

A Vision for Boston: Questions for the 2009 Mayoral Candidates

DAY 2: EMPLOYEE SPENDING

As a candidate for Mayor what do you think is the best way to control the growth in employee compensation and ensure a sustainable workforce?



Michael F. Flaherty Jr.

We shouldn't have to choose between having a quality workforce and bankrupting our city. Tackling Boston's fiscal crisis and escalating personnel costs requires strong data-driven management and the adoption of innovative technologies that make government run more efficiently and responsibly. My administration will adopt CitiStat, a management program that tracks government activities, providing real-time data for each city department. To date, CitiStat has saved cities like Baltimore millions of dollars by identifying and cutting wasteful spending. Sweeping annual performance reviews will also be conducted to pinpoint areas for improvement, consolidation, or elimination in all departments, services and programs. At the same time, we will reduce personnel spending by joining the state's Group Insurance Commission and enrolling city retirees into Medicare. This commonsense and proven solution is a win-win initiative for everyone since taxpayers will no longer have to foot the city's expensive health care bills and city employees will have access to quality health insurance. By running a more efficient government and trimming wasteful spending, we can achieve meaningful savings that can be redirected towards maintaining appropriately staffed schools, police force, fire department and other critical services that have been compromised by funding gaps.

Thomas M. Menino

My administration focuses on improving schools, strengthening neighborhoods and developing our economy. Having an efficient and effective City workforce is essential for this task.

We've made the tough management decisions in good times and bad. Consequently, we've been able to continue investing in constituents' priorities, while reducing our headcount by over 1,000 positions since FY 02, cutting residential property taxes for two straight years and earning the highest bond rating in the City's history.

We will continue to:

- *Pursue Smart Reforms*

Every year, we review all operations for opportunities to streamline and improve government. This year we expanded single stream recycling citywide, restructured the Fire Department, modernized printing services and reduced overtime spending.

- *Negotiate Prudent Contracts*

We have a strong record of negotiating both union contracts and health insurance plans. The current union contracts, for example, contain provisions that lowered the City's contribution to health insurance premiums, saving taxpayers millions.

- *Focus on Long-Term Fiscal Health*

The City focuses on managing its current head count and long-term obligations. We will continue to balance our priorities in the near term and work at the state level on reforms that control long-term costs.