



# CITY OF MELROSE

## OFFICE OF THE ASSESSOR

Sarah MacLellan  
*Chief Assessor*

City Hall, 562 Main Street  
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176  
Telephone - (781) 979-4103  
assessor@cityofmelrose.org

### MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable Melrose City Council  
From: Sarah MacLellan  
Re: FY 2025 Assessing Department Budget (141)  
Date: May 2, 2024

In preparation for review of the Fiscal Year 2025 Department Budgets, I am providing the Honorable City Council with the following information regarding the proposed budget for the Assessing Department.

The Assessing Department is currently staffed by three full-time employees:

- Chief Assessor - Sarah MacLellan
- Assistant Assessor - Tina Salerno
- Head Clerk - Linda DiTonno

The Board of Assessors:

Sarah MacLellan - Chair

Cathy Gulino - Vice-chair

Lee Phelan – Clerk

The Department continues to utilize the Property Tax Work off Program and currently has a participant assisting with administrative tasks in the office three hours per week.

In FY 2024 there were several staffing changes in the Assessing Department. In October, Assistant Assessor Tristan Hoare departed to pursue other opportunities. Tina Salerno was promoted to the position after serving in the Head Clerk position for 1.5 years. While the original hire to fill the vacancy in the Head Clerk role did not meet the needs and expectations of the Department, the position was successfully filled by Linda DiTonno in May. Linda's skills and experience align closely with the Department's requirements, and we are excited to have her join our team.

The proposed Assessing Budget for FY 2025 has an overall decrease of .01%. There is a slight decrease in the Salary & Wage line resulting from the staffing changes in the Department. All salaries come from the same budget. There are no other proposed changes in the Assessors Department Budget for FY 2025.

In cities and towns that have approved significant Debt Exclusions, it is typical for Assessors Offices to see a surge in inquiries and Property Tax Abatement Applications. The Assessors Department expects this increase in activity and will be prepared to answer questions and serve our residents accordingly.

Should additional local options for Property Tax Exemptions or other property tax relief be adopted by the City Council and the Mayor for FY2025, the Assessors Department will be charged with implementing these programs and rolling them out to eligible and potentially eligible applicants. This is an item the Department will monitor closely and plan for as necessary.

While the Assessing Department is responsible for administering motor vehicle excise tax, real, personal, and motor vehicle excise tax abatements, and all property tax exemptions as allowed by law, the two key priorities of the Department are as follows:

- Fulfill our legal obligations by fairly and equitably assessing all property in the city. This requires adequate resources for staff training, updated technology, and ongoing maintenance of our data management systems.
- Maximizing New Growth Value. We are constantly seeking and implementing new and innovative approaches to discover New Growth. By continuing to invest in these initiatives, the city will maximize opportunity for adding New Growth dollars to the tax base.