



City of Malden

Malden City Hall
215 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Meeting Minutes - Final Personnel/Appointments Committee

Councillor Crowe, Chair
Councillor Taylor, Vice Chair
Councillor Colon Hayes
Councillor Condon
Councillor Linehan

Tuesday, December 16, 2025

5:30 PM

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

Watch the Meeting with Teams: <https://tinyurl.com/y842zrwy>

Roll Call

Present: 5 - Amanda Linehan, Councillor Peg Crowe, Paul Condon, Karen Colon Hayes and Councillor Ari Taylor

Also Present: Councillors McDonald, O'Malley, Winslow
Maria Luise-Special Assistant to the Mayor
Christopher Mooney-Assistant City Solicitor
Jenn Spadafora-Vice Chair School Committee

Councillor Crowe called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.
This meeting will have audio and video via TEAMS.

Minutes to be Approved

[472-25](#) Minutes of November 25, 2025 to be approved.

A motion was made by Councillor Colon Hayes, seconded by Councillor Linehan, that the Committee Minutes of November 25, 2025 be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Business

[468-25](#) Mayoral Appointment: Denise Balboni-Cowie, 81 Newland Street, Malden, as a member of the License Board, said term to commence upon confirmation by the City Council, and to expire June 5, 2026.

Attachments: [Mayor's Appointment Letter - Denise Balboni-Cowie](#)

Councillor Crowe welcomed Denise and asked if she could tell them a little about herself and what her interest is in being on the Licensing Board.

Denise described her experience as an office manager at a golf club for twenty years, drawing parallels between managing club operations and city governance, including handling licenses, board decisions, and civic involvement. She is the Chairwoman of the Republican Committee. She said the License Board is of interest to her and she feels it is her civic duty to get involved. She has the time to be able to sit on this board.

Councillor Crowe said the make-up of the Liquor Board is three members and two are Democrat and one has to be a Republican so she will fill the Republican seat.

Councillor Colon Hayes asked if she watched or sat in on any of the License Board Meetings

Denise explained there hasn't been any meetings until this evening and she plans on sitting in on that meeting.

Councillor Winslow discussed challenges faced by local businesses in obtaining liquor licenses, referencing specific cases such as Fajitas Mexican Bar in Maplewood Square they wanted to serve Margheritas but weren't able to obtain one. He emphasized the importance of consistency and fairness in licensing decisions and asked what her thoughts were on that.

Denise explained her approach to handling difficult board decisions, stressing the importance of presenting a unified front and defending board decisions collectively, rather than singling out individuals. The two most important things to her are consistency and fairness.

Chair Crowe will offer an update as to the status of Paper 432-25 on the appointment of Jeffrey Donahue to the Voke School Committee.

The Clerk of Committees read the next order of business into the record. Chair Crowe will offer an update as to the status of Paper 432-25 on the appointment of Jeffrey Donahue to the Voke School Committee.

Councillor Crowe explained she has invited Jen Spadafora, Vice Chair of the School Committee to the meeting since Mr. Donahue's name got forwarded there was a conversation about the process of filling the vacancy. The School Committee does have a policy which is in line with the Voke and it is a joint convention involving the school committee, City Council president, and Mayor is required when the vacancy is not filled by an election opponent. Councillor Crowe give the floor to Jen Spadafora

Jenn said she was at the meeting where members of the Council wanted to know the process. She explained the school committee policy which reads that if we have a vacancy on the school committee that vacancy would be filled by the opponent that ran in the election. If they ran unopposed their replacement would be appointed jointly with the School Committee, City Council President and the Mayor. She continued by saying having read that and not having a formal process they felt this is something very close to the way the agreement with Northeast Voke reads. The School Committee pays the stipend for this position out of the Schools General Fund so the school committee feels they should be leading this process jointly with the City Council but also working with HR, getting the posting for the vacancy online collecting applications and having the City Council President attend a special school committee meeting to deliberate and vote on the appointment. This position has been vacant for three months now and they are still having meetings and it is important we have a representative attending these meetings. We would like to be able to get this position moving forward getting this position posted on line, get applicants to submit their resumes or statements of interest with the hope we will host a combined meeting in January to then appoint. Based on that policy we will ask the City Council President attend our special meeting of the School Committee. She emphasized the importance of a transparent, public process for selecting the representative, including public meetings, open application review, and opportunities for candidates to present statements and answer questions.

Councillor O'Malley said he would have to look at what your policy says but his understanding is the City Charter supersedes the policy you have replacing members of the committee. He does not feel that policy is valid. He is hearing the School Committee will pick whoever and hand it to the City Council but that is already what has happened the Chair of the School Committee has picked a replacement and sent it down to the City Council.

Jenn clarified the Mayor of Malden was not representing the School Committee when he sent that down. He sent down that recommendation down as the Mayor.

Councillor O'Malley said he would like to hear how his colleagues feel but to him that process will not have the public confidence. He stated this is not a reflection of your character but he thinks we should meet jointly if you had a Personnel/Appointments Committee we could meet with both bodies and how we might be filling this.

Jenn explained we do not have a Personnel/Appointments Committee

Councillor O'Malley thinks it is important to meet in a joint session with both bodies. Having public confidence is important. He doesn't feel it is right to give it to one candidate but it would be a candidate that has been vetted fairly.

Councillor Taylor wanted clarify the process for the public there will be applications received and this would be a public process

Jenn said the process will be the city will accept applications from Malden residents interested in serving as Malden's Representative, the applicants must be a registered voter in the City of Malden, meet all eligibility requirements, submit a statement of interest and resume with outlined relevant experience and the school committee will distribute all application materials to the members of the joint convention. They will convene and in accordance with the policy the candidates will be invited to make any statements and answer any questions. The joint convention deliberate and vote in a public session to select a candidate.

Councillor McDonald asked if members of the City Council are invited to attend and share our feedback.

Jenn said she doesn't want to speak for the City Council side she has brought a potential process but suggests they collaborate with whomever the Council President will be at that time to make sure there is full participation.

Councillor McDonald support this and thanks Jenn for bringing this forward. It makes sense and is happy for the School Committee to take the lead and feels strongly for the need of the public process. It might be useful for this committee meet to see what is the criteria we would like to see. Councillor McDonald raised questions about the specific roles of the school committee and City Council in the appointment process, with suggestions to seek legal guidance on ratification procedures and the authority of the joint convention.

Jenn said maybe the Pers/Appts committee would be the right place to compile the answers to those questions.

Councillor Crowe said the School Committee has the policy here. We won't have anybody representing us here if we don't stick to their policies. We talked about being

transparent and putting it out to the community and letting the School Committee take the lead is the way it should have been in the first place. This is just an update the only thing that came into this committee was Jeff Donahue's appointment. The vocational school doesn't care how you put a person in this position they just would like a representative from Malden there.

Council President Linehan suggests circling back with the Vice Chair of the School Committee one more time with Carol Ann, City Clerk to move forward with the process. We have a moment right now to open it up that both parties want. She agreed to move forward by posting the vacancy, collecting resumes, and reconvening in January for a joint meeting, while acknowledging the need to clarify procedural details and ensure representation is restored in a timely manner.

Jenn said what has been a slow process but at least first and foremost if we could get the posting out and if we could get people applying it would be a start.

Other Business

Adjournment

A motion was made by Councillor Taylor, seconded by Councillor Colon Hayes, that this meeting be adjourned at 6:14 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

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