



City of Melrose

Appropriations & Oversight Committee

Thursday, February 26, 2026, 7:15 PM
City Council Chamber, 1st Floor
562 Main Street, Melrose, MA 02176

AGENDA

To watch this meeting live visit mmtv3.org or local cable station MMTV (Channels 3, 15, 22 on Comcast or Channels 37, 38, 39 on Verizon)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Kimberly Vandiver	Vice Chair
Jason Chen	
Cal Finocchiaro	
Maya Jamaledine	
Manjula Karamcheti	
Elizabeth Kowal	
John Obremski	
Christopher Park	
Ryan Williams	
William Bradley Freeman	President, Ex Officio
Devin Romanul	Chair

II. MINUTES APPROVAL

Appropriations & Oversight Committee Meeting January 20, 2026 7:15 PM

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

When: Feb 26, 2026 07:15 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Topic: Appropriations & Oversight Committee Meeting

Join from PC, Mac, iPad, or Android:
<https://cityofmelrose-org.zoom.us/j/97822197550?pwd=Ex2aPaodVhKtCwP0v4aFNHCarsl9JE.1>
Passcode: 354991
Webinar ID: 978 2219 7550

IV. ORDERS

- A. **(ID # 2026-305):** Authorizing a Bond under the Water Enterprise System through MWRA Local Water System Assistance Program bonds in the amount of Eight Hundred Forty Eight Thousand Six Hundred dollars (\$848,600)

V. REQUESTS

- A. **(ID # 2026-307):** Appropriation in the amount of \$340,000 from Capital Stabilization for DPW Refuse/Yard Waste Truck

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The City of Melrose does not discriminate based on disability and is committed to hosting accessible meetings and events. Individuals with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication, written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, in order to access the programs and activities of the City of Melrose or to attend meetings, should contact the City's ADA Coordinator, Polina Latta platta@cityofmelrose.org.



CITY OF MELROSE

Office of Treasurer-Collector

Kathryn J Armata
Treasurer-Collector

City Hall, 562 Main Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Treasurer - (781) 979-4162
Collector - (781) 979-4120

MEMORANDUM

To: Melrose City Council
Mayor Grigoraitis

From: Kathryn Armata

Date: January 23, 2026

Re: Loan Order –MWRA 0% loan – Grove Street water main improvements

ORDERED: That the City appropriates \$848,600, to pay costs of water main improvements, including designing, engineering and constructing water main improvements that will address the removal of lead water service connections throughout the City's water system, including but not limited to cement-lined ductile iron water mains on Grove Street from Lebanon Street to Argyle Street, and including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto; that to meet this appropriation, the Treasurer, with the approval of the Mayor, is authorized to borrow said amount pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 8(5) of the General Laws, or pursuant to any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the City therefor; that the Treasurer, with the approval of the Mayor, is authorized to borrow all or a portion of such amount from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (the "MWRA") and, in connection therewith, to enter into a loan agreement and/or financial assistance agreement with the MWRA and otherwise to contract with the MWRA with respect to such loan; and that the Mayor is authorized to take any other action necessary to carry out this project.

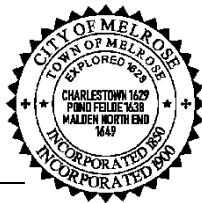
Pursuant to Section 56-14 of the City Ordinances, attached is a projection of the principal and interest costs on the bonds proposed to be authorized by the following loan order under consideration by the City Council. The payment schedule attached assumes a 10-year borrowing term, an interest rate assumption of 0% over the life of the borrowing, and a level debt service payment schedule. The debt service on these bonds will be paid from the Water Enterprise Fund. The borrowing will be entirely offset by maturing loans and will not impact future rates.

Financial Impact

MWRA Water Main Bonds
 Local Water System Assistance Program
 0% interest

\$ 848,600.00

Debt Schedule		
	Principal	Interest
4/15/2026	\$ 84,860.00	0.00
4/15/2027	\$ 84,860.00	0.00
4/14/2028	\$ 84,860.00	0.00
4/14/2029	\$ 84,860.00	0.00
4/15/2030	\$ 84,860.00	0.00
4/15/2031	\$ 84,860.00	0.00
4/14/2032	\$ 84,860.00	0.00
4/14/2033	\$ 84,860.00	0.00
4/15/2034	\$ 84,860.00	0.00
4/15/2035	\$ 84,860.00	0.00
	\$ 848,600.00	\$ -



CITY OF MELROSE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Administration-Engineering-Water-Sewer-Facilities

Parks-Forestry-Highway-Sanitation-Cemetery-Fleet

Jay Coy, P.E., PMP

Acting City Engineer

**City Hall, 562 Main Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176**

Telephone – (781) 979-4172

E-mail: jcoy@cityofmelrose.org

January 20, 2026

To: Melrose City Council
Mayor Jennifer Grigoraitis

From: Elena Proakis Ellis, DPW Director
Jay Coy, Acting City Engineer

cc: Kerriann Golden, CFO/Auditor
Kathryn Armata, Treasurer Collector
Shannon Philips, City Solicitor
James Troup, Assistant DPW Director – Administration & Finance

Re: Authorization to borrow LWSAP funds for CY2026 Water Main Improvements

The Melrose DPW is proposing a project for the MWRA Local Water System Assistance Program (LWSAP) to fund the CY2026 Annual Water Main Improvements. The estimated cost of the program is \$848,600 and includes, but may not be limited to, the following work:

- Grove Street (1450 LF) – This street ranked “poorest” in the City’s roadway condition assessment. The project includes new 8-inch and 12-inch diameter cement-lined ductile iron water mains from Lebanon Street to Argyle Street, to be installed prior to final paving presently scheduled for 2027. Final pavement restoration will be funded by other sources and completed by the City’s paving contractor. This neighborhood was ranked as a Phase II improvement in the 2017 water system CEP.

The rate model shows that there is older debt rolling off in FY26 such that there should be no rate impact from the proposed borrowing. The funds borrowed pursuant to this Order will be deposited into a designated fund as determined by the Finance Department, similar to our other MWRA water and sewer loans.

For this purpose, The Department of Public Works respectfully requests the City Council to review and consider the attached Treasurer’s bond order.



CITY OF MELROSE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Administration-Engineering-Water-Sewer-Facilities
Parks-Forestry-Highway-Sanitation-Cemetery-Fleet

Elena Proakis Ellis, P.E., BCEE
Director of Public Works

City Yard, 72 Tremont Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone - (781) 665-0142
E-mail: eproakis@cityofmelrose.org

January 28, 2026

To: City Council
Jennifer Grigoraitis, Mayor
Lauren Grymek, Chief of Staff
Kerri Golden, CFO/Auditor
From: Elena Proakis Ellis, DPW Director
CC: James Troup, DPW Deputy Director Administration and Finance
Matt Spinale, Operations Manager

RE: Capital Stabilization Request for Replacement of Truck #26 – Refuse Truck

The Department of Public Works respectfully requests an appropriation from Capital Stabilization in the amount of \$340,000 to replace Truck #26, the City's Class 8 refuse truck. The DPW is proposing to replace this truck with a new diesel refuse truck of similar, but slightly smaller size.

Truck #26 is used predominately for curbside yard waste pickup by the City's in-house forces. The existing truck that will be replaced is in need of a repair in the range of \$10,000 to \$15,000, and Truck #26 has been identified as in need of replacement for the last four years. The City has routinely spent between \$10,000 and \$30,000 on repairs for this truck over the last decade. Rather than sinking more funds into repairs, we recommend replacing this aging vehicle. The recommended useful life for a refuse truck is on the order of 7 to 10 years, while Truck #26 is now 21 years old, with about 120,000 miles.

In addition to being used for yard waste collection, the new truck will also be able to tip school dumpsters, providing redundancy with the DPW's smaller refuse truck, Truck #18. While we were able to purchase an electric vehicle to replace Truck #18, which is used for municipal barrels, the collection of yard waste is much more energy intensive, with constant operation of the hopper throughout the day. We do not believe an electric vehicle is feasible to accomplish this task at this time. Thus, we are proposing to purchase a 25-yard rear loading refuse truck from a state contract vendor under State Contract VEH111 for heavy duty vehicles.

We formally request an appropriation from Capital Stabilization in the amount of \$340,000 for the purpose of funding the immediate purchase of a new refuse vehicle. The Department of Public Works will be the custodian of these funds in an account set up by the Auditor and will be the responsible Project Manager.

Thank you for your support and consideration. We would be happy to call or meet with anyone who wishes to ask any questions in advance of the City Council meeting.



CITY OF MELROSE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
*Administration-Engineering-Water-Sewer-Facilities
Parks-Forestry-Highway-Sanitation-Cemetery-Fleet*

Elena Proakis Ellis, P.E., BCEE
Director of Public Works

**City Yard, 72 Tremont Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone - (781) 665-0142
E-mail: eproakis@cityofmelrose.org**

To: Jennifer Grigoraitis, Mayor
Kerri Golden, CFO/Auditor
Date: February 6, 2026
From: Elena Proakis Ellis, Director of Public Works
CC: Jim Troup, Deputy Director Administration and Finance
Matt Spinale, Operations Manager
Derek Lanphere, Operations General Foreman

RE: Vehicle Condition and Replacement Request

The Department of Public Works has updated our vehicle replacement program to reflect vehicles that have been replaced in the last several years and our current needs. We are at a critical point with trucks that are failing and are in dire need of replacement. By the end of our recent large snowstorm, eighteen vehicles used for snow and ice response were out of service. One week later, we still have eleven of those vehicles down. The following trucks are recommended for replacement as soon as possible and have been programmed into a three-year replacement plan.

Trash Packer

Truck 26 - 2004 International Packer - 120,000 Miles - Sanitation Division (yard waste/municipal waste)



Condition: Rotted body, hydraulic lines in need of replacement, rotted hopper, currently out of service

Replacement Cost: \$340,000

Additional Notes: This vehicle is critical to the department's day-to-day operations. It is used for curbside yard waste pickup and occasionally for municipal barrel collection. Replacement of this vehicle has been determined to be more cost-effective over its life cycle than outsourcing yard waste pickup or continuing to repair this unreliable and old vehicle. The DPW has identified a suitable replacement vehicle that is immediately available from a state-contract vendor. A winch will be included on the new vehicle to provide redundancy for municipal and school building dumpster collection.

Heavy Duty Trucks

Truck 21 - 1999 International Dump – 78,000 Miles - Highway Division (out of service)



Condition: Cracked frame, rotted floor, failed inspection.

Replacement Cost: \$350,000 - Ford F650 or F700 (non CDL)

Additional Information: This truck is proposed to be replaced with a hook lift truck with a brine tank instead, to expand the City's capacity to use liquid brine. Other attachments could include a dump body and a salter. We would also like to purchase a catch basin cleaning clamshell for this truck, which would cost approximately an additional \$100,000 and could be added in a later year. This proposed replacement will allow the City more versatility and year-round usage of this truck. The existing truck has traditionally been used predominantly for winter operations, with minimal utility in other seasons.

Truck 29 - 1997 International – 35,000 Miles - Highway Division (snow operations)



Condition: Rotted floor, failing frame, difficulty passing annual inspection

Replacement Cost: \$230,000

Light Dump Trucks

Truck 33 - 2012 Chevy 3500 Dump w/Liftgate – 70,000 Miles - Parks & Forestry Division (also used for snow operations)



Condition: Rotted holes in floor, difficulty passing inspection

Replacement Cost: \$110,000

Additional Information: This is the primary vehicle used for pulling the landscape trailer and for parks maintenance.

Truck 35 - 2011 Chevy 3500 Dump – 53,000 Miles - Parks & Forestry Division (also used for snow operations)



Condition: Rotted floor, difficulty passing inspection

Replacement Cost: \$110,000

Truck 38 - 2012 Chevy 3500 Dump – 70,000 Miles - Parks & Forestry Division (also snow operations)



Condition: Rotted floor, difficulty passing inspection.

Replacement Cost: \$110,000

Truck 47 - 2011 Chevy 3500 - 52,000 Miles – Cemetery Division (also snow operations)



Condition: Rotted bed.

Replacement Cost: \$110,000

Truck 48 - 2009 Chevy 3500 - 58,000 Miles – Cemetery Division (also snow operations)



Condition: Rotted body and bed, difficulty passing inspections.

Replacement Cost: \$110,000

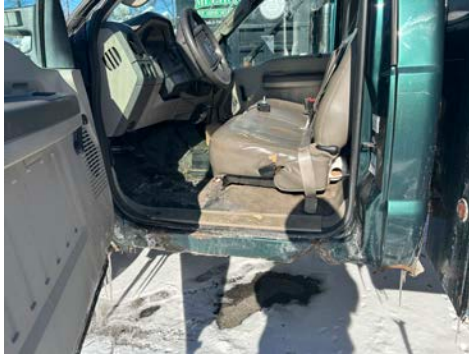
Truck 56 – 2006 Ford F350 SD – 75,000 Miles – Facilities Division Utility Body (snow operations)



Condition: Normal wear – 20 years old, rusted components

Replacement Cost: \$80,000 to \$110,000

Truck 58 – 2008 Ford F350 SD – 33,000 Miles – Facilities Division (also snow operations)



Conditions: Rusting floor, normal wear of 18 year old vehicle
Replacement Cost: \$80,000 to \$110,000

Pickup Trucks

Truck 59 – 2007 Chevy Colorado – 48,000 miles – Facilities Building Systems Supervisor



Conditions: Rusted

body, normal wear of 19 year old vehicle
Replacement Cost: \$65,000

Additional Information: Could be considered for replacement with an electric vehicle, though it is normally stored at Melrose High School where charging capability presently does not exist

Specialty Equipment

Truck 50 - 1997 Case Backhoe – Cemetery Division (also snow operations)



Condition: Rotted floors, primary vehicle for all cemetery operations.
Replacement Cost: \$210,000

Truck 77 - 1997 Volvo L90 C Loader - Highway Division (snow operations)



Conditions: Rotted body and in need of tires. Engine overhaul needed.
Replacement Cost: \$250,000

Truck 64 – 1997 Ford F350 Utility-Boom Bucket Truck – 46,000 miles – Highway Division



Conditions: Rusty frame, normal wear for 29 year old truck
Replacement Cost: \$150,000

Vehicle 1 – 2008 Chevrolet Trailblazer SUV – 102,800 miles – Engineering Division

Condition: Rotted body and needed engine overhaul that was cost-prohibitive. Retired vehicle and disposed of as surplus. No photos are available.

Replacement Cost: \$50,000

Additional Information: Can be replaced with an electric vehicle, since charging is available at City Hall and this vehicle does not perform snow or other 24/7 operations. The Engineering Division is presently operating with no City vehicles.

Vehicle 40 – 2004 Chevrolet 1500 Cargo Van – 150,000 miles – Facilities Van

Condition: Vehicle was inoperable so was taken out of service and disposed of as surplus. No photos are available.

Replacement Cost: \$70,000

Additional Information: Could be replaced with a Transit-type van or similar.

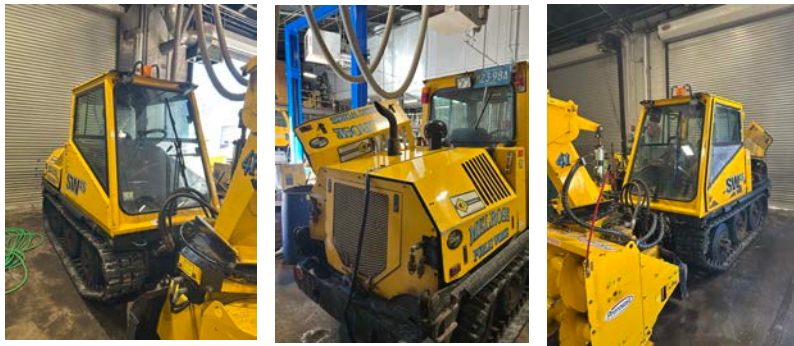
HB-2 – 2012 Falcon Asphalt Hotbox – Highway Division



Conditions: Inoperable

Replacement Cost: \$40,000

Vehicle 62 – 2008 Prinoth (Bombardier) SW 4S Sidewalk Plow – Snow Operations



Conditions: Intermittently out-of-service during last several storms

Replacement Cost: \$190,000

Additional Information: Proposed to be replaced with a trackless machine with various attachments that will make it a useable vehicle year-round, rather than dedicated only to snow and ice response.

Vehicle 23 – 2016 Freightliner 114SD Vactor – 19,000 miles – Sewer Division



Conditions: Several components of suction and tank mechanisms have experienced failure in the last few years, sometimes costing upwards of \$25,000 to \$30,000 for individual repairs.

Replacement Cost: \$650,000

Additional Information: The DPW uses the Vactor for both clearing sewer blockages and for vacuum excavation. Excavation can be harder on the equipment but minimizes the risk of damage to surrounding

utilities when digging in tight locations. The DPW is proposing to consider replacing this truck with a model that has a slightly smaller chassis but an equivalent tank size.

Summary

As shown above, the conditions of the vehicles compromise the safety of our staff and jeopardize the levels of services that our residents have come to expect from the DPW. We have exceeded the expected life of these vehicles on both miles and age. Some vehicles present safety concerns with large holes in the floors, potentially allowing exhaust to enter the cabs of those vehicles. Our personnel have welded floors back in and made temporary repairs, but continuing to repair these severely deteriorated vehicles is not practical or cost effective. Snow operations have become increasingly challenging due to a lack of functioning vehicles; in the recent large storm, we had four employees who were unable to perform their jobs by the end of the storm event due to a lack of operational vehicles for them to drive. As noted above, of 18 vehicles that were rendered inoperable during the storm event, eleven continue to be out-of-service, awaiting repairs by our mechanics.

Recommended replacement intervals for fleet vehicles were taken from the report by Matrix Consulting Group specifically evaluating Melrose's fleet, as well as Fleet Counselor Services, a nationally recognized consulting firm.

Vehicle Type	Recommended Useful Life (Fleet Counselor Services Data)	Age of City Vehicles*	Estimated Replacement Cost
Packer – Yard Waste	12 years or 9,000 hours	#26 – 21 years	\$340,000
Heavy Dump Trucks	12 years or 120,000 miles	#21 – 27 years/OOS #29 – 29 years**	\$300,000 \$290,000
Light Dump Trucks	12 years or 120,000 miles	#33 – 14 years #35 – 15 years** #38 – 17 years** #47 – 15 years #48 – 17 years #56 – 20 years** #58 – 18 years**	\$110,000
Pickup Trucks	10 years or 120,000 miles	#59 – 19 years	\$65,000
Backhoe - Cemetery	15 years or 9,000 hours	#50 – 29 years**	\$210,000
Loader	15 years or 10,000 hours	#77 – 29 years**	\$250,000
Bucket Truck – Highway	12 years or 120,000 miles	#64 – 29 years	\$150,000
DPW Engineering	10 years	#1 – 18 years/OOS	\$50,000
DPW Facilities Van	10 years	#40 – 22 years/OOS	\$70,000
Hotbox	15 years	HB-2 – 14 years/OOS	\$40,000
Sidewalk Bombardier	15 years	#62 – 18 years**	\$190,000
Vactor	12 years	#23 – 10 years	\$650,000
TOTAL 3-year cost			\$3,315,000
Average annual cost			\$1,105,000/year
Average annual cost (excluding sewer vehicle)			\$888,333/year

*OOS = Out of Service

**Experienced failure during January 25, 2026 storm

The Melrose DPW fleet vehicles shown above represent approximately \$3.315M in short-term needs. Please note that this list does not include non-DPW fleet needs, such as the Fire Department, Police Department, Council on Aging, Inspectional Services, etc., who also operate vehicles within the City's fleet.

The proposed expenditure of \$1,105,000 per year shown in the table above is very closely in line with Matrix Consulting Group's estimated replacement need of \$1,134,222 annually for Melrose's fleet. When eliminating the cost of the Vactor truck, which would be paid using the Sewer Enterprise Fund, the total annual need is approximately \$888,000. The three-year needs have been broken down into the following proposed plan:

IMMEDIATE:

The following request is being made concurrent with this memorandum:

- A replacement for yard waste/refuse truck #26 has been submitted, for which Capital Stabilization funds are being requested in February 2026. The estimated cost of replacement is \$340,000.

YEAR 1:

For this year's free cash request, DPW recommends replacing the following Public Works vehicles:

- Heavy Dump Truck (#21, already out of service) – proposed to be replaced with a hook lift truck with a brine tank, dump body, and catch basin cleaning clamshell assembly. The estimated cost, including the various style body attachments, is \$300,000.
- Light Dump Trucks (#33, #35, #38, #47 and #48) – we propose replacing these with four one-ton pickup trucks and two smaller pickup trucks. Electric or hybrid vehicles will be considered for the two pickup trucks, depending on whether they will be used for snow operations. The estimated cost for these vehicles is \$110,000 each for the four one-ton trucks and \$70,000 for the two pickup trucks, for a total of \$580,000.

This results in a total free cash request of \$880,000 from the general fund. Sustainable options will be explored for one pickup truck if it is determined it will not be used for snow plowing, consistent with the City's EV-first policy.

In addition, the DPW is pursuing replacement of the Sewer Division's Vactor truck. This specialized equipment has an estimated cost of \$650,000. A budgetary line item has been carried in the Sewer Enterprise Fund of \$80,000 per year, intended to be used toward a lease-to-own Vactor truck. There is enough free cash in the Sewer Enterprise Fund to pay for a \$200,000 downpayment, with annual payments of roughly \$89,000/year over five years. Free cash for the downpayment will be requested in spring 2026 from the Sewer Enterprise Fund's retained earnings balance.

YEAR 2:

We recommend replacement of the following vehicles in Year 2:

- Heavy Dump Truck #29, with an estimated replacement cost of \$230,000
- The Wyoming Cemetery backhoe (#50), estimated to cost \$210,000
- The 2008 Bombadier sidewalk plow. We recommend replacement with a trackless machine that can also be used with attachments for summer operations, with an estimated cost of \$190,000.
- Engineering Division vehicle – this can be replaced with an electric vehicle, given the availability of a charging station at the City Hall parking lot. This replacement is estimated at \$50,000.
- Catch basin clamshell attachment for the new Truck #21 (hook lift) - \$100,000

This amounts to a total of \$780,000 for Year 2 replacement vehicles.

YEAR 3:

We recommend replacement of the following vehicles in Year 3:

- Highway Division bucket truck - \$150,000
- Light trucks (utility bodies for facilities with one salter) - #56 and #58 (\$80,000 to \$110,000 each, depending on what is specified)
- DPW Facilities van #40 - \$70,000
- Pickup truck #59 - \$65,000
- Loader #77 - \$250,000
- Hotbox HB-2 - \$40,000

The resulting request for Year 3 is \$795,000.

The DPW is anxious to get our fleet up to a serviceable level, to allow us to provide both efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the services we provide. We appreciate your consideration of this capital plan for our vehicles over the next three years.