Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

The Seventeenth Regular Meeting, October 13, 2026

City Council

Isaac B. “Zac” Bears
Anna Callahan
Emily Lazzaro
Matt Leming
Liz Mullane
George A. Scarpelli
Justin Tseng

This meeting will take place at 7:00 P.M. in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor, Medford City Hall, 85 George P. Hassett Drive, Medford, MA and via Zoom.

Zoom
Link: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85778062365?pwd=vHecvOnN5bk76CEJmNZn8SCNpNeeRX.1
Call-in Number: +13126266799,,85778062365#,,,,*396074# US (Chicago)
Live: Channel 22 (Comcast), Channel 43 (Verizon), YouTube, and medfordtv.org.

To submit written comments, please email ccmembers@medford-ma.gov.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

ANNOUNCEMENTS, ACCOLADES, REMEMBRANCES, REPORTS, AND RECORDS

26-168 - Offered by Liz Mullane, City Councilor

Resolution to Invite Residents to Ward 5 Neighborhood Meeting on October 20th

26-176 - Offered by Isaac Bears, Council President

Resolution to Invite Residents to the Harvest Your Energy Festival on October 17th

26-177 - Offered by Isaac Bears, Council President

Resolution to Invite Residents to Sarah Bradlee Fulton Day on October 17th

Records

The Records of the Meeting of September 29, 2026 were passed to Councilor Tseng.

Reports of Committees

24-033 - Offered by Isaac Bears, Council President

Committee of the Whole, September 30, 2026, Report

MOTIONS, ORDERS, AND RESOLUTIONS

26-142B - Offered by City Council

City Council Response to Paper 26-142 (Law Department Appropriations)

26-142C - Offered by City Council

City Council Response to Paper 26-142 (Fire Chief Evans and Funding for City Solicitor)

26-178 - Offered by Isaac Bears, Council President, Justin Tseng, City Councilor

Resolution to Discuss a PILOT and Community Benefits Framework for Medford

26-179 - Offered by Isaac Bears, Council President, Justin Tseng, City Councilor

Resolution to Request an Update from the Mayor Regarding the City Charter

26-181 - Offered by George Scarpelli, City Councilor, Isaac Bears, Council President

Order to Transfer and Authorize the Sale of McCormick Avenue Parcels

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

26-093
Submitted by Mayor Breanna Lungo-Koehn

Veto and Objection to Amendments to the Medford Zoning Ordinance - Boston Avenue Neighborhood Corridor District

26-133
Submitted by Mayor Breanna Lungo-Koehn

Capital and General Stabilization Fund Appropriation Requests (Request 2 - Police Chief Search)

26-142
Submitted by Mayor Breanna Lungo-Koehn

Supplemental Appropriation for the Fiscal Year 2027

26-180
Submitted by Mayor Breanna Lungo-Koehn

Reappropriations of Capital Stabilization Fund for Medford Public Schools

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To participate outside of Zoom, please e-mail REliseo@medford-ma.gov.

Public Participation - Micah-Shalom Kesselman

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

26-003 **Appointment of a City Messenger for 2026 and 2027**

IN CITY COUNCIL JANUARY 6, 2026

TABLED

26-063 **Resolution to Update the Ordinance Establishing the Medford Commission for Persons with Disabilities**

IN CITY COUNCIL	JULY 14, 2026	APPROVED FOR FIRST READING
ADVERTISED	JULY 30, 2026	MEDFORD TRANSCRIPT & SOMERVILLE JOURNAL
IN CITY COUNCIL	AUGUST 4, 2026	ELIGIBLE FOR THIRD READING

Reports Due/Deadlines

16-574 University Accountability Report (Next Report Due in November 2026)

22-026 Quarterly Presentation on City's Financial Health by Chief Financial Officer/Auditor

22-027 Monthly Copy of Warrant Articles from Chief Financial Officer/Auditor

Adjournment

Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE	SPONSORED BY
October 13, 2026	Liz Mullane, City Councilor

AGENDA ITEM

26-168 - Resolution to Invite Residents to Ward 5 Neighborhood Meeting on October 20th

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Be it Resolved by the Medford City Council that we invite the residents of Ward 5 to attend the Ward 5 Neighborhood Meeting on October 20th at 7PM at the Missituk Elementary School. This meeting will be hosted by Councilor Callahan and Councilor Tseng, and residents are welcome to attend and discuss improvements they would like to see in their neighborhood.

For more information and for a Zoom link when it is available, please visit the City Council Agenda Portal.

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

None

Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE	SPONSORED BY
October 13, 2026	Isaac Bears, Council President

AGENDA ITEM

26-176 - Resolution to Invite Residents to the Harvest Your Energy Festival on October 17th

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Be it Resolved by the Medford City Council that we invite residents to attend the Harvest Your Energy Festival on Saturday, October 17th from 12:00 to 3:00 pm at Riverbend Park.

For more details about the event visit https://medfordenergy.org/gogreen/harvest-your-energy-festival/

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

None

Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE	SPONSORED BY
October 13, 2026	Isaac Bears, Council President

AGENDA ITEM

26-177 - Resolution to Invite Residents to Sarah Bradlee Fulton Day on October 17th

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Be it Resolved by the Medford City Council that we invite residents to attend Sarah Bradlee Fulton Day on Saturday, October 17th from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Salem Street Burying Ground

For more details about the event please visit the City of Medford Events Calendar.

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

None

Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE	SPONSORED BY
October 13, 2026	Isaac Bears, Council President

AGENDA ITEM

26-142C - City Council Response to Paper 26-142 (Fire Chief Evans and Funding for City Solicitor)

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Be it Resolved by the Medford City Council that we request that Fire Chief Evans appear before the Council at the October 13th meeting to answer questions.

Be it Further Resolved that we request an answer from the Mayor regarding whether if the full year of the City Solicitor's salary were to be funded by the Council, would the Mayor post that Job and hire a Solicitor or would she use those funds for other outside counsel.

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

None

Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE	SPONSORED BY
October 13, 2026	Isaac Bears, Council President, Justin Tseng, City Councilor

AGENDA ITEM

26-178 - Resolution to Discuss a PILOT and Community Benefits Framework for Medford

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

WHEREAS, the Medford City Council has previously sought to establish a more transparent and representative framework for Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT), including through Papers 20-021 and 20-053, which resulted in the preparation of a draft PILOT Commission ordinance, and the Council's 2024–2025 Governing Agenda subsequently contemplated a Community Benefits Agreement Ordinance providing for community participation in negotiations with major development projects and nonprofit institutions; and

WHEREAS, Medford's last written PILOT agreement with Tufts University expired in 2018, the subsequent arrangement was not memorialized in a publicly available written agreement, and Medford currently lacks a permanent, publicly established process through which residents and the City Council can participate in defining and negotiating PILOT contributions and community benefits; and

WHEREAS, large nonprofit institutions and major development projects can have significant and lasting impacts on Medford's neighborhoods, housing, infrastructure, public services, and finances, and the City would benefit from a transparent and consistent framework for community participation, institutional dialogue, negotiated community benefits, and public accountability;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Medford City Council discuss the development of a comprehensive PILOT and Community Benefits framework, including revisiting and updating the previously drafted PILOT Commission ordinance and developing a Community Benefits Agreement ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

None

Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE	SPONSORED BY
October 13, 2026	Isaac Bears, Council President, Justin Tseng, City Councilor

AGENDA ITEM

26-179 - Resolution to Request an Update from the Mayor Regarding the City Charter

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Whereas, the voters of the City of Medford approved a new City Charter at the last municipal election on November 4th, 2025; and

Whereas, members of the City Council and School Committee met with the Mayor and representatives of the City Administration several times this year regarding City Charter implementation; and

Whereas, the City Administration has not provided a formal response to the City Council and School Committee regarding City Charter Implementation; and

Whereas, the City Clerk has not received any communication regarding the City Charter, a copy of the finalized language, and how it should be codified in the City's Municode; and

Whereas, the City Council and City Clerk are not aware whether the state has been informed regarding the City Charter; now, therefore:

Be it Resolved by the Medford City Council that we urgently request that the City Administration submit the City Charter and the certification from the Department of Elections to the City Clerk to be codified in Municode.

Be it Further Resolved that we urgently request that the City Administration meet with the City Council and School Committee to finalize an implementation plan for the City Charter.

Be it Further Resolved that the City Administration provide an update on the submission of the City Charter to all relevant state agencies.

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

None

Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE	SPONSORED BY
October 13, 2026	George Scarpelli, City Councilor, Isaac Bears, Council President

AGENDA ITEM

26-181 - Order to Transfer and Authorize the Sale of McCormick Avenue Parcels

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Whereas, the City is the owner of two parcels of land located on McCormack Avenue, each containing 3,600 square feet, more or less, identified as the Assessors' as Parcels F-13/37 and F-13/38, and described in Certificate of Title No. 166463 filed with the Middlesex South Registry District of the Land Court (together, the "City Property");

Whereas, the City Property has been vacant and unused since the City acquired the City Property in 1950 pursuant a tax taking, and is surplus to the needs of the City;

Whereas, there is an urgent need to promote and develop affordable housing in the City of Medford and the region;

Whereas, the sale of the City Property will benefit the City by putting the City Property to productive and tax-generating uses; and

Whereas, the proceeds of said sale may be used by the City for the purpose of promoting affordable housing; and

Whereas, now that the Affordable Housing Trust has been operating for over a year and the Council has reviewed the AHT annual action plan since the vote of the Council not to approve a similar order in April 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED BY THE MEDFORD CITY COUNCIL:

1. That the City Council hereby declares that the City Property is surplus to the needs of the City and available for disposition; and
2. That the City Council hereby transfers the care, custody and control of the City Property from the tax custodian for tax title purposes to the Mayor for general municipal purposes and/or for the

purpose of disposition on such terms and conditions as is in the best interests of the City; and
3. That the Mayor be authorized to convey the City's right, title and interest in said City Property, provided that said sale is in compliance with the provisions of General Laws Chapter 30B, the Uniform Procurement Act, and to take any and all other action as may be necessary or appropriate to accomplish said disposition; and
4. That this order shall take effect upon passage.

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

None

Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE	SPONSORED BY
October 13, 2026	

AGENDA ITEM

26-093 - Veto and Objection to Amendments to the Medford Zoning Ordinance - Boston Avenue Neighborhood Corridor District

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

WHEREAS, at the Fifteenth Regular Meeting of the Medford City Council on September 15, 2026 the Council voted to approve the Amendments to the Medford Zoning Ordinance - Boston Avenue Neighborhood Corridor District as follows:

Motion to adopt the CD board recommendations; remove footnote #6 regarding the stepback for North Street; amend 94-9.8.5(3)(j) to read "Up to 20% of total residents may be non-students. The management team shall document these residential categories at the start of each semester and report to the City upon request. All other residents shall be enrolled at an educational institution."; and to approve the Boston Avenue zoning to be ordained, made by Councilor Scarpelli, seconded by Councilor Tseng.

Motion to amend motion of Councilor Scarpelli on the main paper to change Purpose Built Student Housing in the BA3 subdistrict from special permit to by right made by Councilor Leming, seconded by Vice President Lazarro. Motion to amend failed on a vote of three in favor, four opposed (Councilors Callahan, Mullane, Scarpelli, and Tseng opposed).

Motion on B paper to refer questions to legal counsel regarding Section 94-9.8.5(3)(j) language requiring regarding a specific residency or a specific school to legal counsel and Purpose Built Student Housing as by-right vs by special permit as part of the clean up zoning, made by Councilor Scarpelli, seconded by Councilor Tseng. Approved on a Roll Call vote of Seven in favor, Zero opposed.

Vote on original motion: Approved on a Roll Call vote of Seven in favor, Zero opposed.

Motion to reconsider Boston Avenue Zoning made by Councilor Tseng, seconded by Councilor Callahan. Motion approved on a Roll Call vote of Six in favor, One opposed (President Bears).

Motion to adopt the CD board recommendations; remove footnote #6 regarding the stepback for North Street; amend 94-9.8.5(3)(j) to read "Up to 20% of total residents may be non-students. The management team shall document these residential categories at the start of each semester and report to the City upon request. All other residents shall be enrolled at an educational institution."; and to approve the Boston Avenue zoning to be ordained, made by Councilor Scarpelli, seconded by Councilor Tseng.

Motion to amend motion of Councilor Scarpelli on the main paper to change Purpose Built Student Housing in the BA3 subdistrict from special permit to by right made by Councilor Leming, seconded by Vice President Lazarro. Motion to amend approved on a vote of four in favor, three opposed (Councilors Callahan, Mullane, and Scarpelli opposed).

Motion on B paper to refer questions to legal counsel regarding Section 94-9.8.5(3)(j) language requiring language regarding a specific residency or a specific school to legal counsel and Purpose Built Student Housing as by-right vs by special permit as part of the clean up zoning, made by Councilor Scarpelli, seconded by Councilor Callahan. Approved on a Roll Call vote of Seven in favor, Zero opposed.

Vote on original motion: Approved on a Roll Call vote of Seven in favor, Zero opposed; and

WHEREAS, on September 23, 2026 Mayor Breanna Lungo-Koehn issued a veto of the Boston Avenue Neighborhood Corridor District zoning amendment with objections related to the Purpose Built Student Housing by-right use in the BA-3 subdistrict (attached in packet); now, therefore:

Be it Resolved by the Medford City Council that we will review the Mayor's veto of the Boston Avenue Neighborhood Corridor District and the specific objections to the ordinance submitted by the Mayor to the City Council.

The full text of the Boston Avenue Neighborhood Corridor District Zoning may be viewed in the Records of the Fifteenth Regular Meeting of the City Council at https://medfordma.portal.civicclerk.com/

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2026.09.15 Boston Ave Mayor Veto

MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR BREANNA LUNGO-KOEHN

September 23, 2026

RECEIVED
CITY CLERK
MEDFORD, MASS.
2026 SEP 23 PM 3:31

Via Hand Delivery
To the Honorable President and
Members of the Medford City Council
Medford City Hall
Medford, MA 02155

Re: Purpose-built Student Housing Amendment

Dear President Bears and Members of the City Council:

After careful consideration, I have concluded that I must veto the by right purpose-built student housing amendment to the Boston Avenue Neighborhood Corridor District, reviewed as part of Agenda Item 26-093 "Amendments to the Medford Zoning Ordinance- Boston Avenue Neighborhood Corridor District", passed by the City Council after voting it down previously in the same meeting on September 15, 2026. This decision is based not on the substance of the amendment but rather on the circumstances in which the vote occurred, specifically the lack of public participation at the time of the revote and the manner in which the amendment was reconsidered, and, is based on publicly available information regarding the Council's vote on the amendment, after requesting the relevant final papers from the Council, through the City Clerk, multiple times since the meeting.

Please consider this my formal objection and veto to the Amendment.

This amendment, in my opinion, was reconsidered under circumstances that did not provide the level of transparency, public participation and deliberation that a substantive zoning change of this nature requires. Earlier in the evening, while residents, neighbors, and City planning staff were present and participating in the discussion, the Council rejected the proposed amendment by a vote of 4-3 and maintained the requirement that purpose-built student housing receive a special permit. That approach reflected prior consideration by both the City Council and the Community Development Board.

Approximately four hours into the meeting, at about 11 p.m., the Council reconsidered that decision. By that time, most members of the public, neighbors, and City planning staff had left the meeting. With only a small number of individuals remaining in attendance, including a developer interested in building in the affected area of the Hillside neighborhood, a motion was made to reconsider the earlier vote and change the provision from requiring a special permit to allowing purpose-built student housing by right. The motion was seconded and passed by a vote of 4-3.

This is a meaningful zoning change because it removes the special permit process for qualifying development within the designated zoning district. Such a change warrants thoughtful consideration in the presence of the residents, neighbors, planning staff, and other interested parties who participated in the earlier discussion and review of the land use considerations in the City.

MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR BREANNA LUNGO-KOEHN

When the Council initially considered this amendment, members of the public had an opportunity to hear the discussion and provide input. The subsequent reconsideration occurred hours later, after most of those participants had departed. Revisiting the matter under substantially different circumstances undermines the value of the public participation that preceded the original vote and raises legitimate concerns about whether all interested parties had a meaningful opportunity to participate in the process.

Furthermore, the zoning change deviates from the previously agreed upon approach by the City Council and the Community Development Board, which had maintained a special permit requirement for this particular use. The City's planning staff, consultants, and Community Development Board have been engaged in an ongoing effort to thoughtfully implement community-driven zoning changes. A change this significant should be considered through that broader process and with the benefit of meaningful participation from the community.

To be clear, my objection is based on the circumstances surrounding this particular revote rather than an objection to every aspect of the Boston Avenue zoning amendment or to student housing generally. The issue before us is whether a significant change from special permit to by-right development should have been reconsidered and adopted at approximately 11 p.m., after most members of the public and relevant City staff had left the meeting.

Despite the outcome of the September 15 meeting, this issue is not irreversible. The Council has an opportunity to revisit the provision through a public process that provides residents, neighbors, City staff, the Community Development Board, and all other interested parties a meaningful opportunity to participate.

It is my sincere hope that we can move forward together, constructively, transparently, and in partnership, to ensure that zoning changes affecting our neighborhoods are considered through a process that respects public participation and thoughtful planning. For these reasons, and in the interest of maintaining public confidence in our zoning process and ensuring meaningful community involvement, I respectfully submit this formal veto and objection to the Amendment.

Respectfully yours,

B L - K

Breanna Lungo-Koehn
Mayor

RECEIVED
CITY CLERK
MEDFORD, MASS.
2025 SEP 23 PM 3:31

85 George P. Hassett Drive, Medford, MA 02155
781-396-5500 * www.medfordma.org

MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR BREANNA LUNGO-KOEHN

October 7, 2026

Via Electronic Delivery
To the Honorable President and
Members of the Medford City Council
Medford City Hall
85 George P. Hassett Drive
Medford, MA 02155

Re: Supplemental Appropriation for the Fiscal Year 2027

Dear President Bears and Members of the City Council:

I respectfully request and recommend that your Honorable Body approves the following supplemental appropriation for Fiscal Year 2027, to fully restore the balance of the proposed Law Department budget originally presented on June 4, 2026:

	Mayor Proposed 6/4/26	Council's Cumulative Cuts
Salaries	$230,866.60	$146,061.07
Ordinary	$298,700.00	$194,000.00
Total	$529,566.60	**$340,061.07**

And to meet this appropriation, the sum of Three Hundred Forty Thousand Sixty-One Dollars and Seven Cents ($340,061.07) be raised and appropriated from the Fiscal Year 2027 tax levy.

Thank you for your kind attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Breanna Lungo-Koehn
Mayor

MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR BREANNA LUNGO-KOEHN

October 7, 2026

Via Electronic Delivery
To the Honorable President and
Members of the Medford City Council
Medford City Hall
85 George P. Hassett Drive
Medford, MA 02155

Re: Reappropriations of Capital Stabilization Projects Funding

Dear President Bears and City Councilors:

I respectfully request and recommend that your Honorable Body, in accordance with the attached FY27 Capital Budget Changes memorandum dated August 21, 2026 outlined by the School Department and approved by the School Committee on August 24, 2026, approve the following funds to be reappropriated from the listed projects to the proposed projects.

From Project	To Proposed Project	Amount
Add railings to Caron Theater	Replace Intercom Systems at the Brooks, Roberts, and Missituk Schools.	$ 20,000
Flooring/Rug replacement Auditorium/Library		$100,000
Auditorium Seating Repair		$ 50,000
Caron Theater Lighting		$ 40,000
	Total:	**$210,000**

From Project	To Proposed Project	Amount
Roberts Hot Water Tank Replacement	Brooks Chiller Repairs	$ 39,254
	Expanded Scope for Brooks Turf Repairs	$109,000
	Supplement Funding the McGlynn Fridge/Freezer Condenser Replacement	$ 20,008
	Roberts drainage repairs	$ 36,000
	Roberts fire pump repairs	$ 5,040
	Total:	**$209,302**

A representative from the School Department will be available to speak to these requests.

Thank you for your kind attention to this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Breanna Lungo-Koehn
Mayor

Enclosure

Medford Public Schools
489 Winthrop Street, Medford, Massachusetts 02155 Kenneth Lord, Chief Operations Officer

TO: Suzanne Galusi

FROM: Kenneth Lord

RE: FY27 Capital Budget Changes

DATE: August 21, 2026

I recommend the following changes to our FY27 capital budget:

- The State's supplemental budget appropriation provided funding for the following projects included in our capital budget request.. Besides the items below, we completed the railings for the Caron Theater railings in FY26 and do not need the $20,000 budgeted for that project. We can either return the $210,000 to the city or request the funds to replace the intercom systems at the Brooks, Roberts and Missituk Schools.
    - $100,000 Flooring/Rug replacement McGlynn
    - $50,000 Auditorium Seating repair McGlynn
    - $40,000 of the $100,000 funding for Caron Theater lighting repairs
- Reallocate $250,000 Roberts Hot Water Tank project.
    - This project cost was based on an electrification study and the replacement of the gas fired hot water tanks. One tank failed in FY26 and had to be replaced. The consultants for the accelerated repair project have advised against electrification at this time because of the high cost. We recommend replacing the second hot water tank with a gas fired unit for approximately $22,000 and the remaining funds be allocated for:
        - $39,254 Brooks Chiller repairs
        - $109,000 for expanded scope for Brooks turf repairs
        - Approximately $25,000 to supplement funding the McGlynn Fridge/Freezer condenser replacement
        - $36,000 Roberts drainage repairs
        - $5,040 Robers fire pump repairs

Cc. Noel Velez

It is the policy of Medford Public Schools to ensure equal opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, national origin, genetics, or any other characteristic protected by law. Medford Public Schools prohibits any such discrimination or harassment.

City Of Medford
Massachusetts

_____2026

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PETITION

To The Honorable City Council:

The undersigned respectfully request for:

(Please write brief request below)

to read in a memo responsive to certain slanderous, defamatory, and factually untrue statements made by Mayor Lungo-Koehn about myself that were published in the Tufts Daily.

Petitioner's Name: _**Micah-Shalom Kesselman**_____ **Date:** _**10/07/2026**___

Petitioner's Signature: _**/Micah-Shalom Kesselman/**_____

Residence: [redacted]

Place of Business (if applicable): _____

Home/Cell Phone: _[redacted]_____

Business Phone: ___[redacted]_____

Some of you may have read an article in the Tufts Daily, published on September 30th, about the city's legal spending that included some seriously defamatory and outrageous statements from the current Medford Mayor about myself. They have since updated the article with some lines from a rebuttal letter I sent them after the fact, but I am publicly sharing a full version of the letter because it is important to me that the people I work and live with have a complete understanding of everything that transpired here and can trust me and feel safe around me as we continue to fight for a better world and a better Medford.

I want to be very clear--almost every single thing that Breanna Lungo-Koehn stated in regards to myself in the Tufts Daily article was either inaccurate or a complete falsehood, and the incredibly defamatory and dangerous nature of her public statements cannot be understated. As is typical in responding to the increasingly ubiquitous gish gallop tactic in politics these days, it will take a bit of effort to break down Breanna's defamatory statements--certainly more time than it took for her to fabricate them. I will proceed through them in the order in which they were stated.

BREANNA CLAIMED THAT I OFFERED TO REPRESENT THE CITY PRO BONO

I never held myself out to the City to perform any pro bono work related to its defense in the Chertok/Jokelson lawsuit. I am an advanced software and intellectual property attorney, not a municipal law attorney or even a litigator, nor do I have the time or energy to deal with what would clearly be an exceptionally hostile client. When I eventually did enter the case in a professional pro bono capacity, it was on behalf of the Intervenors and was done out of necessity to enable the robust defense that the attorneys at the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee have been providing to the case and the city without cost. They thankfully understood the dire repercussions the case could have not just on Medford but the entirety of the Commonwealth, and so decided to take up representation of the Intervenors after discussions with me.

BREANNA SPELLED MY NAME WRONG

My last name is Kesselman, not “Kessleman.” This is minor, maybe even a little petty, but I think it's a bit rude to not know the last name of the person you are defaming.

I AM FROM MEDFORD, NOT ANY PARTICULAR ACTIVIST GROUP

I am not "from OR," as Breanna stated. I rally and work with a litany of municipal groups in Medford--because the current situation of the city, largely due to historic incompetence from the

executive branch leadership, is so catastrophic that it has largely fallen upon residents to take up the necessary work to protect OUR neighbors and help them thrive. I work with Our Revolution Medford (n.b., "OR" or Our Revolution, is almost completely unrelated to ORM, or Our Revolution Medford) when our goals and work align. I also regularly work with Medford for Palestine, LUCE-Medford Hub, Medford People Power, Safe Medford, Medford Community Response Network, many other municipal organizations in the city, and even just my neighbors. You know, because I give a damn about them.

THE MEDFORD CITY COUNCIL DID NOT TURN DOWN ANY OFFER OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FROM ME, DUE TO MY CONDUCT OR OTHERWISE

As is overwhelmingly clear by now, the City Council did not "decide[] not to go with" me to represent the city because it was never an option and they never had such authority--as the executive branch of the city has reiterated time and time again.

I HAVE NEVER ADVOCATED OR EXPRESSED INTEREST IN VIOLENCE AGAINST ANY PUBLIC OFFICIAL, ELECTED OR OTHERWISE

Now we come to the especially defamatory and uncalled for nonsense. Earlier this year, Breanna did in fact initiate a clearly politically motivated and spurious police investigation into myself and others with whom I organize. It was ostensibly in regards to a Medford People Power--not Safe Medford, which was completely uninvolved in Breanna's attempted intimidation--meeting. As an aside, and in relation to discussion of whether we should continue to push Breanna to implement a model executive order promulgated by the ACLU to protect local organizers against politically motivated targeting and investigation, I apparently said something along the lines of I am happy to push-push-push the Mayor right towards a cliff, but do not think it's worth spending energy pursuing her support on this one. This is very much a paraphrase because it was such an incidental aside that literally no one at the meeting had any idea what was being referenced when Breanna forced the police to investigate.

The detective's own report, which can be publicly retrieved from the Medford Police Department upon request, makes it very, and nearly explicitly, clear that the entire investigation was baseless and thoroughly politically motivated in relation to a contemplated run for Middlesex's 34th District House Representative seat, which I later bowed out of for completely unrelated reasons. Moreover, even the supposed statement which Breanna instrumentalized to initiate a politically motivated investigation against myself and my colleagues, was nothing like an indication that I wanted to "throw [her] off a cliff." It is atrocious and reprehensible that she would make such allegations in the public press.

I have never advocated for or supported violence against any of our elected officials and would never condone such. Hell, I wouldn't condone it against anyone, regardless of their political position. I can admittedly be less than nice, and might talk like a typical New Englander despite being a transplant, but no one would sincerely accuse me of being unkind or advocating political violence.

When I and my colleagues in Medford People Power were first put through all of this political targeting by Breanna, we decided to largely keep the whole matter to ourselves. We felt we had come out the other side and had too much other important work to do to be distracted or intimidated by what was, at the end of the day, utter nonsense from a petty, flailing individual with an unfortunate amount of power for the time being. Now that it has been raised in the public, and deeply mischaracterized and instrumentalized solely to slander me, it appears we will have to engage in the distraction after all. Regardless of whatever rightful legal action I do or do not take against Breanna as an individual, I think it is important to recognize what this kind of conduct means for the city and its residents as a whole.

THE INCREDIBLY DISTRESSING NATURE OF BREANNA S CONDUCT HERE

This defamatory statement from Breanna is especially troubling because it is indicative of at least two very problematic behaviors that have only escalated in recent months. First, she has always engaged in borderline, at this point I would say well over the border, defamatory and disparaging speech about those who are politically opposed to her--especially if they are vocal and unapologetic. Moreover, she has been more than willing to abuse her position and municipal resources to engage in political bullying and intimidation, as we clearly see here.

The second behavior is far more personal to me, as this comes right off the heels of the City Council meeting of September 29th where it was shared that Breanna had not only refused to utilize city resources to publicize the City Council's ward meetings, which they ordained last year, but actively tried to obstruct those meetings by removing them from the city calendar *merely because I had produced a flyer to publicize the meetings and enable some sort of RSVP*. For whatever reason, it is clear that she has decided to target specifically me and now is doing whatever she can to harm me, personally, professionally, and socially, even if it puts bystanders like my fellow organizers or my family, or even the fundamental democratic systems and axioms of the city itself in danger.

Everything about how Breanna is conducting herself right now is simply untenable, and I sincerely urge her to deeply introspect and work towards a more healthy and reasonable mode of behavior. For her own sake and the sake of the city, if not for mine.