we do not have to go before the full council for a vote.

Chris explained that the committee's discussion of alternative amounts and ballot wording was a natural extension of the agenda items, and that the mayor's letter, sent on the day of the meeting suggesting alternative amounts, did not constitute a violation since the mayor is not a committee member and the topic arose unexpectedly. He said he still does not think this committee committed an open meeting law violation if when drafting and posting the meeting this letter was not added to the agenda. He feel it was appropriate for the committee to discuss that letter. It needed to be discussed in order to get the ballot wording done.

Councillor Crowe said she feels that at the previous meeting Councillor Winslow proposed alternative language for the ballot in that Finance Meeting and that is why the Mayor responded to that. She feels it was very much in our purvue to have this discussion.

Motion was made to allow the Legal Department to submit a response to the complaint on behalf of the Finance Committee by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Sica. All in favor.

Councillor McDonald explained this motion has been approved and thanked Chris. We look forward to your coming back with the determination.

A motion was made by Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Sica, that the Order be recommended favorably to Legal Department to allow Christopher Mooney, Assistant City Solicitor to submit respond to the OML Complaint against the Finance Committee to the Attorney General's Office. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Other Business

The Committee will discuss scheduling of educational forums in advance of the upcoming Special Municipal Election in March.

Councillor McDonald explained this agenda item is to have a little discussion about some community education opportunities about the issues that prompted this override and wanted to be clear that we cannot use City time, resources or facilities to campaign for or against a local ballot initiative. This would not be that instead it would be an opportunity for educational purposes. The forums will feature standardized content about the city budget and ballot questions, similar to previous public presentations, and will include opportunities for attendees to ask questions. The committee emphasized the importance of using consistent, updated information and making materials available online and in multiple languages. There has been back in forth with Maria and the Mayor's office to get some dates together and explains this is a good time to share ideas about the forums.

Maria said in her discussions with the Mayor they mentioned starting sooner but thought early February and spread them out as we approach March 31st. They propose 4 forums to be spread out throughout the City to educate. They were thinking school buildings, preferably auditoriums and cafeteria at Beebe, Salemwood and Linden. She also said there is parking at all these facilities and the fourth forum would be held online. We would like to start confirming dates so that if they need to hold more they could and they are opened to any ideas suggestions or locations.

Councillor Linehan said the locations sound great the geographic spread is important and parking and transit is also. She feels the sooner we can get them scheduled the better and there is a balance of getting it to a time when people could be there and not making it to soon so people can get it on their calendar and they can attend and getting it closer to the election the fresher it is in their minds as well.

Councillor Taylor feels that the locations are great and asked if you would consider one at the Senior Center in the afternoon for people who can attend then.

Councillor Colon Hayes said that sounds great and wanted to clarify that this will be held through the Finance Committee not the CEIC

Councillor McDonald said that is correct through the Finance Committee and the Mayor's Office will co-host like the last Forum. It is also important that all of the information will be posted and shared for constituents. There are other places will everyone can share that content and feels that is very important to share the information. The forums will feature standardized content about the city budget and ballot questions, similar to previous public presentations, and will include opportunities for attendees to ask questions and emphasized the importance of using consistent, updated information and making materials available online and in multiple languages.

Councillor Colon Hayes asked if they are allowed to discuss the actual questions and how they are going to vote. For example she has already gotten questions of where can we vote no. They thought no override. She feels those are the types of questions we may get a lot.

Carol Ann explained when they see the sample questions they will understand. The yes/no statements have been removed. It will just be the questions they fill in a yes or no vote or bubble that needs to be filled in. How people should vote is off the table to discuss with constituents. She discussed common voter questions about the ballot, such as how to vote 'no' on override questions, and explained that the state requires specific ballot formats without explicit yes/no statements. Sample ballots will be posted online and distributed at forums to help voters understand the process.

Councillor McDonald asked if there are resources from the State on this.

Councillor Linehan referenced a page from OCPF that she would send to the Councillors with public information the OCPF GUIDE-17 Public Employees, Public Resources and Political Activity (Guide)

Here is the link she was referencing: <https://www.ocpf.us/PublicSearch/ViewDocument?id=3018>

Councillor O'Malley said we are not allowed to use city resources but we can use our campaign funds for that.

Councillor Luong this past election you went to the senior buildings explaining the ballot and will you do the same for this was that part of your plan

Carol Ann said she has planned on a few outreaches right now with her staff but wanted to get the feel of what how this body was moving forward first before she scheduled election outreach.

Councillor McDonald encouraged the Councillors to collaborate on forum planning and outreach, with a focus on reaching diverse populations, including seniors and residents in different neighborhoods. The committee agreed to reconvene with feedback and finalize plans for the educational events.

Tabled Papers

[433-25](#)

Be it ordained by the Malden City Council that the Code of the City of Malden (MCC) 9.20.050 PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL WASTE is hereby amended by striking Subsections A, B, and C in their entirety and inserting the following in their place:

Sponsors: Stephen Winslow

Attachments: [Current 9.20.050 Provisions Applicable to All Waste](#)

Adjournment

A motion was made by Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Condon, that this meeting be adjourned at 6:57 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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