

MPL event offered insights and tips to use technology more intentionally

The Malden Public Library (MPL) recently partnered with Reconnect Malden to hold an event, Tech on Your Terms, featuring three local experts on digital wellness and critical thinking. The purpose of the event was to help people use technology more intentionally. The topic was timely and relevant, as reportedly, people check their cellphones about once every five minutes, and nearly 46% of Americans say they're "addicted" to their devices.

Nearly 70 people, including several City Councillors and the Malden Public Schools Superintendent, attended this panel discussion, where experts provided tips and practical tools to help attendees better navigate tech and avoid (or reduce) mindless scrolling. The event also featured a lively Q&A session with thought-provoking questions

and conversation about the significant impact technology has on people's lives. The free event was open to youth, parents, and all community members, and it concluded with light refreshments and the opportunity for attendees to mix and mingle with the experts.

Malden parent Shaleen Title, a volunteer with Reconnect Malden, helped bring this event to the MPL after having conversations with other local parents about technology and kids. "We were exhausted with decisions about phones, social media, and AI; we were concerned about all of the software being used at school; and we felt like we were dealing with all of this alone," she explained. She helped organize this event "to bring us together and empower us to deal with these topics together."

Some of the experts' biggest

takeaways included teaching children to use their devices (and social media) responsibly, setting limits around children's use of cellphones and social media and encouraging children to spend time with friends—doing activities offline.

The event's three panelists included Dr. Susan Linn, a lecturer in psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and a ventriloquist who appeared on "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood." Among other books, she is the author of "Who's Raising the Kids? Big Tech, Big Business, and the Lives of Children." Another panelist was Dr. Joan Donovan, a Malden-based professor and researcher who explores media manipulation and helps people detect, document and debunk media manipulation campaigns. Panelist Liza Hirsch, the Director of the Children's Justice Unit at the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, works to advance justice and equity for Massachusetts children and youth through civil investigations, litigation, policy and community engagement.



About the Malden Public Library

MPL, which is located at 36 Salem St. in Malden, supports technology in various ways, including free Wi-Fi, tech help drop-in days, loaner laptops for use inside the library, a Library of Things with many tech items available, and circulating Wi-Fi hotspots. The Library of-

fers diverse programming, services and resources for children, teens and adults, and it can be a hub for screen-free learning and connection. The staff encourages parents and kids to dive into physical books, magazines and newspapers; explore free programs like story time and craft

workshops; and use quiet spaces for relaxing, journaling or solving puzzles. Patrons can also engage with others by joining the Library's book clubs, board game nights and other great family-friendly events. Learn more at

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<https://maldenpubliclibrary.org>.

MPL is a private, nonprofit corporation, established with a trust fund from Elisha and Mary Diana Converse in 1885. The Trust

funds the building's maintenance, renovations, artwork and books, with help from generous donations from individuals, families and private foundations. The Board of Trustees—nine Malden residents—oversee the trust.

They are not paid for their work. Compared to other Massachusetts libraries, MPL costs taxpayers less while providing the same essential services.

(Courtesy photos)

LEGAL NOTICE

Invitation to Bid City of Malden Devir Park Phase II Notice to Bidders

LEGAL NOTICE

The City of Malden invites the submission of sealed bids for the Devir Park Phase II project construction. The project area consists of the existing soccer and softball fields on the west side of Devir Park at Fellsway West and Malden Street and the areas immediately surrounding the fields. The scope of work includes demolishing the existing softball backstop and associated concrete wall, pavements, infield mix, players benches, demolishing the soccer field and irrigation system and installing the new soccer and softball fields with related backstop, benches, bleachers (one existing to be reset and one new), foul poles, walkways and associated earthwork, drainage and irrigation improvements as depicted on the project plans. Part of the park shall remain open to the public during construction.

BID OPENING will be held on Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 1:00 pm at the Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development (OSPCD), City Hall, 215 Pleasant Street, 3rd Floor, Malden, MA 02148. A Bid Summary will be made available to all Bidders, and other persons properly interested, within twenty-four (24) hours of the Bid Opening.

Plans, specifications and all bid documents may be obtained electronically (only) from the City of Malden beginning Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 10:00am. Requests for electronic bid documents may be made to Jane Ventrone at jventrone@cityofmalden.org or (781) 324-5720 x 5728. A non-mandatory pre-bid meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 22, 2026 at 11:00am onsite at Devir Park near the softball field at the corner of Malden Street and Fellway West (Route 28).

All sealed bids must be hardcopy (only) and delivered to the Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development (OSPCD) prior to the BID OPENING, as stated above. Bids shall be delivered to OSPCD at Malden City Hall during these hours: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday between the hours of 8:00am - 5:00pm, and Tuesday between 8am - 7pm. The office is closed on Fridays. The bidder assumes the risk of any delay due to mail or other delivery. Bids received after the official BID OPENING will be returned unopened. The City of Malden reserves the right to waive any informalities in Bids, to reject any or all Bids, or to accept any Bid that in their judgment will be in the best interest of the City.

January 16, 2026

~ Home of the Week ~



REVERE - Wonderful one-floor living in this one-owner Ranch style home. 6 rooms, 2-3 bedrooms, spacious living room open to dining room - perfect for entertaining, hardwood flooring, eat-in kitchen with new laminate flooring, freshly painted interior, freshly painted deck for summer enjoyment, easy-to-care-for yard with storage shed, maintenance-free vinyl siding, one car garage under, gas line in from street on side of the house (not to the house) for future use, side street location in desirable neighborhood! Come make this sought-after Ranch your very own! "Welcome home to 40 Rand Street."

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Sen. Lewis announces Virtual Office Hours for January

State Senator Jason Lewis will be holding Virtual Office Hours on Tuesday, January 20, from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. This will replace the regularly scheduled Virtual Office Hours on February 19, due to the celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Any constituent of Senator Lewis is welcome to attend Office Hours, with no appointment necessary, to discuss any personal issue or legislative feedback with the Senator and his staff.

Virtual Office Hours are held on Zoom. Each constituent meets privately with the Senator during the Zoom session. To join the meeting, please visit

it SenatorJasonLewis.com, use the following link address or enter the meeting information on Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83854164671?pwd=eWZlZWQWU0VhZjcE9XSXl5Rk-1BRVd5Zz09>

Meeting ID: 838 5416 4671
Passcode: 234270

Senator Lewis also holds regular in-person Office Hours in each community of the district (Malden, Melrose, Reading, Stoneham, Wakefield and Winchester). For further information or any questions, visit SenatorJasonLewis.com or contact his State House office at 617-722-1206 or Jason.Lewis@masenate.gov.

~ Letter-to-the-Editor ~

A Statement from a Concerned Malden Taxpayer

Dear Editor,

As residents and taxpayer of the City of Malden, we are deeply concerned by recent calls from City Hall to pursue a Proposition 2½ tax override as the solution to the City's current budget challenges.

According to Mayor Gary Christenson, Malden is facing a financial shortfall severe enough to justify raising property taxes. Before taxpayers are asked to pay more, we believe the City has a fundamental obligation to demonstrate that it has fully and responsibly managed the dollars it already collects.

Budget shortfalls do not appear overnight. They are the result of long-term decisions—some of which involve avoidable costs, delayed reforms, and missed opportunities to control spending.

One clear example is the City's employee health insurance expenditures. For years, Malden had the option to transition to more cost-effective health plans, as many surrounding municipalities did. Those changes were not made, and taxpayers are now being asked to absorb the consequences of those decisions.

We also believe it is reasonable—and necessary—to scrutinize spending across all departments, including the school system and municipal administration. Residents deserve transpar-

ent answers to basic questions:

- Where has spending increased most rapidly?
- Which programs lack measurable outcomes or oversight?
- What contracts, benefits, or administrative costs could be renegotiated or restructured?

To date, taxpayers have not been presented with a comprehensive, independent analysis that identifies wasteful spending, inefficiencies, or structural cost drivers. Instead, we are being told that higher taxes are unavoidable. We strongly disagree with that approach.

Before placing a Proposition 2½ override before voters, the City should commission a high-level, third-party financial audit conducted by an independent accounting firm with no political or financial ties to Malden. Such a review should focus on identifying cost-saving opportunities, long-term liabilities, and spending reforms that could reduce or eliminate the need for a tax increase.

This is not about opposing essential services or public education. It is about respecting taxpayers—many of whom are already struggling with rising housing costs, inflation, healthcare expenses, and utility bills.

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