



CITY OF MELROSE

Fiscal Year 2024
Municipal Budget

Proposed by
Paul Brodeur, Mayor



City of Melrose, Massachusetts

Budget Proposal Supplement, Fiscal Year 2024



Mayor

Paul Brodeur

City Council

Jen Grigoraitis, President, Ward 6
Christopher Cinella, Councilor-at-Large
Jack Eccles, Councilor-at-Large
Maya Jamaledine, Councilor-at-Large
Leila B. Migliorelli, Councilor-at-Large
Manjula Karamcheti, Ward 1
John Obremski, Ward 2
Robb Stewart, Ward 3
Mark D. Garipay, Ward 4
Shawn MacMaster, Ward 5
Ryan Williams, Ward 7

Melrose Public Schools

Dr. Julie Kukenberger, Superintendent of Schools

School Committee

Margaret Raymond Driscoll, Chair
Ed O'Connell, Vice Chair
Jennifer Razi-Thomas
Jen McAndrew
Lizbeth DeSelm
Paul Brodeur
Dorie Withey

Patrick Dello Russo, CFO

Auditor Kerriann Golden, Assistant Auditor

Margot Fleischman, Director of Strategic Initiatives and Communication

Lily Martin, Communications & Community Outreach Coordinator

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CITY OF MELROSE

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

PAUL BRODEUR
Mayor

City Hall, 562 Main Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone - (781) 979-4440

May 8, 2023

Dear Honorable City Council and Melrose Community members,

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 44 § 32 and § 6-3 of the Melrose City Charter, I respectfully submit for your consideration the City of Melrose's proposed operating budget for Fiscal Year 2024.

With this letter, I want to assure our community and the City Council that we have successfully managed, and will continue to manage, any downturn in the economy. The number one priority of my administration is to assure the residents of this City that we will be able to safeguard the assets of the community and always provide for a balanced budget annually and maintain a stable level of service. The FY24 Operating Budget accomplishes these objectives for both the City and the Melrose Public Schools.

With that said, I am pleased to share the details of this year's proposed balanced budget with total estimated operating expenses of \$101,173,341, representing a 6.2% increase over Fiscal Year 2023.

This budget delivers on a commitment to our residents to:

- Continue to invest in our schools, as shown in our proposed increase for the School Department, which represents an increase of \$3 million for FY24;
- enhance the quality of life by supporting seniors, continuing sustainability efforts, advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in our community, and increasing support for community members experiencing a mental health crisis;
- use data to drive decision-making by investing in critical infrastructure such as IT; and
- use what we learned through the pandemic to drive us forward.

We are proposing an 8.45% budget increase for the School Department which represents an increase of \$3 million over the approved Fiscal Year 2023 budget, and we will meet the state-mandated Net School Spending requirement. We propose balanced budgets for the Water, Sewer, Mt. Hood, and Ambulance Enterprise Funds.

In developing the Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget, the City formulated the budget utilizing the following:

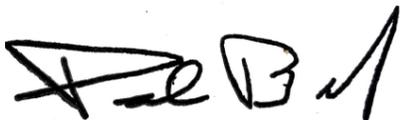
- new tax revenue resulting from the 2½ Tax Levy;
- an estimated \$500,000 of New Growth;
- an increase in Net State Aid of \$2,390,249 (principally driven by revenues received through the New Student Opportunity Act in Chapter 70 Educational Aid);
- an increase in the amount of Local Receipts and percentage revenue budgeted over FY2023;
- and \$250,000 from the Education, Public Safety Substance Abuse Fund (annual recurring revenue) directed to the FY2024 School Department Operating Budget.

In developing the strategic plan, we are also requesting additional deposits, including \$242,000 into the Special Education Stabilization Fund and \$500,000 from this year's Free Cash to Supplement School-related expenditures. We are requesting that \$615,000, or 8.59 percent of the total Certified Free Cash, be deposited into these funds before July 1, 2023. This is a significant deposit into the City's Stabilization Funds and continues the administration's effort to ensure solid fiscal health. If approved, in conjunction with our FY2024 requested budgetary funding for the Stabilization and OPEB funds, over \$8.3 million dollars will reside in our Stabilization Funds come July 1, 2023.

I am equally committed to increasing transparency in our City's finances. As Mayor, I also aim to inspire and increase civic engagement within our community. To achieve these goals, my office has once again collaborated with the Auditor's Office to deliver an interactive FY24 budget tool. This interactive budget presentation makes the numbers clear, accessible, and digestible. Transparency is nothing without accessibility, and the budget tool allows for both.

Finally, I also offer the following pages as a supplement to the clear and accessible numbers you will find on our budget presentation's dashboard. These subsequent pages add context and texture to the services City departments provide.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Brodeur". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

Paul Brodeur
Mayor of Melrose

General Government

Executive Office of the Mayor

Mission & Overview

The Mayor is the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Melrose, elected by the voters at large every 4 years. The Mayor oversees all City operations and is responsible for appointing Department Heads, city officers, and the members of multi-member bodies (Boards & Commissions). Paul Brodeur is the 23rd Mayor of Melrose and assumed office on November 15, 2019.

Mayor's Office Departmental Organization

- € His Honor, the Mayor
- € Director of Strategic Initiatives & Communication (Mayor's Chief of Staff)
- € Communications & Community Outreach Coordinator
- € Director of Economic Recovery and Business Development (grant funded)
- € Part-time Administrative Assistant

Changes from FY23 to FY24

Staffing Changes:

There have been no staffing changes this Fiscal Year. Our part-time Administrative Assistant has begun to provide administrative support to other departments as well as staffing the Mayor's Office front desk, as was anticipated when the position was added last fiscal year.

What is the percentage increase in your budget over FY23?

The Mayor's Office budget increase for FY24 is 3.97%.

What are the major changes to the Mayor's budget?

- € Salary and Wage adjustments
- € Education and Seminar increase
- € Dues and Membership increase

What are the reasons for these changes (major cost drivers)?

- € Salary and Wage line item has been adjusted to reflect the actual wages calculated using the City’s new salary plan.
- € The increase to the Education and Seminar line item will cover the one-time cost of a professional development opportunity for staff that is available during the upcoming fiscal year.
- € In the case of dues/memberships, in FY23 we increased this line item significantly to reflect the actual cost of the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) dues. These costs had not been captured in our budget over several fiscal years and so last year was a relatively large adjustment (23.4%). However, the typical year-over-year increase in these dues has averaged approximately 2%, which is the increase reflected in our proposed budget for FY24.

Why Do People Contact Us?

1. For assistance with accessing City services
2. To share concerns and find solutions to service-related problems and City policies
3. For assistance with organizing, executing, and publicizing community events
4. To volunteer on a Board or Commission
5. To publicize community programs and news
6. To schedule meetings with the Mayor
7. For support with opening a new business or operating an existing business
8. To address concerns specifically in the commercial districts (trash/litter, parking, accessibility, general questions)

Mayor’s Office 2023 Highlights & Numbers

- Updated the City’s website, coordinating with multiple departments
- Initiated the “Week Ahead” digest to increase civic engagement and awareness
- Published 15% more City News items in FY23 compared to FY22
- Created the City of Melrose’s new Facebook page, which had over 80,000 visitors
- Launched the Mayor’s Office College-level Public Relations Internship Program
- Co-developed the City’s Flag Policy with the City Solicitor
- Developed an internal Press Release Submission Form
- Assisted 101 residents through the “Contact the Mayor” submission form and hundreds of others through telephone and general email inquiries
- Organized and coordinated 9 community events
- Coordinated the donation of over 1,000 diapers to local families in need through the Mayor’s second annual Diaper Drive
- Worked with National Grid to develop a program to pay down nearly \$145,000 in gas and electric utility bills for over 100 low-income Melrose households using ARPA funding
- Launched a small business and nonprofit grant program using ARPA funding, awarding approximately \$119,000 to local business owners and nonprofit organizations, including \$25,000 to address food insecurity

- Implemented Phase 2 of *Project: Pop-Up* to support economic vitality in the commercial areas
- Conducted a comprehensive fees study to compare fees charged in Melrose to other communities in the region
- Worked closely with the City Solicitor, Liquor Licensing Commission, Building Commissioner, and Office of Planning and Community Development to develop a strategy for attracting new businesses to Melrose, including a brewery

City Council

Mission & Overview

The City Council is the legislative branch of The City of Melrose consisting of eleven elected members, one from each of the seven wards (Ward Councilors), and four city-wide representatives (At-Large Councilors). All terms of office are two years.

The Council adopts ordinances, orders, and resolutions; reviews and approves the annual budget; approves appropriations, appointments, and other matters proposed by the Mayor. Annually, the Council selects one member to serve as President who presides over the bimonthly Council meetings, decides committee assignments, and assures that information and member discussion are conducted fairly and democratically. The Council is governed by its own Rules of Order and follows Roberts Rules of Order.

Department Organization

The City Council oversees the City Clerk's Office and the Clerk of Committees.

Clerk of Committees

Mission & Overview

The Clerk of Committees, an office of one, supports the eleven-member council. The Clerk oversees the posting of agendas for each of the seven committees he supports. He runs their meetings, be it remote or in person. He acts as a liaison between each department head and the Mayor. The Clerk oversees the Boards and Commissions operating under the Administrative Code. He provides guidance on the applicable law and ensures that all members have received oaths and have met all onboarding standards.

Department Organization

€ One Clerk

Why Do People Contact Us?

1. For assistance with City services
2. To determine their ward or who their ward councilor is
3. To schedule Oaths of Office and Notary appointments

Clerk of Committees by the Numbers

- 95 Total meetings held from July 1, 2022 – May 8, 2023
 - 32 City Council Meetings
 - 18 Appropriations & Oversight Committee Meetings
 - 7 Finance Committee Meetings
 - 13 Health, Education & Welfare Committee Meetings
 - 4 Legal and Legislative Committee Meetings
 - 10 Protection and License Committee Meetings
 - 9 Public Service Committee Meetings
 - 2 Public Works Committee
- Rendered assistance in approximately 75 different requests for miscellaneous website updates.
- Led one on one training for Recreation department staff for a new website launch.
- Worked closely with the Human Rights Commission for several website and event updates.
- Led IQM2/Granicus and website training for several new staff including the building department and elections.
- Launched and continued to provide updates to Boards and Commission public-facing portal and internal Excel spreadsheet.
- Aided with Granicus / IQM2 on 34 different occasions.
- Hosted a workshop to inform Boards and Commissions of their duties and requirements under the Open Meeting Law, Conflict of Interest Law, and the Public Records Law.
- 103 Notaries performed.
- Responded to approximately 250 resident requests for service.
- Approximately 70 oaths of office administered.

- Responded to three Public Record Requests and one extensive informational request from the Historical Commission.

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- This office does not have your vital record!

City Clerk & Elections

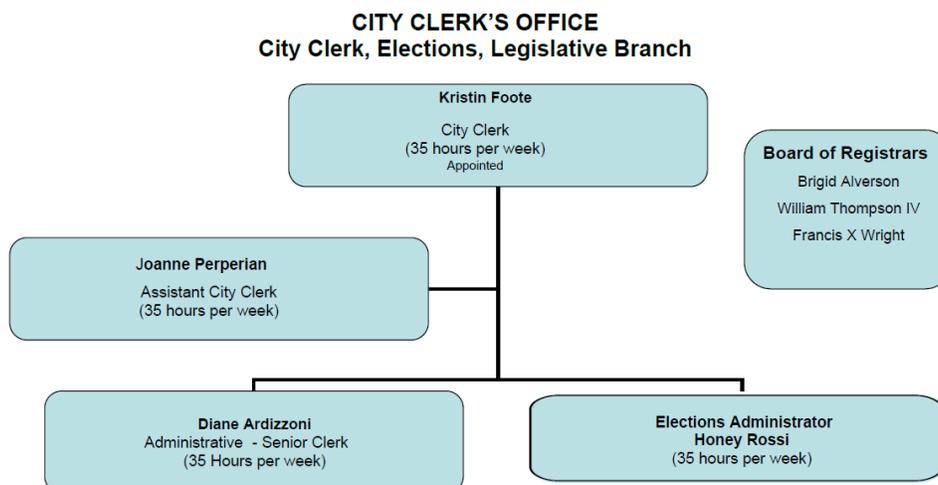
Mission & Overview

The office of the City Clerk is often the first stop as people navigate through City Hall. To quote a 1900s job description, "Traditionally, and to a large degree presently, the office can be compared to a hub around which the wheel of local government revolves. The spokes of the wheel represent the various boards, departments, and committees within the government to which the Clerk relates in a direct way. The rim of the wheel represents the many segments of State and Federal Government from which many of the Clerk's official duties and responsibilities stem. As political scientist William Bennett Munro, who wrote one of the first textbooks on municipal administration said, "No other office in municipal service has so many contracts. It serves the mayor, the city council, and all administrative departments without exception. All of them call upon it, almost daily, for some service or information. Its work is not spectacular, but it demands versatility, alertness, accuracy, and no end of patience. The public does not realize how many loose ends of city administration this office pulls together."

As the official record keeper and clerk for the municipal organization, the City of Melrose, the department's mission is to maintain and preserve records in the best possible manner. The office handles the license processes required by the administrative code of the municipal organization in an efficient and timely manner.

The City Clerk supports the City Council with meeting agenda preparation, producing minutes, and clerking the meetings as well as posting meetings for all appointive bodies in the City. The Clerk ensures the City charter and administrative codes are kept current with new ordinances and zoning regulations. The City Clerk serves as a member of the Board of Registrars of Voters and supervises the Election Administrator. The City Clerk is also responsible for all election-related functions. As one of the five City Records Access Officers (RAO), responsible for public records requests of a general nature, the Clerk's office serves as custodian of all vital records (Birth, Death, & Marriage) dating back to the 1800s – we preserve the history of Melrose. The City Clerk is also a justice of the peace and many weddings in city hall.

Department Organization



Why Do People Contact Us?

1. Business and dog licensing and raffle permits
2. Vital records & historical research
3. Getting married at city hall
4. To register to vote

City Clerk by the Numbers:

- 18 Vital Records Issued per day on average
- 207 Marriage Intentions (previous staff elevated the FY22 figure – there were 145 intentions)
- 57 Weddings Performed
- 124 New Business Certificates
- 36 Common Victualer Licenses issued
- 1 special election for the Northeast Vocation school building vote
- 68 Election Day Poll Workers
- 15,089 City Census Forms Mailed

Little Known Facts

- The profession is the oldest of public servants in local government and traces back before Biblical times.
- We are responsible for over a century's worth of public records

Goals for FY24

- Having met the 25% paper reduction goal of FY22, continue this by enhancing online services.
- Respond to customer requests to increase cloud-based transaction options to enhance resident access. This workflow has increased staff productivity and efficiency.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of the charter and administrative code to create a calendar noting stated deadlines.

What is the percentage increase in your budget over FY23?

The City Clerk's budget changes by 5.96% and the Election/Registrar changes by 7.51%

What are the major changes to your budget?

Clerk - lines increased: overtime, public hearing notices, printing, recodification, paper. Elections – supplies; printing, postage

What are the reasons for these changes (major cost drivers)?

- Permanent changes to the fall elections process including the covid accommodations, changes to the administrative code/charter, increases in the cost of supplies like paper, replacing broken time/stamps, 14 retractable banners for polling identification, re-precinct postcards and postage.

Community Services Division

Mission & Overview

The City of Melrose benefits from having a consortium of department heads who work together to offer life-enhancing services to our community members. The Community Services Division is headed by the Director of Strategic Initiatives and Communications and is comprised of the following department heads:

- Council on Aging Director
- Melrose Public Library Director
- Executive Director, Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building (“Memorial Hall”)
- Superintendent of Mount Hood and Open Spaces
- Recreation Director
- Veterans’ Services Director

Together, these department heads collaborate to provide cultural, social, and wellness events, connect Melrose residents to resources such as COVID-19 vaccination clinics, and most recently, coordinate with the Director of Health and Human Services to address community mental health needs through the development of initiatives and training for mental health and wellness. The City of Melrose benefits from having a consortium of department heads who work together to offer life-enhancing services to our community members. The Community Services Division is headed by Director of Strategic Initiatives and Communications and is comprised of the following department heads:

Council on Aging

Mission/Overview

To connect older adults with programs, resources, and services in our community to generate a positive impact on daily living. Our job is to enrich the lives of our seniors and create a community where they can age in place with dignity and respect. The Council on Aging operates on a “no wrong door policy.” Not only do we serve the older residents of Melrose, but we also operate as a resource hub for anyone in need.

Live Well ~ Age Well

Department Organization

- € Executive Director
- € Administrative Assistant
- € Office Assistants – 7 hours
- € Milano Center Manager
- € Program Coordinator – 16.5 hours
- € Social Worker – 18 hours
- € Social Worker intern – 18 hours
- € 7 Drivers- total 40 hours per week
- € 2 Senior Center Assistants- total 20 hours per week
- € 36 Volunteers

Why Do People Contact Us?

- Adult learning, skills, and craft workshops/classes
- Social and recreational activities including excursions
- Congregate meals
- Resource/Referral Assistance

Council on Aging by the Numbers

- € 16 employees – 224.5 hours per week
- € 366 volunteer hours
- € 52 average weekly wellness check calls
- € 3,318 older adult contacts in the Milano Center database
- € 858 newsletters mailed monthly, 1,678 electronic versions, 342 public locations
- € 126 referrals to Mystic Valley Elder Services (services, ombudsman, protective)
- € 156 Melrose Emergency Fund/Social Service cases (rent, necessities, utilities, emergency food)
- € 189 Benefits Assistance referrals (fuel assistance, snap, mass health, etc.)

- € 38 Melrose Emergency Board cases (housing assistance)
- € 28 Housing application assistance – hands-on
- € 701 unduplicated participants in activities, FY 22 – opened in April
- € 296 lunch meals
- € 154 shopping trips
- € 1,179 rides
- € 3,302 phone calls received
- € 36 day-trip excursions
- € 29 Youth T-passes

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- € We operate as a resource portal for *all* Melrose residents in need
- € We believe that teaching life skills along the younger age spectrum hopefully positions one to plan better for their later years

Changes from FY23 to FY24

- Requesting \$7,020 to increase drivers’ rates of pay. Recruitment has failed based on low salary rates. We are unable to regionalize, as our Melrose drivers make \$3 less per hour than surrounding communities.
- 100% part-time Social Workers’ salary in city salary and wages adds an additional expense of \$16,500.
- Previously unbudgeted expenses for toner (\$2,750) and recyclable paper supplies (\$1,283) = \$4,033
- Important to note: The oldest vehicle in the fleet is 10 years old and needs to be replaced. It is no longer a comfortable ride and
- The Milano Center has been open post-pandemic for one year now and participation rates are 3X the previous rates prior to the pandemic.
- New programs: LGBTQ+ Social Club, Grief Counseling, Parkinson’s Exercise Group, Photography Club, and many new day excursions.
- Transportation to and from the Milano Center is now free to all seniors residing in Melrose.
- A furnished Milano Pavilion will allow for additional square footage for outdoor programming.
- The fob system has been installed and Milano rentals will resume as a new revenue source.

Goals for FY24

- € UMass Boston Community needs assessment commences Spring ‘23- release date Winter ‘24
- € Resume strategic planning toward Age Friendly & Dementia Friendly Certification

Melrose Public Library

Mission & Overview

Melrose Public Library's staff, building, and collections provide a portal for all to explore, imagine and engage. The library is where literacy, local history, and community connect! We serve as an educational and cultural hub for residents and visitors alike.

Department Organization

- € Library Director
- € Assistant Director/Head of Technical Services
- € Head of Children's Services
- € Circulation & Adult Services Librarian
- € Circulation & Teen Services Librarian
- € Reference & Technology Librarian
- € Reference & Local History Librarian
- € 3 Senior Library Assistants (Children's Assistant Librarian; Office Coordinator; Acquisitions Manager)
- € 3 Full-time Library Assistants
- € 3 Part-time Reference Librarians (14 hours/week total)
- € 6 Part-time Library Assistants (52 hours/week total)

Why Do People Contact Us?

- € Readers' Advisory Services
- € Finding fiction and nonfiction reading, listening, or viewing material
- € Technical help (computers and technology)
- € Genealogical and School Research
- € Engage in community; avoid social isolation
- € Space to meet/gather
- € Attend programming for all ages

Melrose Public Library by the Numbers:

- € Top four in NOBLE circulations (including during moving and construction), averaging 10,605 physical items per month between July 1, 2022, and April 30, 2023
- € 48,870 e-audiobooks, e-books, and e-magazines (including e-picture books) circulated from Overdrive and Hoopla from July 1, 2022 – April 30, 2023
- € 764 new library cards issued from July 1, 2022 – April 30, 2023
- € 250 Programs were held – 37 hybrid, 103 in-person, 47 passive, and 63 virtual, with a total attendance of 2,263. 542 people/devices watched the recorded programs.
- € 417 take-home kits were used for crafting programs
- € 3,005 people engaged in passive displays/programs
- € 13,736 active Melrose patrons

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- € We value access to information in all formats, not just books. We circulate mobile hotspots and laptops to help increase access to the internet and our library databases from home, for patrons who may not have this technology.

Changes from FY23 to FY24

- € No major financial changes
- € FY23 was spent primarily in our interim space at the Beebe School. It has once again been a year of transition, change, and adjustment. We are thrilled to have a space that allows us to provide access to all our materials during construction.
- € Major construction has begun on the library. The 1963 addition has been removed, all asbestos and hazardous materials have been carefully separated and removed from both the addition and the historic building and disposed of appropriately. Selective demolition in areas of the historic building has been performed in preparation for the restoration and renovation of the original section of the building. The new addition foundation will be beginning shortly.
- € We will be moving in 2024 back into our completed building at West Emerson. Financial impacts for the new space will be focused on FY25.

Goals for FY24

- € Prioritize preservation of local history collection, including digitization of local newspapers and organization of general materials.
- € Assess the Diversity Audit conducted in FY2023 on collections for all ages to ensure broad representation in our library materials.
- € Maintain appropriate staffing levels throughout the renovation process; plan for staffing needs post-renovation in the expanded facility.
- € Partner with other community stakeholders in an advisory/support capacity for a new city-wide community read effort.

Percentage Increase Budget over FY23?

The library budget has a 1.5% increase in the total budget, pending the resolution of a new contract with the collective bargaining unit.

Major changes to the Library Budget FY23 to FY24

The telephone line (522000) has been eliminated. The postage line (521500) has a 28.6% decrease; however, this represents only a \$400.00 change. These decreases have been used to help offset increases in Supplies and Materials. Electronic Formats (534210) has decreased due to a canceled subscription.

Reasons for these changes

The decrease in the telephone line is due to telephone services being merged with the City's system through the IT department at the time of the move to our interim space. We do not need as much postage at this time as we used to, with more and more patrons receiving their communications via text or email.

Memorial Hall

Mission & Overview

The mission of the Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Building is to provide the city with a commemorative monument to the patriotism of servicemen and women from Melrose who gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country. It is also a cultural center for the community. It continues for the commemorative ceremonies marking certain dates in the history of the Veterans of the United States as well as inaugural ceremonies for the city of Melrose.

Department Organization

- € Executive Director
- € (4) part-time Operations Assistants: average @ 10 - 17.5 hours/week per person

Why Do People Contact Us?

1. **Rental inquiries!**
2. Scheduled Events Information: Ticket sales, HP access to building and seating, parking, time doors open, length of the event, organization contact information, and general event information

Memorial Hall by the Numbers:

Memorial Hall is seeing an overall increase in the number of event bookings and attendance at the events as the public becomes increasingly comfortable with indoor events. For FY23, we are on target to host 260 events and will welcome over 49,000 guests, (attendees), to Memorial Hall. As of April 2023, we have received requests for 179 event dates in FY24.

Our customer events database is made up of 68% nonprofit organizations and 32% businesses, (dance companies, private businesses, individuals for private events, etc.). 73% of our customers are listed as Melrose addresses, with 27% outside Melrose.

In FY23, we partnered with several City of Melrose departments to use Memorial Hall for public programs:

- Melrose Veterans Services Department: Monthly Veterans Food Mart serving 4 communities in conjunction with the Boston Food Bank, Veterans Day Breakfast, the Memorial Day Breakfast, and the Memorial Hall Parade Registrations location
- Mayor's Office: Senior Resource Fair. Mass Municipal Association meetings
- Melrose Recreation Department: a summer robotics program that we increased to run for 4 weeks in July/August 2023. Also, Rec Staff Training and Mental Health Training sessions.
- Melrose Health Department: A Covid Vaccine Booster Clinic in early Fall and a Flu Shot clinic in late fall
- Council on Aging Holiday Party
- Melrose Emergency Management: Hosted Mystic Regional Emergency

Management Training

The Exterior Renovation project was started in FY23. This project includes roof replacement, all windows renovated, exterior shades added to enable the Main Hall to be “theater dark”, interior shades replaced, Back Lobby door replaced, copper exterior décor, exterior doors refurbished, cleaning & pointing of granite, and interior beams repaired. Completion is anticipated in the summer of FY24.

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- € Memorial Hall operates as a business with the Director of Memorial Hall responsible for the facilities management, i.e., service plans, maintenance plans, daily maintenance, repairs, annual inspections, etc., and all aspects of event management. Melrose DPW is responsible for the exterior i.e. landscaping, trash disposal, snow plowing
- € Revenue generated is from facility rental fees only.
- € Total Events at the building >250/year.

Percent increase in Memorial Hall's Budget

- € Memorial Building budget increase is 3.5%

Budget changes from FY23 to FY24

- € Increase to elevator line item due to expected union wages increase for service plan.

Goals for FY24

- € Secure and execute 260 events
- € secure reservations for 175 FY25 events by end of FY24
- € With the completion of the Civil War Heritage Project at the end of FY23, move to the next step of the project i.e., a Virtual Tour of Memorial Hall
- € GAR Room floor and ceiling repairs project scope of work with monies received from the State
 - Liaison to the Friends of Melrose Memorial Hall Gala Committee October 14, 2023

Park Department/Mount Hood

Mission & Overview

The goal of the Melrose Park Department is to protect, maintain and develop the City's parks, fields, and recreational facilities for the benefit of Melrose residents. The Park Department is responsible for the City's parks, fields, and open spaces including Mount Hood Golf Course and Memorial Park. Apart from Mount Hood, these properties are maintained by the Department of Public Works. Mount Hood is operated and maintained under a management agreement between the City of Melrose and Sagamore Golf Inc.

Why Do People Contact Us?

- Park permits
- Golf
- Guidance on how to use outdoor spaces

Department Organization

- € Superintendent of Mt. Hood and Open Spaces
- € Executive Assistant

Parks by the Numbers

- € 2796 Permits Issued across 27 parks
- € 81 Parks and Fields Overseen
- € 50 Adopt-a-Sites
- € 40 gardening beds added at 2 Greenwood Pl
- € 43479 Rounds of golf played in 2022
- € \$2.45 million Total Revenue
- € \$1.9 million Golf Revenue
- € \$417K Food & Beverage Revenue
- € \$130K Pro Shop Revenue

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- € We are partnering with the Boys and Girls Club offering kayaking on Ell Pond this Summer!

Changes from FY23 to FY24

Mt. Hood's budget is comprised of revenue brought in by the golf course and functions. It is not funded out of the City's general fund. In our contract with the management company, we have contractually agreed to spend a minimum of \$50K on capital improvements each year.

Goals for FY24

We look forward to starting a relationship with Sagamore Golf Inc. as the new management company for Mt. Hood Memorial Park and Golf Course. Sagamore has entered a 5-year contract with the City ending in 2027. One of our goals is to have a beverage cart on the course that will provide customers with access to food and beverages, another is to work with Sagamore transitioning revenue operations with new POS systems, along with setting some extensive tree maintenance to enhance the course. Golf course revenue is driven by weather. Parks and Open Spaces require comfortable weather for residents to take advantage of all the wonderful sports fields, parks, playgrounds, hiking trails, dog parks, community gardens, skateboard park, and bike paths Melrose has to offer.

Recreation Department

Mission & Overview

The Melrose Recreation Department creates high-quality recreational programs and events that are affordable, safe, and fun for residents of all ages and abilities.

Through our programming, we provide resources and opportunities to strengthen our community while promoting social, cultural, and physical well-being. On average our department has over 8,000+ residents participating in our programs and events per year. Some of our largest programs include Melrose Youth Basketball (900+ participants, 200+ volunteers), Melrose Flag Football (250+ participants, 50+ volunteers), and Middle School Afterschool Athletics & Clubs (600+ participants, 25+ volunteers). In total we have 300+ community volunteers and 80+ seasonal/part-time workers helping us make our programs run.

Additionally, we typically provide 60+ scholarships per year for families who are experiencing financial hardships. A face for the City, our department works and interacts with residents ranging from ages 2 to 100. Daily, we can have contact with hundreds of residents.

Department Organization

- Recreation Director
- Recreation Coordinator
- Recreation Administrative Assistant (Part-time)

Why Do People Contact Us?

1. Register for a program
2. Apply for a job
3. Drop volunteer paperwork

Recreation by the Numbers:

- 3,000+ Program Participants
- 200+ Programs Offered
- 60+ Scholarships
- \$3,000+ Fundraising/Donations
- \$350,000 Approx. Revolving Budget

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- The Recreation Department is nearly self-sustaining through revenue-generating programs
- The Recreation Department works with a multitude of vendors and community partners to provide a wide variety of programs and events.
- Our mission is the promotion of socialization, physical exercise, personal well-being, and fun.

Budget Requests & Changes

- No additional budget requests currently

Changes from FY23 to FY24 Budget

- There are no significant changes or budget requests for FY24

Goals for FY24

- Continue to adapt ourselves and our programming to meet the changing needs of our residents
- Continue to offer programming that is supportive of the mental wellness of our residents including mindfulness and Mental Health First Aid programming.

Veterans' Services

Mission & Overview

Melrose Veterans' Services leads the Melrose-Wakefield-Saugus (MWS) Veterans Services District. The MWS Veterans' Services District seeks to advocate on behalf of all the district's veterans and provide them with guidance on local, state, and federal benefit programs, quality support services and to direct an emergency financial assistance program for those veterans and their dependents who are in need. The Chapter 115 Benefits Program is run by the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services (DVS). This program is run locally and benefits are reimbursed up to 75% by the State. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers federal benefits at the local level and we aid veterans and their families in applying for them. These forms and applications can be very daunting, long, and sometimes difficult to understand.

Goals and Objectives

- To execute timely and accurate benefit delivery for all veterans seeking help from the Federal, State, and Local branches of government
- To provide dignity, compassion, respect, and privacy to all veterans seeking assistance
- To empower veterans through technology, information sharing, and networking, where they can assist themselves and their fellow veterans by connecting services
- To continue the fight against homelessness and joblessness within the veteran community
- To be honest and forthright with our veterans, researching the correct answer and providing results as quickly as accuracy allows
- To see the office as a base of operations, not a home, bringing services to the veteran wherever they are whenever they need

Department Organization

- Director of Veterans' Services
- Administrative Assistant

Why Do People Contact Us?

- Department of Defense (DoD) questions, Chapter 115*, VA Claims, VA Healthcare, anything VA related in addition to local ceremonies for veterans.
- Vaccine inquiries
- Home healthcare inquiries

Veterans' Services by the Numbers:

- 3 Municipalities served
- 75-100 Chapter 115* clients served across the 3 communities
- Average 300 Disability claims filed annually due to the passing of new legislation
- Average 30 VA pensions for Aid and Attendance filed annually
- Over \$625,000 brought back to VA beneficiaries who reside in the City of Melrose between VA disability compensation and VA pensions and survivor benefits

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- While we are seen publicly at events, the office runs much more than events and ceremonies
- We run the MVMMS Operation club and trip annually which involves meeting with the students weekly culminating in a trip to Washington DC in May. (Hoping to start back up in the school year 2022-23)
- We help with all the events and fundraising efforts of the VAB
- We serve as a source of socialization for some of our senior veterans.
- Assist from cradle to grave with VA disability claims and pensions
- Assist Veterans in finding and obtaining resources for Mental Health help, rent assistance, housing, substance abuse, and the various GI Bills and Welcome Home Bonuses

Changes from FY23 to FY24

- Increase in Veterans Benefit line 015432/544000 by 6% in anticipation of DVS COLA adjustment in July 2023 to match Social Security COLA increase of 5.9% in January 2023.
- Salary line-item increase to include part-time VSO, meeting State Districting requirement.

Goals for FY24

- Increase current part-time Melrose Veterans Administrative Assistant to full-time based on the number of residents in the District/State compliance (greater than 70K residents)

Finance and Administrative Services

Finance and administrative services departments act as the organizational engine of municipal government operations. While some of these departments are public facing (e.g., Treasurer/Collector), most operate internally, playing a critical role in ensuring the City's assets are stable and protected (Assessor, Auditor, City Solicitor), and that your public servants have the support they need to provide the customer service our residents deserve (Human Resources).

Assessor

Mission & Overview

The mission of the Melrose Assessing Department is to determine the valuation of all real and personal property within the City in a fair, efficient, transparent, and cost-effective manner. For the purpose of taxation, the Assessing Department is obligated under law to assess all property at full and fair market value as of January 1st of each year.

The Assessing Department is responsible for the following functions:

- Ensuring the accuracy of real property valuation through annual inspection of sale properties, properties for which building permits have been taken out, and all abatement application properties.
- Routine re-inspection of all properties on a ten-year cycle.
- Discovering, listing, and valuing over 8,771 residential properties, including single-family homes, multi-family homes, condominiums, and apartment buildings. There are 291 commercial, industrial, and mixed-use properties, 425 exempt properties, and 491 business personal property accounts which are also valued on an annual basis.
- Maintenance and administration of the assessing databases and maps.
- Recording all changes in property ownership, land subdivisions, and changes in land use codes.
- Analyzing real estate sales transactions and annually adjusting property assessments to reflect market value.
- Processing property tax exemption applications for income-eligible senior citizens, veterans with service-related disabilities, and persons who are legally blind.
- Processing Motor Vehicle Excise tax abatements. The City of Melrose annually issues over 22,000 excise tax bills and the Assessing Departments processes more than 750 excise abatements.
- Capturing new growth from building permit activity and land use changes as defined by Mass. General Law.

Department Organization

- Chief Assessor
- Assistant Assessor
- Assessing Clerk

Why Do People Contact Us?

- Valuation information
- Excise Tax abatements
- Property Tax Abatements
- Personal exemptions
- Assessors Maps

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- The Assessors' primary job is to make sure that taxes are fairly allocated to each person and

property in the City. Assessors determine property values for all taxable property; the tax rate is determined by the City's approved budget.

- Property values in Melrose are certified each year by the Division of Local Services, Massachusetts Department of Revenue.
- The Melrose Assessor's Office is incredibly innovative in its use of technology
- External inspections continue with aerial imagery and lasers to measure outside of buildings, as well as incorporating the use of street-view cameras

Changes from FY23 to FY24

- 2.7% **increase** in the overall budget
- Salary & Wages – 6% **increase** due to the implementation of HRS Compensation and Classification Study and other contractual wage/COLA increases.
- Furniture & Fixtures – 100% **decrease** due to project completion for the original intent of budget line
- Seminars – 100% **decrease** due to reclassifying into Education/Training
- Education/Training – 50% **increase** due to reclassifying from Seminars

Goals for FY24

- Continue to be a leader in using data to drive decision-making
- Collaborate with Building Department and GIS Manager to integrate mapping and permitting data systems with the Assessors Database
- Collaborate with Treasurer/Collector to develop efficiencies and streamline tax billing and abatement processes.
- Continue to be thorough in the discovery of taxable property and allowable levy growth due to new construction.
- Work with the Mayor's Office and other City Departments to ensure that residents eligible for exemptions are aware of and take advantage of these offerings.

Auditor

Mission & Overview

The mission of the Office of the Auditor is to protect the City's assets. We serve as the financial foundation for all the City's operations by ensuring every bill, every payroll, every purchase, and every grant that comes across our Office is lawful, accurate, and in line with the Council's approved budget.

Department Organization

- City Auditor/CFO
- Assistant City Auditor
- Financial Manager
- Senior Accounting Clerk

Why Do People Contact Us?

1. Internal help desk for MUNIS software
2. Payroll inquiries from employees
3. Vendors checking the status of payments
4. Budget questions

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- All departments must flow through the Office of the Auditor to achieve their goals
- This Office keeps *all* the City's finances secure
- While the Office of the Auditor does not have much direct contact with the public, we have a very direct impact on the lives of residents by ensuring the appropriate application of all public monies

Changes from FY23 to FY24

- Salary and Wage adjustments for staff.
- Increase in audit services and dues and memberships.

Goals for FY24

- Continue to develop and train munis users on enhancements (version 2021) and best practices.
- Continue to work on munis projects that create efficiencies for all departments.
- Collaborate with Treasurer's Office to move to electronic payments for larger vendors and streamline the warrant process.
- Continue to work with departments and outside auditors to produce an ACFR
- Implement ways to go paperless.

City Solicitor

Mission & Overview

The City Solicitor's office functions as a full-time law office providing high-quality, cost-effective legal services to the Mayor, City Council, Department Heads, Boards, Commissions, and other municipal employees, handling the City's litigation and other legal functions in-house to the greatest extent possible. The office serves to provide high-quality legal representation in numerous areas, including but not limited to zoning, employment & labor law, elections, civil rights, Title IX, civil service, contracts, and procurement, permitting and licensing, real estate, education law, ethics, conflict of interest law, open meeting law, public records law, and tort actions involving personal injury and property damage claims. The City Solicitor's office strives to successfully prosecute and defend any actions before state and federal courts and administrative agencies on behalf of the City, provide well-reasoned and timely legal opinions, draft legislation, draft and review contracts, leases, and deeds, and help facilitate the lawful implementation of programs, policies and best practices throughout all City operations. Its staff has broad expertise in various areas of municipal law.

Department Organization

- City Solicitor
- Assistant City Solicitor
- Executive Assistant

Why Do People Contact Us?

- Requests for Advice and Legal Opinions
- Departmental Operation Items
- Insurance Claims Processing
- Liquor Licensing matters

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- Legal department oversees the Melrose Liquor Commission
- There is no separate Procurement Office in the City of Melrose. The City Solicitor's Office oversees, provides guidance, and answers questions of relative Departments and boards/commissions as necessary on any procurement-related matters
- Legal Department works closely with the Melrose Board of Health on Code enforcement matters within the City of Melrose

Budget Changes from FY23 to FY24

- Overall Budget Increase of 12.3%
- The salary and wage line item has increased by 8.7%. This is a result of the implementation of the non-Union Compensation and Classification Study by the City, as well as the estimated cost of interim coverage this fiscal year while the City Solicitor is out on anticipated maternity leave.
- Decrease in Legal Subscription Services under the line item entitled “Electronic Mass General Laws” of 27.6%. After a three-year contract with the previous vendor, the City solicited written quotes and contracted with a comparable vendor for the next three years at a significantly reduced rate
- Dues and Memberships have increased slightly by \$20 – 0.7%- to account for an estimated slight increase in subscription/membership fees
- Increase in the expense for contractual Property/Liability Insurance coverage for the City of 15%. This contractual rate increase reflects a deterioration of the property re-insurance market, and the resulting higher insurance premiums across the board for policyholders. The amount in this line item is reflective of the cost of the new insurance contract, with no reduction in coverage from previous years, and an added \$5K to hopefully address additional costs to the premium for new vehicles that may be added

Goals for FY24

- Aside from continuing the annual training conducted by my office, develop a handbook for those on Appointed Boards/Commissions in conjunction with the City Clerk to provide clear instruction on duties, responsibilities, and legal requirements as appointed members
- Work with the Human Resources Department as necessary to help draft and implement any policy updates as recommended by the Racial Equity Group.
- Develop written City Procurement Policies and Guidelines to aid Departments and Boards and Commissions in the procurement of supplies and services.

Human Resources

Mission & Overview

The Human Resources Department ensures that the City of Melrose follows fair and consistent employment practices, supports employees and retirees in health and welfare benefits, complies with federal and state laws and collective bargaining agreements, and effectively communicates employment matters to all City employees. By providing exemplary service to City employees, and ensuring a safe and inclusive work environment, the HR Department strives to create an environment where employees of all backgrounds can succeed and thrive while providing citizens of all backgrounds with excellent municipal services.

Department Organization

- Director of Human Resources and Labor Relations
- Human Resources Coordinator
- Human Resources Assistant

Percentage Increase in HR Budget over FY23

152 Human Resources- overall increase 6.3%

- Salaries and Wages- 7.3 % increase due to transitioning to the non-union Compensation and Classification plan, which includes 2% COLA as recommended in the study
- 20% decrease in the advertising budget and 25% increase in the physical exams, resulted from shifting \$2,000 from one line item to another to better allocate funds and meet City's needs.

912 Worker's Comp - no changes

- Level-funded

913 Unemployment- no changes

- Level-funded

914 Employee Benefits - overall increase 7%

- Health Contractual Benefits – 7.8% increase
 - FY24 plans' rate changes range from -5.8% to 11.9%, which averaged 5.2% increase for non-Medicare plans and a 2.0% increase for Medicare plans.
 - The health budget projection is always a snapshot of a moment in time and cannot predict the behavior of employees, life events, or economic changes that may affect future enrollment.
- Medicare Part B - 16.6% increase or a 3.8% increase over the *actual* FY23 cost.
- Salaries and Wages -4.5% increase due to the implementation of the non-union Compensation and Classification Study.

What are the major changes to your budget?

The HR department doesn't have major changes to the budget in FY24 outside of the 7% Employee Benefits increase, which is a result of changes in the Group Health (7.8% increase), Medicare Part B (16.6% increase), and Opt-Out (11.8 % decrease) budgets.

What are the reasons for these changes (major cost drivers)?

The Health Insurance budget, which has the largest financial impact on our budget is a contractual obligation for the City of Melrose and is primarily driven by the economy and healthcare, which are constantly evolving, and over which we don't have control. The City of Melrose provides insurance through the Group Insurance Commission (GIC), which is required to procure new contracts, including health and pharmacy benefits, every 5 years and FY23 was year 5 of the existing contracts. The new contracts resulted in FY24 changes in the plans' names, design, and copays, and some plans were no longer offered, all of which impacted most of our benefit-eligible employees. We saw a significant number of changes during a very active April- May 2023 Open Enrollment compared to other years. This translated into a 7.8 % increase in the Group Health budget.

Medicare Part B cost is another element that impacts the Employee benefits budget. The City of Melrose reimburses our retirees and their spouses 70% of the standard Medicare Part B premium. Since not every retiree pays the same premium, HR does its best to project the most reasonable estimated cost with the information we have available at the time. In FY23 that line was funded lower than the actual cost, which resulted in a 16.6% increase over the FY23 budget, or a 3.8% increase over the *actual* FY23 cost.

Our Opt-Out program has been a successful health cost avoidance measure that employees take

advantage of. HR implemented the following cost-saving measures for FY24 related to the Opt-Out program: reduced the eligibility requirement from 12 to 6 months to allow for more employees to benefit from this program; broadened qualifying events for enrollment and reduced benefit amounts. This resulted in an 11.8% decrease in the Opt-Out budget.

HR by the Numbers:

Clients Served

- 22 Departments
- 421 City Employees: 258 Benefit Eligible & 140 Non-Benefit Eligible (not including election help)
- 528 School Benefit Eligible
- 775 retirees/spouses/survivors

Benefits & Budget Administration

- Administrate **the following benefits for active employees:**
 - 8 non-Medicare and 4 Medicare Health plans
 - 2 Dental Insurance plans (Employee and Retiree)
 - 3 Life Insurance plans
 - 3 Deferred Compensation plans
 - Disability Insurance
 - Pet Insurance
 - Flexible Spending Account
 - Opt. Out Incentive program
- Administrate **the following benefits for retirees:**
 - Health Insurance
 - Dental Insurance
 - Basic Life Insurance
 - Optional Life Insurance
 - Medicare Part B Reimbursement for **675 retirees & their spouses.**

Financial Management: We manage approximately \$16 million.

Recruitment:

Oversaw and participated in the recruitment, screening, hiring, and orientation for positions in the Police, Fire, Public Works, Library, and City Hall departments and three regional offices:

- Health and Human Services: Melrose, Wakefield, Stoneham
- Veterans: Melrose, Wakefield, Saugus
- Pine Banks: Melrose, Malden

FY 2023 new hires (through April 2023):

- 18 Benefit eligible
- 38 non-benefit eligible (excluding election help)

City Staffing Changes:

FY 2023 (through April 2023):

- 15 Retirements (4 School; 11 City)
- 21 Resignations
- 26 Deceased Retirees

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- We are a department of three employees with a broad range of responsibilities:
 - Benefit Administration
 - Finance Management
 - Labor Relations
 - Performance Management
 - Recruiting and retention
 - Succession Planning
 - Unemployment
 - Worker's Comp and 111F Administration
 - Supporting 22 departments, 400+ City employees, and 700 retirees

Goals for FY24

- HR will have a leading role in working with the Racial Equity Group on the Organizational Equity Assessment and designing and implementing the DEI Training Series. As part of this work, the consultant will evaluate employment policies, recruiting and hiring practices, performance management, benefits, and programs the City offers to our employees that may have differential impacts on certain groups and address existing gaps in inequities. The HR Director will work on following through with any updates that are required related to policies, benefits, or programs. The Consultant will also review department-specific policies and programs and communication and outreach methods to determine if they are effective and if they reach out to diverse audiences and will recommend improvements. The HR Director will act as a liaison with the departments for data gathering and future implementation of any recommendations. Additionally, the Consultant will use the information collected through the equity assessment and design interactive training series for all employees with the goal of developing a common language, understanding, and appreciation of the principles of DEI and how it impacts organizations and train employees on practical steps to promote awareness and foster environment of growth, inclusivity, and belonging. The HR department will coordinate these trainings for all employees of the City.
- The HR Department will focus on providing professional development opportunities for department heads and managers in the areas of performance management and performance evaluations, which will

become the building blocks, critical for the successful implementation of a future hybrid merit/step-based compensation system.

- The HR Director will assist with the successful transition of Mayor-Elect and focus on their priorities.
 - **Long-term goals and projects:** streamline resumes submission, automate processes, including new hire paperwork collection, leaves management, etc.; digitize some HR functions/processes.

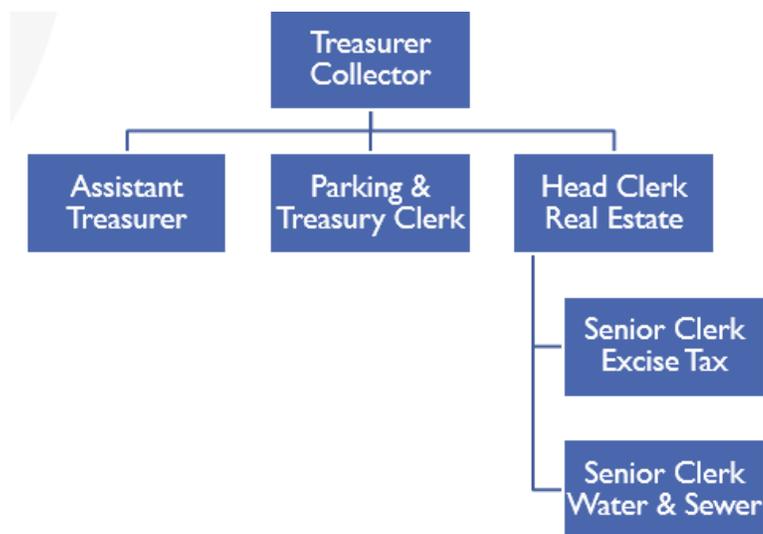
Treasurer/Collector

Mission & Overview

The mission of the Treasurer Collector Department is to efficiently collect money owed or contributed to the City and provide the City with a system of fiscally prudent monetary controls, thereby ensuring the safeguarding of the funds collected and invested for the citizens of the City.

The Treasurer Collector department is responsible for the billing and collection of water and sewer bills, real estate, personal property, and auto excise taxes and the receipt of various fees for permits, licenses, and miscellaneous payments. The department is also responsible for the reconciliation of all bank accounts, short-term and long-term investments, short-term and long-term borrowing, management of Tax Title accounts, payroll processing, W-2 issuance, income tax reporting and other required governmental filings, and the funding of all disbursements.

Department Organization



Why Do People Contact Us?

- Request a Municipal Lien Certificate prior to real estate closing
- Explanation of additional fees and interest on late payments
- New homeowners seeking guidance
- Explanation of Water & Sewer lien
- Misplaced and uncashed checks
- Deduction and account changes for payroll processing
- Parking violation dispute
- Purchase of overnight parking permit
- Request a tax payment history
- Request a duplicate W-2

- Employment verifications for loan applications

Treasurer Collector by the Numbers

The Collectors and Parking Clerks focus on customer service and the processing of payments. The following chart provides an indication of the collection volume associated with each Clerk’s function (amounts do not include penalties and interest).

	# Bills	FY22	YTD FY23
Real Estate Tax	9,377	\$69,257,842	\$68,338,940
Personal Property Tax	481	\$ 2,498,206	\$ 2,251,739
Excise Tax	24,045	\$ 3,604,234	\$ 3,254,466
Water Fees	40,454	\$ 5,936,862	\$ 5,510,106
Sewer Fees		\$ 8,483,523	\$ 7,123,810
Parking Lots & Permits	338 permits	\$ 55,068	\$ 54,316
Parking Tickets		\$ 135,633	\$ 110,667
Municipal Lien Certificates	442	\$ 22,990	\$ 11,050

The Treasury function manages the funds once collected. Shorter-term funds are held in interest-bearing bank accounts to maintain sufficient liquidity to fund the City’s warrant activity. Accounts with longer-term horizons are invested conservatively by the City’s investment advisor. As of March 31, 2023, account balances were:

	#	Value
Bank Accounts*	40	\$31,638,523
Investment Accounts	43	\$17,345,216

*Includes special funds and committed funds for projects underway

The Treasury function also manages the City’s debt obligations, including the issuance of BANs and bonds and the contractual payments of principal and interest. The total long-term principal and interest outstanding as of June 30, 2022, was \$54,070,882. In early FY23, the City issued \$6,162,471 of General Obligation Bond Anticipation Notes that mature on September 21, 2023.

Little Known Facts/Misconceptions

- The Registry of Motor Vehicles determines the amount of your Excise Tax
- There is no overnight parking in Melrose, however, you may apply for a one-night exemption 12 times per year through the Melrose Police Department website
- The interest rates we charge on late payments are dictated by Massachusetts General Law

FY23 Accomplishments/Changes

- Decreased CLA monthly account audit time by approximately 50% with full implementation of Munis Cash Management module; monthly close is complete

- by the 15th of the month
- Conducted analysis of parking lot and overnight pass rates of other communities and submitted recommendations to Traffic Commission; all but one recommendation was approved
 - Addressed aged personal property accounts receivables by contracting with FH Cann
 - Fully utilized D'Ambrosio LLP to address Tax Title accounts resulting in quicker resolution and guidance in longer-term resolution
 - In the process of working with the lockbox provider to gain access to additional systems to improve process flow

Percentage Increase in FY24 Budget

- The overall Treasurer Collector department budget is 4.7% higher than FY23
- The Parking Budget is 8.7% lower than FY23.

Changes to FY24 Budget and Reasons

- Salaries – up 6.1% due to contractual step-ups/COLA increases and an increase in hours for the Collectors team from 30 to 35
- Printing – down 44.4% due to reclassifying a processing vendor to professional services
- Postage – up 10%. The budget contemplates an additional postage increase and two elections
- Bank Fees – down 100%. The banking partner agreed to waive certain fees
- Professional Services – up 86.7% due to reclassification of vendor from Printing

Goals for FY24

- Collectors team cross-training to provide backup during absences and periods of turnover
- Implement lockbox provider systems to decrease the processing time and paper flow
- Address aged Excise Tax accounts receivables
- Collaborate with Auditor's Office to move to electronic payments for larger vendors.

Public Safety and Infrastructure

Local government operations are like a clock: many pieces move independently of one another but rely on one another's success to function. While no one department can truly optimally perform without another, what the following departments do is truly bedrock to the City of Melrose.

Municipal government operates best in the background of our lives. We typically only notice it when something goes wrong: when a sidewalk is cracked, the WiFi at school goes out, a traffic light breaks. What we don't see are the fires prevented because of strong building codes and talented inspectors; the lives saved this year because of a dedicated health department's commitment to ensuring public safety as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to have a major impact in 2021 and early 2022; the hours spent collaborating on logistics to bring cultural events to our public spaces while ensuring all attendees are safe and the crowds manageable; the family dinners missed to respond to winter storms, so our children can get to school safely.

It is my hope that the following pages will demonstrate that capital investments are nothing without the talented and dedicated public employees who implement them.

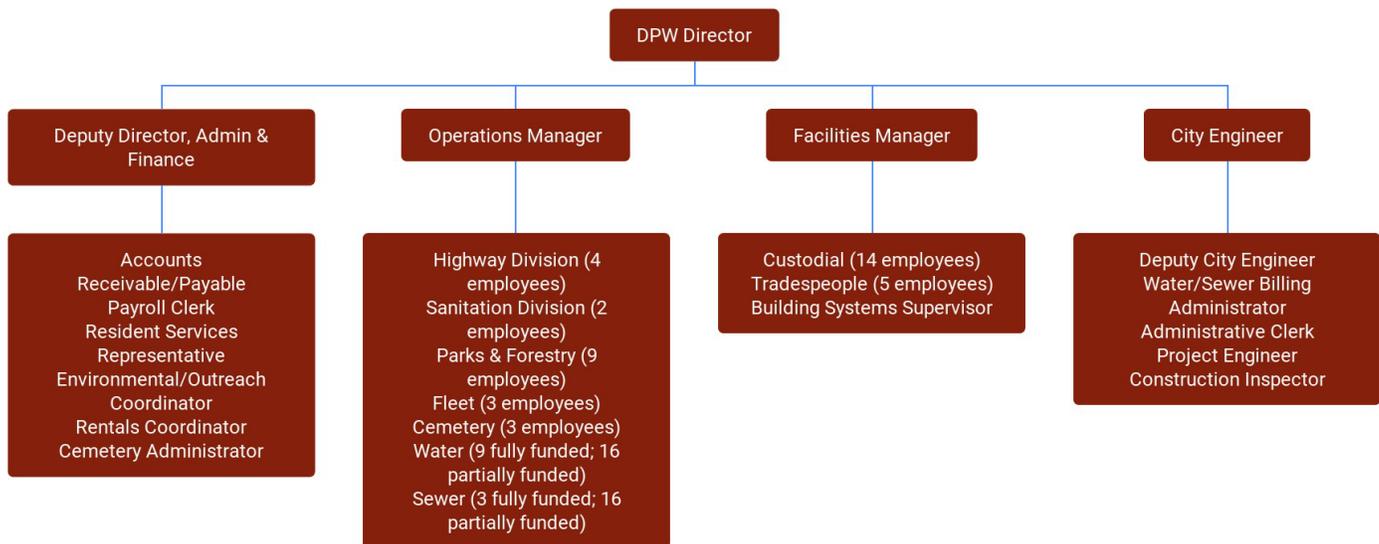
Department of Public Works

Mission & Overview

The Department of Public Works is one of the most diverse branches of city government, working to ensure the safety and well-being of all residents of Melrose by providing essential services with the responsibility of maintaining critical infrastructure for the City such as streets, sidewalks, water, sewer, catch basins, rubbish and recyclable collection, and vehicle and equipment maintenance.

The Department is also responsible for responding to snow, ice, and other emergency services; responsible for the care of all City trees, for the maintenance of all parks and fields, for the maintenance and general operations of the cemetery, for enforcing of water, sewer and street ordinances; and engineering design and construction management for capital improvement and maintenance projects. To accomplish these functions, the Department is organized into eleven divisions: Administration, Engineering, Facilities, Fleet, Highway, Parks, Sanitation, Sewer, Trees, Water, and Wyoming Cemetery

Department Organization



Why Do People Contact Us?

- Potholes and other road/pavement maintenance issues
- Trash pickup questions
- Snow removal
- Water and sewer service requests

DPW by the Numbers:

- Since the beginning of Fiscal Year 2023, these are some of the items DPW has addressed:
- potholes filled: 712 locations
- storms responded to: 20.9 inches of snow
- vehicles in fleet maintained: 140 pc. of equipment
- tonnage of trash/recycling:
 - 5,377 tons of trash
 - 2,336 tons of recycling
- parks/fields/open spaces maintained: 81 locations
- total work orders: 2,558 resolved
- invoices processed: 1,254 purchase orders
- recycled 510 mattresses as part of the new mattress recycling program

The Department of Public Works also played a critical role in several large projects/events:

- Capital projects including paving, water main replacement, sewer main improvements, and drainage improvements
- Support of City events including school sports, elections, memorials, Earth Week, Victorian Fair, Healthy Melrose, road races, and private facility rental events
- Installed and maintained four parklets and several Shared Streets, completed Central Terrace public seating area, and implemented many other traffic safety and pedestrian and bicycle-friendly measures
- Applied for and received multiple grants for infrastructure and environmental initiatives

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- DPW functions mostly in the background of the lives of people in Melrose yet we are foundational to all City operations.
- We play a key role in putting on community and cultural events like Home for the Holidays, Earth Week, Victorian Fair, Summer Stroll, etc.

Changes from FY23 to FY24

- Contractual increases in salaries (step and cost-of-living increases for both union and non-

union staff). Successfully negotiated laborer and clerical union contracts for FY23 through FY25, which will be in effect throughout FY24.

- Annual changes in Massachusetts Water Resource Authority assessments in water and sewer funds.
- The DPW faces the biggest challenges dealing with rising costs and increased demand to maintain our Schools and Municipal Buildings. The ages of critical building components have either neared or have exceeded the end of useful life. We have advocated for additional staff and continue to work with the CFO on the proper strategy to add to the existing levels. Secondly, our contractual costs and scope of work associated with service agreements continue to grow. We have conservatively projected an increase of approximately \$25,000 to be included in the FY24 Budget.
- For Snow and Ice Operations, it should be noted that our 5-year average annual spending is \$953,230. Although the budget has been adjusted each year, the average budgeted amount in the same period has been \$626,942.
- FY24 will be the final year of the current Solid Waste and Recycling Contract with JRM/Republic. Recycling processing fees are the only increase in the Sanitation Division budget. As shown in the Recycling line item, these fees are based on our recycling tonnage and a negotiated per-ton cost. The City has begun to entertain vendors that are interested in providing this service when the contract expires on June 30, 2024. Preliminary indications are that significant changes and cost increases are on the horizon.

Goals for FY24

- Meeting the obligations of all regulatory programs, such as lead water service removals, NPDES MS4 drainage requirements, and hazardous materials reduction/removal
- Finalizing new contracts for trash and recycling hauling and disposal, which will take effect in FY25, and minimizing the impending impacts of these new contracts
- Implementing facilities and fleet improvements to address our aging infrastructure, while also moving toward our Net Zero goals, as feasible within our budget capacity
- Fostering a positive work environment through enhanced professional development and attention to personnel initiatives

Emergency Management

Mission & Overview

Melrose Emergency Management, using the guidelines of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), facilitates planning, secures, and provides resources to assist and help protect the residents, business community, and city government from hazards that threaten Melrose. This is done through the four phases of Emergency Management: Preparedness (Planning, Training, Exercising), Response, Mitigation, and Recovery.

Working in close partnership with City Departments and our Regional/State Partners, EM plans and prepares for emergencies, educates the public about emergency preparedness, conducts training exercises, and performs other services to support the City's overall preparedness. EM follows an all-hazards approach, preparing for various types of emergencies – natural or man-made.

Department Organization

1. Emergency Management Director

Why Do People Contact Us?

The Emergency Management Director rarely interfaces with the public and generally acts as a liaison between the State and the City, as well as the Chiefs of Police and Fire.

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- Every municipality is required by state law to have an Emergency Management Director
- The EMD spearheads the coordination of City Departments for planned and demand response events using the Federal Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Federal Incident Command System (ICS)
- In the event of a disaster, fire, or flood, the EMD would coordinate emergency relief for residents, (food, temporary sheltering, etc.)
- Melrose Emergency Management is the third-tier layer of the emergency management system, our partners are the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Melrose Emergency Management makes applications to MEMA and FEMA for grants and all reimbursement from Declarations of Emergencies

Changes from FY23 to FY24

With the effects of COVID-19 becoming less life-threatening, the ordering of PPE supplies has stopped as we maintain a sufficient supply.

Goals for FY24

- Continue to phase back to normal operations
- For all event planning, foster the use of NIMS and ICS
- Complete the EOC/Training Center upgrade

- Conduct Tabletop Exercises with city departments, State and Federal Agencies and local constituents to plan and train for events that could have a negative or disastrous impact on the City
- Establish written evacuation plans for City Hall

Fire Department

Mission & Overview

The Melrose Fire Department (MFD) strives to improve and safeguard the quality of life within the City of Melrose. The members of the department guarantee the citizens and visitors of Melrose that we will provide dependable service in a responsible fashion while showing care and compassion for those in need. As public servants, our first and foremost duty is to serve the community. We will treat those we serve fairly, regardless of their race, color, creed, sex, age, lifestyle, national origin, or economic status. We ensure that any service we provide adds value to our citizens'/customers' quality of life. The department recognizes the individuality of everyone who works here. We will treat one another with respect, kindness, and a sense of the importance of teamwork. We continue to foster a spirit of excellence throughout the organization while we serve our citizens.

The MFD responds promptly and efficiently to structure fires and emergency medical incidents. The members of the MFD continuously train in all aspects such as fire safety, hazmat operations, technical rescue operation, EMS training, specialty team training, water rescue, and automobile extractions.

Department Organization

- Fire Chief
- Financial Administrator
- Fire Alarm Superintendent
- 7 Captains
- 9 Lieutenants
- 33 Firefighters

Why Do People Contact Us?

1. Emergency Response Calls (*including, but not limited to; medical aids, fires, MVAs, wires-down, alarm sounding, lockouts, lift-assists, and the odor of gas*)
2. Master-Box Plug Outs
3. Fire Prevention (*fire drills/permits/inspections/details*)

Melrose Fire Department by the Numbers: (July 1, 2022 - May 1, 2023)

- 3,861 Emergency Response Calls
- 96 Training Activities consisting of 1,533.50 personnel hours
- Fire Prevention/Code Enforcement Activities:
 - 6 Complaints
 - 16 School Fire Drills
 - 9 Group Home/Day Care Fire Drills
 - 526 Permits Issued
 - 502 Inspections Conducted

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- We are a multi-faceted all-hazard Fire Department

FY23 Accomplishments

On September 27, 2022, the Fire Department's new TDA ladder truck was officially placed in service. At 5:05 p.m., five minutes after the truck was placed in service, the members of the ladder took the truck on its first official run which was for a medical aid call to 743 Main Street.

On May 1, 2023, the Fire Department received brand new Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) equipment. This equipment was purchased through the FY23 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant, FY23 State Earmark Grant, and a purchase order through free cash by the City. The following items were delivered on May 1st:

- 13 Air Paks
- 6 SCBA Face Pieces
- 12 Cylinder Bottles

Percentage Increase in the Fire Budget for FY24

The Fire Department will receive an overall budget increase of .2% for FY24.

- .2% increase in salaries due to contractual raises
- 4.9% increase in professional services due to price increases for in-house annual Hazmat training and fire department scheduling system "CrewSense"
- 20.8% increase in station cleaning supplies. The Fire Department has been budgeted for \$4,800 for the last 10+ years and in FY22 and FY23, we have overspent this line. These cleaning supplies (*such as: paper towels, toilet paper, mops, sponges, cleaning sprays, soaps, disinfectants, vacuum filters, etc.*) are purchased for the use of maintaining clean environments at all three fire stations.

Goals for FY24

- Increase our training to stay in line with national standards as well as document said training by implementing Lexipol/Fire Rescue Academy. Lexipol/Fire Rescue Academy is an online training module that sends out and tracks the training performed by the Fire Department members. The Lexipol side of the module holds policies and procedures, most mandated by the State. The Fire Rescue Academy side of the module contains training videos and allows our department to upload our own videos for training purposes.

Health and Human Services Department

Mission & Overview

The Melrose Health and Human Services Department promotes the personal and environmental health of the community through education and policy development supported by enforceable regulations, and collaboration with other people and organizations.

Our goal in the public health sector is to protect and promote health. The Melrose Health Department offers a wide variety of services and functions for the City of Melrose to accomplish just that. The services range from a variety of topics, including, but not limited to, vaccinations, health permits and applications, informational sheets, healthy eating and living activities, pest control, tobacco control, substance use prevention, animal control, and more.

The Melrose Board of Health is the policymaking, rule-making, and adjudicatory body for public health in the county or counties in Melrose. The state legislature gives boards of health specific powers and duties.

Department Organization

- Health Director for Melrose, Wakefield, and Stoneham
- Administrative Assistant
- Senior Public Health Nurse
- Health Inspector
- Senior Environmental Health Specialist
- Public Health Specialist
- Prevention and Wellness Coordinator
- Regional Tobacco Control Coordinator
- Social Services Coordinator
- Animal Control Officer
- Public Health Excellence Grant Coordinator
- 11 School Nurses

Why Do People Contact Us?

- Complaints about trash/housing/food establishments/noise/pests
- Questions about the MA State Housing Code or Food Sanitation Code
- Vaccination inquiries
- Social Services and access to providers, signing up for community benefits

Health and Human Services Department by the Numbers:

- 1,591 COVID-19 and flu vaccine doses administered
- Over one million dollars in grant funding from State and Federal sources for projects across all three branches of environmental health, public health nursing, and human services
- 101 housing and nuisance complaints from January 2022 through April 2023
- 128 food permits issued within the City of Melrose

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- Melrose leads a shared Health and Human Services department with Wakefield and Stoneham
- Melrose Health and Human Services Department is responsible for working with schools through School Nursing

Changes from FY23 to FY24

- 5.8% increase in salary and wages; to respond appropriately and in a timely manner, the department needs more health inspection capacity to fulfill the City's needs.

Goals for FY24

- Increase access to mental health services and promote education surrounding behavioral health
- Formalize and expand shared services with the Mystic Valley Public Health Coalition
- Increase outreach to underserved populations and continue to promote health equity

Information Technology

Mission & Overview

The City of Melrose IT Department strives to make technology services better, quicker, more effective, and more efficient for all students, families, employees, and residents. The IT Department is responsible for installing and maintaining critical infrastructure for the City of Melrose including the schools. We provide all technology-related equipment and software in the City and Schools including but not limited to, networks, copiers, projectors, printers, smartboards, wireless access points, telephones (both analog and Voice over IP (VoIP)), Public Address (PA) systems, uninterrupted battery backup systems, security systems, door hardware, fobs, cameras & intercoms, computers, monitors, laptops, Chromebooks, police cruiser computer systems, Public safety devices, servers, virtual servers, email, websites, mobile phones, fiber optic network on street poles, desktop support for City and School personnel, backup and disaster recovery systems, running new cabling and repairing old cabling, and reverse 911 systems. We are also responsible for designing, contracting and leading projects for the City and Schools to upgrade or install new systems. We communicate with City and School leaders to understand needs and provide technical solutions to those needs.

Department Organization

- IT Director/Chief Information Officer
- Assistant IT Director
- IT Systems Analyst
- IT Project Manager
- Financial Systems Analyst
- School Systems Administrator
- School Elementary Desktop Technician
- School MVMMS/HS/Franklin Desktop Technician
- School SIS Data Coordinator

IT Department by the Numbers:

- FY22: 5,551 Tickets processed.
- FY22: 28 projects completed or in progress

There are also dozens of both small and large-scale projects the IT department spearheaded this fiscal year which cannot be distilled in neat qualitative numbers. Some of these include:

- Replacement of entire school district phone systems and implementation of a new VoIP phone system including cancellation of multiple costly telephone lines and new desk phones.
- Purchase and implementation of a new redundant city-wide server platform with cybersecurity protection (Hyper Converged Infrastructure HCI)
- Cybersecurity Awareness Training for all staff (state grant program)

- New security camera server project with new hardware and software
- New IT ticket system configuration, training, and rollout
- Replacement of all security cameras at the MVMMS with 20+ additional cameras
- New projectors, interactive whiteboards, & audio systems installed at the Horace Mann School
- New projectors and interactive whiteboards installed at the Roosevelt Elementary School
- Purchase, configuration, and implementation of a new Mobile Device Management System
- Purchase configuration and implementation of a new web-based anti-virus and endpoint control software
- Installation of new election lines and hardware
- Two Munis ERP Software upgrades
- Recreation software selection, and implementation by Frank Olivieri
- Social Media Archiving project: enrollment of several social media sites throughout the city and schools in an archiving software for use during Public Records Requests (PRR i.e., FOIA)
- Replacement of all City Hall security cameras
- Design and planning for a new city-wide fiber-optic loop project
- Replacement of food services Point of Sale (POS) server and replacement of all POS machines in all schools.
- Replacement and configuration of all MFPs (copiers) in the school district and city. Consolidation of contracts and cost savings.
- Beebe School Library Project: Ran cabling, installed switches, wireless access points, printers, and phones throughout the building
- Completion of new video editing lab at MHS
- Replacement of WebEx with Zoom, configuration, implementation, and training
- Installation of door access security and fob reader at the Milano Center
- Installation of door access security with a fob reader at 4 doors at the MHS
- Timeclock software (SaaS) and hardware replacement for DPW selection & design. Implementation and training summer of 2023
- Capital Investment Planning work with the Collins Center
- Public Address systems replacement planning
- Mt Hood Camera replacement project: currently in the design and quotes phase.
- New Library Project: designs and specifications review for all systems

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- IT is responsible for over 11,546 pieces of equipment, up from 5,322 in 2016.
- Half of the City IT staff is dedicated to school projects and maintenance.
- IT maintains 7.7 miles of fiber optic cables on utility poles.
- An additional 6.9 miles of fiber optic cable will be installed in the summer of 2023.

Changes from FY23 to FY24

- Munis support

- This change reflects the traditional annual 5% increase for all MUNIS products
- Software Licenses
 - This change is due to the addition of O365 features needed for security and a future rollout of Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)
 - New (renewal) Antivirus and endpoint protection software added
 - New Mobile Device Management (MDM) software added

Inspectional Services

Mission & Overview

The Inspectional Services Department is responsible for the health and public safety of the community and for monitoring improvements to residential and commercial properties. Our goal is to help the residents of Melrose by providing timely and quality service and answers to questions regarding building and zoning issues. We also ensure compliance with the Architectural Access Barriers Board regulations to ensure everyone living, working, and moving through Melrose can adequately access our buildings and spaces.

Increase from FY23 to FY24

- 11.2%
 - Salary and Wage adjustments
 - Adding a new administrative assistant part-time position starting January 1, 2024
 - Increasing continuing education funds - \$1,300.00

Reason for increase

- Salary and Wage line item has been adjusted to reflect the actual wages calculated using the City's new salary plan.
- Part-time administrative assistant: This new position would help with the workload to maintain the level of service expected from this department. This new position would enable us to be proactive instead of reactive while assuring backup during vacations, sick time, and ascension planning.
- Continuing education funds.: The current \$1300 amount does not accurately reflect the expenses generated by my inspectors, an additional \$1300 is needed.

Department Organization

- Director of Inspectional Services
- Executive Assistant to the Director
- Part- Time Plumbing and Gas Inspector (26 Hrs.)
- Part-Time Wire Inspector/Sealer of Weights & Measures (28 Hrs.)
- Part-Time Local Building Inspector (28Hrs)

Why Do People Contact Us?

- Permit Applications for Building, Electric, Plumbing, Gas, or Occupancy
- Information regarding application requirements and zoning
- Information about opening a business
- To learn and understand the Codes and Ordinances
- To complain/inquire about:
 - If permits were issued
 - Permit history of a property

- If a Use is allowed in a certain zoning district
- Freedom of Information Act requests
- Unsafe properties
- Working without permits
- Zoning and building codes violations
- Online permitting system help

ISD by the Numbers (in an average year):

- 7,000 emails fielded.
- \$800,000 in permit fees collected
- 3,300 inspections
- 3,100 permits issued

Last year (4/1/22 to 4/30/23):

- 3636 permits issued Residential and Commercial.
- \$1,138,920.00 in fees collected.
- 4727 inspections.
 - Note: The increase in revenue, permits issued, and inspections were a result of online permitting and the easing of Covid restrictions

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- There is a tremendous number of nuances in zoning and building codes and it requires a huge amount of knowledge and agility to keep up with the changes
- Regulations are constantly changing but funding does not always come down from higher government levels to accommodate those regulation changes
- Building and Inspectional Services provides public safety. If we don't ensure compliance with all codes, this could result in loss of life. We keep residents safe with stringent building codes, talented and dedicated inspectors, and thorough processes
- Housing stock in Melrose remains the way it is because of the work of ISD. The work we do is foundational to making Melrose an attractive place to live

Goals for FY24

- Continue to provide quality and responsive customer service to our customers.
- Select a permitting system that allows for better communication between departments to allow for fast application processing and department accountability.
- Scan all department documents to allow quick public access, reduce wasteful copying, free up space, and reduce clerical work.

Changes from FY23 to FY24

- Add – a part-time administrative Assistant (18 hours)
- Document scanning project
- Upgrading our Permitting Software
- Increase funds for mandated continuing education - inspectors

Office of Planning and Community Development

Mission & Overview

It is the mission of the Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD) to protect and enhance the quality of life in Melrose. To accomplish this mission, OPCD provides long-range planning, manages the capital improvement program, reviews and recommends changes in zoning, applies for and administers grants and community development programs, implements special projects, oversees sustainability efforts throughout the City and provides mapping and GIS (Geographic Information System) support. Additionally, OPCD supports the work of several Boards and Commissions in the City and reviews all major land use proposals, including subdivision plans and significant residential and commercial development proposals. OPCD provides staff support to the following Boards and Commissions: Planning Board, Board of Appeals (ZBA), Historic District Commission, and Energy Commission.

Department Organization

- Director of Planning and Community Development
- Senior Planner
- Account Manager & GIS Analyst
- Sustainability Manager
- Assistant Planner

Why Do People Contact Us?

- Property owners & developers inquiring about land
- Affordable housing opportunities
- Questions about electricity pricing

OPDC by the Numbers:

Planning Board Activity

- 14 Meetings
- 28 ZBA cases reviewed, and recommendations issued
- 1 Subdivision application reviewed
- 7 Site Plan Review Applications reviewed
- 2 Slope Protection Applications reviewed
- 115 housing units permitted
- 6 commercial spaces permitted
- 1 Zoning Subcommittee Meeting
- 1 Zoning Public Hearing
- 3 Design Review Subcommittee Meetings

Zoning Board of Appeals Activity

- 14 Meetings

- 28 permit applications reviewed and decision filed

Historic District Commission Activity

- 6 Meetings
- 6 Cases Reviewed for Certificate of Appropriateness

Planning Studies and Zoning Updates

- Kicked off the Planning process for updating our 7-year Open Space and Recreation Plan and held numerous outreach events to engage a cross-section of the community
- Researched, drafted, and obtained Council approval for 10 zoning amendments designed to make the zoning easier to understand and to ensure compliance with Mass General Laws
- Drafted green building design guidelines for new development which will provide additional tools and resources for developers who are designing development projects.

Affordable Housing Activity

- Assisted with the lottery for 19 affordable housing units at Radio Factory Lofts, the new 141-unit mixed-use building located at 99 Washington Street
- Assisted with the lottery for 2 affordable townhomes at Blueberry Hill
- Worked with the Melrose Affordable Housing Corporation to acquire \$440,000 in federal funds to offset the purchase of a three-family home to increase the number of deed-restricted affordable housing units that they own and manage.
- Participated in the North Suburban Consortium to allocate HOME funds across the member communities
- Participated in the Metro Mayors Coalition Regional Housing Taskforce to support housing production across the Metro Mayors region.

Grants, Project Management and Capital Improvements

- Awarded a \$615,000 MassWorks grant to relocate the culvert by Ell Pond which opens economic opportunities for the Caruso property and reduces the risk of flooding in the area.
- Secured \$75,000 grant funding to hire a zoning consultant to recodify the Zoning Ordinance and implement zoning strategies identified in the Housing Production Plan
- Awarded \$800,000 in federal funding for the Ell Pond Park Stormwater Management and Resiliency Project
- Procured and managed the \$45,995 contract for the consultants hired to implement the Civil War Veterans Heritage Project
- Managed the \$17,700,000 construction contract for the Library Renovations & Addition Project
- Managed the bidding and award of the \$1,287,900 construction contract for the Hoover Roof Replacement
- Managed the bidding and award of the \$707,000 construction contract for the Horace Mann Roof Replacement

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)/Mapping/Sign making

- Worked with PeopleGIS to reconnect the live parcel data to the City's online map
- Working on the Cemetery Mapping & Digitization Project for approx. 30,000 souls and over 11,000 lots
- Created a City Utility App for workers in the field to access all Drainage, Sewer Layers, B-Sewer Plans, and Sewer Tie Cards.
- Renamed and geo-located 7500 Water tie cards to be added to the cloud for workers in the field for the City Utility App.
- Provide the Assessor's office with new parcel \building\ addition\ renovation information.
- Created travel routes for tree & utility pole inspections reducing road time for multiple stops.
- Continue to assist multiple departments by providing maps, signs, and various data requests.
- Continue with edits and research for the water, sewer, drainage, and easement GIS layers.
- Continue to assist Inspectional Services with the new Permitting software
- Continue with scanning – cataloging

Energy and Sustainability

- Adopted the Melrose Net Zero Action Plan which creates a roadmap for reducing community carbon pollution in three sectors – buildings, transportation, and energy supply.
- Awarded a \$500,000 Green Community Building Decarbonization grant in support of the Melrose Public Library. This is the seventh Green Community grant the city has received since our designation in 2010.
- Awarded a \$75,000 3-year grant to fund energy efficiency outreach and coaching to homeowners, small businesses, renters/landlords, and income-eligible residents to help them navigate and take advantage of new Mass Save incentives for insulation, air sealing, and heating system upgrades including heat pumps.
- Launched the Melrose Energy Challenge, which is a new resource designed to help residents and small businesses electrify everything.
- Administered the Melrose Community Power program to protect residents from astronomical increases in energy costs. Approximately 90% of Melrose residents and small businesses are enrolled in MCP at a fixed rate which has provided overall savings of over \$3.5 Million to Melrose households - \$1.8 million saved in just November and December of 2022 alone.
- Secured Power Purchase Agreements for roof top solar on the Hoover and Horace Mann Elementary School Roofs
- Events – Participated in Victorian Fair, Senior Resource Fair, Earth Week, Healthy Melrose, EV Showcase and various other webinars and virtual events

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

- OPCD oversees a sign and façade grant program to help small businesses defray the cost of new signage
- OPCD does not decide what kinds of businesses come to Melrose
- OPCD manages the capital improvement program and has overseen renovations projects in many of the City's school and municipal buildings

Changes from FY23 to FY24

- 3.4% increase in salary and wage line item to reflect annual contractual/COLA increases
- The annual allocation of \$2,500 to support the work of the Energy Committee has been moved to the Planning Department Budget

Goals for FY24

- Continue to assist residents, developers, and business owners with the permitting process and provide technical and administrative support to the Boards and Commissions under OPCD purview
- Work on the recodification of the Zoning Ordinance and craft zoning amendments to support the city's housing and land use goals
- Continue to provide mapping and GIS support to enhance the City's GIS capabilities and Maps Online functionality
- Continue to Implement the Housing Production Plan and create market rate and affordable housing opportunities
- Finalize and obtain approval of the Open Space and Recreation Plan
- Continue to Implement the Net Zero Action Plan
- Increase the total number of residents purchasing 100% renewable energy through our aggregate
- Continue to provide project management support for Library Renovations, Roof Replacements, and other Capital Projects

Conservation Commission

Mission & Overview

The Melrose Conservation Commission is a 7-member volunteer board created under the authority of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40 Section 8c “for the promotion and development of the natural resources and for the protection of watershed resources.” We administer the MA Wetlands Protection Act, the Rivers Protection Act, and the Melrose Wetland Ordinance. Under these laws, no one may “remove, fill, dredge, or alter” any wetland, floodplain, bank, land under a water body, or land within 100 feet of a protected resource (the “Buffer Zone”) without obtaining a permit from the Conservation Commission.

These laws are critical for maintaining the health and vitality of wetlands and wildlife while minimizing potential flooding during larger storm events. During our monthly meetings, we coordinate with project applicants to understand the potential impact on wetland resources and floodplains with the goal of avoiding and minimizing these impacts. These projects range from new home developments, residential and commercial property improvements, and utility and city maintenance projects.

The Conservation Commission also has responsibility for the care and control over the City’s conservation lands, which are open space parcels available for passive recreational use. These include the conservation areas surrounding Towners and Swains Ponds (also known as Flagg Acres, Seaview Trails, and the Rocky View Trail/Knox Memorial Trail), the Ferdinand Woods and West Hill Terrace conservation areas in the northwest corner of the City, and various isolated parcels of land throughout the city. A major portion of the Commission’s conservation maintenance budget is spent on managing nuisance vegetation and algae treatments for Towners Pond (which is under the control of the Conservation Commission) and for Ell Pond and Swains Pond, which are Parks Department properties. The Commission frequently has cleanup days where volunteers and members maintain the hiking trails within the conservation areas. The Commission also continues to support the Outdoor Classroom at the Hoover School. One commission member is part of the group assessing the redesigned sports fields by Ell Pond.

There is one part-time staff person. At least one resident either calls, emails or stops by the office in person per week with a concern to be addressed.

Why Do People Contact Us?

- Wetland permitting
- Open space concerns/information
- Tree issues
- Flooding issues
- Wildlife information

FY23 Accomplishments/Changes

- 3 New Commission members and 1 new Associate member.
- Began Year 1 of the Multi-year Ell Pond Water Chestnut treatment program - mechanical harvester and hydro rake treatment from (2022-2024) that started July 2022. On-shore component of material removal provided by DPW with conservation staff coordination. A small harvester was deployed the first year because of its 12" to 16" draft. The machine provided 13 harvester service days with approximately 3.38 acres of the pond surface area of seed-bearing water chestnut removed according to an august aerial photo.



What is the percentage increase in your budget over FY23?

- The overall Conservation Commission budget is 18.7815% higher than FY23.

What are the major changes to the Conservation Commission budget?

- Education/Seminar- 169% increase for education budget.
- Conservation – 41.1% increase for full treatment of Ell, Towners and Swains ponds.

What are the reasons for these changes (major cost drivers)?

- Education/Seminar – 169% increase for education budget. This line item has not been adjusted in nearly a decade and is severely underbudgeted. Victorian Fair table space, new member training workshops and education handbook access draw from this line item. Several longtime members left the Commission in FY22 & FY23, and we will need to invest in training and education for new members.
- Conservation – 41.1% increase for full treatment of Ell, Towners and Swains ponds. This consists of chemical treatments at Towners, Ell and Swains ponds. (Excludes Ell Pond water chestnut removal that is covered under a separate 3-year contract with separate partial funding from state earmark and free cash for first two years).

We still need to identify funding for the third year of this water chestnut removal contract for FY25. Towners pond has had an ongoing waterlily and pondweed growth problem that needs to be addressed.

Goals for FY24

- Complete Second year of Ell Pond Water Chestnut treatment program.
- Encourage new Commission members to attend training workshops.
- Develop a comprehensive aquatic vegetation management plan with the Parks department for Mt. Hood ponds, Towners Pond and Swains Pond to look at all ponds together.

Police Department

Mission & Overview

MISSION: The mission of the Melrose Police Department is to provide quality policing through collaboration and mutual trust with the citizens of our community. We will do so with honor and integrity. We value the rights of all citizens, and we will enforce the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in a fair, impartial, and procedurally just manner.

VISION: The Melrose Police Department will be a model agency prepared to meet future challenges by being a progressive and innovative police department. We will enhance the quality of life for all citizens by creating a partnership of trust and transparency with our community to promote positive change.

VALUES: The Melrose Police Department strives to establish our credibility and legitimacy through the embodiment of our core values: Honor, Integrity, Courage, and Accountability (HICA):

- *Honor:* Our promise to always do what is right. We hold our profession and the citizens we serve in the highest respect.
- *Integrity:* We are committed to honesty and ethical behavior in all our actions.
- *Courage:* We have a selfless devotion to our duty, and we will stand for justice in the face of danger.
- *Accountability:* We accept responsibility for our actions and understand the expectations of the community we serve.

Department Organization

- Chief of Police
- Executive Office Manager
- Administrative Assistant
- 4 Lieutenants
- 10 Sergeants
- 33 Patrol Officers
- 2 civilian Parking Wardens

Little Known Facts/Common Misconceptions

Police Officers are not only tasked with enforcing the laws of the Commonwealth, but we also handle a wide variety of calls involving quality of life issues, mental health and substance abuse disorders, as well as overall community engagement and community policing activities to further strengthen the relationship with those in the community that we serve.

Changes from FY23 to FY24 and Highlights of FY23

- Both Unions (Superior and Patrolman's) settled contracts in FY23 thus increasing required funding for salaries and wages for FY24, (5.5% increase)
- New "community engagement" line item (10k) in FY24 to help fund equipment/merchandise/personnel to increase overall police involvement in positive community outreach events.
- New "Digital Headquarters" program (DHQ) to streamline invoicing, personnel management, and dissemination of policies/ procedures/crime bulletins and other administrative functions (11.5K).
- 4 members of the department retired and or transferred in FY23.
- New Chief of Police, Kevin M. Faller, was sworn in on December 01, 2022.
- 3 Patrol Officers to be hired to replace the 3 that will have separated from service.
- New "Professional Standards" Supervisory Position created to oversee policies, POST compliance, and investigate citizen complaints.
- A new "Mental Health/Substance Abuse" detective was created to focus on outreach and follow-up on all mental health and substance abuse calls within the city.
- A new "Community Engagement/Social Media Team" was created to increase visibility and engagement within the community.
- Reinstated HUB program with area departments and social service agencies.
- Supervisory personnel sent to FBI LEEDA (Law Enforcement Executive Development Association) training.

Goals for FY24

- Continuing pursuit of Accreditation through the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission (MPAC) and conducting a Certification assessment.
- Increase training for all personnel, including sending all supervisory personnel to FBI LEEDA training(s).
- Institute recurring "Community Meetings" where members of the community and the police can engage and discuss various topics.
- Increase "community engagement" events focusing on marginalized members of the community and those who historically have not interacted with the police.