



A Vision for Boston: Questions for the 2009 Mayoral Candidates

DAY 16 – CITY FINANCES

What steps will you take to ensure continued delivery of basic services within a balanced 2011 budget? What choices will you make to achieve greater operational savings? How will you apply revenues from the higher hotel room excise and new meals taxes?



Michael F. Flaherty Jr.

Our ability to continue the delivery of essential city programs and services in the years following the economic downturn depends largely upon our implementation of performance management mechanisms. Specifically, my administration will conduct annual performance reviews of every city department to determine which programs are ripe for consolidation or elimination, and will utilize the CitiStat management system to constantly analyze city performance data in order to make informed budgetary and policy decisions. We already know that the city of Boston is owed about \$66 million in unpaid parking tickets, and annual performance reviews are likely to reveal many more inefficiencies. These new management systems will help us to not only prioritize our city's scarce city resources and discover innovative ways to improve government, but will also help us achieve a balanced budget and the delivery of high-quality city services. I voted against the meals and hotel taxes and would implement a sunset clause for these measures if elected Mayor. In the interim, I would allocate the generated revenues to the city's OPEB fund to help the city better finance its long-term post-employment benefits obligations.

Thomas M. Menino

Because we have one of the best financial teams in the country and have built smart budgets in good times and bad, we will develop a balanced budget in FY11 that invests in the people's priorities: public education, public safety and livable neighborhoods. We will achieve this through several strategies:

- *Advance Initiatives That Deliver Value*
 - The City will continue to pursue legislation that will stem the rise of health care costs and improve youth opportunities. We will continue to leverage our high bond rating to invest in technology and construction projects that help us deliver better service and lower costs.
- *Continued Performance Improvements*
 - Leveraging Boston About Results, the City's comprehensive performance management program, we will continue to invest in programs that work, shifting resources to efforts constituents' value most. Through the smart use of data, we will sustain efforts to manage down expenses such as overtime and non-personnel expenditures.
- *Sensible Use of New and One-Time Revenue*
 - Years of prudent management have resulted in reserves; we will prudently use reserves in FY11. The City will continue to push for revenue diversification, using new funds to modernize operations, lowering long-term costs and, over time, reduce the property tax burden.