



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

As we head into Spring, the City Council is meeting every week, not only to discuss regular business, but to also meet with each of the City departments to review budgets, to learn about each department's accomplishments and to hear what is planned for next fiscal year. Additionally, last month each of the City Council members highlighted their personal top budget priorities, and the Council sent a consolidated list to the Mayor with all our recommendations. At the end of the agenda are listed the overarching numbers for the departments the City Council has viewed so far, as well as viewing each of those meetings online for more information.

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 [April 7th](#) meeting, we passed a [resolution](#) congratulating Barbara Kerr on her retirement as Director of the Medford Public Library.
- During the [April 28th](#) meeting, we honored the life of [Judy Kaplan](#), a long-time Medford activist, and former member of the Medford Human Rights Commission.
- At the [April 28th](#) meeting, the Council celebrated the [18 Medford youth volunteers](#) from St. Raphael's Parish on their project in partnership with the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless to raise funds for and build 18 beds for children on the waitlist for the coalition's A Bed for Every Child Program.

General Business

- 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 Park 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.

- 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.
- During the April 28th meeting, the Council:
 - Approved \$400,000 from the capital stabilization fund to fund a feasibility study and schematic designs related to a potential roof and heat pump replacement conversion project at both the Missituk (\$200K) and Brooks (\$200K) Elementary Schools.
 - School Committee Member and Chair of the School Building Committee, Jenny Graham, along with Ken Lord, COO of Medford Public Schools provided an in-depth presentation on the current state of the High School project, along with timeline, scope and next steps for the coming months.
 - The City Council was approached to approve 19 repair requests for 6 different schools totaling \$1,858,807 from the capital stabilization fund:
 - * \$115,833.33 to Missituk
 - * \$115,833.33 to Roberts
 - * \$145,833.33 to Brooks
 - * \$220,833.33 to Medford High School
 - * \$540,358.33 to Andrews
 - * \$720,115.33 to McGlynn
 - The Mayor's office approached the City Council with an appropriations funding for FY26 of \$48,866.17 from back invoices of previous fiscal years that had gone unpaid. The councilors expressed their disappointment that this issue wasn't accounted for earlier and the Mayor's office provided ways to ensure this doesn't happen again in the future. The motion was approved.
 - Proposed amendments and recommendations made by the CDB Board around the Medford Zoning Ordinance for Medford Square were approved unanimously.
 - The first reading of the Standard Compensation Ordinance was reviewed and approved unanimously by the City Council
 - Due to the City's failure to respond to the City Council's resolution, a public records request for a comprehensive litigation report was brought forth by President Bears and Councilors Tseng and Scarpelli. It was approved and signed by all members of the City Council.
 - A resolution by President Bears and Councilor Scarpelli was introduced to update the Council on the 2026 Common Victualer License Process.
 - The Community Preservation Committee shared with the Council their FY26 recommendations for the distribution of \$2,383,387 in the following areas:
 - * \$238,338.70 – Open Space/Recreation
 - * \$595,846.75 – Community Housing
 - * \$238,338.70 – Historic Preservation
 - * \$119,169.35 – Administration
 - * With \$1,191,693.50 as the general remainder
 - A \$4,000 distribution was made to the Community Garden Commission to expand the current community garden at Tufts Park. The first reading occurred for amendments to Personnel Ordinance, specific to the Director(s) of Elections, Diversity and Veteran's Services, which was approved by the City Council
 - A \$2,500 expenditure request was made by the Mayor's office due to a motor vehicle accident with a fire department employee.
- During the April 1st meeting, the City Council discussed two resolutions around the City of Medford's snow removal process, that were brought forth by Councilors Mullane, Tseng and Scarpelli. Additionally, the Council went into Executive Session to discuss litigation strategy in Chertok vs. City of Medford and to review the following litigation settlements from the Mayor's office:
 - Joseph P. Cardillo & Son, Inc. v. City of Medford
 - Delia Chirinos Romero v. City of Medford
 - Plymouth Rock Assurance Corp., a/s/o Mike's Landscaping v. City of Medford
 - Commerce Insurance Co. a/s/o Brian T. Guiry v. City of Medford
 - Safety Insurance Co. a/s/o Joanne Sarro v. City of Medford
 - Electric Mutual Insurance v. City of Medford
 - Fargo, et al. v. City of Medford; and
 - Conboy v. City of Medford.
- At the April 7th meeting, the Assessor's office presented to the City Council around the resolution to Review Implementation of Residential Exemption for Municipal Property Taxes. It was determined, following the presentation, that additional information was needed to fully understand the implications for all Medford residents.
- For the April 14th meeting, the City Council reviewed the most recent draft of the Standard Compensation Ordinance, an ordinance that is intended to establish minimum labor standards for workers employed through City contracts.
- At the April 21st meeting, the City Council presented their overarching budget recommendations for the Mayor. Additionally, the following departments presented:
 - Information Technology
 - * FY27 Budget: \$521,311.07
 - * FY26 Change: Increase of \$161,054.04
 - Treasurer/Collector:
 - * FY27 Budget: \$807,206.29
 - * FY26 Change: Increase of \$27,147.29
 - Finance/Procurement:

- * FY27 Budget: \$894,037.47
- * FY26 Change: Increase of \$13,902.47

During the April 28th meeting, City Council members heard about the most recent Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan Summary for FY26 and members of several organizations were there to speak on the impact of these grants. The total funds are distributed in several ways, as dictated by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and one of them is through public service grants as outlined below.

- During this funding cycle, the CDBG allocated \$215,028 to 9 organizations:
 - \$38,750 – Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD)
 - \$21,000 – Housing Families
 - \$26,400 – Medford Council on Aging
 - \$9,128 – Medford Public Schools
 - \$10,000 – Mystic Valley Elder Services
 - \$11,250 – Mystic Valley YMCA/Mystic Community Market
 - \$7,500 – RISE Multicultural Services
 - \$82,750 – S.C.M. Community Transportation
 - \$8,250 – The Welcome Project
- At the April 29th meeting, the City Council reviewed preliminary budget requests from the following departments:
 - Human Resources
 - * FY27 Total Budget: \$306,061.21
 - * FY26 Change: Increase of \$42,690
 - Council on Aging
 - * FY27 Total Budget: \$207,068.03
 - * FY26 Change: Increase of \$1,011.13
 - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
 - * FY27 Total Budget: \$149,361.76

- * FY26 Change: Increase of \$19,450.76

– Recreation

- * FY27 Total Budget: \$682,126.96
- * FY26 Change: Increase of \$42,775.96

- On April 14th, a special meeting of the City Council was held:
- A resolution to Request that the Mayor Fund Legal Defense in Chertok v. City of Medford was passed with 6-1 votes.
- The City Council reviewed the zoning overlay for Medford Square that was approved by the Community Development Board and recommended to the City Council. The Council approved and adopted the zoning overlay for the Medford Square district.

Planning & Permitting Committee

- 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.
- At the April 22nd meeting, the Innes Land Strategies Group shared with the Planning and Permitting Committee the next area of zoning discussions for the following areas of Medford, as well as a review of project topics from April 2026 – June 2026:
 - Boston Avenue Corridor District
 - Discussion of Tufts Institutional Zone proposal

Resident Services & Public Engagement

- During the April 14th meeting of RS&PE, the Committee reviewed steps and locations to hold the upcoming Neighborhood Ward Meetings. The Committee had to cancel its March meeting due to other City Council scheduling conflicts, so the newsletter covered meetings from February, March and the beginning of April.

Liz Mullane
Chair, Resident Services & Public Engagement