



MINUTES FINANCE COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, November 19, 2025 - 5:00 p.m.
City of Huntington Beach
Council Chambers
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

For the audio recording of the November 19, 2025, Finance Commission Meeting, please visit the City's website at: <https://huntingtonbeach.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Vice-Chair Lo Grasso called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and Vice-Chair Lo Grasso led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MEMBERS
PRESENT:
Frank Lo Grasso, Vice-Chair
David Cicerone, Commissioner
Austin Edsell, Commissioner
Billy Hamilton, Commissioner
Dave Chennault, Commissioner

MEMBERS
ABSENT:
Kelly Gates, Chair
Paul Geery, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT
Robert Torrez, Interim Chief Financial Officer
Zack Zithisakthanankul, Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Ashley Wysocki, Director of Community & Library Services

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

CONSENT ITEMS

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion: Moved by Commissioner Edsell and seconded by Commissioner Hamilton to approve the Finance Commission Meeting Minutes dated October 22, 2025, as presented

The motion carried by the following votes: 5-0-2-0

Ayes: Lo Grasso; Cicerone; Edsell; Hamilton, Chennault
Noes: None
Absent: Gates; Geery
Abstain: None

DISCUSSION ITEMS AND POTENTIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

D1. D1. Sports Complex - Presentations Inclusive of Service Contracts, Resident Discounts and Agreement Extensions - Ashley Wysocki, Director of Community & Library Services

Director of Community & Library Services, Ashley Wysocki, reviewed the three current agreements for the Sports Complex—the facility management and operations agreement, the concession stand lease, and the Service Agreement for the outlying fields—outlining the responsibilities of the City and HBSC and presenting a budget and revenue comparison between City-operated and HBSC-managed years, noting that current staffing supports 95% facility-use capacity. She also presented a concept to replace the 2005 batting cages with an indoor training facility that could serve as a community hub and expand programs and resources. A Commissioner raised concerns about whether the Sports Complex is attracting more non-residents than residents. Ashley noted that outfields and landscaping fall under the City's Merchants Landscaping contract and discussed the potential need for a specialized sports-field maintenance contractor. Staff provided a breakdown of field rates, programs and events, parking revenue, sponsorship tiers, and future capital needs. Commissioners expressed support for the current operators, citing increased usage and revenue, and hoped to see greater resident participation and a higher revenue share for the City. Ashley also reviewed the Concession Agreement and Outlying Fields Service Agreement, detailing responsibilities, timelines, and costs. The Finance Commission concluded with a discussion with the Finance Department about service contract procedures and safeguards, including whether a flagged dollar amount should trigger Council review.

D2. Commissioner Questions Pertaining to Community & Library Services - Commissioner Chennault

The Commissioner expressed appreciation for the work completed by Community & Library Services staff in compiling responses to the Commissioners' inquiries and requested that Director of Community & Library Services, Ashley Wysocki, review the questions submitted by the Commissioner along with staff's responses. Ashley reviewed the responses related to the Equestrian Center, and the presenting Commissioner provided follow-up questions, asking that staff return to the Commission with answers at a later date. After reviewing the attachments for the item, it was clarified that items 1 and 8 were submitted by Commissioner Chennault, items 2 through 7 were provided by City staff, and that item 3 and a presentation included in item 5 were uploaded in error and will be redacted from the record. The Commissioners also asked additional questions regarding the Urban Forest and the Yacht Club based on the responses provided.

D3. Proposal to Build an Agenda Deadline Schedule for the Finance Commission - Robert Torrez, Interim Chief Financial Officer

The Finance Department presented a proposed Agenda Deadline Schedule to the Finance Commission, modeled after the format City Departments use for City Council agendas, to give staff sufficient time to prepare documents and conduct necessary analysis. The Interim Chief Financial Officer emphasized the importance of adequate time for building the agenda. Staff noted that information is often submitted at the last minute and requested that the Commission provide inquiries and materials earlier, while acknowledging that occasional last-minute submissions may still occur. Providing additional advance notice would help staff manage agenda preparation alongside other responsibilities. The Commission did not vote to adopt the schedule but acknowledged the suggestion and expressed willingness to follow it.

D4. FY 2024/25 Year-End Budget Adjustments, Year-End Audit Entries and Transfer Recommendations Review - Zack Zithisakthanakul, Assistant Chief Financial Officer

The Assistant Chief Financial Officer, Zack Zithisakthanakul, presented to the Finance Commission the FY 2024/25 Year-End Budget Adjustments, Year-End Audit Entries, and Transfer Recommendations Review, which was approved by the City Council on November 18, 2025. Zack explained that, per the City Charter, an independent auditor is hired annually to review the City's financials. The budget team conducts an analysis and projected a year-end surplus primarily driven by stronger-than-expected revenues and one-time receipts. Finance also reviewed Workers' Compensation, including the evaluation of potential liabilities and associated costs, with a Commissioner requesting additional information to better understand fund transfers and potential cost reductions. Zack discussed aging infrastructure, noting that several planned replacements were deferred to balance prior operating budgets, creating a backlog of assets beyond their useful life. He emphasized that without additional funding, the City risks higher repair costs, increased downtime, and disruption to essential services. The Commissioners acknowledged the need for equipment replacements and requested a detailed breakdown of the financials. Finance also reviewed other fund adjustments, including the Bella Terra Parking Structure, the HOME Program Fund, and a Revolving Loan Fund transfer to the CDBG Fund.

D5. Task Force Recommendation to City Council on "Efficiency & Effectiveness - Process, Procedures & Technology" - Commissioner Cicerone

A Commissioner reviewed his meeting with City Treasurer Jason Schmitt and Interim Chief Financial Officer Robert Torrez regarding processes, procedures, and systems software. Several improvements were noted, including efforts to provide an upgraded cash flow report from the Treasury Department. The Commissioner proposed submitting a letter to the City Council to create a "Process, Procedures & Technology" task force aimed at enhancing the City's overall efficiency and effectiveness. The proposed task force would include three City Council members, the City Treasurer, the City Attorney, and two Finance Commissioners to provide outside perspective on business practices the Commissioners would like to see more actively implemented. The Vice-Chair requested that Commissioner Cicerone draft the letter for the Commissioners to vote on at the next Finance Commission meeting.

D6. Task Force recommendation to City Council on "H.B. Equestrian Center" - Commissioner Cicerone

A Commissioner proposed creating a task force focused on the Equestrian Center to assess its financials and raise the Equestrian Center to a higher operational standard, along with drafting a letter to the City Council requesting its formation. The Vice Chair commended the Meadowlark task force for its accomplishments and expressed support for achieving similar progress with the Equestrian Center. A Commissioner inquired about the scope of work, noting that the current agreement does not expire for some time. The presenting Commissioner explained that the task force would focus on facilities and structures, including the lack of a major covered arena and other improvements needed to elevate the facility as a more lucrative asset for the City. Commissioner Cicerone will draft the letter to the City Council for Finance Commissioners to vote on at the next Finance Commission meeting.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Chennault expressed appreciation for everyone, shared his excitement to work with the Finance Commissioners, and conveyed his gratitude to City staff.

Commissioner Cicerone expressed appreciation and thanks to staff and shared that he is excited to see the City grow with a more business-focused approach.

Austin Edsell expressed appreciation for the Interim Chief Financial Officer and thanked him for his service to the City. He also wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas.

Vice Chair Lo Grasso expressed appreciation and thanks to staff and discussed the December Finance Commission meeting with the Commissioners. Please see the motion made below:

At the Wednesday, November 19, 2025, Finance Commission meeting, the Commission discussed during Commissioner Comments to cancel the December 17, 2025, Finance Commission meeting and meet for a non-business Holiday Lunch. Vice Chair Lo Grasso made a motion to cancel the December Finance Commission meeting and meet for a non-business Holiday Lunch. Commissioner Cicerone seconded the motion, and the Commissioners voted as follows:

The motion carried by the following votes: 5-0-0-2

Ayes: Lo Grasso; Cicerone; Edsell; Hamilton; Chennault

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Gates; Geery

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Moved by Vice-Chair and seconded by Commissioner Cicerone to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

The motion carried by the following votes: 5-0-2

Ayes: Lo Grasso; Cicerone; Edsell; Hamilton; Chennault

Noes: None

Absent: Gates; Geery

Submitted by:

Robert Torrez, Interim Chief Financial Officer

By: Skyler Barthold, Management Aide