



Town of Concord
Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA

Thursday, November 20, 2025, at 6:30 PM
Concord Town House

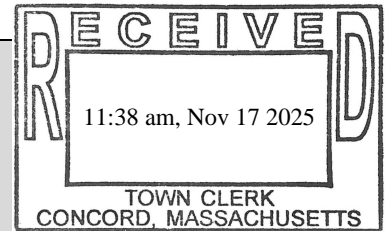
22 Monument St., 2nd Fl. Select Board Conference Room

Notice of public meeting as required by M.G.L. Chpt.30A §18-28

HYBRID IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM

Join the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88079218861>

Meeting ID: 880 7921 8861 Dial in: 1-646-931-3860



Please be advised that this open meeting is being broadcast live via Zoom and MMN and recorded for playback online, video-on-demand viewing at <https://concordma.gov/2409/Government>. The listings of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours before said meeting, which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may be addressed. Items may be taken out of order and at times differ from those listed below. Other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. **Video or call will be muted upon joining meeting please use the "raise your hand" feature in the zoom meeting to ask to speak. ATTENDEES ARE REMINDED THAT BY ATTENDING THIS MEETING THAT YOU CONSENT TO YOUR LIKENESS AND AUDIO BEING USED AND REBROADCAST BY MMN.**

6:30 PM	1. Call to Order
6:30 PM	2. Public Comment <ul style="list-style-type: none">Public Comment is limited to up to 10 minutes, with no more than 2 minutes allocated to any one speaker. Public Comment is limited to items that are not on the agenda.
6:40 PM	3. Correspondence <ul style="list-style-type: none">Review Correspondence (if any)
6:40 PM	4. Meeting Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none">Approve the minutes of October 16 and October 30, 2025
6:45 PM	5. Liaison Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">Review and discussion of liaison report in the packet; additional verbal reports as needed
7:00 PM	6. Minuteman Regional School District Budget Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none">Presentation by School Superintendent and Finance Director of responses to requests and status of FY27 budget development
7:15 PM	7. Town Operating Budget Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none">Presentation by Town Finance Team on status of FY27 budget development
7:30 PM	8. Review of Finance Committee Role in Town Government <ul style="list-style-type: none">Discussion of the above; Town Moderator to participate
8:00 PM	9. Finance Financial Policy Working Group <ul style="list-style-type: none">Report on status of work being done by Financial Policy Working Group[Review and discuss first draft of possible reserves policy language to supersede current section 7 of Town of Concord Financial Policies – if available]
8:30 PM	10. Review of Action Items and Adjournment



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

November 20, 2025

1

Call to Order

Requested by: FC Chair

Action Sought: Open Meeting

Proposed Motion(s)

Move to vote to call the November 20, 2025, Finance Committee meeting to order at XX:XX PM.

Additional Information

None.

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

November 20, 2025

2

Public Comment

Requested by: Finance Committee Chair

Action Sought: Public Comment

Proposed Motion(s)

None anticipated.

Additional Information

Public Comment is limited to up to 10 minutes, with no more than 2 minutes allocated to any one speaker. Public Comment is limited to items that are not on the agenda.

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

November 20, 2025

3

Correspondence

Mail, letters, emails, presentations, etc.

Requested by: Finance Committee Chair

Action Sought: Review correspondence

Proposed Motion(s)

None anticipated.

Additional Information

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST
November 20, 2025

4

Minutes

Requested by: Karlen Reed, Clerk

Action Sought: Vote/Approval

Proposed Motion(s)

MOVE to vote to approve the Finance Committee minutes for October 16, 2025 and, October 30, 2025.

Additional Information

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>

**Town of Concord
Minutes of the October 16 2025
Meeting of Finance Committee
Hybrid Meeting**

Members Present: Peggy Briggs (online), Brian Conway (online), Kathy Cuocolo Eric Dahlberg, John Garofalo, Pat Geyer, Don Kupka, Lyndsey Lis, Paul Rodriguez, Sri Tupil (online), Lois Wasoff (online).

Members Absent: Suresh Bhatia, Gerald Jansen, Karlen Reed, Quazi Sadruzzaman.

Others Attending: Wendy Rovelli (Select Board liaison), Ryan Ferrara (Concord Acting CFO), Laurie Hunter (Superintendent CPS & CCRSD), Robert Conry (Asst. Superintendent of Finance and Operations, CPS & CCRSD), Zach Lamoureux (Concord Senior Financial Analyst).

1. Call to Order: of the Finance Committee Meeting at 6:31 p.m. by Vice Chair Lyndsey Lis. Materials are in the FinCom meeting packet.

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Correspondence: Vice Chair Lis noted that there was one new correspondence regarding a new CCRSD initiative called Vision of a Graduate.

4. Minutes: Mr. Dahlberg moved to approve the minutes of September 25, 2025, as amended. Mr. Rodriguez seconded. Vote: 9 Yes, 0 No, 2 Abstain. The motion passed.

5. Liaison Report: The packet includes summaries of reports, with the following additional remarks. Economic Vitality Committee is considering forums open to the public on various topics of interest to the business community, including transportation, cell towers, wastewater, for example. Minuteman Tech’s liaison informed that Dee Orr is the volunteer contact who will be presenting to FinCom in the future. CPC’s liaison informed that \$5 million of applications are currently in review; with the state grant decrease to 16% from 18%, the CPC has \$3.5 million available or \$1.5 million short of requests. Particularly noteworthy is the \$1.418 million application for the CCRSD Amenities Bldg. CPC decisions will be made in November.

6. Financial Policy Working Group: No update at this time.

7. Concord Public Schools (CPS) Response to FinCom’s Budget Info Request: All school principals and administrators are building budgets for FY27, with some insight expected this October month end and the formal presentation to FinCom in Dec. One trend is the aging out or graduation of out-of-district students; FinCom removed out-of-district financials from guidelines last year to help Schools through an un-budgeted “bubble” that now is dissipating.

CPS new initiatives that might affect the FY27 budget include new English Language and Math specialists, which are now combined into the assistant principal’s role. For FY25, CPS spent all but \$987 of its budget and received grant funding from IDEA grants (\$551,000) and METCO (\$694,000). Some risk exists to losing \$15K of Title 1 funding from federal cuts. The Concord shelter is gone, so FY27 grants for this will go to zero.

CPS has three revolving funds: school lunch, circuit breaker, and pre-school. The school lunch program is self-funding with a balance of \$179K. The circuit breaker fund for special education asks Concord to finance up to \$55K, and any amount above that threshold is granted at 75% of tuition cost. The pre-school fund is self-funded and evolves from the tuition charged families.

Given new housing developments, CPS is estimating incremental costs. CPS has been experiencing some enrollment declines. If 50 new CPS students arrive, variable costs include, on average, one new classroom teacher at \$100K, two new special ed at \$72K, and curriculum materials at \$10K, totaling an increase of \$182K. Currently 0.75% of CPS students are out-of-district: that's one out of 133 students. There is not a one-to-one correspondence between cost increases and decreases as a function of enrollment. FinCom members asked about risk to IDEA funding given federal cuts. Mr. Conry remarked that as of last week, funding was status quo; what's being impacted is the lack of staffing to execute work, which could affect timing of funds' distribution.

Out-of-district placements for FY26 range from \$45K to \$265,137 because there are unique situations—sometimes a mid-year placement or a 50/50 split with another town because parents live apart in different towns. In FY26, CPS has 14-15 placements, down from 22 in FY22. Circuit breaker revenue in FY25 was \$930,962 but expenses of \$863,641 were higher than in FY24. With the carry-over from FY24, we have \$696,002 as our beginning balance for FY26. CPS is in good shape relative to other districts because of our special programming initiatives.

Along with the 40 shelter children, CPS experienced 54 fewer students, maybe due to fewer births. Projections show about 120 new students from the 40B program. Middle school enrollment is up by 13 probably because of the new build. FinCom members asked if private school is impacting enrollment.

FY27 direct expenditures are projected up 3.5% to \$53.371M, with anticipated grants at \$1.591M, revolving fund revenue to \$1.642M and circuit breaker of \$816K totaling \$4.049M in funding sources, bringing the CPS budget forecast down to \$49.322M, which is up 3.5% over FY26. That increase is derived from salaries, supplies, contract services, out-of-districts, and utilities. Five-year projection increases are 3.5% per year, with out-of-districts expected to grow 4% FY28 and forward.

Mr. Kupka requested that Dr. Hunter and Mr. Conry address points 6.3 through 6.6 in FinCom's letter regarding per student costs, both with and without out-of-district students. Dr. Hunter cautioned that the state has a way of calculating per pupil data, so this data request needs to be properly labelled. Mr. Kupka would like adjustments for circuit breakers and IDEA accordingly, and he remarked that FinCom understands that the cost per student data will not be fully accurate anyway because OPEB and insurance costs are combined with the Town.

8. Concord-Carlisle Regional High School (CCRSD) Response to FinCom's Budget Info

Request: Concord FinCom was adjourned and the joint Concord and Carlisle FinCom meeting was called to order with quorum attendance for both committees. Dr. Hunter began the CCRSD presentation reiterating that the budget is zero-based and built up. Issues for FY27 include CCRSD building expenses roof and HVAC, which are nearing end of life. For FY25, the over

\$37 million CCRSD budget was spent down but for \$6,607. An additional \$400K was placed in the CCRSD general stabilization fund. CCRSD has not yet been certified its excess and deficiency level which is the equivalent of free cash, regulated at 5% of CCRSD operating and capital budget. It was \$1.6M or 4.1 % of FY25, so CCRSD can grow that up to 5% or \$900K more, after which the excess goes to the Towns.

The largest grants are IDEA (\$451K) and Metco (\$471K). CCRSD has other grants, not necessarily renewable annually, but no change anticipated, according to Mr. Conry. Title 1 grant has the 15% reduction risk but the grant is small (\$10,000). Shelter grants for CCRSD will go to zero. Total grants projected for FY27 are \$1.1M.

Other sources of revenue are revolving funds: adult education course fees, athletics fees, school lunch, facilities rental (new fund) and circuit breaker; greater reimbursements are expected. Mr. Conry explained that CCRSD will get 75% of tuition reimbursement but not 75% of transportation for FY27. Non-resident tuition revolving fund is always totally used up because CCRSD charges \$45K per student to defray special ed costs. We have 8 students this year, and we hope to raise non-resident tuition for FY27 since it is lower than the lowest end of out-of-districts' tuition. We can decline students if their cost is too great. Total revolving funds that CCRSD could use is \$1.6M.

OPEB stands at \$11.7M and investment income for FY25 was \$1.3M. For FY25, no contribution was made to OPEB given its healthy position. For FY25, CCRSD had some reduction of special tutors, a special ed teacher moved to CPS, and a tech specialist retired with no replacement. Dr. Hunter remarked that it's the first time in three years that CCRSD opened not in deficit.

For FY27, CCRSD is focused on the issue of enrollment, given new housing projects in Concord and Carlisle. This year, Concord is down 40 CCRSD students and Carlisle is up 20, roughly, so that will be a big Carlisle adjustment for FY27 under the regional agreement expenditure allocation. Ms. Briggs commented that this issue of big swings in enrollment has existed for the towns for 30-40 years, and, thus, maybe the time has come to set up a committee to look at a rolling 3 to 5 year average of enrollment. Mr. Dahlberg and Mr. Kupka would like to see enrollment by town since 2012 to present and then projected forward five years to FY31.

Mr. Conry remarked that Memorial Field may need replacement three years from now. A new track would be fund-raised. The Amenities Building just went before the CPC.

A variable cost analysis for enrollment at CCRSD looks at quarter FTE. If CCHS had 25 more students enroll, that would mean 1/4 classroom teacher for \$25K, 1/4 special ed for \$11K and some supplies at \$5K, or about \$41K total. This assumes no out-of-districts among the 25, which per student would be an additional \$150K. The new AP initiative will shift teaching responsibilities and no added cost. CCRSD has 35 METCO students. CCHS out-of-districts for FY25 are 44 students and 41 students in FY26. That number should decrease for FY27 because CPS is addressing special ed with greater programming so that the student is prepared for CCHS.

For debt, CCRSD distributes a level principal payment on debt, so interest payment also decreases over time. By FY31, BANS debt will be paid off, and our annual debt service will

decline from \$3.795M in FY26 to \$3.06M in FY31. The intention is to maintain Ripley with the only priority is HVAC. Ripley expenses are allocated 60% CPS and 40% CCRSD; preschools at Ripley fall in the CPS budget. There are 29 FTEs at Ripley.

CCRSD expenditures for FY27 are forecasted at \$46.17M, an increase of 2.2%. Five-year projections forecast increases annually, with 2.8% in each of FY28 and FY29. Funding sources, which include grants, revolving funds and circuit breaker, as well as Chapter 70 and other general fund revenue, including E&D, amounts to about \$10.128M for FY27. So, the net assessment to the Towns is \$36.042M and excluding debt, \$37.373M. Five-year assumptions include a flat general fund revenue growth rate and a modest increase in grants and revolving fund sources, but circuit breaker will drop in FY29 because out-of-district enrollment is expected to drop. For FY27 and projected to FY31, teacher and non-teacher salaries, contract services, supplies and materials grow between 3.3-3.5%. Retirement and utilities grow about 3.0%. Out-of-districts is forecasted at - 6% for FY27 including tuitions increases, but grows at a normalized trend at +3.5% FY28-FY31. OPEB contributions will not grow FY27, although there is a \$375,000 contribution, but that contribution will be reduced 10% per year through FY31. Insurance is projected to grow at 8.0% for FY27 and 5% for FY28-FY31.

The CCRSD expenditure allocation across Concord and Carlisle has changed significantly, reducing in FY27 to 74.84% with expenditures at \$26.97M or -0.9% decrease. Carlisle's enrollment share increases to 25.16% in FY27, resulting in a 9.3% increase in net assessment of \$9.068M in FY27. Five-year projections, assuming no new housing and current students do move to the next grade, forecast a gradual return to normalized levels of 76.3% Concord/23.7% Carlisle allocation by FY31, with the biggest change in FY28, where Concord's expenditure allocation means a 4.3% increase in CCRSD net dollar assessment. Mr. Kupka reiterated that he would like to see spending on a per student basis for CCRSD, per the letter's request 1.2 and 6.3-6.6, as he asked for CPS.

The initial FY27 CPS and CCRSD budget presentations to the School Committee will be December 17, 2025 with public hearings for both on January 7, 2026. With business concluded, Mr. Dahlberg moved to adjourn the joint meeting. Mr. Kupka seconded, and all present voted in favor of adjournment.

Vice Chair Lis reconvened the Concord FinCom meeting. Members Present: Peggy Briggs (online), Brian Conway (online), Kathy Cuocolo, Eric Dahlberg, John Garofalo, Pat Geyer, Don Kupka, Lyndsey Lis, Paul Rodriguez, Sri Tupil (online), Lois Wasoff (online). Members Absent: Suresh Bhatia, Gerald Jansen, Karlen Reed, Quazi Sadruzzaman. Others Attending: Wendy Rovelli (Select Board liaison), Ryan Ferrara (Concord Acting CFO), Zach Lamoureux (Concord Senior Financial Analyst).

9. FY27 Budget Guidelines Considerations: The FinCom considered three discussion questions on taking out-of-district expenses from the guidelines, putting Tier I capital in the guidelines, and creating an enrollment modifier. For out-of-districts, Mr. Rodriguez and Mr. Garofalo expressed that Schools should not have to plan for what is not in their control—and that includes the tuitions set by the out-of-district institutions. Ms. Briggs remarked that she thought the decision was made last year to keep the expense out of guidelines, permanently. Mr.

Dahlberg, Chair Wasoff and Ms. Geyer viewed the event last year as a one-time occurrence, so out-of-district expenses should go back into guidance. Vice Chair Lis asked if keeping this expense in guidelines helps to motivate the continued attention of Schools to offer specialized programs to keep students in district. Mr. Dahlberg asked that the Guidelines Sub-Committee provide a scenario analysis of the out-of-districts expense both in and out of guidelines.

Regarding Town Tier 1, Ms. Wasoff reminded all that the Schools have separate warrant articles for their Tier 1 capital requests. Mr. Dahlberg stated that Tier 1 needs to go back into guidelines because last year when it was removed, it increased significantly. Furthermore, Schools Tier 1 should be in guidelines too. Vice Chair Lis would like the guideline to be of a different methodology, like percent of assets, to which Mr. Rodriguez concurred. Ms. Briggs would like Tier 1 in guidelines, tracking FinCom's stipulated overall guideline. Mr. Kupka agreed to look into different methodologies for Tier 1 capital.

Tier 2 capital impacts the Town's debt service. Mr. Kupka asked Mr. Ferrara if he would look into the asset and depreciation schedules or life of assets for which the Town is responsible, so FinCom can examine that relative to spending. Mr. Kupka remarked that the state does offer guidelines, examining Tier 1 and debt service as a percent of budget, and he will do some analysis of that. Regarding an enrollment modifier, Mr. Kupka would like to do an analysis using the data that Mr. Conry provided in expenses per 25 or 50 students. Mr. Rodriguez cautioned that there is no linear relationship: most expenses do not fluctuate with the student population.

10: Recap of Action Items: Schools are to follow up on requests for data as outlined in the FinCom letter under 1.2 and 6.3-6.6 for CPS and CCRSD; this is more "per student" expense data. Schools should also provide exact enrollment numbers for CPS and CCRSD, not just percent allocations. Mr. Kupka will do scenario analysis for out-of-districts expenses. For Tier 1 and Tier 2 analysis, Mr. Ferrara will provide some asset data and the Guidelines Sub-Committee will look at different methodologies for each of those budget items. Minutes of September 25th will be adjusted by Ms. Geyer. Later this year, Concord FinCom will want to discuss with Carlisle FinCom about the rolling average idea for enrollment allocations. Chair Wasoff reminded that for end of meeting October 30th, the goal is to vote on preliminary guidelines and to make decisions about out-of-districts and tiered capital because these preliminary decisions inform the budget units as they are budgeting. Final guidelines get set in December. Any other data relevant to guidelines should be presented at the Oct 30th meeting.

11: Adjournment: Ms. Reed and Ms. Geyer will post the approved minutes. Mr. Dahlberg moved to adjourn this meeting. Mr. Rodriguez seconded. Vice Chair Lis adjourned the meeting at 8:53pm.

YouTube video, October 16, 2025:

[youtube.com/watch?v=PQbbsGiGSy0&list=PL1TTzrWEKOOonnNx4Y97syFCGhi0OGGQrA&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQbbsGiGSy0&list=PL1TTzrWEKOOonnNx4Y97syFCGhi0OGGQrA&index=2)

Meeting Documents Link, October 16, 2025:

https://concordma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/57835/20251016_Agenda_Packet_Finance_Committee

KR revision 11.13

**Town of Concord
Minutes of the October 30, 2025
Meeting of Finance Committee
Hybrid Meeting**

Members Present: Suresh Bhatia (online), Peggy Briggs, Brian Conway (online), Kathy Cuocolo, Eric Dahlberg, Pat Geyer, Don Kupka, Lyndsey Lis, Karlen Reed (online), Sri Tupil (online), Lois Wasoff.

Members Absent: John Garofalo, Gerald Jansen, Paul Rodriguez, Quazi Sadruzzaman.

Others Attending: Paul Boehm (Select Board), Ryan Ferrara (Concord Acting CFO), Zach Lamoureux (Concord Senior Financial Analyst)

1. Call to Order: of the Finance Committee Meeting at 6:31 p.m. by Chair Lois Wasoff. Materials are in the FinCom meeting packet.

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Correspondence: Chair Wasoff noted that there was no new correspondence.

4. Minutes: Chair Wasoff informed that the minutes of Oct 16, 2025, as well as those of tonight Oct 30th, will be reviewed for approval at the Nov 20th FinCom meeting.

5. Liaison Report: The packet included summaries of reports, with the following additional liaison remarks. CPC met on October 28th, with an hour spent on the Amenities Building application, mostly updates on costs and timing. CPC has previous experience funding a large project such as this—for example, \$2 million for the Doug White Fields. CPC was made aware that FinCom would be very interested if a bonding recommendation for the Amenities project were entertained, but CPC’s Chair implied that this would not be a consideration.

The Municipal Buildings Sub-Committee of the Land Use Working Group is the furthest along in its analysis, currently working to get real estate values for each of the relevant properties’ operating costs and 10-year projected costs to decide dispositions. A question was raised whether 10 years is the appropriate timeline for projections. Mr. Kupka recommended a 20 year timeline and to flatline assumptions clearly within the line items. Ms. Briggs agreed, except for a longer timeline of 30 years, starting five years out in 2030 to 2055.

Ms. Cuocolo also asked what role FinCom should play in these land use project discussions. Mr. Boehm added FinCom will have a role, prescribed likely by the Select Board. FinCom can help by informing the Sub-Committee when Concord could take on more debt and having eyes on the recommendations. Ms. Briggs further recommended that FinCom could be very helpful to gather state and federal information about projected inflation and real income growth, for example, if Mr. Boehm could provide a list of parameters for assumptions. Mr. Boehm expressed that he believes in flatline assumptions across all sub-committees of Land Use and would like FinCom to review recommendations for his sub-committee before going to the Select Board. Ms. Reed sees another role for FinCom: to ensure that funds are available for land purchase or

development using stabilization funds. FinCom's role in Land Use will be on a future meeting's agenda.

Chair Wasoff reported that the FinCom November 20th meeting will be a regular meeting on capital without a public hearing. A Tri-Board meeting on capital is scheduled on December 8th.

6. Financial Policy Working Group: The group will have preliminary information to the Select Board before the Warrant closes, and that information is being drafted.

7. Town's Operating Budget Update and Responses to Information Requested: Mr. Ferrara reported that Concord's new CFO, Jennifer Barrett, begins on Monday, November 3rd. She will attend the next FinCom meeting with Mr. Ferrara. After a review of calendar meeting dates and FinCom's roles and responsibilities, Mr. Ferrara presented the Town's financial policy regarding capital improvement, which targets 7-8% of total Town budget net of excluded debt. Of the 7-8%, not more than 5% shall be for debt service, and capital outlay for both Town and Schools separately shall be at least 2-3% of the annual budget, not including excluded debt.

Mr. Ferrara highlighted several personnel issues in the Town budget. This included a deputy police chief at \$205K (fire has a deputy and assistant chief), public safety business manager for fire, police and dispatch at \$128,500, and public records administrator for \$101,250 full-time or \$40K part-time. He also requested reconsideration of FY26 cuts in the Seasonal Ranger Program, \$200K for Fire/Police overtime, and cost of living adjustments for the Town compensation plan. This COLA line item includes the salary reserve for incentive pay and union contracts that were not settled yet (like Park and Trees). Mr. Ferrara also proposed to restore a FY26 request for an IT Business Knowledge Manager to support town-wide IT initiatives at \$145K.

The preliminary increase for the Town's FY27 general budget is between 3.0-3.5% without these added personnel, which Ms. Briggs estimated to be 5-6 added FTE for combined annual salaries of \$700K. Mr. Ferrara made clear that these positions have not been thoroughly vetted yet. The timing of FinCom's request for Town budget info does not align with FinCom's preliminary guidelines because FinCom wants the Town to use preliminary guidelines to further inform and refine its budget before final guidelines are set in Dec.

The Town asked that the proposed FY27 Elections budget get removed from guidelines because the cost is out of the Town's control. For FY27 there will be local, state primary and state election as well as costs associated with early and mail-in ballots. The projection is an increase of \$73K. While state primary and election expenses are reimbursed, they do so with a lag.

Ms. Lis commented that corporate entities are being pressed to create efficiencies with AI. Mr. Ferrara stated that AI is helping for specific Town admin tasks, like the transcription of minutes, but emergencies require police intervention, trees in the road require a truck, and local government tends to lag anyway with new IT. However, with a new IT Director, who is open-minded, the hope is for quick opportunities. Ms. Lis suggested consideration of working groups to address the use of AI; for example, AI would be helpful to optimize the scheduling of police officers and their location based on need.

8. CPS and CCRSD Responses to FinCom Information Requests: Chair Wasoff noted that the Schools' responses are now part of the packet. No discussion of the responses took place at this meeting, per Chair Wasoff's request.

9. FinCom Discussion of Capital and Preliminary Guidelines: Mr. Kupka guided the FinCom and reviewed the metrics, formula, capital policy limits, and guideline exclusions before their guidelines discussions began.

Metrics: The Congressional Budget Office updated its Employment Cost Index forecast, which is 80% of FinCom's metric for inflation. FinCom FY27 metrics are now projected inflation (3.06%), projected nominal personal income growth per capital (3.69%); projected real personal income growth per capital is 0.66%, because our inflation metric is now over 3%.

Formula: FY27 guidelines are based on FY26 approved Town Meeting operating budgets, which were \$33,678,889 for the Town, \$47,632,034 for CPS, \$24,301,422 for CCRSD and \$1,325,132 for Minuteman, totaling \$106,937,477. FY27 Budget units' initial budget requests subject to guidelines are: +3.0% to +3.5% for Town to \$34,666,820 (@3.0%); +3.50% for CPS to \$49,321,580; - 0.90% for CCRSD to \$24,082,709 and an estimated +3.0% for Minuteman to \$1,364,886 or a total of \$109,449,412. Minuteman is a plug-number; FinCom will hear from them on Nov 20th, and they are not subject to FinCom guidelines. These requests reflect a growth rate of 2.3% for spending subject to guidelines.

Capital policy limits: Per Financial Policy 9.A.1, Capital items are defined as assets such as structures, land, and equipment (including related, plans, designs and studies) which have a life expectancy of at least two years at a cost of at least \$10,000. Town policy is to use straight-line depreciation. Mr. Ferrara provided Mr. Kupka with a list of Concord's capital assets, and Mr. Kupka will analyze that data. Concord has a capital expenditure policy which is Tier 1 + Tier 2 debt service divided by Total Budget excluding Tier 3 must fall in the range of 7-8%, of which Tier 2 debt service accounts for 5% or less and Tier 1 accounts for greater or equal to 2-3%. This policy ensures that capital assets are kept in good service, replaced as needed.

Applying this policy to FY26, the total budget, excluding Tier 3 debt service for Concord and including Minutemen, was \$133,544,036. Tier 1 as a percent of that number was 5.2% for Town, 0.5% for CPS, and 1% for CCRSD. Tier 2 debt service was 9.8% for the Town, 1.5% for CPS, and 0.9% for CCRSD. FinCom recognizes that Tier 3 debt service was much higher for CPS and CCRSD because of the recent school constructions; however, for Town alone, Tiers 1 and 2 debt service clearly exceeded the capital policy limits.

By including Tier 3 capital debt service of Town, CPS, and CCRSD, as a percent of total budget, capital for all three tiers averaged at 13.9%. Mr. Kupka and Ms. Wasoff agreed that 10% is the recommendation of the State as best practices, but there is no limit. Noteworthy is that the Town borrows money to buy trucks but capital leasing is not in the Schools' analysis. Mr. Kupka will examine this issue further. FinCom members expressed concern over whether the capital policy limits will be exceeded for FY27, given the FY27 capital budgets proposed by Town and Schools last month, plus the expected debt burden for road construction borrowing as approved

at Town Meeting 2025. FinCom estimates that the current total FY27 capital request for Town and CPS is 18.7%. FinCom members discussed several capital spending scenarios. A Town, Schools and FinCom meeting on capital is scheduled for Dec 8.

Guideline exclusions: Two guideline exclusions were proposed regarding the Schools' out-of-districts and Town election expenses for FY27. Regarding out-of-districts, Chair Wasoff, Mr. Dahlberg and Ms. Cuocolo separately stated that last year Schools came with a specific request for a specific turn-of-events. FinCom helped them manage through that. This year the out-of-district line item is not a cost save, but a zero-based item as the cost is reduced significantly. Mr. Kupka confirmed that there would be no material impact on the Schools' budgets by including the out-of-district expenses in FY27 guideline. Ms. Lis felt that the lack of visibility and control - that tuition is not set by Schools and the reimbursement rate, especially on transportation, is nebulous -- means that out-of-districts should not be subject to guidelines. **Motion:** Mr. Kupka moved to include out-of-district placement costs in FY27 guidelines. Mr. Dahlberg seconded. Vote: 7 Yes, 3 No, 1 Abstain. **Motion passed.**

Regarding the Town's request that FY27 election costs of approximately \$73K be out of guidelines, Ms. Reed noted that the election cycle is predictable and the principal cost is postage. Ms. Briggs remarked that frequently there are added costs for special town elections for overrides and more, so the Town has to manage these costs accordingly. She suggested to budget an average cost and roll it over to the busier years from those slower. Mr. Dahlberg stated that he fears a precedent set for other line items to be pulled from guidelines in the future. Mr. Ferrara stated that the costs, including police detail, are hard to estimate and the election cycle changes. **Motion:** Ms. Briggs moved to include election expenses in FY27 guidelines. Mr. Kupka seconded. Vote: 11 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain. **Motion passed.**

Preliminary Guidelines Discussion: Mr. Dahlberg asked if FinCom had a sense of the tax implications of different levels of guidelines. A big positive change is the decline in CCRSD Tier 3 debt service as well as CCRSD operating budget of -0.9%, so the total change for all budgets could be an increase of about 2.1%, below the 2.5% Prop level. Ms. Cuocolo reiterated FinCom's stance to create one guideline parity across all operating units. Ms. Lis remarked that FinCom has an opportunity to consider low guidelines for operating budgets knowing that the Town, for example, might show a spike in Tier 3 debt service over the next five years, so as to replace some of its larger assets. Mr. Kupka added that he used 3% in his scenario for Town and CPS as a straw man only.

Mr. Conway suggested setting guidelines low, 2.5%, which is below inflation. Mr. Dahlberg said that FinCom owed it to the process and taxpayers to go low as the guidelines are meant to inform the budget, not the other way around, and this is a preliminary guideline after which FinCom will hear presentations on what the committee might have missed. Ms. Reed remarked that 3.06% is the inflation metric that FinCom is using, so 3% guidelines are already below inflation. Mr. Kupka reminded FinCom that if FinCom only focuses on the operating budgets, the committee cannot predict the tax rate.

Motion: Ms. Briggs moved to set preliminary guidelines for FY27 operating budgets, based on the FY26 approved budgets, for the Town at 3%, for CPS at 3% and for CCRSD at -1.0%,

rounding from -.09%. Mr. Bhatia seconded. In discussion, FinCom compared using a 3.0% guideline versus a 2.5% guideline. The FY27 operating budget request by the Town is \$34,689,256 (a 3.0% increase over FY26) and for CPS is \$49,321,580 (a 3.5% increase over FY26). The Town request would be reduced by \$0 using a 3.0% guideline and reduced by \$168,395 using a 2.5% guideline. The CPS request would be reduced by \$260,585 using a 3.0% guideline and reduced by \$498,745 using a 2.5% guideline.

FinCom members noted that the costs of CCRSD are not dropping; rather, the Concord allocation of costs have declined due to an enrollment shift, and next year that could change in the other direction. The challenge with proposing a guideline below the 3% inflation rate might mean cutting actual positions. FinCom can ask for efficiencies but it is hard for these organizations to do. FinCom is looking for overall property tax increases not to exceed 2.5%, but we cannot analyze this properly without capital expense data, which FinCom has deferred to a future meeting. This argues, therefore, for a conservative guideline measure. **Ms. Briggs withdrew her motion. Motion:** Mr. Dahlberg moves to set the FY27 preliminary guideline at 2.5% for the Town, 2.5% for CPS and -0.9% for CCRSD. Ms. Briggs seconded. Vote: 9 Yes, 2 No, 0 Abstain. **Motion passed.**

10. Recap of Action Items: Chair Wasoff will inform Carlisle FinCom via email of our preliminary guidelines. Ms. Reed and Ms. Geyer will post the minutes.

11. Adjournment: Mr. Bhatia moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Briggs and Mr. Kupka seconded. Chair Wasoff adjourned the meeting at 8:56 pm.

YouTube video link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TGxuQHwWykI&list=PL1TTzrWEKOOonNx4Y97syFCGhi0OGGQrA&index=1>

Meeting Documents link:

<https://concordma.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/10302025-13393>



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

November 20, 2025

5

Liaison Report

Review and Discussion of Compiled Liaison Report

Requested by: Finance Committee Chair

Action Sought: None

Proposed Motion(s)

None anticipated.

Additional Information

Review and discussion of liaison report, if any, in addition to written reports provided in the meeting packet.

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>

**CONCORD FINANCE COMMITTEE
LIAISON REPORTS FOR 11/20/25 MEETING**

Economic Vitality Committee (Paul Rodriguez)

The committee does not want to support any increases to meal and lodging taxes. The business community suggested that the adverse effect on their business due to this increase would not be worth the small amount of revenue generated. The committee does not plan on making a formal recommendation but will not support any increase.

The committee found two areas to clarify the permitting process that will help the business community. The first is with a new ordinance that would streamline the process to obtaining a beer garden permit, similar to the process for food trucks. The second is associated with the sewer improvement fee and how the minimum costs unfairly affect small business creation. The committee found examples of small businesses that had a large fee due based on minimum requirements, that did not make logical sense for the nature of their business.

The town worked to help offset some of the negative aspects of the government shutdown by providing some of the gapped services at the Robbins House. There were a large number of visitors during this period.

Tax Relief Evaluation Task Force (TRETf): League Presentation 11.7.25 (Karlen Reed)

On November 7, the Tax Relief Evaluation Task Force (TRETf) gave a presentation, “Rethinking Tax Relief,” to the League of Women Voters of Concord-Carlisle at the Concord Free Public Library on the TRETf’s investigation of the Residential Tax Exemption (RTE), interviews of residents and real estate agents, the TRETf’s housing burden cost survey and recommendations to the Select Board on the RTE. Preliminary key findings include that homeowners and renters are generally unaware of how the RTE works, 26% of Concord housing units are rental units, and the RTE has had mixed results. While the RTE reduced the assessed value of homeowners who applied, the RTE is not based on income; consequently, the RTE benefited some high-income homeowners and harmed some low-income homeowners. Also, the RTE does not help any renters. The TRETf has released its survey seeking more data, and responses are due by December 19, 2025. The survey can be accessed online at: <https://bit.ly/ResTaxSurvey>.

The TRETf also gave an update on the use of ADUs (Auxiliary Dwelling Units) as a means to ease our housing crisis. Over 50 people attended in person and another 20 attended online. The video of the event has been posted on the Town’s YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOzRtqycygs>.

On November 13, the TRETf met to review their outreach efforts, draft report, RTE assessor calculations, survey data analysis process and data gaps, and the upcoming Nov. 17 tax classification hearing.

Public Works Commission: Meeting November 12, 2025 (Karlen Reed)

The Public Works Commission (PWC) met on Nov. 12 and discussed the 2025-26 winter maintenance and snow response program and gave updates on certain private and public ways and the FY26 Roads Program. In particular, the PWC will look in December at draft Warrant Articles, the Stormwater program, and the Amenities Building sewer connection issue. The PWC will plow snow when it reach 2” in depth, and the average cost of snow removal after each storm event is \$15K. Overall estimated cost of the snow removal program is \$600K.

School Committee (11/5) (Eric Dahlberg)

Below are a few key points from the 11/5 School Committee meeting. Pat Geyer expects to attend the 11/19 CPS meeting and can provide a verbal update on any key points at our 11/20 meeting.

Budget/Guidelines: Andrew Herchek summarized our preliminary guideline discussion and vote - acknowledged they have work to do to get to our 2.5% target for CPS. Brian Waterson piggybacked on this to flag that Carlisle has significant budget challenges this year - stakeholders are meeting to identify solutions.

Enrollment Decline: The committee discussed CCRSD enrollment trends, noting that the overall enrollment is down by about 100 students from the previous year, with the current count being around 1,147-1,149 students.

Light Board (Don Kupka)

- **Middle School Solar Project:** officially on-hold, with no clear path to realization. Underground infrastructure was installed in the parking lot, but canopies proved to be cost-prohibitive. The building is rooftop-solar ready, as required by the Massachusetts building code for all new buildings, but the Light Plant did not receive a site license from the Schools, and has not awarded the project. Similarly, the Schools had concerns about the planned on-site battery storage and did not grant a license for it.
- **Rates:** CMLP is nearing the end of rate hearings and continues to prepare for the change from the current flat rate per unit to a variable time-of-day rate structure for residential customers starting next spring.

Minuteman Tech (Brian Conway)

Per Dee Ortner, Concord's representative on the Minuteman school board, the last few meetings have focused on end-of-year financial reports and hearing from students regarding student activities (trips, events, etc.). School policies and related documents also were reviewed and updated. With the school year now underway and class sizes finally settling in, the school board efforts have turned to current year budgets and school activities. There was an Open house on Sunday November 16th for prospective students. There is a school committee meeting November 18th at 630pm, focusing on the finance report.

Land Use Working Group (Kathy Cuocolo)

The Land Use Working Group and its 3 subcommittees, Municipal Building consolidation, Public Safety and Public Works, continued on their path of analysis as outlined in the prior liaison report.

- Of note is that in responding to the LUWG's question concerning the Finance Committee's preference for either 10 or 15-year projections, Kathy relayed that 15 years was our preference.
- Sven Weber, the co-chair, indicated that it would be most helpful if the Finance Committee would review the LUWG's upcoming January report. That quarterly report, which they will be submitting to the Select Board, will be the first that will include the estimates for repurpose, repair or rebuild.

Select Board (Lois Wasoff)

The Select Board held its Tax Classification hearing on November 17. After seeing detailed presentation from the town assessor and hearing public comment, the Select Board voted: in favor

of using a single tax rate for residential and commercial property and of continuing the RTE for another year; and against creating an open space discount and a small commercial exemption.

Additional Liaison Reports for 11/20 FinCom meeting

Minuteman School Board – additional report (Brian Conway)

Meeting held Nov 18.

- Admissions** – 7 Concord Applications for class of 2030 as of 11/17/2025. The past years are the snapshot as of 11/17/2025. Comment made that application is more comprehensive and now requires proof of

Town	As of 11.17						
	CO 2030	CO 2029	CO 2028	CO 2027	CO 2026	CO 2025	CO 2024
Acton	10	7	6	21	21	16	20
Arlington	13	35	9	57	36	30	42
Bolton	2	6	5	10	5	8	5
Concord	7	1	0	10	15	8	2
Dover	0	1	0	2	0	2	0
Lancaster	1	13	6	28	5	3	4
Lexington	11	17	6	31	12	14	19
Needham	4	10	1	13	7	7	3
Stow	3	7	9	23	8	13	9
Total In District	51	97	42	195	109	101	104
OOD Apps	21						
Total with OOD	72						

residency.

- Finance Report.** As of end of 1st quarter (9/31/2025):

- Have approximately 10% of general fund budget left.
- Approved all revolving fund accounts with all funds having excess projections for FY26 ending fund balance.
- Bank balances reconciled; nothing unusual to report

Planning Board (Sri Tupal)

874 Barrett's Mill Road 4 subdivision lots: continuation of discussion moved to Dec 4th

- Public Comment – minutes allocated to any one speaker.
Revised MBTA zoning planning board recommendations (adding Concord Greene to the zoning)

- 1053 & 80X Main Street Definitive Plan Lot Release Request
The application has been submitted and reviewed by engineering

- Requesting the release of 2 lots from the restrictive covenant (lots 4 and 5) immediately. Approved by the planning board unanimously

3. Potential Wireless Bylaw Amendment Warrant Article Discussion

- Requesting feedback to pursue in this year's town meeting, evaluate any legal roadblocks in the zoning bylaws, looking at heights, place, natural landscapes, etc
- Planning board discussed that it is not only the tower's capacity to service, but also needs to be evaluated
- Recommendations for changes in the bylaws were discussed using a hybrid approach. The plan is to get something by Jan 23rd

4. Potential Mixed-use Zoning Bylaw Amendment Warrant Article Discussion

- Some key clarifications to the proposed bylaws were discussed

CPS (Pat Geyer)

Meeting held November 18.

CPS has identified \$501,000 of Tier 1 capital proposed expenses for FY 27. This is for Alcott HVAC replacement (end of life) and touch screen whiteboards (equipment breakdowns). CPS anticipates that Tier 1 and 2 capital will increase between \$760,000 to \$985,000 EACH YEAR through FY 30. For FY31, they expect \$1.2 million mostly for roofing. They hope to get a grant to help defray the roofing costs if the schools can hold out to FY 31.

11.19.25 Chairs breakfast			
Committee	Name	Name	Notes
Select Board - Chair (SB)	Mark	Howell	Mr. Howell noted that TAC is hosting an input session today. Select Board has published a meeting calendar through June. Ready for Town Meeting. Dec. 29 Warrant opens. Dec. 13 training is next governance workshop, 9 -11 a.m.
Ag Committee	Bryan	Kramer	Working on scheduling Ag Day for 2026. Thinking about getting traffic signs for events.
Bias and Hate Incident Reporting Work Group	Paul	Boehm	Tackling a number of questions about reporting bias incidents. The committee has put together a work plan, including doing research on resources on existing systems to report incidents. Trying to define their outreach approach.
Board of Health	Dottie	Bernard	Flu clinics are being run for town employees. Teachers appreciated them, and one was run for general public at Harvey Wheeler. These are for flu and COVID vaccines.
CAC - Climate Action Committee	Brad	Dye	Secured Weston and Sampson to help with the Climate Action Plan review. Did vendor selection and had help from TAC committee members - shows 2 committees working together.
CHA - Concord Housing Authority	Stephan	Bader	Thanked the Select Board for the Chairs Breakfast process. Bridge has articles on CHA. On \$300K from Trust for Everett Garden - CHA board will apply for state matching funds.
CHDC - Concord Housing Development Corporation	Lee	Smith	Assabet River Homes project is underway. Working with Trust on buy-down program to convert market rate to affordable homes. Also, CHDC is working with MCI on Phase 1 using CHDC Junction Village land to increase development space.
CPS, CCRSD - Concord Public School Committee / Regional School Committee	Tracey	Marano	School recognizes value of rail trail, but school cannot assist further. Civics event today at the middle school. School will work with CMLP to get the solar project done.
FC - FinCom	Lois	Wasoff	Last meeting, FinCom voted a 2.5%/2.5%/- .9% prelim guidelines for Town, Schools, and CCRSD. FinCom will make final guidelines in a month, though the guidelines do not reflect non-guideline spending. Minuteman Tech and Town will present tomorrow.

Finance Policy Working Group	Wendy	Rovelli	The Working Group has drafted a reserve policy for FinCom consideration tomorrow.
Hugh Cargill Trust Committee	Jill	Block	Hugh Cargill Trust serves 8-10 families for emergency assistance each month. Trust has approved 84 property tax relief applications, \$425/quarter per person. Also allocated funds from the Silent Fund, and an annual appeal goes out soon.
Land Use Working Group	Judith	Grant	Meeting 4 times a month counting all committee and subcommittees. Charge is to review town-owned properties and the group developed 3 sub areas - public safety, public works, and municipal consolidation. The group presented a report to the Select Board on Q1 work, which involved site visits, data collection. Now in Q2, the group is looking at more data collection and identifying options for site usage and at costs and impacts. Feb. 2026 public engagement event possible.
MAHT - Municipal Affordable Housing Trust	Keith	Bergman	Housing groups will schedule quarterly roundtable in mid December. Trust will update the housing production plan in 2027. Trust applied to CPC for funds. Trust awarded \$300K to Concord Housing Authority for sprinklers at Everett Gardens. Trust meets tomorrow on Zoom to discuss acquisition of 91B Main Street from the State. \$600K purchase price; \$500K comes from Town ARPA funds.
MCI Concord Advisory Board	Dan	Gainsboro	The board is talking with DCAMM on how to best implement the master planning process. December will see quarterly report to Select Board; may extend and amend the committee charge beyond Dec. 31, 2025 and to collaborate with Land Use Working Group. Will include consideration of alternative time line for program elements.
Middle School Building Committee	Pat	Nelson	Still meeting. Punch list is 99% complete. Have \$2M in contingency fund left and will report when the project is done.

Municipal Light Board	Warren	Leon	CMLP will not raise rates, and April 1 will start Time of Day use system -- some homes' electric bills will go down, some up. Light staff are getting ready for implementation of Time of Day. Middle School solar project is put on hold - neither bid was acceptable. Project needs School Committee to be more cooperative.
NRC - Natural Resources Commission	Sarah	Grimwood	The NRC needs 2 members. Recommendations coming in December. Will have a new subcommittee for Warners Pond. A Bridge article reported a site on Elm Street with piles of dirt -- contractor was encroaching wetlands, and license ran out, so license was not renewed. Dirt piles are still there, so NRC sent a Notice of Violation to MassDOT, requested a restoration time line, and asked the contractor to attend Dec. 17 NRC meeting.
Personnel Board	Bill	Mrachek	Still waiting for Town to approve the Personnel Handbook. Still need 2 members.
Public Ceremonies & Celebrations Committee	Holly	Legault	Thanks for participation in Veterans ceremony; next is Honored Citizens in March. Needs members.
PWC - Public Works Commimssion	Andrea	Solomon	PWC previewed the Roads Program, and PWC is now developing contracts for the next 5 years, which will touch 80% of Concord Roads to bring road index up to 85 PCI. PWC is looking also at updating the safety issues, not just ADA capabilities. This will help prioritize the projects. Takes a lot of consulting and input and CPW work.
Town Moderator	Carmin	Reiss	Dec. 13 program on governance is at the Town House. She encouraged folks to ask for help on Warrant Articles. Town meeting starts April 27. The Town again will do a handbook with all Town Meeting materials, sent to all households. Committees with recommendations must be mindful of material submission deadlines. Calendar is on the town website. She will be evaluating the Middle School as a site for Town Meeting and will send reminders to committees about upcoming deadlines.

TRETF - Tax Relief Evaluation Task Force	Ellen	Quackenbush	TRETF went live with survey, had First Friday at League on RTE (Residential Tax Exemption) and housing. Video is online now. Classification hearing was Monday night and the RTE was passed for another year. Report due is in March. Have 604 survey responses, but not many from renters. Looking for opportunities to help renters, perhaps use Section 50 law, which needs renters to give tax returns to landlord. \$ goes to the landlord. No age restriction. Section 42 c 1/2 law - takes senior circuit breaker credit and gives an exemption -- avoids an asset cap. Right now, 36 people get senior circuit breaker benefit from the Town now.
West Concord Advisory Council	Barbara	Morse	Just finished going through guidelines; looking at charge. Goal is to reach other committees and not duplicating effort, like MCI group, 2229 Main Street.
West Concord Cultural District	Sue	LaChance	Appreciate Select Board approving sculpture project in West Concord. Planning Dec. 13 event, strolling in West Concord. Qualifications for being a cultural district have changed, so this will impact this committee.
ZBA - Zoning Board of Appeals	Theo	Kindermans	Novo is making progress.



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

November 20, 2025

6

Minuteman Regional School District Budget Presentation

Presentation by School Superintendent and Finance Director of responses to requests and status of FY27 budget development

Requested by: Finance Committee Chair

Action Sought: None

Proposed Motion(s)

None anticipated.

Additional Information

Presentation from the Minuteman Regional School District regarding the Fiscal Year 2027 budget.

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>

November 20, 2025



Concord Finance Committee: Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District

Presented By: Heidi Driscoll, Superintendent
Nikki Andrade, Business Manager
Dee Ortner, Minuteman School Committee –
Concord Representative



Concord Student Highlights

- Class of 2025
 - 6 Concord graduates went on to 4-year public and private colleges.
 - *Colleges:* Howard, NYU, Rochester, Simmons, UMASS Lowell and Wentworth
- 39 Current Students
 - Representing 17 of Minuteman's 18 Program Majors
- 2 Seniors Out on Co-Op
 - Animal Science (Arlington Animal Clinic) & Health Assisting (Acton Medical)
- Athletic Achievements
 - Muji Vader – Girls Basketball
 - Senior Captain and 2-Time League MVP
 - **22 points away from 1,000 career points**
 - Recognized in the *Globe*, *Herald* and [Concord Bridge](#)



Senior Joey Vader



Senior Captain Muji Vader



MINUTEMAN
HIGH SCHOOL REVOLUTIONIZED

1. Overall Spending and Concord's Assessment



Concord's Historical Budget Trends

Minuteman	Total Budget	Operating Budget	Total Assessments	Total Students	Operating Expense Per Pupil
FY2026	\$32,461,056	\$25,504,611	\$26,073,739	669	\$38,123
FY2025	\$31,941,314	\$24,160,849	\$25,689,923	686	\$35,220
FY2024	\$30,316,325	\$23,458,597	\$25,481,911	692	\$33,900
FY2023	\$29,010,622	\$22,092,652	\$22,395,741	655	\$33,730
FY2022	\$27,640,588	\$20,731,416	\$19,461,392	634	\$32,700
FY2021	\$25,502,946	\$20,255,561	\$17,337,416	602	\$33,647

Concord's Historical Assessments: Per Pupil

Concord	Operating Assessments	October 1 Enrollment Count	Per Pupil Assessment
FY2026	\$1,205,605	38	\$31,726
FY2025	\$1,199,223	41	\$29,249
FY2024	\$1,152,850	36	\$32,024
FY2023	\$1,011,487	33	\$30,651
FY2022	\$839,269	25	\$33,571
FY2021	\$866,644	25	\$34,666

*FY2026 Per Pupil Assessment = FY2026 Operating Assessment / Oct 1, 2024 Enrollment Count

Concord: Historical Assessment Trends

Concord	Total Assessments	% Change in Total Assessment	4 Year Rolling Average Enrollment	% Change in 4 Year Rolling Average Enrollment
FY2026	\$1,752,117	1.11%	37	9.6%
FY2025	\$1,732,805	5.5%	33.75	13.4%
FY2024	\$1,641,695	8.8%	29.75	10.2%
FY2023	\$1,508,544	17.0%	27	17.4%
FY2022	\$1,289,284	6.2%	23	7.0%
FY2021	\$1,213,873	13.1%	21.5	13.2%

FY2027 Budget Update



October – Budget Collection

- Budget input collected from Teachers and Supervisors
- Compile FY2027 Departmental Request (Wish List) Budget

November – Administrative Review

- Presented FY2027 Departmental Request (Wish List) Budget to Finance Committee on **November 10th**
- *Actual FY2027 Budget and Assessments will be lower than this Department Request (Wish List) Budget*
- Develop Superintendent Recommended Budget

December – Finance Committee Review

- Present FY2027 Superintendent Recommended Budget

January – FY2027 Budget Presentations

- Finance Committee, School Committee and Public Hearing
- FY2027 Budget Book finalized

FY2027 Department Request Assessment

Minimum Required Contribution	\$ 719,278
Transportation Assessment	\$ 39,638
Assessment over Min. Req. Contr.	\$ 577,996
Operating Capital Assessment	<u>\$ 135,243</u>
Sub-Total	\$ 1,472,155
Building Project – Debt Service*	<u>\$ 436,174</u>
Total Assessment	<u>\$ 1,908,329</u>

FY2027 Departmental Request

Concord	FY2027 Dept Request Total Budget	FY2027 Dept Request Operating Budget	FY2027 Dept Request Total Assessments	October 1, 2025 Enrollment	FY2027 Dept Request Operating Expense Per Pupil
FY2027	\$34,481,679	\$27,009,624	\$27,877,250	658	\$41,048

Concord	Operating Assessments	October 1 Enrollment Count	Per Pupil Assessment
FY2027	\$1,334,911	39	\$34,228

Concord	Total Assessments	% Change in Total Assessment	4 Year Rolling Average Enrollment	% Change in 4 Year Rolling Average Enrollment
FY2027	\$1,906,329	8.8%	38.5	4.1%



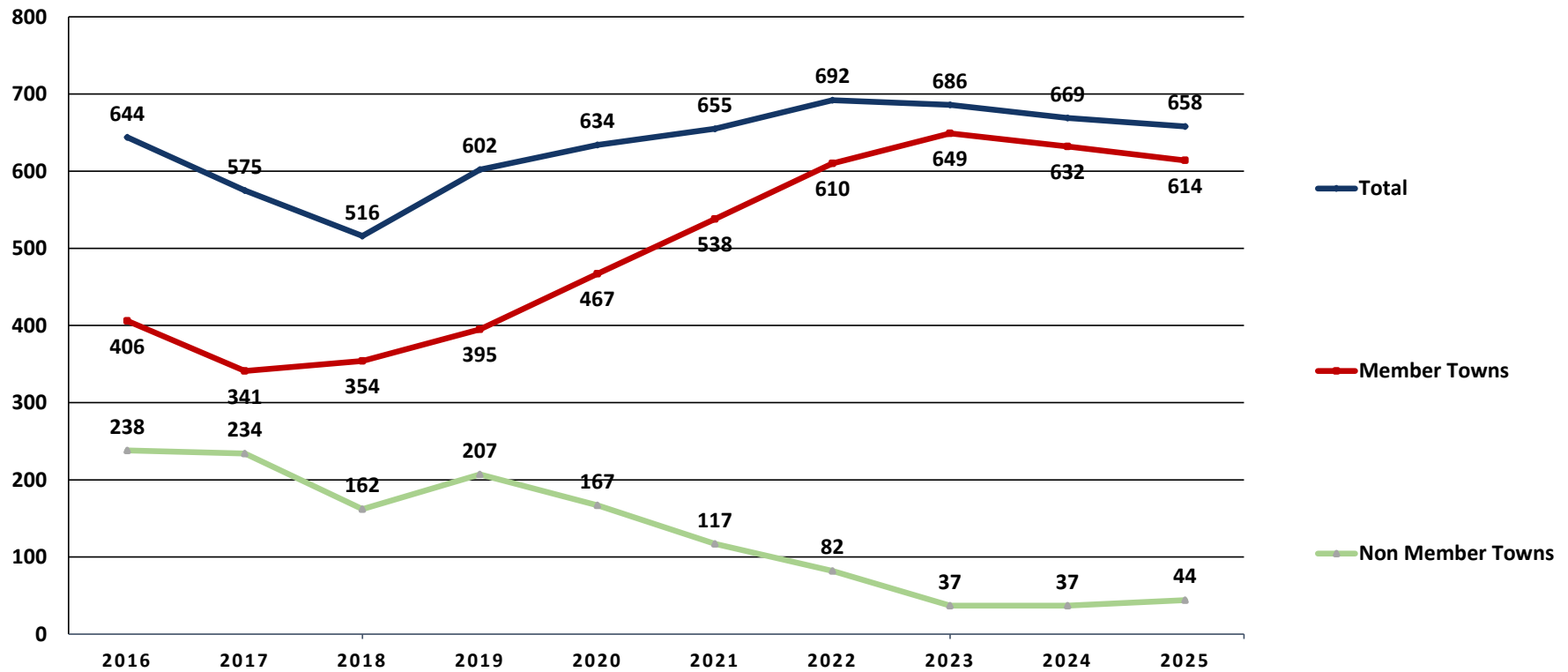


MINUTEMAN
HIGH SCHOOL REVOLUTIONIZED

2. District Membership and Enrollment



Overall Enrollment as of October 1



Enrollment by Town as of October 1

- Enrollment is Primarily In-District
 - Out of District Seats Still Exist
 - Goal of the District is to maximize enrollment

Class of	2029	2028	2027	2026	Subtotal
Acton	14	17	22	19	72
Arlington	56	38	39	55	188
Bolton	6	10	6	9	31
Concord	9	9	8	13	39
Dover	0	1	1	0	2
Lancaster	17	15	17	14	63
Lexington	32	27	25	18	102
Needham	15	20	17	11	63
Stow	9	11	20	14	54
Member City/Town	158	148	155	153	614
Other Non-Member	20	21	2	1	44
Total Students	178	169	157	154	658

3. Top Minuteman Issues



Engagement



Ownership

FY2026

- Maximizing Enrollment with Enrollment, Membership, Access and Capacity (EMAC) Committee
- Successfully Negotiating a Collective Bargaining Agreement
- Implementing State Regulations Impacting Admissions and Graduation

4. FY2025 & FY2026 Minuteman Budget Update

	FY2026 Budget	FY2025 Budget	FY2025 Actual	Variance
Revenue:				
Assessments	26,073,739	25,689,923	25,689,923	-
Ch. 70 Aid	3,142,029	2,998,383	3,046,779	48,396
Ch. 71 Reg. Trans. Reimb.	1,129,911	969,305	969,305	-
Prior Year Tuition	809,464	818,824	818,824	-
Prior Year Capital Fee	255,341	277,084	277,084	-
E&D Appropriation	650,000	650,000	650,000	-
E&D Add. Appropriation	285,372	424,095	424,095	-
Facilities Revolving	115,200	113,700	113,700	-
Interest Income	-	-	192,644	192,644
Miscellaneous	-	-	6,086	6,086
	32,461,056	31,941,314	32,188,440	247,126
Overall Expenditure:				
Salary	15,493,595	14,717,901	14,704,691	13,210
Non-Salary	16,967,461	17,223,413	16,958,955	264,458
	32,461,056	31,941,314	31,663,646	277,668

FY2025 Approved Year End Budget Transfers

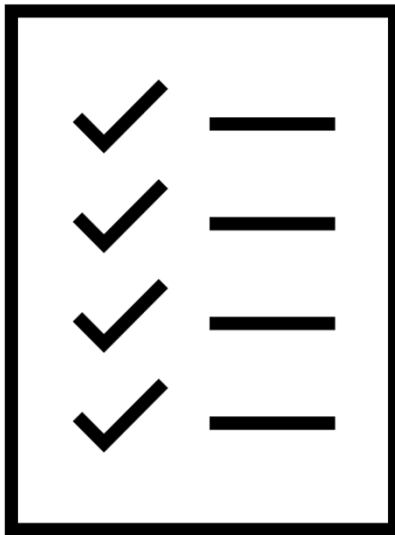


Other Post Employment Benefit (OPEB): Approved Transfer of an additional \$425,000 to OPEB Trust Fund



Capital Stabilization: Approved Transfer of an additional \$424,095 to Stabilization Account

FY2026 Budget on Target



**FY2026 Approved Operating and Capital Budget:
\$32,461,056; 2.99% Increase**

Operating Budget

- Teachers Contract - 3% plus Steps and Lanes
- Insurance Costs
- New Transportation Contract
- OPEB - \$605,000 = \$290,000 Increase

Capital Budget

- *Debt Service - Athletic Field will not be Assessed to Member Towns*
- Stabilization - \$950,000 Contribution = \$100,000 Increase from FY25
- *Projected Stabilization Balance with FY26 Contribution - \$5,238,925*



MINUTEMAN
HIGH SCHOOL REVOLUTIONIZED

5. Spending Levels

- Continuation of expansion of Animal Science Major
- Minuteman is not planning to change service levels for any programs or services in the next 5 years





MINUTEMAN
HIGH SCHOOL REVOLUTIONIZED

6. Capital Program

- No plans for additional items that might require excluded debt.
- Will Continue Plan for East Building without excluded debt.
- 20 Year Analysis drives Finance Committee in Capital Planning Strategy.





MINUTEMAN
HIGH SCHOOL REVOLUTIONIZED

7. Education Reform and Mandates

- Governors Council on Graduation will determine requirements for Massachusetts Diploma that will likely have financial impact that remains to be seen.
- BESE (Board of Education and Secondary Education) regulations on CTE Admissions may have financial impact that remains to be seen.



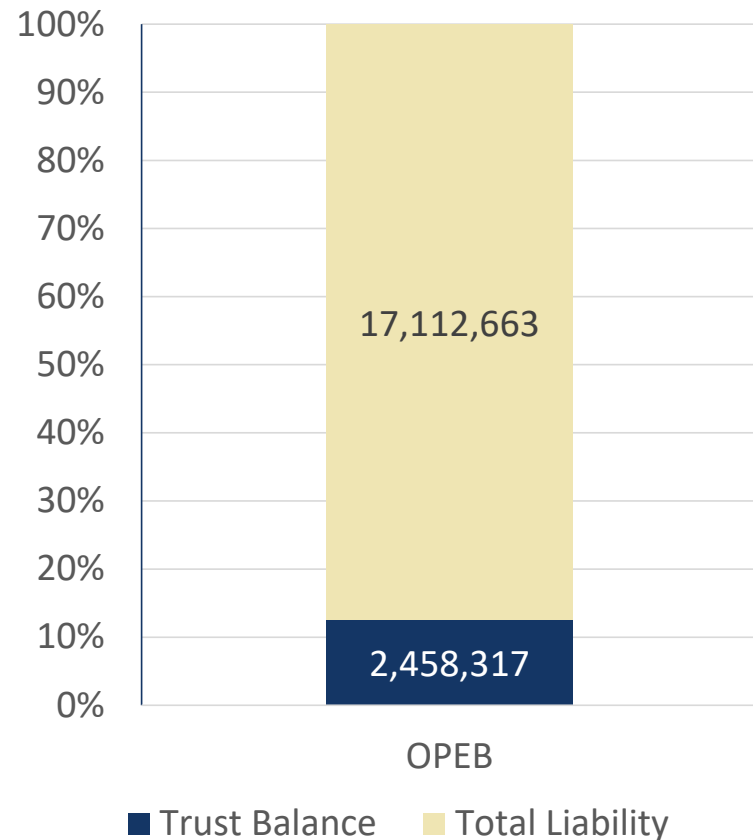
8. OPEB: Current Balance and Funding Strategy

OPEB Study Committee Funding Strategy – 5% Increase Each Year

Long Term Funding Plan for OPEB
(inc. Active Retiree Health Insurance and OPEB Contribution):

FY2023: \$725,000	FY2026: \$1,155,000
FY2024: \$762,000	FY2027: \$1,215,000
FY2025: \$800,000	FY2028: \$1,275,000

Total Liability as of 6/30/2025: \$17,112,663
OPEB Trust Balance as of 10/31/2025: \$2,458,317





MINUTEMAN
HIGH SCHOOL REVOLUTIONIZED

9. Additional Information

- Superintendent Driscoll has been meeting with Superintendent Hunter from Concord to determine strategies to best support Concord students





MINUTEMAN
HIGH SCHOOL REVOLUTIONIZED



Thank you! Questions?





Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

November 20, 2025

7

Town Operating Budget Presentation

Presentation by Town Finance Team on status of Fiscal Year 2027 budget development

Requested by: Finance Committee Chair

Action Sought: None

Proposed Motion(s)

None anticipated.

Additional Information

Attached is a presentation from the Town Finance Team regarding the status of the Fiscal Year 2027 budget. This presentation was provided to the Select Board at their November 17th meeting.

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>



Fiscal Year 2027

Finance Committee – November 20, 2025

Budget Update



Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Schedule

- **November 17th** – Select Board Meeting (Tax Classification Meeting)/Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Update
- **November 20th** – Finance Committee Meeting (Regular Meeting)
- **December 8th** – Finance Committee Meeting (Tri-Board Capital Planning Forum with Select Board)
- **December 11th** – Finance Committee Meeting (Regular Meeting and Guidelines)



Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Schedule

- **December 1 - 31** – Finalize Capital and Operating Budgets
- **March 1 - 31, 2026** – Public Hearings for FY27 budgets
- **April 27, 2026** – Annual Town Meeting



FY 2027 Operating Budget Overview

Personnel

- **Police Command Structure** – Current command staff are stretched thin limiting supervisory coverage and officer development; **One FTE estimated cost of \$205,000 (including educational incentive)**; Potential offset of \$110,000 if adjustment in shift strength is implemented



FY 2027 Operating Budget Overview

Personnel - Continued

- **Public Safety Business Manager** – A dedicated Public Safety Business Manager, similar to what already exists within CPW, would provide the financial and administrative expertise needed to support both departments, freeing command staff to focus on field operations and community safety while ensuring resources are managed effectively; **One FTE estimated cost of \$128,250 (including benefits)**



Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Update

Personnel – Continued

- **IT Business Knowledge Manager** – This position was budgeted as an IT Business Analyst prior to FY26 and was cut from the budget in FY26; This request would restore the FTE that was cut from FY26 with a new position with a different focus to support town-wide IT initiatives; The proposed position is budgeted at Grade 13, Step 9 (@ \$145K with benefits)



FY 2027 Operating Budget Overview

Personnel - Continued

- **Public Records Administrator** – A dedicated Public Records Administrator would allow the Town to meet statutory deadlines for requests while enabling the Records & Archives Manager to refocus on the essential archival and records management work that preserves Concord's history and supports transparent government; **If Part Time, non-benefit eligible, approximately \$40,000; If Full Time with benefits, estimated cost is \$101,250**



FY 2027 Operating Budget Overview

- The increase includes:
 - Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for non-union employees @1.2%
 - Restoration of seasonal ranger program and increases to Fire and Police Overtime reflecting spending trends



FY 2027 Operating Budget Overview

- Incremental \$73K increase for three elections scheduled in Fiscal Year 2027
- Includes elimination of vacant Risk and Compliance Manager position (\$91 K)
- Town Manager and Finance Department has met with Town Departments regarding their proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Operating and Capital Budgets



FY 2027 Operating Budget Overview

Total % increase from FY26 to 27 for guideline eligible categories: 5.3%



FY 2027 Operating Budget Overview

October 30, 2025, Finance Committee meeting:

- Finance Department presentation reflected a preliminary % increase target for the Fiscal Year 2027 guideline budget between 3.5%-3.0%
- Finance Committee voted the following increases:
 - 2.5% Town
 - 2.5% Concord Public Schools
 - -0.9% Concord Carlisle Regional School District



FY 2027 Operating Budget Overview

Finance Department FY27 Budget Review:

Elimination of Proposed Positions:

- Public Safety Business Manager - \$128K
- Public Records Administrator (part time) - \$40K

Retaining Proposed Positions:

- Deputy Police Chief - \$205K
- IT Business Knowledge Manger - \$145 K



FY 2027 Operating Budget Overview

Finance Department FY27 Budget Review:

Other Reductions:

- Police Overtime - \$79K
- Fire Overtime - \$136K
- Library Overtime (closing on Sundays) - \$44K



FY 2027 Operating Budget Overview

Finance Department FY27 Budget Review:

Other Reductions:

- Account for Council on Aging formula grants to offset salary - \$25K
- Reduction in budget lines where request doesn't reflect actual spending trends – \$320K



FY 2027 Operating Budget Overview

Update as of November 17th:

- Current budget percentage change after Finance Department review

= 3.25% increase from Fiscal Year 2026 to 2027

Evolving Our Budget Approach

- Each year, departments build their budgets **from the ground up**, reviewing staffing, service needs, and costs before requests are finalized.
- While this is often referred to as a *line-item budget*, it functions more like a **bottom-up process**, where expenditures are justified annually rather than simply carried forward.
- What's changing now is our focus: how funds are spent vs what outcomes they achieve.
- Soon, we will be working with **Tyler Technologies** (parent company of **Munis**), and beginning a transition to **Priority Based Budgeting (PBB)**, which links resources directly to **community priorities and results**.
- FY27 will mark the **start of this transition** as we build awareness and test examples. We expect to be ready for **full integration of PBB in FY28**.

Bottom-Up Budgeting → Outcome-Based Budgeting (PBB)

Where We Are in the Transition

FY27: Building Awareness & Testing Examples

- Introducing PBB principles
 - **Align spending with community priorities**
 - **Evaluate programs, not just line-items**
 - **Rank programs by priority and impact**
 - **Encourage data-driven decisions**
 - **Increase transparency and accountability**
 - **Promote collaboration and innovation**
- Begin linking costs to outcomes in select program areas.

FY28: Full Integration into Budget Development

- Broader program inventory and priority scoring.
- Develop a consistent “program budgeting” language across departments.
- Align funding directly with outcomes and community priorities.

FY27, Build Awareness → FY28, Full Integration

Shifting the Budget Conversation

- To move from the current +3.25% proposal toward the Finance Committee's guideline of +2.5%, we must move beyond trimming line items - where there is little left to cut.
- Instead, our focus should shift toward understanding **service level trade-offs** and prioritizing investments that most advance community outcomes.
- This is not about “doing more with less,” but about **funding what matters most** and being deliberate about where reductions will occur as needed to meet funding limitations.

Line-Item Review → Program Evaluation → Priority-Based Budgeting → Resource Alignment

Example: From Line-Item to Priority-Based Budgeting

Ceremonies & Celebrations: numbers shown for illustrative purposes only

Traditional Line-item View

- Supplies – \$4,000
- Police Overtime – \$6,000
- Public Works Support – \$3,000
- Other Expenses – \$2,000
- **Total:** \$15,000

Old framing: “What do we spend on supplies and overtime?”

New framing: “What community value do these funds create?”

Priority-Based View

- **Outcome Area:** Civic Engagement & Community Identity
- **Program Goal:** Preserve and celebrate Concord’s history and traditions through inclusive, community-wide events.
- **Key Services Funded:**
 - Annual Patriots’ Day Parade & Flag Raising
 - Independence Day and Concord 250 Celebrations
 - Veterans’ and Memorial Ceremonies
- **Priority Rationale:**
 - Strengthens community pride and connection.
 - Supports tourism and cultural identity.
 - Aligns with Envision Concord’s goal of civic inclusion and participation.

Request: FY27 Budget Workshop

Aligning Priorities and Funding

Purpose:

Engage the Select Board in a focused discussion to identify the programs and outcomes most essential to Concord's goals - using a Priority Based Budgeting lens to inform further adjustments toward the Finance Committee's guideline.

Focus:

- Review high-level service areas (e.g., public safety, sustainability, civic engagement, infrastructure).
- Discuss relative priority and impact of each area using PBB concepts - *how strongly does this program advance community outcomes?*
- Identify potential areas for re-scaling or phasing, rather than cutting line items.
- Explore where service levels could be adjusted with minimal impact on outcomes.

Request: FY27 Budget Workshop

Aligning Priorities and Funding

Pre-work for staff:

- Selected development of program summaries showing purpose, outcomes supported, cost, and performance measures.
- Map programs to priority outcomes identified in *Envision Concord* or other guiding documents.
- Identify where reductions would affect service delivery, community expectations, or compliance.

Workshop Format:

- 2-hour working session in December.
- Short overview of the FY27 gap and PBB approach.
- Discussion by program area using a “value vs. cost” matrix or scoring tool.
- Board identifies top-tier, maintain, and lower-priority program areas.

Outcome:

- Select Board guidance on service level priorities and principles to inform adjustments toward the FY27 target and to shape the FY28 Priority Based Budgeting rollout.

Moving Forward Together

- Concord's FY27 budget reflects **strong fiscal management** and a commitment to aligning operations with community priorities.
- This year marks the start of our **transition to Priority Based Budgeting**, connecting resources to outcomes in a more deliberate and transparent way.
- As we prepare for **full integration in FY28**, we'll continue refining how we evaluate programs, measure results, and communicate value.
- Our goal is to ensure that every dollar invested reflects Concord's shared values - **balancing fiscal discipline with community priorities**.

Fiscal Discipline → Transparency → Priority Alignment → Community Value



Questions or Comments?



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

November 20, 2025

8

Review of Finance Committee Role in Town Government

Requested by: Finance Committee Chair

Action Sought: None

Proposed Motion(s)

None anticipated.

Additional Information

Discussion of the Finance Committee's role in town government. Town Moderator, Carmin Reiss, will participate in this conversation.

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>



Role of the Finance Committee

SOURCES OF AUTHORITY AND GUIDANCE

Hierarchy of Authorities

- ▶ Massachusetts General Laws
- ▶ Town Charter
- ▶ Town Bylaws
- ▶ Standing Votes of Town Meeting
- ▶ Established Town Tradition and Practice
- ▶ Official Guidance
 - ▶ MA DOR Publications
 - ▶ Assoc of Town Finance Committees Publications

Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 39, § 16

Every town whose valuation for the purpose of apportioning the state tax exceeds one million dollars shall, and any other town may, by by-law provide for the election or the appointment and duties of appropriation, advisory or **finance committees, who shall consider any or all municipal questions for the purpose of making reports or recommendations to the town;** and such by-laws may provide that committees so appointed or elected may continue in office for terms not exceeding three years from the date of appointment or election. In every town having a committee appointed under authority of this section, **such committee**, or the selectmen if authorized by a by-law of the town, and, in any town not having such a committee, the selectmen, **shall submit a budget at the annual town meeting.**

Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 40, § 6

To provide for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures, a town may at an annual or special town meeting appropriate or transfer a sum or sums not exceeding in the aggregate five per cent of the levy of the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the fund, to be known as the **reserve fund**, is established. No direct drafts against this fund shall be made, but **transfers from the fund may from time to time be voted by the finance or appropriation committee of the town, in towns having such a committee**, and in other towns by the selectmen; and the town accountant in towns having such an official, and in other towns the auditor or board of auditors, shall make such transfers accordingly.

Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 41, § 60

The town accountant shall immediately upon the close of each calendar year compile statements in tabulated form showing the amounts appropriated and the amounts expended from each appropriation during the preceding fiscal year, the amounts appropriated for the current fiscal year and the amounts expended from such appropriations during the first six months of such year and the amounts estimated to be expended from such appropriations during the second six months of such year, and the estimates for the next ensuing fiscal year, and shall forthwith furnish a copy thereof to the selectmen, or to such committee as the town may appoint to consider and report on proposed appropriations. The selectmen,

Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 41, § 60 (con't)

or said committee when so appointed, shall after due consideration designate the amounts which in their opinion should be appropriated for the ensuing fiscal year, and shall accompany the same with such explanations and suggestions in relation thereto as they may deem desirable for the proper information of the inhabitants. The selectmen or, if such committee has been appointed, the committee, shall print and distribute this document at or before the annual town meeting, and the town clerk shall transmit a copy thereof and of all town reports to the director of accounts.

Concord Town Charter

SECTION 2. APPOINTED OFFICIALS

C. The moderator shall appoint a finance committee and such other officers, boards and committees as the moderator shall herein after be directed to appoint by bylaw or vote of the town.

SECTION 3. MEMBERSHIP; TERMS; POWERS, DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES; TERMINATION

The membership of boards and committees appointed as provided in Section 2, the length of the term of each member thereof and of officers so appointed, and the powers, duties and responsibilities of the same shall be as now or hereafter provided by applicable statutes and bylaws and votes of the town, except as herein otherwise provided...

Concord Town Charter

SECTION 4. MULTIPLE OFFICERS Neither the moderator nor any member of the select board, the school committee, or the **finance committee** may, during the term for which the moderator, select board member, school committee member or finance committee member was elected or appointed, **be elected or appointed to any other town office**, except as otherwise provided herein...

Concord Town Charter

SECTION 16. ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURES

Not less than 90 days before the annual town meeting each year (See Note #4, Amendments), **the town manager** shall submit to the select board **a careful detailed estimate in writing of the probable expenditures of the town government for the ensuing fiscal year**, stating the amount required to meet the interest and maturing bonds and notes or other outstanding indebtedness of the town, and showing specifically the amount necessary to be provided for each fund and department, together with a statement of the expenditures of the town for the same purposes in the two preceding years and an estimate of the expenditures for the current year.

Concord Town Charter

SECTION 17. ANNUAL BUDGET

The *select board* shall consider the tentative budget submitted by the *town manager* and make such recommendations relative thereto as they may deem expedient and proper in the interests of the town. Not less than 60 days before the annual town meeting each year the *select board* shall transmit a copy of the budget together with their recommendations relative thereto to each member of the finance committee.

Finance Committee Bylaw

Section 1.

At the annual Town Meeting to be held in the year 1922 and before the final adjournment thereof, **there shall be appointed by the Moderator a Finance committee consisting of fifteen members.** Five members of such committee shall be appointed to serve for a term of three years; and five members shall be appointed to serve for a term of two years; and five members shall be appointed to serve for a term of one year. At each annual Town Meeting after the annual meeting of the year 1922, the Moderator shall appoint five members of such committee to serve for a period of three years. Except in case of death, resignation or removal from office, each member of the committee shall hold office until the final adjournment of the annual Town Meeting of the year in which his term of office expires. **Said committee shall at all times consist of fifteen members,** and vacancies occurring therein, otherwise than by expiration of the term of office, shall be filled by the Town Moderator. **No member of such committee shall be an officer of the Town or a member of any board of the Town.**

Finance Committee Bylaw

Section 2.

The Finance Committee shall meet and organize as soon as practicable each year after the final adjournment of the annual Town Meeting and at such organization meeting shall elect a chairman and a clerk.

Finance Committee Bylaw

Section 3.

When the warrant for a Town Meeting contains any article or articles under which an appropriation or expenditure of money or the disposition of any property of the Town may be made, the Finance Committee shall consider such article or articles after giving one or more public hearings thereon and shall report in print its recommendations to such Town Meeting. The recommendations of the Finance Committee concerning any articles in the warrant for an annual Town Meeting shall be printed and distributed to the voters of the Town not less than seven days before such meeting. The Finance Committee may consider and report upon any other article in any warrant issued for a Town Meeting whenever in the opinion of a majority of the committee such consideration and report seem advisable for the best interests of the Town. The Finance Committee may carry on its inquiries and investigations through such sub-committees as it may create and the committee shall determine the method by which such sub-committee shall be selected.

Town Meeting Standing Votes

Budget Guidelines

Voted: The Finance Committee shall annually establish a guideline for budget increases to be considered in fiscal year planning by the Board of Selectmen, the Concord Public School Committee and the Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee and will publish said guideline in the local press prior to November 30 of the previous fiscal year.

Article 4, Annual Town Meeting, May 1976

Note: This vote replaced the vote taken under Article 4 of the 1975 Town Meeting relative to tax stabilization, which had established as a policy that the annual tax rate increase not exceed 50% of the increase in the consumer price index.

Town Meeting Standing Votes

Five Year Projection of Tax Burden on Citizens

Voted: To request the Finance Committee to make a five-year projection on what the total tax burden is likely to be on the citizens of the Town commencing with the calendar year 2012. This information shall be included in “The Report of the Finance Committee of the Town of Concord” sent to all voters prior to each Annual Town Meeting thereafter.

Article 3, Special Town Meeting, November 7, 2011

Finance Committee Tradition and Practice in Concord

- ▶ Participates in budget process for three budget units:
 - ▶ Town
 - ▶ Concord Public Schools
 - ▶ Concord Carlisle Regional School District
- ▶ Develops and publishes budget guidelines
- ▶ Conducts 3 pre-town meeting hearings on financial articles
- ▶ Formulates recommendations to Town Meeting on financial articles
- ▶ Makes and publishes five-year tax burden projections
- ▶ Writes and publishes robust Finance Committee Report
- ▶ Provides advice on motions and proposed amendments at Town Meeting
- ▶ Observes and advises boards/committees re fiscal issues throughout year

Finance Committee Tradition and Practice in Concord

1970 Finance Committee Charge, issued by Select Board

- ▶ Advisory only (no legal authority)
- ▶ Likely describes historical tradition and practice
- ▶ 55 years old and in some particulars out of date, e.g.:
 - ▶ authorization of excess expenditures for snow and ice removal no longer necessary under state law
 - ▶ FinCom no longer has practice of advising SB on exemption of contracts from competitive bidding requirements in emergency situations

Mass Department of Revenue

Guidance

The **finance committee** is the official **fiscal watchdog** for a town. Because it is difficult for all taxpayers to be completely informed about every aspect of a town's finances, finance committees were established so a **representative group of taxpayers** could conduct a thorough review of municipal finance questions on behalf of all citizens.

... The **primary duties** of a finance committee are to **advise and make recommendations to town meeting** on the budget and other areas of finance.

...The finance committee is primarily responsible for submitting its recommendations on the annual budget to the town meeting. In assuming this responsibility, **the committee influences the entire budgetary process.**

Assoc of Town Finance Committees Guidance

The **finance committee** is a town's **official fiscal watchdog**. Its primary responsibility is to advise and make recommendations to town meeting on the budget and other areas of finance, although in many towns they prepare and submit the budget as well as comment on it. **The state statutory authority of the finance committee does not vary from community to community, but the role and process does.**

Whether or not the finance committee prepares the town's budget, the committee is responsible for submitting recommendations on the budget and other financial warrant articles to town meeting. **The finance committee report provides analyses, explanations, and justifications for its recommendations.** Although the level of detail varies from town to town, more informative reports include financial and statistical data, often trace historical trends and specific appropriations.

Variations in Practice Among Town Finance Committees

- ▶ **Plainfield** (pop. 623): FC develops capital and operating budgets and moves them at Town Meeting
- ▶ **Norfolk** (pop. 11,556): SB drafts budget; FC per bylaw makes main motion at Town Meeting
- ▶ **Lincoln** (pop. 6,946): FC presents all budgets to Town Meeting
- ▶ **Stow** (pop. 7,109): Per charter, Town Administrator develops budgets and presents to Town Meeting; FC reviews and makes recommendations
- ▶ **Westborough** (pop. 21,591): Town Manager creates and submits budget, FC makes main motions on budget articles
- ▶ **N. Andover** (pop. 31,024): Same as Westborough
- ▶ **Holliston** (pop. 14,964): Elected FC makes final decisions on budgets presented to Town Meeting and makes main motions

Finance Committee Now and in the Future

The Finance Committee currently operates in consistency with state law, town charter, town bylaw, standing town meeting votes, and tradition and practice.

Adjustment and change of responsibilities can be made through:

- ▶ Charter amendment
- ▶ Bylaw amendment
- ▶ Town Meeting vote
- ▶ Adjustment of tradition and practice through collaboration with Select Board, School Committee, and Town Manager



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

November 20, 2025

9

Financial Policy Working Group

- Report on status of work by Financial Policy Working Group
- Review and discuss first draft of reserves policy language

Requested by: Finance Committee Chair

Action Sought: None

Proposed Motion(s)

None anticipated.

Additional Information

Attached is a draft of the Reserve Fund Policy update for the Finance Committee's review and discussion.

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>

Town of Concord Financial Reserve Policy

Under Massachusetts General Law c. 40, § 5B, municipalities and districts may create one or more stabilization funds, which are special reserves into which monies may be appropriated and reserved for later appropriation for any lawful municipal purpose.

Section 5B distinguishes between a **general purpose stabilization fund**, which is created for later appropriation for any lawful purpose, and a **special purpose stabilization fund**, which is created for later appropriation for a more specific purpose or purposes that is designated at the time the fund is created. [Voters may also approve a Proposition 2½ override in order to fund appropriations for a particular stabilization fund.]

Monies accumulated in a stabilization fund carry over from one fiscal year to another, and interest remains with that fund. Appropriations can be made **into** either a general or special purpose stabilization fund by a majority vote of Town Meeting. Appropriations **from** a general purpose stabilization fund must be approved by a two-thirds vote. Appropriations **from** a special purpose stabilization fund must only be approved by a majority vote. A two-thirds vote is needed to create either type of stabilization fund or to change the purpose of an existing fund.

Through the use of stabilization funds, Concord can protect itself against unanticipated events (such as, for example, by use of a general stabilization fund to provide a source of funds in the event of an unexpected reduction in revenues or unbudgeted expenses due to a natural disaster), and can set aside funds to help to cover anticipated major expenses in advance (such as, for example, by the use of special purpose stabilization funds to mitigate the impact on property taxes of excluded borrowing for major capital expenses such as schools or other municipal buildings). The maintenance of adequate reserves is also a factor considered by the bond rating agencies, so the creation and appropriation of general and special purpose stabilization funds may help Concord to maintain its Aaa bond rating.

Set out below are the Financial Policies adopted by Concord to inform the creation of, and appropriation to and from, general purpose and special purpose stabilization funds.

Reserves

The Town is committed to building and maintaining reserves to ensure budget flexibility to finance emergencies and unforeseen needs and establish funds to support Town priorities and long term capital improvement plans. It is a Town goal to maintain reserves, in aggregate, to retain a Aaa rating and consequently impact long term borrowing costs. Reserves are intended to be used to fund unanticipated or one-time costs rather than to fund operating expenses (unless provisions are made to replenish reserves). It is Town policy to maintain, at a minimum, the types of reserves described in this Policy..

Policy Summary

Available Funds	Minimum Funding Target*	Examples of Appropriate Usage
Annual Reserve Fund	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unforeseen operating budget expenditures
Free Cash	3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding stabilization funds • Funding capital projects • Retirement & OPEB
General Stabilization Fund	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency and unexpected events • Non-recurring annual expenditures
Overlay Surplus	No target	* Appropriation for any legally permitted purpose
Special Purpose Stabilization	Target to be set for each fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Capital expenditures * Funding debt service

* As a percentage of the ensuing General Fund Budget

Annual Reserve Fund

As part of the annual budget appropriation, funds will be set aside to provide for extraordinary or unforeseen departmental operating costs. The amount of appropriation will reflect a financial management decision based on economic and budgetary risks. The Town Manager, with the certification as to fund balance by the Town Accountant, can make a request to the Finance Committee for a transfer from the General Fund Reserve Fund to another appropriated account, in the event that the account incurs an expenditure which is extraordinary or unforeseen, per M.G.L. 40 § 6. The Finance Committee shall have the sole authority to approve such a transfer.

Free Cash

The Division of Local Services (DLS) defines Free Cash as “the remaining, unrestricted funds from operations of the previous fiscal year, including unexpended free cash from the previous year.” DLS must certify free cash before the Town can appropriate it. It is Town policy to maintain a minimum Free Cash balance, at or above 3% of the ensuing General Fund Budget with the following stipulations:

1. If Free Cash falls below 3% of the ensuing General Fund Budget, the Town Manager and Chief Financial Officer shall develop a plan to bring Free Cash back up to the minimum level.
2. If Free Cash in combination with the General Stabilization fund rises above 10% of the ensuing General Fund Budget, the Town Manager and Chief Financial Officer shall consider recommending using the excess Free Cash in the following ways:
 - i. Appropriate a portion of the excess Free Cash for a special non-recurring expenditure that could include a capital item that would otherwise be eligible to be funded through borrowing.

- ii. Appropriate a portion of the excess Free Cash to a General Fund or Special Stabilization Fund. Funds should not be allocated for stabilization that would result in full use of the unused levy limit.

General Stabilization

The General Stabilization Fund is established to provide emergency funds for usage in a major or significant event, such as natural disaster, uninsured loss, damage to a capital asset, or unanticipated decrease in revenue. Withdrawals should be limited to mitigating emergencies, unanticipated events or non-recurring expenditures that cannot be supported by annual general fund appropriations. It is Town policy to establish a minimum funding target at or above 5% of the ensuing General Fund Budget. Where possible, withdrawal of funds, should be limited to an amount where Free Cash in combination with the General Stabilization fund exceeds 10% of the ensuing general fund budget.

If withdrawals from the fund result in a balance below the minimum target, the Town Manager in conjunction with the Chief Financial Officer will develop a plan to replenish funds within the next two fiscal years.

Overlay Surplus

The purpose of the Overlay Reserve is to offset unrealized tax revenue resulting from abatements and exemptions. As approved by the Board of Assessors (BOA) or directed by the Appellate Tax Board, the Assessing Division grants abatements for real estate and personal property tax. Annually the BOA will determine an overlay amount, based on the annual recapitulation sheet, to be incorporated into the annual Town tax levy.

At the conclusion of each Abatement year (by May 30th), the Assessor will update the status of the Overlay Reserve with data that includes, but is not limited to, the gross balance, potential abatement liabilities, and any potential surplus, where the Overlay Reserve exceeds the amount of potential liabilities. If the BOA determines that a surplus exists, the BOA will notify the Chief Financial Officer, Town Manager and Select Board of the potential surplus amount. The Select Board in conjunction with the Chief Financial Officer and Town Manager may request that the BOA vote to declare that some or all of the surplus be available for appropriation.

Special Purpose Stabilization

It is Concord's practice to create Special Purpose Stabilization funds to be appropriated for specific purposes that are designated by a vote at Town Meeting. The purpose of a Special Purpose Stabilization fund may be defined narrowly (i.e. one specific project or purchase), or broadly (i.e. to support a capital improvement plan which may include various projects to be completed over a lengthy time period).

Special Purpose Stabilization funds may be used as a source of funding for capital related projects, equipment, and for major maintenance items. Other special purpose funds may include vehicle replacement, technology upgrades, and road maintenance.

DRAFT – NOVEMBER 17, 2025

Target balances for a Special Purpose Stabilization Fund are set based on the purpose of the particular fund and anticipated expenditures. Appropriations to Special Purpose Stabilization Funds may come from the General Fund or by dedicating a particular fee, charge, or other receipt as funding source(s). Appropriations to any Special Purpose Stabilization Fund will be subject to approval by Town Meeting. All such requests will be subject to review by the Select Board and the Finance Committee, which will make recommendations to Town Meeting.

One example of a Special Purpose Stabilization Fund is a Capital Stabilization Fund, the purpose of which is to fund the implementation of the Concord's Capital Improvement Plan, and to ameliorate the tax impact of the large capital projects where possible. The target funding balance of a Capital Stabilization Fund should be determined and updated regularly by the Town Manager and Chief Financial Officer.

DRAFT

Financial Policy Working Group

Financial Glossary

All definitions are taken from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue/Division of Local Services January 2020 Municipal Glossary

Audit – An examination of a community's financial systems, procedures, and data by a certified public accountant (independent auditor) resulting in a report on the fairness of financial statements and local compliance with statutes and regulations. The audit serves as a valuable management tool for evaluating a community's fiscal performance.

Audit Committee – A committee appointed by the select board, mayor, or city council with specific responsibility to review a community's independent audit of financial statements and address all issues relating to it, as well as those outlined in the accompanying management letter.

Audit Management Letter – An independent auditor's written communication to government officials, separate from the community's audit. It generally identifies deficient areas, if any, and presents recommendations for improving accounting procedures and other internal controls.

Audit Report – Prepared by an independent auditor, an audit report includes: (a) a statement of the audit's scope; (b) explanatory comments as to the application of auditing procedures; (c) findings and opinions; (d) financial statements and schedules; and (e) supplementary comments, recommendations and statistical tables. It is very often accompanied by a management letter.

Available Funds – Balances in the various fund types that represent nonrecurring revenue sources. As a matter of sound practice, they are frequently appropriated for unforeseen expenses, capital expenditures, or other one-time costs. Examples of available funds include free cash, stabilization funds, overlay surplus, water surplus, and retained earnings.

Bond – A means to raise money through the issuance of debt. A bond issuer/borrower promises in writing to repay a specified sum of money, alternately referred to as face value, par value or bond principal, to the buyer of the bond on a specified future date (maturity date), together with periodic interest at a specified rate. The term of a bond is always greater than one year.

Bond Rating (Municipal) – A credit rating assigned to a municipality to help investors assess the future ability, legal obligation, and willingness of the municipality (bond issuer) to make timely debt service payments. Stated otherwise, a rating helps prospective investors determine the level of risk associated with a given fixed-income investment. Rating agencies, such as Moody's and Standard & Poor's, use rating systems that designate a letter or a combination of letters and numerals, where AAA is the highest rating and C1 is very low.

Capital Asset – Any tangible property used in the operation of government that is not easily converted into cash and that has an initial useful life extending beyond a single financial reporting period. Capital assets include land and land improvements; infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, water and sewer lines; easements; buildings and building improvements; vehicles, machinery and equipment. Communities typically define capital assets in terms of a minimum useful life and minimum initial cost.

Capital Budget – An appropriation or spending plan that uses borrowing or direct outlay for capital or fixed asset improvements. Among other information, a capital budget should identify the method to finance each recommended expenditure (e.g., tax levy or rates) and identify those items that were not recommended.

Capital Improvement Program – A blueprint for planning a community's capital expenditures that comprises an annual capital budget and a five-year capital plan. It coordinates community planning, fiscal capacity, and physical development. While all the community's needs should be identified in the program, there is a set of criteria that prioritize the expenditures.

Capital Outlay – The exchange of one asset (cash) for another (capital asset) with no ultimate effect on net assets. Also known as "pay as you go," it is the appropriation and use of available cash to fund a capital improvement, as opposed to incurring debt to cover the cost.

Debt Burden – The amount of debt carried by an issuer usually expressed as a measure of value (e.g., debt as a percentage of assessed value, debt per capita, etc.). Sometimes debt burden refers to debt service costs as a percentage of the total annual budget.

Enterprise Fund – Authorized by MGL c. 44 § 53F½, an enterprise fund is a separate accounting and financial reporting mechanism for municipal services for which a fee is charged in exchange for goods or services. It allows a community to demonstrate to the public the portion of a service's total costs recovered through user charges and the portion subsidized by the tax levy, if any. With an enterprise fund, all costs of service delivery--direct, indirect, and capital --are identified. This allows the community to recover total service costs through user fees if it chooses. Enterprise accounting also enables communities to reserve the "surplus," or retained earnings, generated by the enterprise operation rather than closing this out to the general fund at year-end. Services that may be treated as enterprises include, but are not limited to, water, sewer, hospital, and airport services.

Financial Advisor – An individual or institution that assists municipalities in the issuance of tax exempt bonds and notes. The public finance department of a commercial bank or a non-bank advisor usually provides this service.

Free Cash – Remaining, unrestricted funds from operations of the previous fiscal year, including unexpended free cash from the previous year, actual receipts in excess of revenue estimated on the tax recapitulation sheet, and unspent amounts in budget line items. Unpaid property taxes and certain deficits reduce the amount that can be certified as free cash. The calculation of free cash is based on the June 30 balance sheet, which is submitted by the community's auditor, accountant, or comptroller. Free cash is not available for appropriation until certified by the Director of Accounts. (See Available Funds)

General Fund – The fund used to account for most financial resources and activities governed by the normal town meeting or city council appropriation process.

Governmental Funds – Funds generally used to account for tax-supported activities. There are five different types of governmental funds: general, special revenue, capital project, debt service, and permanent.

New Growth – The additional tax revenue generated by new construction, renovations and other increases in the property tax base during a calendar year. It does not include value increases caused by normal market forces or revaluations.

Nonrecurring Revenue Source – A one-time source of money available to a city or town. By its nature, a nonrecurring revenue source cannot be relied upon in future years, and therefore, such funds should not be used for operating or other expenses that continue from year to year.

OPEB (Other Postemployment Benefits) – Many public employees earn benefits over their years of service that they do not receive until after their government employment ends. While pensions are the most common of these, other postemployment benefits generally include combinations of health, dental, vision, and life insurances. These are provided to eligible retirees and sometime to their beneficiaries, and as a group, are referred to as OPEB.

Operating Budget – The plan of proposed expenditures for personnel, supplies, and other expenses for the coming fiscal year.

Overlay (Overlay Reserve, or Allowance for Abatements and Exemptions) – An account that funds anticipated property tax abatements, exemptions, and uncollected taxes. Additions to the overlay reserve need not be funded by the normal appropriation process but instead raised on the tax rate recapitulation sheet.

Proposition 2½ – A state law enacted in 1980, Proposition 2½ regulates local property tax administration and limits the amount of revenue a city or town may raise from local property taxes each year to fund municipal operations.

Reserve Fund – An amount (not to exceed 5 percent of the tax levy for the preceding year) set aside annually within a community's budget to provide a funding source for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures. In a town, the finance committee can authorize transfers from this fund for "extraordinary or unforeseen" expenditures. Other uses of the fund require budgetary transfers by town meeting. In a city, transfers from this fund may be voted by the city council upon recommendation of the mayor.

Sale of Cemetery Lots Fund – A fund established to account for proceeds of the sale of cemetery lots. The proceeds may only be appropriated to pay for the cost of the land, its care and improvement or the enlargement of the cemetery under provisions of MGL c. 114 § 15.

Stabilization Fund – A fund designed to accumulate amounts for capital and other future spending purposes, although it may be appropriated for any lawful purpose (MGL c. 40 § 5B). Communities may establish one or more stabilization funds for different purposes and may appropriate any amounts into them. A two-thirds vote of town meeting or city council is required to establish, amend the purpose of, or appropriate money from a stabilization fund. A majority vote of town meeting or city council is required to appropriate money into a stabilization fund.

Trust Fund – In general, a fund for money donated or transferred to a municipality with specific instructions on its use. As custodian of trust funds, the treasurer invests and expends such funds as stipulated by trust agreements, as directed by the commissioners of trust funds, or by town meeting. Both principal and interest may be used if the trust is established as an expendable trust. For nonexpendable trust funds, only interest (not principal) may be expended as directed.

Unfunded OPEB Liability – This is the difference between the value assigned to the benefits (other than retirement) already earned by a municipality's employees and the assets the local government will have on hand to meet these obligations.

Unfunded Pension Liability – This is the difference between the value assigned to the retirement benefits already earned by a municipality's employees and the assets the local retirement system will have on hand to meet these obligations. The dollar value of the unfunded pension liability is redetermined every three years and driven by assumptions about the interest rates at which a retirement system's assets will grow and the rate of the pensioners' future costs of living increases.



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

November 20, 2025

10

Recap of Action Items - Adjournment

Requested by: Finance Committee Chair

Action Sought: Vote/Adjourn

Proposed Motion(s)

Move to vote to adjourn the November 20, 2025, Finance Committee meeting at XX:XX PM.

Additional Information

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>