

## New city attorney has long history in business

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By Brett Lake  
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The City of Westminster has wasted little time in finding new legal representation following the retirement of long-time city attorney John Walsh at the end of December.

Elissa Levan, and the law firm of Funk & Bolton, P.A., was introduced Jan. 11 to assume the cities legal tasks.

Levan, 46, resides in the Mt. Washington area of Baltimore County. She brings more than 20 years of legal experience to Westminster.

"I am thrilled about the position, and we are honored to have been chosen," Levan said.

The mother of two said that her passion for law stems back to her stubborn, opinionated and argumentative childhood traits; of which she jokingly said she hopes to have moderated throughout the years.

"The truth is that, on some level, I always knew I would go to law school because the person who I admired most in the world, my father, was a lawyer," Levan said.

Her father, who has played a major role in her career path, also serves as Counsel for Funk & Bolton.

"I wanted to be just like him, and I hope that by the end of my career, I have attained some approximation of his character," Levan said.

Levan now embarks on the mission of providing legal counsel to the City of Westminster.

Mayor Kevin Utz and the members of the council interviewed six prospective firms to assume the duties left vacant by the retirement of long-time city attorney John Walsh.

The Council found its match with Levan and company.

"It was really, I think an impressive crew. I think we made an excellent choice," said Council President Damian Halstad.

"They were very knowledgeable about Westminster, and clearly had done their homework about the city, which I was impressed with," said Tony Chiavacci, council member. "Frankly, some of it was just a good feel for them fitting with us as a city."

According to [www.funkandbolton.com](http://www.funkandbolton.com), the Baltimore based firm began in 1996 with six attorneys and three staff assistants. The firm now boasts 32 lawyers with 12 specializing in local government.

Levan is one of those 12.

Beginning her law practice in 1988, Levan spent the majority of her career in private practice representing local governments.

"I have been engaged in representing municipal government for many years and have represented jurisdictions in many different areas of the state," Levan said.

As general counsel, Funk & Bolton currently represent Bowie, Church Hill, Chesapeake Beach, St. Michael's, Rock Hall, Sudlersville and Upper Marlboro.

"The experience that I bring to the City, therefore, and that my colleagues here at Funk & Bolton bring to [Westminster] will enable us to provide high quality and efficient representation to the City, continuing, we hope, the tradition of professional excellence established by Mr. Walsh," Levan said. Levan has done litigation involving annexation matters, torts and employment issues. However, she said that the bulk of her work isn't litigation related.

"The majority of my practice is involved in trying to keep my clients out of litigation. The every day work of providing advice and counsel to governing bodies and their staffs on the full gamut of issues that arise," Levan said.

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