



CITY OF MELROSE

Legal Department

Shannon Phillips

City Solicitor

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To: Honorable Melrose City Council
From: Shannon Phillips, City Solicitor
Re: FY2025 Operating Budget- Office of the City Solicitor (151)
Date: May 2, 2024

In preparation for City Council's review of the Fiscal Year 2025 Department budgets, I am providing the Honorable Melrose City Council with the following information regarding the proposed budget for the Office of the City Solicitor.

The Solicitor's Office is currently staffed by three employees:

- Shannon Phillips, City Solicitor
- Amy Lindquist, Assistant City Solicitor for School and Labor
- Tanji Cifuni, Executive Assistant

Tanji Cifuni joined our office in FY24 as the new Executive Assistant. Tanji brought with her prior experience as a paralegal, previously worked as Community Development Director with the Town of Winthrop for four years, and as Assistant to the Town Manager in Winthrop for ten years before that. She is knowledgeable in all areas of municipal law, and has been a real asset to our office, and all of City Hall, with her work ethic, infectious personality, and skills. As part of her job, she also serves as Clerk to the Liquor Commission and is currently working to help the City implement a new software program that will streamline public records processing.

Our office's budget has minimal increases for upcoming FY25. As can be seen in the line items of our budget, a substantial portion of our department's budget is used to cover the City's cost for property and liability insurance. This year, we are estimating a 3.9% increase in our insurance premium due to insurance rate increases and credits on our account. However, we are actively working with our insurance agent to institute best risk management practices and policies which will enable the City to receive more competitive quotes for FY25 in the hopes of coming in below that number.

This past year, in working with our new insurance agent, we have improved on the quality of City coverages in a number of areas including Cyber Liability coverage. We have also instituted a process wherein our insurance company reviews and provides necessary insurance certificates

and coverage limits for various types of contracts which ensure the City is in the best position from a risk-management perspective.

This coming FY25 our office is working to centralize and streamline the public records process for the City of Melrose with public records requests for the City and Schools flowing directly through our office. To aid in this, we are working with IT on implementing a new software program which will track all public records requests, deadlines for responses, help with redactions, make it easy to upload and produce responsive documentation, and save City time and resources in responding.