



City of Malden

Malden City Hall
215 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Meeting Minutes - Final City Council

Council President Amanda Linehan
Councillor at Large Karen Colon Hayes
Councillor Paul Condon
Councillor Peg Crowe
Councillor at Large Michelle Luong
Councillor at Large Carey McDonald
Councillor Ryan O'Malley
Councillor Jadeane Sica
Councillor Chris Simonelli
Councillor Ari Taylor
Councillor Stephen Winslow

Tuesday, April 28, 2026

7:00 PM

City Council Chambers
215 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Committee of the Whole

Watch the meeting with Teams: <https://tinyurl.com/ycx4fjxm>

1. CALL TO ORDER

Council President called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE IN HONOR OF SERVICE MEMBERS

3. ROLL CALL

Also in attendance was Alicia McNeil, Maria Luise, and Lisa Cagno.

Present - Councillors: 10 - Karen Colon Hayes, Paul Condon, Peg Crowe, Amanda Linehan, Carey McDonald, Ryan O'Malley, Jadeane Sica, Chris Simonelli, Ari Taylor and Stephen Winslow

Absent - Councillors: 1 - Michelle Luong

Typically, Public Comment is not done during Committee of the Whole meetings. However, in consideration of all the members of the public who were in attendance to speak regarding the FY'27 budget, Councillor O'Malley made a motion to suspend Council Rules for the purpose of hearing public comment, seconded by Councillor Colon Hayes. Motion passed unanimously.

Steven South, representing Teamsters Local 25, Denise Balboni-Cowie of 81 Newland Street, and Michelle Connolly of 258 Lebanon Street all spoke in regards to Paper 233-26.

Later in the meeting, a motion was made by Councillor Sica, seconded by Crowe to suspend Council rules for the remainder of the meeting for the purpose of receiving communications and grant the previously tabled National Grid petitions. Motion passed unanimously.

4. HEARINGS, PETITIONS, MEMORIALS, AND REMONSTRANCES

Council will hold a public hearing on a National Grid petition to install underground conduits

153-26

Petition: Massachusetts Electric Company dba National Grid Plan No. 31239416 - National Grid to install underground facilities on Main Street. Trench and install (6) 4" concrete encased conduit from MH A/1 18 to switchgear located on 1100 Main Street approximately 60' on public right of way. Malden, MA.
(Hearing Required)

Attachments: [1100 Main Street Petition](#)
[Abutters 1100 Main Street](#)
[Hearing Notice 1100 Main Street - Updated March 25, 2026](#)
[Updated Plan](#)

With the exception of a representative from National Grid, no one came forward to speak either in favor or opposition of this petition during the public hearing. Councillor O'Malley is working with National Grid on the design aspect of this install. The equipment is to be moved further back on the property as to be less of an eyesore on the front of the building. There is also some discussion on putting a fence around the equipment. The movement of the electrical equipment is triggering a need to move the company's dumpster, which also brings up issues of pest control. Councillor O'Malley and National Grid are in agreement on how best to proceed but they are still in discussions with the property owner. A little more time to work out complete details was requested prior to granting this petition.

A motion was made by Councillor O'Malley, seconded by Councillor Sica, that the Petition be tabled. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

5. MOTIONS, ORDERS, AND RESOLUTIONS

233-26

Order: The Mayor will submit the Fiscal Year 2027 Annual Appropriation Orders for the General Fund.

Sponsors: Carey McDonald

Attachments: [Mayor Christenson's Memo](#)
[Link to Proposed FY2027 Budget](#)
[FY 2027 Summary Report Expenditures by Department for DBB](#)
[Finance Schedule of Meetings](#)

Clerk Desiderio read Mayor Christenson's memo into the budget then distributed copies of the appropriation order to the members of the Body.

Councillor O'Malley noted that he had requested from Controller Ranaghan, an Excel sheet containing account numbers, descriptions, and historical budget data to aid in analysis.

Councillor McDonald outlined the budget review period, with an overview meeting scheduled with the Mayor's finance team, followed by departmental budget discussions and a public hearing planned for June 2nd. The Council has 45 days from this meeting to take action on the appropriation order. A final vote is expected by June 9th. They also explained how members of the public may find the budget online for their own review.

A motion was made by Councillor McDonald, seconded by Councillor Sica, that the Order be referred to the Finance Committee. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

234-26

The City Council will address the Open Meeting Law complaint submitted on April 16, 2026 by Bruce Friedman of 8 Marvin Street, Malden against the Council related to the release of Executive Session minutes on April 14, 2026.

Sponsors: Amanda Linehan

Attachments: [OML Complaint by Friedman on April 16 2026 ES Minutes](#)
[Response to April 16 2026 OML Complaint - Friedman 234-26](#)

A motion was made by Councillor Sica, seconded by Councillor Crowe, that the Council Item be referred to the Legal Department. The motion carried by a 9-0 vote. Councillor O'Malley voted present.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

235-26

Communication: The Fiscal Year 2027 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Budget has been sent by the Mayor's Office directly to the Finance Committee to avoid delays on the City Council's review and adoption thereof. The CDBG Budget will come back before the Full Council with recommendations for a final vote after review by the Finance Committee

Prior to discussion on this paper, Councillor Crowe announced that although she does not benefit from any of the monies distributed from this grant, she is employed by a non-profit organization that does. She recused herself from this conversation revolving around the CDBG budget.

A motion was made by Councillor McDonald, seconded by Councillor Colon Hayes, that the Communication be received and filed. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

236-26

Communication: From Council President Linehan regarding the approval of draft executive session minutes under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 22(g)(1)

Sponsors: Amanda Linehan

Clerk Desiderio read the entire communication into the record, which may be found in the body of the paper. Councillor O'Malley requested that in the future, when reporting on review of Executive Session minutes, it would be helpful to refer to the subject of each meeting instead of just notating the meeting dates.

A motion was made by Councillor Crowe, seconded by Councillor McDonald, that the Communication be received and filed. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

A representative from the Solicitor's Office will follow up on Paper 203-26 with an update to the Council on the investigation into the Open Meeting Law Complaint filed by Bruce Friedman of 8 Marvin Street on April 7, 2026 against the Council related to the Executive Session posted on April 7 under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 21(a)(3) and 21(b)(3).

City Solicitor McNeil explained that in response to this OML complaint, the Legal Department's investigation has found the wording of the paper seeking a vote to enter into Executive Session was reasonable and not in violation of open meeting law. The agenda did state the reason for entering into Executive Session with as much specificity as was possible without defeating the purpose of the Executive Session, as is required. A motion was made by Councillor Sica, seconded by Councillor Winslow, to authorize the Legal Department to submit the response to the complainant and the Attorney General's office. The motion passed by a 9-1 vote. Councillor O'Malley dissenting.

A representative from the Solicitor's Office will offer an update to the Council on the proceedings held in open court on the afternoon of April 28 regarding the matter of Dris Corporation et al v. City of Malden.

City Solicitor McNeil reported that in court earlier this afternoon, although the docket read the hearing was regarding both Dris Corporation and Benevolent Botanicals, Judge Rubin had announced they would only be discussing the motion for clarification filed by Benevolent Botanicals (BB). In their motion, BB argued the court should order the City of Malden to issue a special permit without them having to go through the process. Judge Rubin seemed unaware that BB needed to apply for a special permit as part of the marijuana licensing process. Solicitor McNeil argued that BB requesting the court order on this topic, shows they were aware of the requirement.

The court wants to see Malden stipulate a pathway for BB to follow in order to get their business up and running. Additionally, the possibility of sending both parties into mediation was discussed again.

The court has instructed BB to provide by May 8 their ideas of how they would like to see this process move forward. The City was instructed to enter into ES to review their proposed plan to discuss if BB's proposed path forward is feasible and then provide the court a response by May 20.

Judge Rubin acknowledged her previous decision was not clear and stated she will be providing a clarifying decision.

7. TABLED PAPERS

[150-26](#)

Petition: Massachusetts Electric Company dba National Grid Plan No. 31200905 - National Grid to install underground facilities on Main Street. Customer to trench and install (6) 4" conduit from MH A/34 on Main Street to proposed switching module, approximately 55 feet on public right of way. 204 Main Street, Malden, MA. (Hearing Required)

Attachments: [204 Main Street Petition](#)
[Abutters 204 Main Street](#)
[Hearing Notice 204 Main Street](#)

A motion was made by Councillor Crowe, seconded by Councillor Sica, that the Petition be taken from the table. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Councillor Crowe, seconded by Councillor Simonelli, that the Petition be granted with the following conditions: (1) That the Engineer be called when Dig Safe is notified and (2) That the streets and sidewalks be restored to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

151-26

Petition: Massachusetts Electric Company dba National Grid Plan No. 31186713 - National Grid to install underground facilities on Main Street. Trench and install (2) 4" concrete encased conduit from MH A/34 on Main Street to pad located on 213 Main Street approximately 220'. Malden, MA.
(Hearing Required)

Attachments: [213 Main Street Petition](#)
[Abutters 213 Main Street](#)
[Hearing Notice 213 Main Street](#)

A motion was made by Councillor Crowe, seconded by Councillor Sica, that the Petition be taken from the table. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Councillor Crowe, seconded by Councillor Simonelli, that the Petition be granted with the following conditions: (1) That the Engineer be called when Dig Safe is notified and (2) That the streets and sidewalks be restored to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councillor Winslow, seconded by Councillor Taylor, that this meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 8:22 PM.

CAROL ANN DESIDERIO, CITY CLERK

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