



Medford City Council Newsletter

Isaac B. "Zac" Bears, Council President | Emily Lazzaro, Council Vice President
 Anna Callahan | Matt Leming | Liz Mullane | George A. Scarpelli | Justin Tseng

The City Council is already off to another busy year with several meetings happening throughout the month of February. With a focus on enhancing services provided to city residents, continuing the discussion around rezoning Medford Square, and starting an initiative to offer Ward meetings throughout the city – the City Council has been meeting every week to offer residents opportunities to engage and share feedback on these important opportunities.

Note that the underlined words in this newsletter indicate links to meeting agendas, live recordings, and other relevant resources in the digital version of this document. To subscribe to future newsletters, go to bit.ly/medfordcitycouncilnewsletter.

Commemorations and Acknowledgements

- At the [February 24th Meeting](#):
 - We passed a [resolution](#) to recognize and celebrate Black History Month;
 - A [resolution](#) was approved to celebrate National Therapy Animal Day;
 - The Council extended [warm wishes](#) to residents celebrating Lunar New Year, Ramadan, and Lent
- At the [April 7th meeting](#), we passed a resolution congratulating [Barbara Kerr](#) on her retirement as Director of the Medford Public Library.

General Business

- At the [February 3rd Committee of the Whole Meeting](#), the Council discussed an [Amendment](#) to Chapter 2, Article V, Division 2 - Medford Standard Compensation Ordinance. While councilors expressed support, the paper was kept in committee follow legal review and further discussion with the procurement department. As noted, this legal review was previously requested at the December 16, 2025 meeting.

• At the [February 3rd Meeting](#):

- A [resolution](#) was put forward to schedule Neighborhood Ward Meetings hosted by the City Council. As an ongoing effort to encourage communication and enhance engagement throughout Medford, the City Council is committed to providing meetings within each Ward to hear directly from residents on issues, concerns, and any feedback as it relates to the overall City and each ward specifically. This was passed to the Residential Services and Public Engagement Committee to begin planning and executing.
- Two resolutions were introduced around the ambulance/EMS service provider transition from [Amstrong Ambulance](#) to [Cataldo Ambulance Service](#) by Council President Bears and Councilor Scarpelli – one that was specific to ongoing data request that provided insight into the service change, and the second to regarding transition change, contract transparency and oversight.
- Additionally, two [separate resolutions](#) around the January 26th winter storm were drafted by Councilors Tseng, Mullane and Scarpelli. One resolution

was to provide a full response report around the January 26 storm and the other to evaluate the snow removal and response to better address resident's concerns for the future.

- The Council approved two requests from the Mayor's office including:
 - * \$97,500 to replace boilers at Engine 5 on Main Street;
 - * \$19,573 in self rescue equipment from the Leary Foundation for the Fire Department
 - The Community Preservation Committee shared their final recommendations that were approved by City Council with \$2,264,174 helping to fund 11 different projects and initiatives throughout the city.
 - The Council approved licenses to Plazita Mexico Tacos and to The Lighthouse Café.
 - A resolution to Require Law Enforcement Identification and Protect Fourth Amendment Rights was discussed and referred to Committee as well as a resolution to implement the City Charter, which will be discussed further at a future Committee of the Whole meeting.
- At the February 24th meeting:
 - A resolution was brought forward by Councilor Scarpelli, Councilor President Bears and Councilor Tseng to request a comprehensive litigation report going back to January 2019 outlining the lawsuits that the City of Medford has been involved in and a fiduciary review of funds expended on legal matters, including litigation defense, settlements, judgments, and outside counsel fees.
 - The City Council discussed a resolution that the DPW update and provide a brief report to the Council on any upcoming major infrastructure work along with scope and timeline, to provide Medford residents with more communication around these types of projects happening in their area. In the same vein, the Council reviewed a resolution that would require the city and utility companies to include a clear reference to construction moratorium and direct contact information so residents can reach out with any construction questions.
 - As housing crisis continues to impact residents, The Council approved a resolution to support Home Sharing and requested implementation plan as another housing alternative in the City.
 - Requests from the Mayor's office that were approved by the City Council:
 - * \$10,000 from the CPA to TreesMedford to fund the City Park Invasive Plant Inventory;
 - * \$800 donation given by Jay Tangney for a veteran in need;
- The City Council tabled the appointments sent by the Mayor's office to City Boards and Commissions in order to receive allow for more or additional information to be included on the appointees.
- At the March 3rd special meeting, the March 25th joint hearing, and the March 31st meeting, City Council worked on rezoning of Medford Square with the Community Development Board. Council and the CBD jointly approved an overlay rezoning for parcels near City Hall so that Transom real estate could commence its project there, which includes new housing and a grocery store, and the bodies came to consensus to approve the rest of the rezoning for Medford Square by April 28th.
 - At the March 10th meeting:
 - City Council approved \$160,000.00 in appropriations for a new gym floor for the Recreation Center for the Chevalier and \$9,995.00 for a used Zamboni for the Recreation Department
 - Passed a motion encouraging the city to properly fund the replacement of Medford's Tree Canopy.
 - We discussed a resolution to request snow clearance on roadways outside of 553-569 Winthrop Street.
 - At the March 24th meeting:
 - At the Committee of the Whole Meeting, Council discussed its FY27 budget requests from individual Councilors. We compiled the Council's list of requests and sent those to the Mayor.
 - We heard a resolution to request an update on the city's inclusion specialist, which was requested last year.
 - We voted to refer to legal the ordinance that established the Medford Commission for Persons with Disabilities, which had been drafted by the Commission for Persons with Disabilities, to modernize terminology and further clarify the Commission's role.
 - At the April 7th Meeting:
 - We passed an ordinance to the Community Development Board that would update the city's fractional incentives. Currently, the City requires any multi-housing development of ten units or more to be 10% affordable housing; however, if that 10% results in a decimal (e.g., 1.1 units for an 11-unit development), the developer needs to round up. This update would allow developers to put a cash equivalent of fractional units towards the Affordable Housing Trust (e.g., an 11-unit development would require 1 affordable unit and 10% the cost of an affordable unit to be donated to the Trust). This ordinance language was drafted and endorsed by the Affordable Housing Trust.

- We heard the tenants' association of Brooks Part Apartment discuss the rat infestation in their apartment complex and encouraged the landlord to take steps to address this, namely by purchasing new dumpsters and having more frequent pest control and trash pickup.
- We appropriated \$13,800.00 for the elections commission for voting pads.
- At the April 8th meeting, the City Council held a joint session with the School Committee to hear a budget update from the City administration.

Planning & Permitting Committee

- On March 17th, the Planning and Permitting Committee discussed "cleanup" zoning for the Office of Planning, Development, and Sustainability and the Building Department — including reviewing definitions and scrivener's errors — as a part of the overall rezoning project.
- On April 8th, the Planning and Permitting Committee met to discuss the boundaries of the proposed Boston Ave rezoning, discussing 40R overlays as well, which would encourage more affordable housing with cash incentives from the state.

- Additionally, on March 17th, the vacant building ordinance was voted out of committee.

Public Health & Community Safety Committee

- On February 10th, the Committee discussed a resolution to require law enforcement identification and protection of the Fourth Amendment rights. This was a beginning discussion to determine what type of legislative action could be taken and to gather feedback. The paper was kept in committee for further review and conversation.

Public Works & Facilities Committee

- On April 1st, the Public Works & Facilities Committee met to hear a report from the DPW regarding the January 2026 Snow Storm Response.

Resident Services & Public Engagement

- On February 10th, the RS&PE Committee met for the first time this year to review the January newsletter and to begin outlining the strategy, communication and implementation of Ward meetings to be held throughout the City.

Liz Mullane
Chair, Resident Services & Public Engagement