



MINUTES FINANCE COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, April 23, 2025 - 5:00 p.m.
City of Huntington Beach
Civic Center Lower Level
Meeting Room B-7

For the audio recording of the April 23, 2025, Finance Commission Meeting, please visit the City's website at: <https://huntingtonbeach.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Chair Kelly Gates called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. and Commissioner Austin Edsell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MEMBERS
PRESENT: Kelly Gates, Chair
Frank Lo Grasso, Vice-Chair
David Cicerone, Commissioner
Scott Dowds, Commissioner
Austin Edsell, Commissioner
Paul Geery, Commissioner

MEMBERS
ABSENT: Billy Hamilton, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT
Travis Hopkins, City Manager
Robert Torrez, Interim Chief Financial Officer
Kriss Casanova, Economic Development Director
Thuy Vi, Management Aide, Finance
Shari Saraye, Buyer
Jessica Castro, Senior Accounting Technician

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dave Chennault spoke about his concerns regarding Meadowlark Golf Course's overdue rent and associated late fees. He urged action to recover the funds owed and recommended finding a new operator for the golf course due to the persistent financial issues

Ken Inouye expressed his concerns about the City's infrastructure and highlighted the urgency for financing infrastructure improvements on systems that are nearing failure and that could potentially impact public safety.

CONSENT ITEMS

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion: Moved by Commissioner Frank Lo Grasso and seconded by Commissioner Paul Geery to approve the Finance Commission Meeting Minutes dated March 26, 2025, as presented

The motion carried by the following votes: 4-0-1-2
Ayes: Cicerone; Dowds; Gates; Geery; Lo Grasso
Noes: None
Absent: Hamilton
Abstain: Edsell

Newly appointed Commissioner Edsell shared his background with the Commission.

DISCUSSION ITEMS AND POTENTIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

D1. Review of Visit HB Operations

Representatives from Visit HB presented an overview of their operations, highlighting their role as a nonprofit promoting tourism through a 6% fee assessed on local lodging. They discussed marketing strategies aimed at driving hotel occupancy and increasing transient occupancy tax (TOT) revenue for the City. Commissioners questioned the transparency and effectiveness of Visit HB's spending, requesting clearer metrics demonstrating the direct impact of marketing expenditures on tourism growth.

D2. Popular Annual Finance Report Review

Interim Chief Financial Officer Robert Torrez presented key points from the Popular Annual Finance Report (PAFR), noting strong City bond ratings and outlining revenue sources and expenditures. Major financial considerations include pension bond obligations and rising public safety costs.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Lo Grasso stated that he would like to discuss the City of Norfolk, Virginia's Balancing Act tool at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Moved by Commissioner Frank Lo Grasso and seconded by Commissioner Paul Geery to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

The motion carried by the following votes: 6-0-1
Ayes: Cicerone, Dowds; Edsell; Gates; Geery; Lo Grasso
Noes: None
Absent: Hamilton

Submitted by:
Robert Torrez, Interim Chief Financial Officer
By: Thuy Vi, Management Aide