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February 2021

State launches One Stop for Growth

By John Ouellette

On Jan. 27, Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito and Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy briefed municipal CEOs and local officials on the new Community One Stop for Growth program, which was announced by Polito at the MMA Annual Meeting on Jan. 21.

Polito said the new unified grant application portal is designed to simplify access to 10 of the most popular economic development-related grant programs across several state entities. Applicants can save time and effort by having their application considered for multiple grant programs simultaneously.

"It is more important than ever to coordinate across programs to best support communities as they recover from the pandemic," Kennealy said.

<u>Community One Stop for Growth</u> was an outcome of the administration's yearlong Economic Development Planning

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Process in 2019. It complements the Community Compact Connector grant finder tool that was launched last year, and is similar to the earlier consolidation of infrastructure grants under MassWorks. Another feature is that it aligns the application and review timeframes for an array of programs, Kennealy said.

Community One Stop

provides access to the following grant programs offered by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, Department of Housing and Community Development, and MassDevelopment:

MassWorks



Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito and Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy briefed municipal officials on the new Community One Stop for Growth program. Pictured are (top row, I-r) MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith; Assistant Secretary for Program and Performance Management Helena Fruscio-Altsman; Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy; and (bottom row) Assistant Secretary for Communities and Programs Juan Vega; and Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito.

- Urban Agenda
- 43D Expedited Permitting
- Community Planning Grants (new)
- Rural Development Fund (new)

■ ONE STOP continued on 27

Adam Chapdelaine is new MMA president, Mayor Fuller is VP

By Jennifer Kavanaugh

Having steered their own communities through a turbulent 2020, the MMA's new president and vice president say they plan to help municipalities navigate another year of COVID-19, racial justice issues, and economic challenges during 2021.

Arlington Town Manager Adam Chapdelaine, who served as MMA vice president last year, became president on Jan. 22, succeeding Agawam City Councillor Cecilia Calabrese. Newton Mayor Ruthanne Fuller, who has been serving as the District 5 representative for the Massachusetts Mayors' Association, replaced Chapdelaine as vice president.

Over the past year, Chapdelaine said, the MMA further solidified its role as the statewide voice for municipalities,





Adam Chapdelaine

Ruthanne Fuller

giving local leaders opportunities to engage with state officials as they confronted myriad challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. He commended the MMA for also working with other organizations to ensure that cities and towns were being heard during crucial points in the pandemic.

PRESIDENT, VP continued on 25

2021 MMA **Board of Directors**

The MMA Board of Directors holds regular meetings in Boston, followed by a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission with the administration. For information on the board's activities, call the office of MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith at 617-426-7272

Executive Committee

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Mayor, Newton

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Executive Director's Report

Back to normal after COVID? No thank you!

In spite of disruption and disorganization in the roll-out of vaccine delivery and execution across the nation. it is clear that we are past the pandemic midpoint. With strong collaboration, communication and ingenuity — just as with testing — our supply, demand and delivery systems will adjust, improve and reach appropriate capacity to ensure vaccinations and herd immunity by the end of this summer. You will be an essential part of this success.

Simply put, we are now closer to the end than we are to the beginning, although huge challenges are still ahead of us.

Let's stop for a moment and absorb the good news part of this. We have passed the middle of this crisis. Due to the extraordinary efforts of government at all levels (especially local and state), America and the world can now imagine a time when we can control the novel coronavirus, instead of it controlling our lives and institutions.

Lots of people are already talking about a swift return to circa-2019 normality, or maybe a "new normal" that rhymes with 2019, by the fall. (New normal seems to differ from normal in that it would be a close cousin to 2019, only with heightened awareness of our vulnerability, and a few tweaks such as a short-term focus on masks and an unclear blend of in-person and virtual



By Geoffrey Beckwith

engagement).

Yet here is the singular question: do we *want* to return to the pre-COVID-19 normal? I believe the answer is no.

Here are a few ideas, and I'm sure vou can add more:

We must retain our renewed reliance on science to guide **policy.** In the "beforetimes," it

was common to frame belief in science as a political issue. Fortunately, this has been rarer in Massachusetts. At a national level, however, we saw the former president and many governors denigrate medical and scientific realities. They belittled the COVID threat and described evidence-based pandemic responses as attacks on individual liberty. This led to unnecessary death and misery, and increased everyone's vulnerability, due to the harsh reality that the virus does not care about red and blue, about state or local borders, or about the approval ratings of politicians. Going forward, we must de-politicize science and facts.

We must keep the movement for racial equity front and center.

Explicit racism has been on the rise for many years, and the pace accelerated during the past five years. Emboldened by dog-whistle politics and reinforced by social media platforms, white supremacists have marched throughout America, from Charlottesville in 2017 to the

DIRECTOR'S REPORT continued on 26

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Baker's FY22 budget would boost municipal aid

By John Robertson

On Jan. 27, Gov. Charlie Baker filed a \$45.6 billion state budget plan for fiscal 2022 that would reduce overall state expenditures by nearly 1% next year, as the administration plans a recovery from the disruptions caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the related economic recession.

In addition to a consensus tax revenue forecast of \$30.1 billion, the spending plan for next year, known as <u>House 1</u>, relies on as much as \$1.6 billion in onetime revenues from the state's Stabilization Fund.

Unrestricted General Government Aid

Fulfilling his long-term pledge to local officials, Gov. Baker's budget would increase Unrestricted General Government Aid at the same rate as the projected growth of state revenues: 3.5%. The increase amounts to \$39.5 million, bringing the account to nearly \$1.17 billion. Implementation of this state-local revenue sharing framework is good news in a challenging time for local finances.

The <u>Division of Local Services website</u> <u>has preliminary fiscal 2022 Cherry Sheet</u> <u>aid amounts for each community</u>.

Chapter 70

The governor's budget recommendation would restart implementation of the funding schedules in the 2019 Student Opportunity Act that were delayed last year after the coronavirus recession upset the original first-year funding plan.

His budget would increase Chapter 70 education aid by \$197.7 million (3.7%) to a total of \$5.48 billion, which would fully fund the first year of the Student Opportunity Act's seven-year plan to add \$1.5 billion in new state funding for K-12 education. The majority of the funds would implement the improvements to the foundation budget, adding weight for low-income students, English Language Learners, special education costs, and school employee health benefits.

An initial look at the budget, however, indicates that a large percentage of cities, towns and school districts would remain minimum-aid-only, receiving the minimum \$30 per-student increase in the act. The MMA will continue to strongly advocate for significantly higher minimum aid during the budget process.

The Chapter 70 recommendation would make a significant change in how cities and towns can meet their required local contributions for fiscal 2022. Municipalities may use up to 75% of the total grant awarded to the local school district through the Elementary and Secondary Education Emergency Relief program enacted by Congress last month (also known as ESSER II) to fund a part of the increase in its local contribution requirement under Chapter 70, but not more than the increase in required local contribution in fiscal 2022 relative to fiscal 2021. This is a new temporary provision that is explained in the narrative and slides on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education school finance website.

The DESE website also has fiscal 2022 Chapter 70 aid and net school spending requirements under the governor's budget for each city, town and regional school district, as well as preliminary fiscal 2022 charter school assessments and reimbursements.

Charter schools

The governor's budget would increase the charter school reimbursement account to \$143.5 million, intended to meet the commitment in the Student Opportunity Act to fund 75% of the state's statutory obligation to mitigate Chapter 70 losses to charter schools.

The Student Opportunity Act pledges to phase in full funding of the statutory reimbursement formula over three years, and while this plan may meet that requirement, the MMA contends that it would not fix the serious flaws in the charter school finance system. Charter schools will continue to divert a high percentage of Chapter 70 funds away from many municipally operated school districts, and place greater strain on the districts that serve the vast majority of public schoolchildren. A resolution of the charter school funding problem remains a top MMA priority.

Special Education Circuit Breaker

House 1 would add \$22.5 million to fund the Special Education Circuit



Gov. Charlie Baker discusses his budget recommendation during a State House press conference on Jan. 27. (Photo courtesy Joshua Qualls/Governor's Press Office)

Breaker program at \$367.7 million, an increase of 6.5%. The Student Opportunity Act expanded the circuit breaker by including out-of-district transportation, an important enhancement for cities and towns.

Regional school transportation reimbursements

The governor's budget would reduce funding for regional transportation reimbursements from \$82.2 million this year to \$75.9 million. The MMA notes that this would create hardship for virtually all communities in regional districts.

Reimbursements for transportation of out-of-district vocational students remains significantly underfunded at \$250,000.

Increasing these accounts is an MMA priority.

McKinney-Vento

House 1 would reduce reimbursements for the transportation of homeless students under the federal McKinney-Vento Act, from \$13.5 million this year to \$11.1 million in fiscal 2022. The impact of this funding level will vary from community to community, depending on the number of homeless families that remain sheltered in local hotels and motels.

The administration has been successful in reducing the number of homeless students who are dislocated from their

BUDGET continued on 16

Challenges ahead are focus of MMA Annual Meeting

By Meredith Gabrilska

The MMA's <u>42nd Annual Meeting &</u>

<u>Trade Show</u>, held during a pandemic and social and political upheaval around the world, will go down in history as the largest virtual gathering of municipal officials in the state.

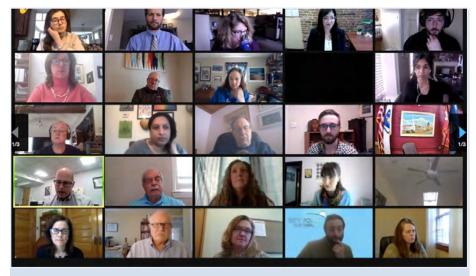
Instead of the usual gathering in Boston, more than 850 local leaders got together on Jan. 21 and 22 using an interactive platform called Chime.

This year's theme, "Leading Through Challenge and Change," aptly described the unprecedented year for cities and towns across the Commonwealth and the nation. Faced with an unrelenting pandemic and its economic fallout, a breaking point in the call for racial and social justice, and upheaval in Washington, D.C., municipal leaders and employees have had to pivot and innovate to meet the moment and the needs of their communities, while prioritizing safety and stability.

The MMA's first major online conference featured compelling speakers, timely workshops, networking opportunities, and a robust Trade Show featuring 80 exhibitors.

Thursday's <u>keynote speaker, Wes Moore</u>, kicked things off by urging local leaders to look deeply at the inequities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and take the opportunity to prioritize helping those who need them most during the recovery and moving forward.

Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito gave a preview of the administration's fiscal 2022 budget proposal, announced the new Community One Stop for Growth, and highlighted

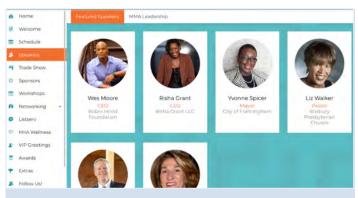


This year's Annual Meeting offered numerous opportunities for members to network online.

the valuable relationship between the state and cities and towns.

Also during the opening session, the MMA revisited its <u>MassTown Careers</u> multimedia campaign — launched last year but then paused due to the pandemic — to raise awareness about the appeal of municipal careers and to help cities and towns recruit a new generation of employees, with a renewed focus on recruiting for diversity and inclusion.

At the Women Elected Municipal Officials Leadership Symposium, <u>Mayor</u> <u>Yvonne Spicer and the Rev. Liz Walker</u> <u>had a fireside chat</u> about Spicer's career and experiences as a woman of color, and the role women elected officials have to play in the fight for racial justice.



The Chime platform allowed Annual Meeting attendees to easily navigate events and features.

To start Day 2, <u>motivational</u> <u>speaker and</u> <u>diversity consul-</u> <u>tant Risha Grant</u> <u>led a live interac-</u> <u>tive discussion</u> on bias, helping attendees uncover their biases and providing tools for changing behaviors.

<u>Gov. Charlie</u> <u>Baker joined the</u> <u>MMA Annual</u>

Business Meeting and announced that he would be filing a \$200 million Chapter 90 bond bill. He also touched on his budget and spoke candidly about the stress of the pandemic on public officials and his methods for managing it.

<u>Fifteen workshops</u> over the two days explored topics ranging from remote governance to public health, net zero emissions to cybersecurity and cultivating equity to economic recovery. All workshops were recorded and will be available to attendees on the Chime platform through Feb. 22. <u>Workshop</u> <u>materials</u> are also being added to the MMA website.

Exhibitors at the interactive Trade Show included a number of environmental consulting, financial, energy and technology firms.

Early on the first day of the conference, first-time attendees had an opportunity to hear from their counterparts during a Zoom networking session and get tips on how to make the most of the high-energy event.

The virtual event was not able to include the typical breakfast meetings of the Massachusetts Mayors' Association, Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, <u>Massachusetts Select Board</u> <u>Association and Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association</u>, all of which

ANNUAL MEETING continued on 27

State and local leaders discuss status of vaccine

By John Ouellette

The state's COVID-19 vaccine program — and myriad logistical and supply concerns — dominated the regular conference call with state officials and about 180 municipal CEOs convened by the MMA on Jan. 26.

Key state officials also addressed favorable changes to federal reimbursement rules and the launch of an ambitious pooled testing program in schools.

Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito gave an update on vaccination sites and shots administered, but pointed out that the state's ability to vaccinate residents currently exceeds available vaccine supplies.

"Our capacity and shots in the arm are not the same thing," she said. "It's the federal government that delivers those doses to the states. ... We want to be ahead of it. That's why we want to have the capacity."

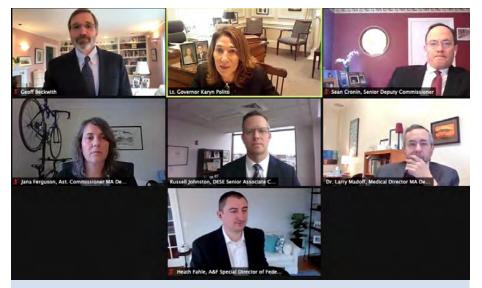
As of Jan. 23, she said, nearly 440,000 doses of the vaccine have been administered to individuals in Phase 1 of the state's three-phase program. Those eligible in Phase 1 include COVID-facing health care workers, long-term care facility residents and staff, and emergency first responders.

Phase 2 of the program was scheduled to begin on Monday, Feb. 1, with residents age 75 and older, followed by those age 65 and older (recently bumped up under new guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and individuals with two or more comorbidities. Next in line will be workers in early education, K-12 education, transit, grocery stores, utilities, food and agriculture, and restaurants and cafes, followed by other specified worker groups.

Jana Ferguson, assistant commissioner at the Department of Public Health, said those who qualify for vaccines in Phase 2 are able to go through their primary care provider or, when making an appointment online, they may fill out a form, under penalties of perjury, attesting that they qualify.

The general public becomes eligible in Phase 3, currently scheduled to start in April, Polito said.

Residents age 75 and older were scheduled to be able to begin scheduling vaccine appointments on Jan. 27. The



State and local leaders convened on Zoom to discuss vaccine distribution, federal aid and ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Pictured are (top row, l-r) MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith; Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito; Sean Cronin, senior deputy commissioner at the Division of Local Services; (middle row, l-r) Jana Ferguson, assistant commissioner at the Department of Public Health; Russell Johnston, senior associate commissioner at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; Dr. Larry Madoff, medical director at the Department of Public Health; and (bottom row) Heath Fahle, special director for federal funds at the Executive Office for Administration and Finance.

Executive Office of Elder Affairs has provided information to local councils on aging on how to help residents who are uncomfortable making appointments online or are unable to do so. Ferguson said her department is discussing offering assistance via the 2-1-1 non-emergency information line, and in many cases appointments can be made by phone.

The state's web portal, <u>www.mass.gov/</u> <u>covid-19-vaccine</u>, provides the most up-to-date information about the state vaccine plan, when and where residents can get the vaccine, a map of vaccine locations (with links or phone numbers for booking appointments), and answers to frequently asked questions.

By Jan. 29, Polito said, Massachusetts would have 103 publicly available vaccination sites and capacity to administer 242,000 shots per week. Capacity is expected to reach 165 sites and 305,000 shots per week by mid-February, including 76,000 per week at seven vaccine "megasites" at locations such as Gillette Stadium and Fenway Park.

The federal allotment to Massachusetts, meanwhile is just shy of 190,000 doses

per week. Polito said "we are hopeful" that the federal government will quickly ramp up allotments to be more in line with capacity. She said there's also optimism that additional vaccines — beyond the two currently approved — will become available in the near future.

Ferguson acknowledged that the DPH has had to notify communities about vaccination supply limits in order to help them plan. The supply shortage creates logistical challenges for the state and puts a premium on ensuring that no doses go to waste, particularly since the vaccines must be stored under exacting conditions.

Pharmacies and community clinics are being added to the website map on a rolling basis as the state seeks to even out availability throughout the state and across different demographic groups. By Feb. 15, Polito said, 71 retail pharmacies are expected to be administering vaccines.

Dr. Larry Madoff, medical director at the Department of Public Health, said individual doctors' offices that currently

CEO BRIEFING continued on 16

Moore: Work to fix problems exposed by COVID

By Jennifer Kavanaugh

During this time of pandemic and political upheaval, leaders need to elevate their missions and fight for the people who need them most, said bestselling author and social entrepreneur Wes Moore during the MMA's 42nd Annual Meeting & Trade Show on Jan. 21.

In a keynote address titled "Evolve, Adapt, Inspire: The Tenets of Transformational Leadership," Moore recognized the unprecedented challenges faced by local leaders, in the forms of COVID-19, racial injustice and economic fallout. These challenges, however, also give leaders an opportunity to think about what they really need to achieve – and the people they need to serve.

"If we never forget about who we're fighting for, we won't stop fighting for them," Moore said. "Especially at a time when we know it's going to be hard, especially at a time when we know that budgets are going to be tight, especially at a time when we know that decisions won't be simple – this is where you matter most."

He said the COVID crisis exposed problems that have long existed. Even before the pandemic, 44% of Americans didn't have \$400 in cash to cover an emergency expense, and one in five children were going to bed hungry. Of the people who have lost jobs during the pandemic, 24% were already living in poverty. Even before COVID, he said, leaders had work to do.

"This is not just about the virus," Moore said. "It's about neglect. It's about the fact that we're watching the impacts of COVID-19, and ... not everyone has felt its impacts equally. Not everybody sees just how devastating and damaging this virus has been."

As CEO of the <u>Robin Hood Foundation</u>, the largest anti-poverty nonprofit in New York City, Moore speaks frequently about inequality. His books include "<u>Five Days:</u> <u>The Fiery Reckoning of an American</u> <u>City</u>," which examines the aftermath of Freddie Gray's 2015 death in police custody in Moore's hometown of Baltimore.

In his talk, Moore explained how the adversity he faced as a child helped shape his views and work. His father died when Moore was a little boy, leaving his mother, then in her 20s, alone to raise three children. Moore and his family moved into his grandparents' small home in the South Bronx, where he started getting into trouble.

"The first time that I felt handcuffs on my wrists is when I was 11 years old," Moore said. "Eleven. In the Bronx."

Frustrated with his behavior, Moore's mother sent him to a Pennsylvania mil-

itary academy, from which he ran away five times in the first four days. Between the reminders from his mother that, "It is not all about you," and his experiences with his fellow cadets, Moore said he grew to appreciate the importance of interconnectedness and cooperation.

He said we need empathy and collective action now more than ever, as people face growing instability in their lives.

"We are hitting a moment right now where, frankly, your jurisdictions, your areas, your constituents, your people – people who rely on you, the people who need you – they are crying out because of what we know are the distinct realities of this moment in their lives," Moore said, "where certain things that felt certain no longer feel certain, certain guarantees that we promised no longer feel guaranteed, certain hopes that maybe your people might have had might now seem laughable."

When the pandemic ends, leaders must aspire to do more than just return to pre-COVID conditions – they should strive toward a collective agenda and an inclusive framework, and realize that growth doesn't need to be discriminatory. Leaders should be ready to make hard decisions, he said, and to bring people together from across the political spectrum to advocate for the right causes. Local leaders aren't just someone who holds a seat or an office.

"You're a dream protector," Moore said. "You're protecting the dreams of every one of your constituents, and your responsibility, my responsibility, is to make sure that we're protecting the dreams of



During the opening session of the MMA Annual Meeting on Jan. 21, keynote speaker Wes Moore talks about the critical role local leaders play in challenging times like these.

those who we know do not have other people that are protecting them."

Moore fielded a number of questions and described how he manages to remain positive during these times. He said he imagines describing the struggles of today to abolitionist Harriet Tubman or civil rights activist Rosa Parks. People have overcome tough times before, he said. Instead of spending "all day long just mired in darkness," people must keep pushing forward.

"In many ways optimism is a choice, as to what we choose to spend our time focusing on," Moore said.

He urged leaders to measure an organization's anti-bias efforts on the same level as financial benchmarks and other performance metrics.

"Do you have someone who's actually going in and measuring some of these other things when it comes to combating systemic racism?" he asked. "Both reminding people that it's real, but also showing people what progress looks like in order for us to get there?"

When addressing controversial issues, local leaders should examine how and why people come to the conclusions they do. He urged officials to listen humbly and with open minds.

"I don't know if local officials are always supposed to have the answers," Moore said. "I think what local officials are being asked to do is to listen to the concerns and try to unearth where the answers have already been developed."

Grant examines bias, provides tools for inclusion

By Jennifer Kavanaugh

When motivational speaker and diversity consultant Risha Grant describes the importance of inclusion, the former college basketball player talks about how much she hated the sport as a young girl.

During her Jan. 22 keynote at the MMA's 42nd Annual Meeting & Trade Show, Grant said her cousins made her watch them play basketball, but wouldn't let her participate. After an older cousin taught her how to play and championed her, she fell in love with the game, and eventually received several Division 1 scholarship offers. If you "want to make a difference in someone's life," she said, you must be inclusive.

"So you have to ask yourself, who is it that you can be an ally for in the office?" Grant said. "Why is that person not talking? How can you amplify their voice? How can you make sure that they are truly a part of the team? That's inclusion."

Grant is the founder and CEO of <u>Risha</u> <u>Grant LLC</u>, a diversity consulting and communications firm in Oklahoma, and a radio host, newspaper columnist and author of "That's BS! How Bias Synapse Disrupts Inclusive Cultures and the Power to Attract Diverse Markets."

In an interactive session called "Get Rid of the BS (Bias Synapse)," Grant helped participants discover and examine their biases, and gave them tools for changing behaviors. She coined the term "bias synapse" to describe the way our brains process bias, as if on autopilot.

We must address diversity, inclusion and bias, she said, because it's the right thing to do. By 2042, the United States will be a minority-majority country, she said, and five states have already crossed that threshold.

"As cool as diversity is, let's be real: A lot of people find it extremely challenging," she said. "The world finds it extremely challenging. And challenging is putting that in nice terms, right? Because if I were to put it in real terms, I would say that Black people are being killed at the hands of those who are supposed to protect. The words 'Black man' have been weaponized, and we know that racial disparities exist in every area of our world."

To create change, people need to identify, own and confront their unconscious biases. Using electronic polling, Grant asked attendees about their self-identifications, their biases, and positive actions they could take.

She cautioned against putting people in categor-

ical boxes, giving an example of a man that she prejudged because he had "666" tattooed on his forehead. After talking to him, she realized that the tattoo wasn't a satanic reference, and that he was a reformed convict who had helped lead hundreds of people out of gangs.

"As cool as diversity is, let's be real: A lot of people find it extremely challenging. The world finds it extremely challenging." - Risha Grant

"People don't fit in boxes," she said. "They are going to get out every time."

Through her concept of a BS Finder, Grant calls on people to assess their reactions; attribute the causes; and identify whether their feelings are based on personal experiences, social norms, or deeply-rooted beliefs.

Families often pass down hurts and fears through generations, Grant said. When she was young, her grandmother repeatedly warned about how "they" might treat her as a Black girl in a mostly white community. One summer, her grandmother made her study because "they" might not give her an equal education. She would also insist that Grant get receipts with her penny candy, to guard against theft accusations.

"She was trying to teach me how to



Risha Grant, a motivational speaker and diversity consultant, urges Annual Meeting attendees to examine their own biases during her Jan. 22 keynote.

navigate in a world that wasn't made for me," Grant said. "So it taught me unconscious bias, it taught me mistrust, but it also taught me how to navigate in this world."

While Grant appreciated her grandmother's protectiveness, she eventually had to address the mistrust it created.

To confront bias, she said, we need to build authentic relationships, be intentional about actions, question assumptions, and challenge microaggressions.

Grant recalled talking to a white man once in a Chicago bar. Their pleasant conversation derailed when the man called Grant "such a credit" to her race, and repeated bigoted stereotypes. Instead of berating him, she explained why his words hurt. In return, she got an apology, a "big steak dinner," and a new friend.

"Challenge those microaggressions, but do so with grace," she said.

To build more diverse workplaces, Grant suggested that leaders review resumes without any identifying information, select diverse interviewing panels, ensure that questions don't just reflect interviewers' backgrounds; reconsider prioritizing graduates of the "best schools"; and consult websites or consultants for inclusive hiring advice.

To improve environments for employees, organizations need policies for inclusivity, zero tolerance and anti-retaliation.

In response to a question, Grant spoke

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Spicer, Walker discuss equity, inclusion, role of leaders

By Meredith Gabrilska

In a virtual fireside chat during the MMA Annual Meeting on Jan. 21, Framingham Mayor Yvonne Spicer joined the Rev. Liz Walker to discuss topics ranging from Spicer's childhood experiences and interests to her position as the first popularly elected African-American woman mayor in the state, and her thoughts on the vital role women in elected positions have to play in advancing racial equity.

"In all of my personal life experience, it has been women at the forefront, and I stand on the shoulders of so many women," Spicer said during the Women Elected Municipal Officials Leadership Symposium. "I have a responsibility to pass that baton on to other women."

Spicer recalled meeting Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman elected to Congress, in Brooklyn, New York, when she was 6.

"Our congresswoman came to visit our classroom," Spicer said. "She said, 'I help people, and I help children like you have a better life.""

Noting the way black and brown families lived where she grew up, Spicer could see that Chisholm was making a difference. She also had the opportunity to see, in the late 1960s, a Black woman in a position of leadership.

Prior to entering local government, Spicer spent 16 years as a science and technology educator in Framingham and Newton and 10 years at the Museum of Science. She served as a Town Meeting member in Framingham and on the Standing Committee on Ways and Means and the Human Relations Commission, but her youthful aspirations did not predict a political career.

"I was always very curious about the world around me and how things work," Spicer said of her early interest in science and engineering.

She recalled an at-home experiment of taking apart and reassembling a blender as a moment that illustrated her parents' support of her interests.

"Your parents are your first teachers, and both of my parents were very inspirational and always made me feel as if I could do anything," Spicer said. "And I was never told otherwise." She did experience being the only girl or child of color in the science or engineering classes and events she took part in, but she said it didn't phase her.

"I'm here," she said, reflecting on the experience. "I'm taking up my space, and I'm going to do me."

Asked about influential

voices outside of her family, Spicer listed the church and the civil rights movement, noting that she was born before the 1965 Voting Rights Act explicitly outlawed barriers that were used for a century to suppress voting by African-Americans.

"My mother would always remind us to never take the right to vote for granted," she said.

She said it is important to understand the historical roots of race in this country — "a 400-year-plus issue" — noting that there is long and arduous work ahead.

She said "acknowledging that we all come with baggage" is key to having the critical conversations to unpack the baggage and find the common ground.

Walker, who was the featured WEMO speaker in 2017, noted that the country has had moments of reckoning before, and asked what would make this time different. Spicer said that the number of women and women of color who are now in seats of leadership would make the difference. They see things differently.

"If people of color are not at the table, if women are not at the table, then their voices are never heard," she said.

She also gave young people credit for their role in the Black Lives Matter movement. On matters like racial justice and climate change, "they don't want to step back and wait their turn." Spicer said she sees Black Lives Matter as a



CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

#MassMuni21

Mayor Yvonne Spicer (left) and the Rev. Liz Walker talk about Spicer's career and experiences as a woman of color, and the role women elected officials have to play in the fight for racial justice during the Women Elected Municipal Officials Leadership Symposium on Jan. 21.

mechanism for bringing visibility to the lives of black people.

Spicer also spoke about racial challenges in Framingham, including "microaggressions" that exist even in a community of roughly 70,000 people, 30% of whom identify as being people of color and where many residents value being in a diverse community.

Spicer calls those willing to roll up their sleeves in support of Black Lives Matter accomplices, as opposed to allies.

"Throughout my life and career, it is those accomplices that have made the difference for me," Spicer said. "I grew up with love and hope and spirit and faith and I carry that into the work today, to be compassionate, understand the community and lead with integrity."

"Elected women in general can do so much," she said, encouraging attendees to look at who is sitting at their professional and personal tables.

"When you sit and eat a meal, does everyone around the table look like you? If so, your table is not big enough."

"You have to be very deliberate in your actions," she said. "Create the spaces that allow for you to get to know the diversity in your community, and just keep asking who is not here that I know lives in this community."

Spicer said women are particularly good at bringing in new and different voices and looking at what others might need.

SPICER continued on 20

Legislature begins new two-year session

By John Robertson

The new two-year legislative session that started on Jan. 6 will take a little while to really get rolling, but there are a few items that could be taken up even before legislative rules have been adopted and committee chairs and members have been named.

The governor filed his fiscal 2022 state budget recommendation on Jan. 27, and work will start on that immediately, including public hearings that could begin later this month.

The governor also filed a bond bill needed to finance Chapter 90 authorizations for local road projects in fiscal 2022. March 1 is the deadline for notifying cities and towns of their local allocations, and the MMA will be asking for expedited consideration of the measure.

The <u>House and Senate moved quickly</u> to approve a climate bill on Jan. 28 to replace the bill they sent to the governor at the end of the last session, which he vetoed.

And the MMA is advocating for early passage of legislation to maintain flexibility regarding town meetings and local elections, extending rules that were enacted last spring in the early part of



Ronald Mariano

Karen Spilka

the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sen. Karen Spilka returns to lead the Senate, and the House welcomed a new speaker, Rep. Ronald Mariano, following the retirement of Speaker Bob DeLeo on Dec. 29 after serving six terms as the leader of the House. The Senate president and House speaker both have roots in local government, having served on school committees in Ashland and Quincy, respectively.

In remarks to the Senate, Spilka reflected on accomplishments of the last twoyear session, including the 2019 Student Opportunity Act and the sweeping policing reform bill enacted last year. Looking toward the new year, she said that emergency paid leave legislation would be an early priority for the Senate. In comments to the House, Mariano said that monitoring the distribution of vaccines and helping people and businesses with ongoing economic and health care challenges caused by the pandemic will be early priorities in the House.

For most bills, the pace is usually slower in the first year of a new session, when hundreds of bills — both new and refiled — are assigned to committees for hearings.

Legislators and advocates are still working on draft bills, with a filing deadline that has been pushed back to Feb. 19 because the last session ran late due to the COVID state of emergency. In November, the MMA Board of Directors approved a 17-bill MMA legislative package that covers a range of municipal issues.

The legislative schedule for 2021 anticipates formal working sessions through mid-November and a restart in January for the second half of the two-year session.

Governor signs economic development bond bill

By Brittney Franklin

On Jan. 14, Gov. Charlie Baker signed a \$626 million economic development bond bill, titled An Act Enabling Partnerships for Growth.

One week after the bill was originally filed by the Baker-Polito administration last March, the Commonwealth entered a state of emergency to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill was subsequently updated in order to bolster economic recovery. The final version of the law reflects some of those changes.

Highlights include:

- \$50 million for neighborhood stabilization
- \$50 million for transit-oriented housing development
- \$10 million for climate-resilient housing
- \$40 million for revitalization of underused properties
- \$10 million for regional and community assistance on <u>175 communities within the MBTA</u> region. Communities in this group that d

 \$20 for a new rural and small town development fund to support municipalities on local goals

Also included in the law are two housing-related policy changes. The Housing Choice provisions change state law to reduce the vote threshold needed to adopt certain zoning changes, from two-thirds to a simple majority. This language went into effect immediately.

The Housing Choices Act has been strongly supported by the MMA and a broad coalition of stakeholders including the Greater Boston Real Estate Board, the Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Association of Realtors, the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, and NAIOP – The Commercial Real Estate Development Association.

The law also includes language that imposes a one-size-fits-all zoning scheme on <u>175 communities within the MBTA</u> <u>region</u>. Communities in this group that fail to create a zoning district with as-ofright multifamily development would be ineligible for funds from the MassWorks Program, the Housing Choice Initiative, or the state's Local Capital Projects Fund.

The MMA has consistently opposed this measure, and <u>on Jan. 7 sent a letter to the</u> governor asking him to veto Section 18 of the bill.

In a letter to the Legislature vetoing certain portions of the bill, the governor noted that, "Although I did not propose this section, I am signing it because the law gives my Administration considerable discretion to determine compliance. I expect the relevant agencies will work diligently with cities and towns to develop compliance criteria that are fair and reasonable, with due regard for different needs in different communities, and for the time and effort it takes to create new zoning districts."

This portion of the bill will go into effect 90 days after it was signed.

Polito cites strength of state-local partnership

By John Ouellette

Speaking to more than 800 local leaders from across the state during the MMA Annual Meeting & Trade Show on Jan. 21, Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito stayed largely on the topic of the state-local partnership and the administration's commitment to listening to local leaders and then developing tools to help them.

She also announced the 3.5% Unrestricted General Government Aid increase in the <u>administration's state</u> <u>budget plan for fiscal 2022</u>.

"Our budget recommendation will continue the strong support for cities and towns that our administration has made a priority since entering office [in 2015]," Polito said.

And she announced a new grant application portal called <u>Community One Stop</u> <u>for Growth</u> that consolidates applications for a range of programs in one online location.

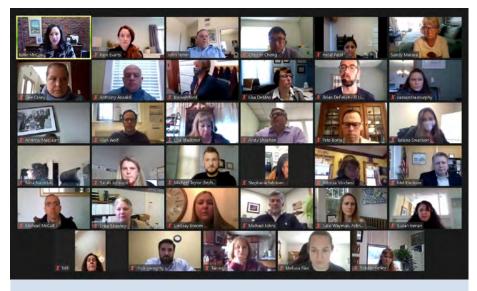
"We hope this new streamlined application will make it easier to get your communities the resources you need to succeed both in your [pandemic] recovery and far into the future," Polito said.

Polito reiterated that housing production remains a priority for the administration and a key to its economic development strategy. The administration has set a goal of producing 135,000 new units by 2035.

She thanked local officials for their help and support in passing the Housing Choices Act, which was included in the economic development package signed by the governor on Jan. 14. Housing Choices changes state law to reduce the vote threshold needed to adopt certain zoning changes, from two-thirds to a simple majority.

Polito said the \$626 million multiyear <u>economic development package</u>, which the governor filed last March and then reworked in late June to address pandemic needs, includes \$10 million for climate-resilient affordable housing production as well as funding for revitalization of underused properties, site readiness, regional and community assistance planning, a new Rural and Small Town Development Fund, and maintenance of broadband infrastructure in central and western Massachusetts.

Given the negative impact of the pandemic on local businesses, Polito said the administration is "prioritizing supporting the businesses that define our main streets." In December, the administration announced a \$668 million



MMA-Suffolk alumni, students connect

More than 60 alumni and students gathered virtually on Jan. 21 during the MMA Annual Meeting & Trade Show. The MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program now has more than 400 graduates, and the Municipal Finance Management Seminar has more than 100.



Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito discusses housing, economic development, small business relief and the joint state and local response to COVID-19 on Jan. 21 during the MMA's Annual Meeting & Trade Show.

small business relief package to help the hardest-hit main street and downtown small businesses with grants that will be administered through the <u>Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation</u>. The Small Business Relief Fund has provided \$195 million in direct support to more than 4,100 small businesses.

Polito also mentioned the multi-year <u>transportation bond package</u> signed by the governor on Jan. 15, which includes funding for a number of municipal grant programs, including a new Municipal Pavement Partnership Program and Local Bottleneck Reduction Program as well as the popular Municipal Small Bridge Program and Complete Streets program.

Polito noted how the COVID-19 pandemic had strengthened the bonds between state and local government, and how new forums have been established for idea exchange – particularly the frequent conference calls convened by the MMA for state and local leaders – with concrete results.

"We are fortunate to have a strong line of connection with local officials," she said. "As former local officials, [the governor and I] know you know your communities best."

She added that, "The pandemic has made the role of government even more important, especially at the local level."

Polito noted that the administration has created a number of grant and technical assistance programs intended to facili-

POLITO continued on 20

Gov. Baker previews budget, discusses pandemic

By John Ouellette

During the MMA Annual Business Meeting on Jan. 22, Gov. Charlie Baker thanked hundreds of local officials for their "invaluable" partnership during the COVID-19 pandemic and announced his intent to quickly file <u>legislation to</u> <u>authorize \$200 million for the Chapter</u> <u>90</u> local road and bridge program.

The governor also touched briefly on his <u>state budget plan for fiscal 2022</u> (filed five days later), noting a proposed 3.5% increase in Unrestricted General Government Aid and full funding of the Student Opportunity Act.

Baker pointed out that the administration and the Legislature worked hard to triple the balance of the state's "rainy day fund" between 2015 and 2019, which is enabling the state to weather the economic fallout of the pandemic without raising taxes or making drastic budget cuts.

The governor highlighted a number of programs and recently signed laws intended to help give an economic boost to main streets and downtowns that have suffered during the pandemic, particularly a <u>\$626 million economic</u> development bond, \$16.5 billion transportation bond package and a new small business relief initiative that has distributed \$232 million thus far to more than 4,000 small businesses. The multi-year transportation bond law includes funding for the popular Complete Streets and Municipal Small Bridge grant programs, as well as new Municipal Pavement Partnership and Local Bottleneck Reduction grant programs.

A former selectman in his hometown of Swampscott, Baker recognized how challenging the past year has been for local officials across the state and thanked them effusively for their hard work to navigate the pandemic and maintain essential services. In an informal question-and-answer segment of his appearance, he acknowledged that he is anxious to return to having face-to-face contact with local officials and constituents again, and that he has turned to regular evening walks with his wife, Lauren, to relieve stress.

Since he's spending less time travelling the state, he said he's also been doing

more reading, and recommended "Lincoln on the Verge," which gave him a "giant dose of perspective" on challenges that leaders have overcome. (For entertainment, he's become a fan of "Ted Lasso," a TV show he said he probably wouldn't have discovered if not for the pandemic.)



Gov. Charlie Baker discusses the COVID-19 pandemic during the virtual MMA Annual Meeting & Trade Show on Jan. 22.

"Recognize that your words matter — in both directions. What you say can either take the temperature down or turn it up. What you say can help people work together or do just the opposite."

- Gov. Charlie Baker

The governor stressed the nonpartisan nature of local elections, which dovetails with his bipartisan approach to governing. He and Polito "take a lot of pride in having served in local government, and we've tried to bring that kind of attitude to our work the last six years." He said state and local governments "are judged on what they accomplish, not what they oppose."

Baker noted that during the 2014 campaign, he spent time in communities where, "if a Republican got 5% of the vote, it was a miracle" because he wanted to get to know people whose life experiences were different from his.

"Public life is a team sport," he said. "It's very hard to get much done ... unless you're willing to build coalitions and to recognize that you don't know where your next one is coming from." Both the state and federal political systems, he said, are carefully designed not to convey absolute power to one individual or branch of government and to offer protection for minority points of view.

Regarding the polarization we face as a country, he said, "People need to make some new friends, and I don't say that lightly. ... We all tend, more often than not, to spend time with the people we know best. And COVID, by the way, makes what I'm talking about here dramatically harder to do."

Asked how state and local leaders can make progress on racial equity and justice, he said leaders need to really work at listening to many perspectives, building trust and relationships, and being aware of the power of political speech.

"Recognize that your words matter — in both directions," he said. "What you say can either take the temperature down or turn it up. What you say can help people work together or do just the opposite."

Dr. Fauci cites 'critical role' of local leaders in pandemic

By John Ouellette

In a Jan. 25 interview with the Georgia Municipal Association, Dr. Anthony Fauci, a lead member of the White House Coronavirus Task Force and one of the world's leading experts on infectious diseases, said municipal leaders have a "critical" role to play in both containing the spread of COVID-19 and ensuring that the vaccines are distributed and administered effectively in order to end the pandemic.

"I think local leaders are some of the most important components of getting the message to the community, which was one of the reasons I was enthusiastic to speak with you," he said. "You really want to make sure that the people who are on the ground, close to the community, are very aware of the information in real time. ... Congratulations on what you do, because it really is important."

Directly addressing the abundance of misinformation about the disease and treatments since the pandemic began nearly a year ago, Dr. Fauci stressed the importance of listening to public concerns and promoting solid scientific evidence.

"We've got to start basing things on facts," he said. "We've just got to explain the facts to people."

He urged local leaders to engage in conversations about the COVID vaccines and work to allay the fears of those who doubt their safety or efficacy.

"Some people are worried that maybe it's the federal government trying to put something over on us, or companies trying to make some money," he acknowledged.

But the unprecedented speed at which vaccines were developed — in just 11 months — indicates "spectacular advances in the science of vaccine platform technologies," he said, and not a lowering of rigorous vetting standards.

"Safety was not compromised, nor was scientific integrity," he said. "The determination of whether a vaccine is safe and effective is made at the end of clinical trials involving tens of thousands of people. ... The whole process is both independent and transparent."



During a Jan. 25 interview with the Georgia Municipal Association, Dr. Anthony Fauci says local leaders play a critical role in the fight against COVID-19.

"Safety was not compromised, nor was scientific integrity. ... The determination of whether a vaccine is safe and effective is made at the end of clinical trials involving tens of thousands of people. ... The whole process is both independent and transparent." – Dr. Anthony Fauci

Trial data is evaluated by an independent data and safety monitoring board that includes scientists, vaccinologists, ethicists, and statisticians, and "is not accountable to the federal government or the pharmaceutical companies." If the board signs off, then the U.S. Food and Drug Administration conducts its own review.

Fauci said he's confident in the new Biden administration's prioritization of COVID vaccination and its five-part vaccine plan. He said the effort could get a boost from additional vaccines that could be coming online soon, such as a single-dose version being developed by Johnson & Johnson.

"Getting back to normal," he said, "is highly dependent on the percentage of people that we get vaccinated." Part of the challenge, he said, is getting "through and past this vaccine hesitancy."

If we get in the area of 85% of the population vaccinated by mid-summer, he said, "we could be approaching" normal activities by mid- to late-fall. By the end of this year, he said, "We can feel much different than we do now."

Because COVID and the vaccines are so new, he said it's too soon to know if additional vaccine doses might be needed in the future.

"We have that [possibility] in our longterm strategic plan," he said.

Asked about the level of concern over mutations of the coronavirus, Fauci said virus mutation is to be expected, and the new coronavirus variants do not appear to be more virulent, though they are more transmissible. He said it's possible that people would need a vaccine booster later on to effectively fight variants, but "for the time being, things look OK."

Signaling a dramatic shift under the new presidential administration, Fauci sat with the Georgia Municipal Association just hours after speaking to the World Health Organization about the United States rejoining the organization and hours before a scheduled meeting with President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris to discuss pandemic response.

Dr. Fauci, who is director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and the chief medical advisor to the president, has served American public health in various capacities for more than 50 years.

The half-hour interview was conducted by GMA Executive Director Larry Hanson, General Counsel Rusi Patel, and Communications Director Kelli Bennett. The GMA has shared the interview with state municipal leagues across the country. ●

Transportation bond package renews municipal grants

By Ariela Lovett

On Jan. 15, Gov. Charlie Baker signed a multi-year \$16.5 billion transportation bond bill that had gone through several iterations as it passed from the governor to the Legislature and back to the governor.

The governor had 10 days to review the bill after it passed both the House and Senate in the early morning hours of Jan. 6. He signed most of the spending provisions, but vetoed several high-profile policy initiatives.

The law includes funding for a number of municipal grant programs administered by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation:

- \$100 million for a new Municipal Pavement Partnership Program
- \$100 million to be used in part for work on state-numbered, locally owned roads
- \$70 million for the <u>Municipal Small</u> <u>Bridge Program</u>
- \$50 million for the <u>Complete Streets</u> program
- \$25 million for a new Local Bottleneck Reduction Program

Gov. Baker vetoed a fee increase for app-based ride-hailing services; a requirement that the MBTA implement a low-income fare option and that the state's 15 regional transit authorities study means-tested fare programs for possible future adoption; and a mandate to direct all proceeds from the in-progress regional Transportation and Climate Initiative to the Commonwealth Transportation fund. The governor explained his rationale behind the vetoes in a letter to the Legislature.

The transportation bond package does not include funding for the Chapter 90 local road and bridge program. Gov. Baker filed a <u>\$200 million fiscal 2022</u> <u>Chapter 90 bond bill</u> on Jan. 25. The MMA, meanwhile, has drafted a twoyear Chapter 90 bond bill that would provide \$300 million per year, and is seeking a legislative sponsor to file it by the Feb. 19 deadline.

2021 MMA Board of Directors installed

The 2021 MMA Board of Directors was installed during the association's Annual Business Meeting on Jan. 22.

The voting directors are elected by the following MMA organizations: the Massachusetts Mayors' Association (MMaA), the Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association (MMCA), the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association (MMMA), the Massachusetts Select Board Association (MSA), and the Association of Town Finance Committees (ATFC).

The immediate past president of the MMA is an ex-officio member.

The board members for 2021 are:

Appointed directors

MMA President: Adam Chapdelaine* Town Manager, Arlington

MMA Vice President: Ruthanne Fuller* Mayor, Newton

MMaA President: Scott Galvin* Mayor, Woburn

MMaA First Vice President: Linda Tyer* Mayor, Pittsfield

MMaA Second Vice President: Martin Walsh

Mayor, Boston

MMCA President: Lisa Blackmer* Councillor, North Adams

MMCA First Vice President: Jeovanny Rodriguez^{*} Councillor, Lawrence MMCA Second Vice President: Eric Steinhilber Councillor, Barnstable

MMMA President: Julie Jacobson* Town Manager, Auburn

MMMA First Vice President: George "Bud" Dunham*

Town Manager, Sandwich

MMMA Second Vice President: Steve Bartha

Town Manager, Danvers

MSA President: Michael Bettencourt* Select Board, Winchester

MSA First Vice President: Michael Walsh*

Select Board, Westwood

MSA Second Vice President: Jill Hai Select Board, Lexington

ATFC President: Brian Boyle* Finance Committee, Bolton

ATFC First Vice President: John Trickey* Finance Committee, Pelham

MMA Immediate Past President: Cecilia Calabrese* Councillor, Agawam

MMA Executive Director: Geoff Beckwith^{*} (ex-officio, non-voting)

Elected directors

Brian Arrigo, Mayor, Revere

Lisa Braccio, Selectman, Southborough

Ralph Figy, Councillor, Westfield

Andrew Flanagan, Town Manager, Andover

Claire Freda, Councillor, Leominster Andrew Hogeland, Select Board, Williamstown

Donna Holaday, Mayor, Newburyport Thomas Hutcheson, Town Administra-

tor, Conway

Diane Kennedy, Select Board, Cohasset

Afroz Khan, Councillor, Newburyport

John McLaughlin, Councillor, Waltham

Dan Matthews, Select Board, Needham

David Narkewicz, Mayor, Northampton

Moises Rodrigues, Councillor, Brockton

Alan Slavin, Selectman, Wareham

Peter Spellios, Select Board, Swampscott Kevin Sweet, Town Administrator, Wrentham

Arthur Vigeant, Mayor, Marlborough Kristi Williams, Town Manager, Westborough

* Denotes Executive Committee member ●

Legislature again OK's climate bill that Gov. vetoed

By Ariela Lovett

An omnibus climate bill passed by the Legislature in the final days of the last legislative session and vetoed by Gov. Charlie Baker on Jan. 14 was re-filed (as S. 9) and passed again by the House and Senate on Jan. 28.

After the 2019-2020 Legislature passed the original bill (S. 2995) on Jan. 4, the governor had 10 days to decide whether to sign or veto it in its entirety. When he vetoed it on Jan. 14, the legislative session had ended and the Legislature did not have the option of considering a veto override. (Since the bill was not an appropriations or bond bill, the governor did not have the option of returning it with amendments for consideration, or vetoing sections of it.)

The re-filed bill, unchanged from the previous iteration, would establish a "net zero" limit on statewide greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (with gross emissions at least 85% below 1990 levels). The bill would also set interim emissions limits for 2030 (half or less of 1990 levels) and 2040 (no more than one-quarter of 1990 levels). The bill would also mandate statewide emissions limits at five-year intervals and require the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to develop comprehensive and specific plans for reaching each goal and to produce regular reports on how the state is doing on emissions goals.

In vetoing the previous bill, the <u>gover-</u><u>nor outlined several policy concerns</u>, including that the legislation could inhibit his recently passed priority, the Housing Choice Act (part of an economic development bond law), which is intended to facilitate new housing construction across the state. He cited concerns voiced by the construction industry that one provision of the climate bill, to allow municipalities to update their building codes to require net-zero energy usage, would be damaging to housing production goals.

Other areas of contention include a difference between the bill's proposed 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels by 2030 and the administration's preference for a 45% target. The governor also highlighted a gap in the area of climate adaptation, which has been a priority for his administration.

"If we intend to comprehensively address climate change, we must give ourselves and our colleagues in local government the tools necessary to create a Commonwealth that is more resilient to the destructive weather events and natural disasters we continue to face because of ongoing climate change," he wrote.

Even before the governor announced his decision to veto the climate bill, Senate President Karen Spilka and new House Speaker Ron Mariano announced their intent to re-file the bill as soon as possible.

The re-filed bill passed by a 144-14 vote in the House and a clear voice vote in the Senate, all but guaranteeing the level of support needed to override a potential veto.

The governor now has another 10 days to either sign the new bill, veto it outright, or return it with proposed amendments.

Gov. Baker signs combined sewer overflow notification bill

By Ariela Lovett

On Jan. 12, Gov. Charlie Baker signed a law requiring wastewater operators to notify the public when a combined sewer system discharges untreated wastewater into a local body of water.

Combined sewer systems, many dating back more than a century, combine wastewater and stormwater, unlike more modern systems that keep sewage separate from stormwater. Stormwater caused by heavy rain events can overwhelm combined systems, causing them to discharge into rivers.

These combined sewer overflows, or CSOs, discharged upwards of 700 million gallons into the Merrimack River alone in 2018, according to a report from WBUR. The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority reported that 29 million gallons were discharged into its service watershed during a major storm this past Christmas Day.

The notification bill was a priority of the environmental advocacy community for

several years. In a press release about the bill signing, Julia Blatt, executive director of the Massachusetts Rivers Alliance, said: "Massachusetts residents have a right to know if there is sewage in their rivers, especially this year when we've turned to nature for safe recreation and peace of mind."

The law requires wastewater operators to, at a minimum, send email or text notifications to local and downstream residents within two hours of discovering a discharge, and provide updates every eight hours until the discharge subsides. The law also requires the operators to publish information online confirming the volume discharged and identifying any precautionary measures the public should take when interacting with the affected waterway.

The law charges the Department of Environmental Protection with developing regulations in the coming year to enforce the new law.

Some wastewater operators have used the debate over the notification bill to

raise concerns about implementation and funding. While some wastewater operators with CSOs have real-time and upgraded monitoring and metering systems, others have aging and out-of-date infrastructure.

Phil Guerin, president of the Massachusetts Coalition for Water Resources Stewardship and director of Worcester's wastewater utility, recently told WBUR that not all permittees subject to the new law will be able to meet the requirements with their current technology, and that it will be a financial burden for them to do so.

As the public receives the CSO notifications required by the law and becomes concerned, Guerin hopes state and federal legislators "will come up with the hundreds of millions of dollars needed to actually fix the problems with antiquated sewer systems."

As of 2018, Massachusetts had 19 CSO permitees responsible for more than 100 separate outfall locations.

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Pollack departs, Tesler named acting secretary

By Jennifer Kavanaugh

Jamey Tesler became the state's acting transportation secretary on Jan. 27 after Stephanie Pollack left to join the Biden-Harris administration in Washington as the new deputy secretary for the Federal Highway Administration.

Pollack had led the <u>Massachusetts Department of Transportation</u> since Gov. Charlie Baker took office in January 2015. Last June, she appointed Tesler as the registrar at the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles after he had served for a year as acting registrar.

In a statement, Tesler said, "Working with Secretary Pollack for most of the last five years has been a master class in transportation policy, and I am happy to be able to use that knowledge to continue advancing the programs and policies we have been working on together for so long."

Tesler's previous transportation-related roles include chief operating officer, chief of staff, deputy secretary of legal



Stephanie Pollack

Jamey Tesler

policy and planning, and assistant secretary for procurement and contract management for MassDOT, and deputy general counsel for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. He also served as general counsel for the state treasurer from 2011 to 2013, and as deputy legal counsel for the governor's office from 2001 to 2004.

Colleen Ogilvie, who had been the deputy registrar and chief operating officer, is now serving as the acting registrar.

Pollack began her new job on Jan. 27, and will also serve as the acting admin-

istrator of the FHA until the U.S. Senate confirms a permanent administrator.

"Stephanie has worked so hard for the communities of Massachusetts," said Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito in a statement. "The successes of the Small Bridge, Complete Streets, and the more recent Shared Streets and Spaces programs show the commitment to local infrastructure that has been a hallmark of MassDOT during her tenure."

Gov. Charlie Baker credited Pollack for bringing stability to the department, helping the state manage transportation issues through historic blizzards, addressing problems at both the MBTA and the Registry of Motor Vehicles, and instituting a data-driven capital improvement plan, among other accomplishments.

"We are so grateful for Stephanie's service to the Commonwealth and congratulate her on her new appointment," Baker said. ●

Applications open for All-America Cities Award

Massachusetts cities and towns have until Feb. 10 to apply for the All-America Cities Award, which recognizes efforts to build equitable and resilient communities.

In June, the <u>National Civic League</u> will name 10 All-America cities and highlight their efforts to use inclusive civic engagement to address critical issues and create stronger connections among residents, businesses and nonprofit and government leaders.

The <u>application is available online</u>, and the league will announce finalists in March.

"The All-America City Awards offer an opportunity for community stakeholders to come together to share and celebrate the programs and projects that make their homes great places to live," said Award Director Rebecca Trout in a statement. "Applicants consistently note that the process leaves them feeling a sense of pride in their community and motivation to tackle the tough issues that persist."



The challenges of the past year, particularly the COVID-19 crisis and social unrest due to racial inequality, have highlighted the need for equity and resilience, according to the as more equitable

National Civic League, as more equitable and resilient communities have been better equipped to address the challenges.

Applicants need to describe the strength of their civic capital — the formal and informal relationships, networks and capacities they use to make decisions and solve problems. They will also need to provide examples of community-driven projects that have helped the community become equitable and resilient.

Projects focusing on this theme include ones that promote racial healing and equity, expand the role of residents in disaster preparedness and recovery, enhance equity in the community's COVID-19 response, reform law enforcement to improve equity, create more civic capacity through leadership or communication programs, improve mental-health and trauma systems, further educational equity, create affordable and safe housing, reduce poverty, increase job readiness and employment, focus on restorative justice, and engage the community in environmental sustainability.

The nonpartisan, nonprofit National Civic League aims to advance civic engagement to achieve thriving, equitable communities. Since 1949, the All-America City Award program has recognized 500 communities for their collaborative efforts to address pressing problems in the community. Past winners include 19 Massachusetts communities: Barnstable, the Blackstone Valley region, Boston, Chelsea, Dennis, Fall River, Fitchburg, Gardner, Haverhill, Lowell, Malden, New Bedford, Newton, North Adams, Pittsfield, Somerville, Southbridge, Springfield and Worcester.

CEO BRIEFING

Continued from page 5

offer vaccines will "definitely be part" of the state's COVID vaccine program going forward. He said the DPH website has "very good guidance" for how providers can enroll to join the vaccine program.

Polito also discussed recent changes related to the <u>state's four-phase reopening</u> <u>plan</u>. Yesterday, the <u>state lifted the early</u> <u>closure order for certain businesses and</u> <u>a late-night stay-at-home advisory</u> also referred to as a curfew, while leaving in place gathering orders and a capacity limit of 25% for many businesses through at least Feb. 8.

"The good news is the COVID trends continue to move in the right direction," she said, adding that the positive test rate (4.82%) is the lowest it has been since early December.

She also mentioned the ongoing <u>Small</u> <u>Business Relief Grant Program</u> administered by Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation (information at <u>www.</u> <u>empoweringsmallbusiness.org</u>), the <u>Community One Stop for Growth portal</u> <u>that she announced on Jan. 21 during</u> <u>the MMA Annual Meeting</u>, and the <u>De-</u> <u>partment of Early Education and Care's</u> <u>Jan. 25 launch of a pilot testing program</u> in Athol, Billerica, Braintree, Dalton, Franklin, Plymouth, Sturbridge and Westfield for early education workers.

School-based testing

Russell Johnston, senior associate commissioner at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, discussed a <u>pilot pooled testing program</u> that was scheduled to launch the next week for K-12 students and school staff.

Pooled testing involves mixing a number of test samples together — creating a "pool" — and then processing them together to detect the virus that causes COVID-19. This approach increases the number of individuals that can be tested using the same amount of laboratory resources as a single PCR test.

The nasal swab tests will be performed once per week, and results are delivered within approximately 24 to 48 hours. If a pooled test result is negative, then all individuals within that pool are presumed negative and may remain in school. If a pooled test result is positive, then everyone in the pool is given an individual diagnostic test to determine who is infected. Johnston said the results of these individual tests are available in 15 minutes, so those in a positive pool who are not actually infected do not have to wait unnecessarily before returning to school.

The DESE has thus far stressed common mitigation strategies — particularly distancing, masks and hand-washing — but Johnston said pooled testing "is now more readily available at a scalable level across the state than it ever has been" thanks in part to advances in laboratory testing technology. He added that a new round of federal stimulus funding for schools has also become available to cover program costs.

He said school districts may opt in to a six-week program that is due to start by Feb. 8 and run through late March — paid for by the state using federal dollars — and then may work with a state-vetted provider and use federal stimulus funds to continue the program through the end of the school year. He said the cost is in the range of just \$3 to \$5 per swab.

In order for the program to be effective, he said, it must test *all* students and staff, from custodians and bus drivers to superintendents.

"If school districts provide their information to the DESE by [Jan. 28], they'll be prioritized for as early a launch as possible," Johnston said. "We want to get some started as soon as next week."

Districts that are currently unsure about

entering the program will have until early March to decide, he said.

Johnston said it will be a shared responsibility between local boards of health and the DESE to report positive cases to the DPH and ensure that contact tracing is implemented.

Johnston added that rules for the new batch of education-related federal funds — about four times the amount received last fall — are "very flexible," and the funds likely can be used by districts to address "learning gaps" that have emerged due to remote learning during the pandemic. As for who decides locally how the funds are used, Johnston recommends that superintendents do so with input from the school committee.

Federal funding

Heath Fahle, special director for federal funds at the Executive Office for Administration and Finance, discussed an executive order signed by President Joe Biden on Jan. 21, effective immediately, instructing the Federal Emergency Management Agency to increase the reimbursement rate for certain emergency response costs from 75% to 100%.

Fahle said his office is awaiting further details and guidance from FEMA, but the news is very good for cities and towns. He said vaccination-related costs, for example, are expected to be 100% reimbursable (though it's not yet clear if this would include employee salaries). He said there are discussions in Washington about whether the order will be made retroactive to the beginning of the emergency.

"Perhaps many of the costs that municipalities have incurred associated with the COVID-19 response will be eligible for full reimbursement," he said. "There is significant movement underway as the new administration takes over."

BUDGET

Continued from page 3

original district, but communities that continue to provide transportation to many students may continue to see shortfalls.

PILOT

The governor's budget would level-fund payments-in-lieu-of-taxes at \$31 million, which the MMA argues would be a significant hardship for many smaller, rural communities with large amounts of state-owned land. This is a key account due to the major impact that PILOT payments have on budgets in a number of small communities. •

MMA group and affiliated organization officers for 2021

Massachusetts Mayors' Association



President: Scott Galvin, Woburn First vice president: Linda Tyer, Pittsfield Second vice president: Martin Walsh, Boston District 1: David Narkewicz, Northampton

District 2: Arthur Vigeant,

Marlborough District 3: Donna Holaday, Newburyport District 4: Brian Arrigo, Revere District 5: Ruthanne Fuller, Newton

Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association



President: Lisa Blackmer, North Adams First vice president: Jeovanny Rodriguez, Lawrence Second vice president: Eric Steinhilber, Barnstable District 1: Ralph Figy,

Lisa Blackmer Westfield

District 2: Claire Freda, Leominster District 3: Afroz Khan, Newburyport District 4: Moises Rodriguez, Brockton District 5: John McLaughlin, Waltham

Massachusetts Municipal Management Association



President: Julie Jacobson, town manager, Auburn First vice president: George "Bud" Dunham, town manager, Sandwich Second vice president:

Julie Jacobson Steve Bartha, town manager, Danvers

Secretary/treasurer: Leon Gaumond, town manager, Weston District 1: Thomas Hutcheson, town administrator, Conway District 2: Andrew Flanagan, town manager, Andover District 3: Kristi Williams, town manager, Westborough District 4: Adam Chapdelaine, town manager, Arlington District 5: Kevin Sweet, town administrator, Wrentham At-large representatives: Anthony Ansaldi, town administrator, Littleton Denise Casey, assistant town manager, North Andover

John Mangiaratti, town manager, Acton Liz Sullivan, town administrator, Dennis

Massachusetts Select Board Association



President: Michael Bettencourt, Winchester First vice president: Michael Walsh, Westwood Second vice president: Jill Hai, Lexington Secretary: Diane Kennedy, Cohasset District 1: Andrew

Bettencourt

Hogeland, Williamstown District 2: Peter Spellios, Swampscott District 3: Dan Matthews, Needham District 4: Alan Slavin, Wareham District 5: Lisa Braccio, Southborough

Association of Town Finance Committees



President: Brian Boyle, advisory committee, Bolton

First vice president: John Trickey, finance committee, Pelham Second vice president: Melinda Tarsi, finance committee. Halifax

Treasurer: Al Tosti, finance committee, Arlington Directors:

Mary Ellen Fletcher, Swampscott Mary McBride, Billerica Mary Jane Mastrangelo, Bourne Bernard Pigeon, Wareham Kevin Sullivan, Hanson

Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources Association



Hamilton

Chair: Dolores Hamilton, human resources director. Framingham Vice chair: Vanessa Hale, assistant town administrator. Southborough Treasurer: Molly Kean,

human resources director, Norwood

Secretary: Gayle Shattuck, personnel director, Watertown Directors: Mary Beth Bernard, human resources

director, Wrentham

Greg Enos, town administrator, Avon Joanne Faust, human resources director, Burlington

Amy Foley, human resources director,

Concord Rachel Glisper, human resources director. Needham Anne O'Brien, human resources director, Fairhaven Michelle Pizzi, human resources director, Newton Michael Taylor, personnel director, Pittsfield

Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts



Suhoski

Chair: Shaun Suhoski, town manager, Athol Vice chair: Matt Streeter, town administrator, Granville Treasurer: Kelli Robbins, town manager, Lanesborough Secretary: Bryan Smith,

town administrator, Erving

MMA Human Services Council



President: Laura Ducharme, community services coordinator, Acton Vice president: Kristin Kennedy, health and community services director, Easton Secretary: Christine Shruhan, youth and

Laura Ducharme

family services director, Burlington Treasurer: June David-Fors, family and youth services director, Northborough

Women Elected Municipal Officials



Donna

Holaday

Chair: Donna Holaday, mayor, Newburyport First vice chair: Eunice Zeigler, city councillor, Methuen

Second vice chair: Diane Kennedy, Select Board chair. Cohasset Directors: Amanda

Linehan, city councillor, Malden; Dottie Fulginiti, Select Board chair, Easton

MSA discusses evaluating key employees

By Isabelle Nichols

The Massachusetts Select Board Association's virtual Annual Business Meeting on Jan. 8 featured a panel discussion on best practices for evaluating municipal employees that report directly to the select board.

Scituate Town Administrator James Boudreau discussed the importance of establishing a constructive review process that is developed collaboratively between the board and employees. He also emphasized the need for ongoing checkins about goals and performance with employees throughout the year, not just during the annual review process.

Southborough Assistant Town Administrator Vanessa Hale, vice chair of the Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources association, discussed protocols and methods for employee evaluations, providing examples of effective evaluation tools. She also discussed goal-setting and the importance of establishing Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound (SMART) goals on an annual basis.

Wareham Town Counsel Rich Bowen gave an overview of the legal aspects



Winchester Select Board Chair Michael Bettencourt is elected president of the Massachusetts Select Board Association during its Jan. 8 Annual Business Meeting.

of municipal performance reviews, in particular the open meeting and public records laws.

Panelists responded to questions on topics such as the unique challenges of conducting sensitive performance reviews publicly, personnel file requirements, and conducting board retreats in compliance with the open meeting law.

The meeting featured welcoming remarks from MSA President Katie Conlon and MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith, followed by a report from the MSA Nominating Committee and a vote on the 2021 MSA Board of Directors.

The new board members are:

President: Michael Bettencourt, Select Board Chair, Winchester

First Vice President: Michael Walsh, Select Board Member, Westwood

Second Vice President: Jill Hai, Select Board Vice Chair, Lexington

Secretary: Diane Kennedy, Select Board Chair, Cohasset

District 1 Representative: Andy Hogeland, Select Board Member, Williamstown

District 2 Representative: Peter Spellios, Select Board Chair, Swampscott

District 3 Representative: Dan Matthews, Select Board Member, Needham

District 4 Representative: Alan Slavin, Selectman, Wareham

District 5 Representative: Lisa Braccio, Board of Selectman Vice Chair, Southborough ●

MMCA holds business meeting, elects officers

The Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association held its Annual Business Meeting via Zoom on Jan. 13, during which members elected the following governing board for 2021:

President: Lisa Blackmer, North Adams

First vice president: Jeovanny Rodriguez, Lawrence

Second vice president: Eric Steinhilber, Barnstable

District 1: Ralph Figy, Westfield

District 2: Claire Freda, Leominster

District 3: Afroz Khan, Newburyport

District 4: Moises (Mo) Rodrigues, Brockton

District 5: John McLaughlin, Waltham

Blackmer thanked Agawam Councillor Cece Calabrese for her service as MMA president during the past year and as a district representative on the MMCA Board.

Also during the meeting, Brianna Sunryd, communications manager and citizen participation officer in Amherst, gave a presentation on her community's citizen engagement efforts, particularly the use of technology.

MMA Legislative Director John Robertson gave a legislative update and answered questions.



Brianna Sunryd, communications manager and citizen participation officer in Amherst, gave a presentation on citizen engagement efforts and technology during the Jan. 13 meeting of the Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association.

> Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

MMHR to discuss COVID vaccine and labor law issues

will discuss the

COVID-19 vaccine

for municipal em-

A labor attorney

update on import-

ant COVID-related

issues like the end

of Families First

will provide an

ployers.

and its implications

On March 4, the Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources association's first program meeting of the year will cover important COVID-19 related updates for human resources professionals.

A year into the COVID pandemic, and with a vaccine now available, human resources professionals are going to be facing a number of logistical and legal questions in the coming months.

Dr. Michael Hirsh, medical director of the Worcester Division of Public Health, trauma services director at UMass Memorial Health Care, and surgeon-inchief for the Children's Medical Center,



Dr. Michael Hirsh

Coronavirus Response Act leave, workers compensation concerns, and legal trends and changes over the past year. MMA Legislative Director John Robertson will provide a legislative update.

Advance registration is required for this free webinar, which will be held from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. An email with the registration link will be sent to all MMHR members in early February.

Contact: MMA Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols at inichols@mma.org

AG creates training video to detect labor trafficking, help victims

On Jan. 11, National Human Trafficking Awareness Day, Attorney General Maura Healey's office launched <u>a new training</u> <u>video</u> and <u>digital toolkit</u> to help people identify signs of labor trafficking and generate referrals to her office for potential investigation and prosecution.

The Attorney General's Office is partnering with local officials, including the city of Boston, and community organizations to distribute the video and other training materials. The <u>digital toolkit</u> is designed to help organizations promote the video on various digital platforms.

The AG's Office has also produced <u>a we-binar</u> geared toward municipal employee audiences. The webinar provides an overview of labor trafficking and ways that building and health inspectors, code enforcement officers, assessors, licensing staff, human services staff, school department personnel, police, fire, and emergency management departments can help to identify and combat it.

The AG's Office created the five-minute animated training video – available in <u>English</u> and <u>Spanish</u> – to help local officials, inspectors, first responders, and law enforcement in formal training, while also raising general public awareness about labor trafficking. The video helps people understand and uncover signs of labor trafficking and refer suspicious information to the AG's Office.

Forced labor scenarios are often embedded within legitimate commercial enterprises and within private homes, Healey said, so labor trafficking and its victims can be difficult to identify, and these crimes often go undetected.

"Labor trafficking is significantly underreported because it can be difficult to detect – it's a crime that often leaves victims hidden

in plain sight," Healey said. "My hope is that by working together, we can eradicate labor trafficking in Massachusetts."

The AG's Office has partnered with Boston to implement training for the Office of Workforce Development and Inspectional Services Department field staff. The city will also be sending the video to tens of thousands of city permit holders, including active construction permit holders, food service permit holders, and permit holders within the long-term rental housing and short-term rental registration database.

The training video and digital toolkit

have been distributed to a number of partner organizations, who will disseminate it to their staff, members, networks and on their platforms.



Attorney General Maura Healey's office has launched a new training video to help people identify signs of labor trafficking.

In 2019, the AG's Office worked with faculty from the Boston University School of Law and representatives from the BU Spark! Initiative at BU's Hariri Institute for Computing to create the <u>RESULT (Recognize & Evaluate Signs to</u> <u>Uncover Labor Trafficking)</u>, a web-based app used to help identify potential labor trafficking cases and connect victims to resources. The office has also conducted training about labor trafficking for municipal employees, including a webinar designed for health and building inspectors, first responders, social services providers and others.

In early 2020, Healey hosted her office's first <u>Human Trafficking Summit</u>, a two-day conference to provide tools and information.

Applictions open for MMA-Suffolk Certificate; information sessions in March

The application period has opened for the MMA and Suffolk University's Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management programs to be held in September in Barnstable and Marlborough.

The Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management is a five-course, graduate-level program held over the course of 25 Fridays. The program is designed for municipal employees looking to further their careers in municipal management. Sample classes include budgeting, human resources management, and strategic leadership.

The fillable PDF application for the 2021-2022 programs is available on the MMA website, and the deadline is April 30. The cost of the 2021-2022 programs is \$2,550.

The MMA will hold two information sessions for the 2021 programs via Zoom on <u>March 10 at 10 a.m</u>. and on <u>March 25 at 3 p.m</u>. Both sessions will provide the same information. Registrants will receive a confirmation email containing the information needed to join the meeting.

These will be the 17th and 18th certificate programs held by the MMA and Suffolk.

Municipal Finance Management

The MMA and Suffolk University will begin its fifth Municipal Finance Management Seminar in March. The application period has closed. The application for the Fall 2021 Finance Seminar will be available on the MMA website in May.

For more information, visit <u>www.</u> <u>mma.org/suffolk</u>. For questions about any of the MMA-Suffolk programs, email Katie McCue at kmccue@mma. org. ●

Information session is Feb. 11 for MMA-Suffolk Municipal Fellowship

Suffolk University will hold an information session on Feb. 11 about a new MMA-Suffolk Municipal Fellowship Program, which will offer significant support to municipal managers and professionals to attend Suffolk's master's in public administration program at its Sawyer School of Business.

The fellowship program will provide a scholarship of up to \$28,000 while the recipients' municipality commits to continuing their salary and position while they attend the program part-time.

Applicants must also be accepted for admission to the master's in public

administration program and receive the support of the chief municipal official in their municipality. Consideration will be given to graduates of the MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management.

The information session will be held via Zoom on Feb. 11 at 3 p.m. To RSVP and receive a link, email Kate Evarts at kevarts@mma.org.

The fellowship application is available on the <u>MMA-Suffolk programs web page</u>, and the deadline is May 1 at 5 p.m.

POLITO

Continued from page 10

tate and improve local government operations — beginning with the <u>Communi-</u> <u>ty Compact Cabinet</u> — and continues to look for new ways to support the needs of municipalities.

"We have worked to transform the role of state government from just a source of funding to more of a partner in local economic development," she said.

In closing, Poilito thanked local leaders

for "your tireless advocacy on behalf of your communities," and said she and the governor recognize that "the success of our Commonwealth depends on the success of all 351 cities and towns." •

SPICER

Continued from page 8

Spicer said she was horrified by the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol, but the inauguration two weeks later restored hope — particularly watching the first African-American woman take the oath of office as vice president, Kamala Harris. As a woman who brings "many lenses," along with her knowledge and experience, Harris is uniquely qualified to face this time in history.

Asked how attendees could encourage more women, especially younger women, to stand for election, Spicer said part of nurturing young leaders is giving them the space to grow and add to the conversation. Spicer said Framingham is taking specific actions to address issues of racial injustice and inequity, such as hiring its first diversity, equity and inclusion officer and taking part in the Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan (REMAP) pilot program to develop an equity plan, as well as addressing intersections of racial justice and the pandemic and looking at school curriculums.

Asked about the national political climate, she said listening lies at the core of understanding.

"Sharing power with those who do not look like you does not diminish your power, but expands the power of the whole nation," she said. ● Nonprofit Locally based Member driven

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Serving Massachusetts' communities since 1982

MIIA presents Risk Management and Wellness awards

By Stephen Batchelder and Wendy Gammons

In recognition of their dedication and commitment to risk management and employee wellness, seven MIIA member communities received special recognition during the MIIA Annual Business Meeting on Jan. 22.

Risk Management Awards

Town of Norfolk: Norfolk Facility Director Matt Haffner has taken a proactive approach to reducing property exposures. He uses the Building Preventative Maintenance Software program, and collaborated with MIIA to pilot the Hartford Steam Boiler Sensor Program to prevent and mitigate costs related to cold weather pipe breaks and water-related losses. Haffner also implemented rigorous COVID-19 protocols and cleaning procedures for all buildings, as well as providing safety training to staff.

City of Greenfield: Greenfield has

an active, cross-departmental safety committee that carefully reviews all workers' compensation incidents, with a commitment to enforcing Department of Labor Standards/Occupational Safety and Health Administration safety protocols. In addition, the city has participated in MIIA's Hartford Steam Boiler Sensor Program and OSHA Certification programs, along with providing weekly COVID-19 updates on the city's website. Greenfield's Police and Fire departments have been active participants in the MIIA Driver Simulator Training Program.

Town of Westford: Under the leadership of Assistant Town Administrator Eric Heideman, Westford has used quarterly Safety Committee meetings to bring together all departments, including the schools, to achieve continuous improvements in risk management. The combined efforts of Westford's new facilities director, Paul Fox, Highway Superintendent Chip Barrett, and Pam Florek of Finance and Accounting led to a steady decrease in losses in both the Property and Casualty and Workers' Compensation lines.

Town of Easton: In response to COVID-19, Emergency Management Director Kevin Partridge, Health and Community Services Director Kristin Kennedy, and Town Administrator Connor Read acted quickly to launch a COVID-19 Information Line, a dedicated email providing updates about COVID spread and answering questions about Easton's services and programs. The town also created a detailed Action Plan that provided safety training to employees, educated residents with continuous updates, enforced protocols, and checked on at-risk residents, all while maintaining normal municipal obligations.

Town of Chelmsford: Chelmsford hired a safety coordinator, made

■ MIIA continued on 29

Diligent property maintenance reduces risk

By Stephen Batchelder

Timely execution of key maintenance protocols can significantly reduce the risk of property losses at any time of year, but these protocols have become even more important due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Municipal property managers now have the burden of deploying pandemic strategies such as bringing more fresh air into buildings and using HVAC systems at higher capacities. MIIA is seeing that when losses or equipment failures occur, down times have become much longer because of the scarcity of key building materials and the need to carefully schedule and rotate trade crews, among other factors. The pandemic has caused many municipal buildings throughout the state to be closed or open with restricted hours, but this should not result in an equivalent reduction in building maintenance protocols. To protect against unnecessary losses, buildings that are closed or operating at less than normal capacity must be maintained and operated as if they are or will be fully occupied.

The following maintenance action items are highly recommended:

Custodial inspections and documentation: Ensure that all rooms, heating systems and windows are inspected daily when buildings and schools are closed. This is especially critical this year, given pandemic-re-

RISK continued on 29



Blue Cross CEO addresses MIIA members

Andrew Dreyfus, the CEO of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, addresses MIIA's virtual Annual Business Meeting on Jan. 22, focusing on three key topics: the insurer's response to the COVID-19 pandemic; diversity, inclusion and health equity; and health care affordability.

Mass Innovations

Three communities recognized with Innovation Awards

By Jennifer Kavanaugh

This month's Mass Innovations column showcases the winners of the MMA's annual <u>Kenneth Pickard Innovation</u> <u>Award</u>.

This year's awards recognize the various ways these communities helped their residents and businesses navigate the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. These efforts included creating funds to help small businesses stay open and to cover people's food and housing costs, and providing services to ensure that at-risk residents could receive groceries at their front doors.

The awards were presented during the virtual MMA Annual Meeting on Jan. 22. This year's award judges were Sheila Vanderhoef, a retired Eastham town administrator, and Greg Balukonis, a retired Dudley town administrator who is currently serving as Blackstone's acting town administrator.

The award is named in honor of Kenneth Pickard, the executive secretary of the Massachusetts League of Cities and Towns from 1969 to 1973.

Acton gives small businesses a boost

Recognizing the contributions small businesses make to the community, Acton officials and residents have banded together to support the local economy through several initiatives over the past year.

To help local businesses weather the COVID-19 pandemic's financial strain, Acton established a small business grant program, eased regulations to allow for more outdoor operations, temporarily reduced liquor-license fees, initiated a social media campaign to support restaurants, and partnered with neighboring towns to seek grant money. These efforts are intended to give businesses more financial and regulatory breathing room, and to boost their morale.

"What stood out is how much the small businesses are part of the community and help create our identity," said Town Manager John Mangiaratti. "Our local businesses are what people know about



Acton Town Manager John Mangiaratti shares a photo of himself getting takeout as part of a social media campaign to support local restaurants during the pandemic.

Acton. The business owners are a critical part of the fabric of our community."

Acton created its small business grant program in April to give businesses up to \$4,000 each to help cover expenses. The town initially planned to use federal Coronavirus Relief Funds, but officials learned that while the program qualified under federal rules, it wouldn't meet state guidelines. To save the program, officials proposed spending more than \$165,000 from free cash reserves for 43 small-business grants. On Sept. 8, a special Town Meeting voted overwhelmingly to spend the money. Before the vote, residents cheered business owners who got up to speak about the proposal.

"Even before the motion had passed, the people that were there from small businesses, I think, felt really supported," Mangiaratti said. "Through the crisis, we've developed a much closer relationship with many of our businesses."

Board of Selectmen Chair Jon Benson said, "It was a real shot in the arm and brought the best out of the community."

Besides the grant program, the town also allowed restaurants to sell groceries; made it easier for restaurants to offer takeout and outdoor dining and for retail businesses to operate outside; suspended enforcement of temporary signage bylaws; and reimbursed 25% of last year's liquor-license fees. In April, Acton launched the #TakeOut-Selfie social media campaign to encourage residents to get restaurant takeout and delivery. The town posted a list of restaurants that remained open and encouraged residents to take selfies of themselves getting takeout.

The town partnered with Boxborough, Littleton, Maynard and Westford to obtain \$1.6 million in CARES Act Community Development Block Grant funds to pay for 100 forgivable loans of up to \$10,000 to microenterprise businesses with fewer than five employees, child care subsidies of up to \$5,000 per child for local families, and \$40,000 per community to support food pantry services.

Acton has also produced a <u>series of</u> <u>videos</u> highlighting the benefits of living and working in town and initiated a "buy local" campaign. The Board of Selectmen recently supported another 25% reduction in liquor-license fees, with an option for payments over time.

Officials said these initiatives will help the town's future economic development efforts and bolster its reputation as a good business community.

"A lot of the things that we did were not that groundbreaking or new," Mangiaratti said. "I think that it's important for us to show the business folks that we're trying, and we're trying different ways, and we're getting feedback on the different ways that they think would be helpful."

For more information, contact Town Manager John Mangiaratti at jmangiaratti@ acton-ma.gov.

Randolph operationalizes its resiliency with committee, fund

Amid the many challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the town of Randolph saw an opportunity to strengthen its community bonds and combine individual acts of kindness into a coordinated response.

The town formed the Randolph Resiliency Committee in March to help the town's diverse population navigate pandemic challenges. The committee focused on creating a volunteer network, ensuring food security for residents, and

Mass Innovations



The town of Randolph partnered with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley to create the Resilient Randolph Fund to help the town's most vulnerable residents over this past year.

providing equitable access to resources and public health information. It also set up a fund to help residents hardest hit by the pandemic. Town Manager Brian Howard said the efforts received strong community support.

"We have really learned the value of small acts of kindness," Howard said. "People stopping to donate at our food drives or holiday toy drop offs have spoken about how they are paying it forward, as others helped them during their time of need. This committee has provided the vehicle to allow residents to assist and support one another."

In setting up the committee, Randolph wanted to embrace its diversity, which includes large Haitian and Vietnamese populations, and help its most vulnerable residents. Bringing together town officials and community and business leaders allowed the town to coordinate efforts, reduce overlap in services and identify service gaps, officials said. It also allowed residents to contact one group for help.

"This communication allows for a fast response time when a resident is in crisis, and for centralized services to be offered to those in need," Howard said. "We also share critical information and ideas."

The committee partnered with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley to create the <u>Resilient</u> <u>Randolph Fund</u>, which raised \$183,000 in nonprofit, business and general donations to support residents in need. The \$183,000 went to 148 applicants: \$154,000 helped residents cover rent, mortgage and utility payments, and \$29,000 went toward food and medications.

The committee hosted food drives and distributed fresh food twice a week, and worked with other groups to sell Eat.Drink.Shop Local T-shirts and to sponsor an "Honorary Mayor 2020" contest to raise money for the Resilient Randolph Fund. It also established a senior-match program that paired volunteers with seniors who were struggling with grocery shopping and chores.

The committee conducts multilingual public outreach in traditional media and on social media platforms to reach a wider audience. By the fall, the Randolph Resiliency Committee had hosted two food drives, made 54 food distributions, prompted 8,032 community check-in calls, engaged 53 volunteers, and distributed 472 masks. It also made 28 senior-volunteer matches by early October.

The support from those who helped, and the reaction from those who have been helped, has motivated committee members, said Elizabeth LaRosee, the committee's chair and Randolph's director of library, recreation and community programs.

"The hundreds of emails, social media posts, phone calls, and letters of gratitude from our residents has been overwhelming," she said. "Everyone has their own story, and through this committee we are able to really listen and help our residents through a difficult year. It is those letters, this public reaction, that really pushes us through the long hours and hard work that it takes to carry out our mission."

The committee plans to operate long after the pandemic ends, and officials see long-term benefits from bringing together people from different backgrounds, energizing volunteers and strengthening community networks. LaRosee and Howard said they hope to involve more high school volunteers, and they expect to continue their work on food insecurity, among other issues.

"We have just scratched the surface of what we can accomplish," Howard said.

For more information, contact Resiliency Committee Chair Elizabeth LaRosee at

elarosee@ocln.org.

Stoneham sets up command center to address COVID needs

Recognizing the obstacles people faced during the spring shutdown, the town of Stoneham set up a command center to coordinate its COVID-19 response and streamline the services it provides to at-risk residents.

From inside the shuttered Senior Center, the Stoneham Command Center addressed residents' pandemic needs from mid-March until August. The center set up a grocery delivery service, helped deliver school meals, and distributed masks, among other services.

"We knew there was going to be a demand in the community," said Town Administrator Dennis Sheehan. "As concerned about COVID as we were, we were really worried about the shortterm needs of people just to survive on that basis."

Each day, about a half-dozen employees worked in the command center, coordinating activities and planning COVID-related services. Employees were able to distance safely in the large senior center, Sheehan said, and moving employees there allowed for more distancing in town hall.

Working with the Stoneham Stop & Shop and the Stoneham Food Pantry, the center established the On-Demand Grocery Delivery Service, which helped financially insecure households get groceries. In addition, the service helped residents who could afford groceries get faster deliveries, especially as commercial grocery-delivery wait times stretched into weeks during the spring.

"We knew that there was going to be a gap in food distribution in that sort of environment," Sheehan said.

At-risk households could call the center, and employees would determine whether the callers could afford groceries or needed the food pantry's help. For residents who could afford groceries, a center employee would take the grocery order and send it to Stop & Shop, arrange payment, and drop off the groceries within 24 to 48 hours. In

■ INNOVATIONS continued on 28

Around the Commonwealth

North Shore

Local leaders join forces to address COVID challenges

As the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic evolve, leaders from nine North Shore communities have been having regular discussions, consulting with local hospital executives, and seeking public health expertise in order to present a regional response to a global pandemic.

With infection numbers rising over the past few months and the number of available hospital beds shrinking, local leaders in Beverly, Danvers, Gloucester, Lynn, Marblehead, Nahant, Peabody, Salem and Swampscott decided to focus on a coordinated response. Officials have also been analyzing the region's case and testing data and hospital statistics, and discussing possible collective responses.

Salem Mayor Kimberley Driscoll said the regional approach reflects a level of cooperation that has long existed among the North Shore communities, a connection that has been strengthened by the past year's challenges.

"The takeaway for me is that there's just a real strong collaboration and collegiality among both local leaders and public health officials," Driscoll said. "I think there's a strong belief that if one community is doing well, we're all doing well."

On Jan. 6, the communities released a joint statement announcing that they had been meeting with executives from Beverly Hospital and North Shore Medical Center to review COVID-19 case data and hospital capacity, and consulting with an epidemiologist.

The leaders urged residents to avoid non-essential, in-person activities with people outside of their households for several weeks. If case numbers kept rising, the statement warned, several communities were prepared to restrict indoor activities further to lessen postholiday virus spread.

"We are particularly troubled about impacts to our hard working residents in the health care workforce," the joint statement read. "With little remaining capacity at our region's hospitals, everyone is negatively affected, even if the reason for your hospital visit is not COVID-related."

The statement also noted that Essex County had the highest case counts in the state at that time.

Of the nine communities, Lynn initially decided to enact further restrictions but has since rescinded them. While there was some support in the group of officials for more restrictions, they decided against region-wide rollbacks. The discussions allowed officials to work through some issues and understand each others' viewpoints, Driscoll said.

Danvers Town Manager Steve Bartha said the regional cooperation has been an important element of the town's COVID response. The town is home to 27,000 people, but is also part of a subregion of 170,000 with Beverly, Peabody and Salem. Consistency is essential for residents who cross borders regularly, he said.

"If each community is doing something differently, it just creates confusion for our residents, who move throughout the region daily," Bartha said.

The COVID situation in the region has improved some since Jan. 6. Essex County now ranks third in average daily cases (70.2 per 100,000 people) and fourth in positivity rates (7.45%), according to Department of Public Health data from late January. Eight of the nine North Shore communities were trending lower in these two metrics as of Jan. 28.

With some progress being made, the group has started pivoting toward regional planning for vaccinations, Driscoll said. Those plans remain in the formative stages, she said, but officials are eyeing vaccination sites in Lynn, Salem and Peabody.

Officials said the past year's experience has been enlightening, and that the strengthened relationships will likely help with addressing future challenges.

"I think all of us are learning lessons daily — in collaboration, communication, mutual aid, regionalism, etc. — the benefits of which will outlast the pandemic," Bartha said.

– Jennifer Kavanaugh

Everett

City distributes free reusable face masks to residents

In the final weeks of 2020, Everett residents received a surprise gift from the city in their mailboxes: a pair of reusable, washable cloth face masks.

The city of nearly 50,000 residents was able to distribute a pair of masks to 20,000 homes, according to Mayor Carlo DeMaria, and has been fielding requests for more through social media accounts and 311. Municipal departments are also able to pass them out as needed.

"When we first had the mask mandate [due to the COVID-19 pandemic], we had seniors saying masks were being price-gouged and were hard to get, and at the beginning of the crisis, there wasn't even enough personal protective equipment for hospitals or first responders," DeMaria said. "We have this CARES Act money from the federal government, and one of the biggest things people need besides rent or food is PPE."

Everett has been among the state's hardest-hit communities during the pandemic. At the turn of the new year, the city was seeing COVID test positivity rates of 12 to 13%, according to Department of Public Health data,



Free masks distributed by Everett have a QR code printed on the inside to bring people to COVID-19 resources on the city website.

Around the Commonwealth

making it a high-risk community.

The free Everett masks are printed with city branding, and a QR code on the inside, when scanned by a smartphone, brings people to the COVID resources section of the city website.

"Use of QR codes has been so popular, we said let's include it, since most people have smartphones and getting COVIDrelated information to them is getting so important, and we are trying to keep that as up-to-date as possible," DeMaria said. "My kids are always saying, 'You need to put QR codes on everything. It's what everyone is using."

The masks were produced by the local screen printing company Universal Screening Studio.

"We were able to use a local business that does embroidery and silk screening for a very reasonable price," the mayor said.

"Little gestures of niceness go a long way and are good for morale," DeMaria said, adding that it's another way that residents know that their local government was thinking of them.

– Meredith Gabrilska

This monthly column features regional and local news briefs related to local government in Massachusetts. To suggest a news item for this column, email editor@ mma.org.

PRESIDENT, VP

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"I am hopeful that we can take what we've learned in 2020 and apply it to the future in ways that can make our communities more engaged and more prepared for potential disruptions," he said.

As president, Chapdelaine looks forward to collaborating with local leaders across the state as they work to ensure that residents are vaccinated and that communities adapt to the "new normal" that emerges post-pandemic. He said he will keep in mind the unique nature and needs of the municipalities, "while also knowing that we are all bonded together by our collective mission" to provide critical services, including public health and safety.

Chapdelaine has been Arlington's town manager since 2012, and was previously the deputy manager there. He has also worked for the city of Fall River, the Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board, and for former Sen. Joan Menard. He earned a master's degree in business administration from Suffolk University and a bachelor's degree in political science from UMass Dartmouth.

First joining the MMA board in 2013, Chapdelaine has become progressively more involved in the organization and in the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association. He served as the president of the managers' group in 2018.

In Arlington, Chapdelaine has increasingly engaged with issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. In recent years, the town has focused on intensive training of leaders and staff, and the hiring of a diversity coordinator. He said he hopes to play a leading role in advancing the MMA's already-established commitment to racial justice and equity.

"I am hopeful that we can take what we've learned in 2020 and apply it to the future in ways that can make our communities more engaged and more prepared for potential disruptions." - New MMA President Adam Chapdelaine

"I would like to work with the MMA Board of Directors, MMA staff, and member communities to provide a toolkit of best practices for how cities and towns can meaningfully and effectively engage on issues of race and equity," Chapdelaine said. "My experience in starting this work in Arlington has allowed me to learn that creating a shared language and shared understanding of our nation's history is critical to making real advances on these issues."

Fuller became Newton's first woman mayor in 2018. She also brings eight years of experience as a councillor. Before moving to Newton more than 25 years ago, Fuller lived in Brookline and served on its Finance Committee. She has more than two decades of experience as a strategic planner for nonprofits and businesses. She earned a bachelor's degree in American history from Brown University, and a master's degree in business administration from Harvard University.

"I look forward to linking arms with my fellow municipal leaders as we give voice to the needs of cities and towns and advocate for our residents at the State House and with the governor and lieutenant governor," Fuller said.

Fuller said the MMA serves as the glue between municipalities and the state. She said the past year crystallized her understanding of the level of interdependence between state and local governments. She said the MMA plays an important role in helping local decision makers act together and learn from each other.

"Whether it is public health, economic strain, school reopening, police reform or racial equity, those bonds were strengthened this past year, and in the next few years will serve us well as we recover and rebound," Fuller said.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Continued from page 2

storming of our nation's capitol building in 2021. This in-plain-view racism has triggered a heightened awareness in Americans, leading to a renewed understanding of how deeply racism is embedded in policies and practices across society, from policing to public health, from our economy to education. The pandemic pulled back the veil on racially based health disparities, with Black, brown and BIPOC communities experiencing higher infection and death rates. Achieving racial equity will require massive change across all of our institutions, and the journey will require unvielding commitment and unprecedented leadership. The new normal after COVID must not allow a snap-back to what was an unacceptable status quo. Racial equity must remain on the center stage.

We must invest more in our public health infrastructure. Government focuses on the here and now. The immediate challenge. The task that must be done. Part of this has to do with the public's willingness to pay. But mostly it has to do with the limits of the human brain. Addressing future threats is a basic human blind spot, because it is very hard for people to process time delays that artificially disconnect actions from results, and it is equally difficult for individuals to recognize how they contribute to world-scale events. For example, today it may be easier to see the connection between the industrial revolution and climate change, but at the turn of the 20th century that was beyond anyone's vision. And at the personal level, people just can't see how their home, job or consumer behavior could really lead to powerful superstorms and rising sea levels. As we move ahead, public leaders at every level must recognize that our local, state and federal public health systems need permanent renewal and investment. We were caught flat-footed and unprepared because of the limits of our brains. A virus in Wuhan is really a virus next door. Funding full-capacity public health systems every year is more affordable and effective (by an order of magnitude) than repeating this pandemic playbook every 20 years. Let's learn and expand our abilities and capabilities.

We must close the digital divides faced by rural and low-income households. The pandemic pulled

back the curtain on two massive digital divides in Massachusetts. Dozens of rural communities do not have access to broadband and the latest in digital technology. The struggle for connectivity has been extremely frustrating for these towns. They have been left behind by the telecom companies. These firms are profit-driven and have refused to build out their networks in low-density, high-cost regions. Federal regulators have failed to step in and force an end to this inequity, allowing fealty to the markets to prevail as policy. Communities have done their best to step up, and some state capital investment has been available, but not at the pace or scale needed to close the divide. The problem of rural broadband access is even worse in other parts of the country. The U.S. government must align regulatory and infrastructure investment policies to bring an end to this failure. In addition, the rapid switch to remote and hybrid K-12 learning in our schools showed just how difficult technology access is for economically disadvantaged households and individuals. Broadband subscriptions, wifi, routers and laptops are commonplace for middle- and upper-income families, but are beyond the reach of far too many. Access to technology is essential for engagement and success in our economy and our communities. Since wealth is distributed disproportionately, these vital digital divide investments must come from our national and state governments, and must be top priorities in a post-COVID world.

We must rethink how we set priori**ties.** We are early in the vaccine delivery stage, and there are understandable concerns and criticisms of how the roll-out has taken place. From the beginning, the federal government abdicated responsibility for coordinating a national game plan and provided no visibility on the volume or dependability of vaccine supplies to the states. This undermined state-level planning and made local decision-making in advance virtually impossible. However, despite some rhetoric to the contrary, the priority-setting that Massachusetts and most states have put in place is transparent and solid. Priority has gone to those most exposed and integral to fighting the pandemic

(health care workers, first responders and other front-line personnel), then to those most vulnerable to serious illness and death (the elderly, those with underlying health conditions), then to those who are essential workers (school, grocery, public works and other employees), then to the general public. Special attention is being given to ensure delivery to those disproportionately vulnerable to or impacted by the virus. Incarcerated individuals, due to their exposure risk, were given priority over the general public. While that may have generated some resentment, it was the right thing to do. Because this is a life-and-death battle, a more political approach to vaccine access would have been abhorrent. Going forward, wouldn't it be refreshing for our systems to use a stronger equity lens on policy decisions instead of defaulting to the what's-least-politically-disruptive/ most-politically-accomodative approach that seems to have become the national norm since the 1980s?

As we look to our post-pandemic future, we long for the day when we can close the gaps between us, a time when we can renew and reconnect and satiate our desire for personal, family and social connection. When we can hug our extended family, have dinner with our friends, travel to unexplored places. We all ache for that state of normalcy.

At the same time, we can embrace a future that has us learning from this experience. Imagine a new normal where science guides us, racial equity calls us, public health is treasured, digital divides are erased, and priorities are weighted toward those among us who are most vulnerable and exposed to risk. That's a new normal that will strengthen our communities and propel us forward, not back.

Go back to normal? No thank you.

Move ahead to a new normal? Yes please! •

ONE STOP

Continued from page 1

- Housing Choice Capital Grants
- Massachusetts Downtown Initiative
- Brownfields
- Site Readiness
- Underutilized Properties (new)

The process starts with an optional but highly recommended Expression of Interest, giving applicants the opportunity to submit brief summaries for up to five project ideas they're contemplating. The Expression of Interest period runs through April 2. Polito said teams from a range of state agencies will provide feedback to help strengthen the proposals and offer guidance for completing full applications.

ANNUAL MEETING

Continued from page 4

held their annual business meetings, remotely, in the weeks before the MMA Annual Meeting. The member groups were, however, able to hold networking sessions during the MMA conference to discuss the events of the day and to connect and decompress.

In lieu of the usual Friday dinner remarks, the state's constitutional officers — Secretary of the Commonwealth William Galvin, Attorney General Maura Healey, State Treasurer Deborah Goldberg and State Auditor Suzanne Bump — recorded video messages for the Annual Meeting attendees. U.S. Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey, fre-



MMA Legislative Analyst Ariela Lovett (top left) leads the discussion "Municipalities Lead the Way to Net Zero" with panelists (clockwise from top right) Rep. Carolyn Dykema; Ben Hellerstein of Environment Massachusetts; and Jillian Wilson-Martin, sustainability coordinator in Natick. "We are a consulting team for you," she said.

Even if a community isn't prepared to apply for a specific grant, she said, the Expression of Interest will help them "be ready for opportunities." Kennealy called the Expression of Interest "a different and better way to start the dialogue with us" and said it will help state agencies understand the community's overall vision. He said state officials can also use it to provide referrals to relevant grants outside of the One Stop program.

The grant application round will be open in May and June, and an Expression of Interest period will reopen for interested municipalities in the fall.

Kennealy noted that the eligibility requirements for the various programs under One Stop have not changed. For the briefing, Lt. Gov. Polito and Secretary Kennealy were joined by Undersecretary of Community Development Ashley Stolba; Assistant Secretary for Communities and Programs Juan Vega; and Assistant Secretary for Program and Performance Management Helena Fruscio-Altsman. Nearly 180 local officials took part, with many expressing their appreciation for the new program.

For complete information on Community One Stop, visit <u>www.mass.gov/onestop</u>. The web resources include recordings of webinars covering the One Stop process.

quent guests at the MMA Annual Business Meeting, also recorded remarks for the meeting.

"Just as our members have had to do time after time over this past extraordinarily challenging year, we at the MMA shifted gears to provide the best experience we could offer under current condi-



Trade Show attendees had the opportunity to interact directly with vendors, browse information about products and services, and watch short videos while making their way through a virtual exhibit hall.

tions, and we are very grateful that so many members showed their faith in us and joined us," said MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith. "We are all truly Leading Through Challenge and Change, and we at the MMA draw inspiration from the incredible and historic work our members are doing in communities across the state every single day. This event really focused on what we can all learn from the past year, and how we can be best prepared for 'the new normal' that emerges.

"I want to thank our terrific staff for their hard work to build an entirely new Annual Meeting experience from the ground up, and I applaud our members for using this Annual Meeting to learn, network and continue their outstanding public service to the people of Massachusetts."

Next year's MMA Annual Meeting & Trade Show is scheduled for Jan. 21 and 22, 2022, back at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston.

MMA continues #MaskUpMA campaign on Twitter

With cold winter weather here and vaccine distribution still in the early phases, the MMA remains engaged in a social media campaign promoting the use of face coverings to reduce the spread of the coronavirus.

The campaign involves MMA and MIIA staff and members sharing photos of themselves with masks on and using the hashtags #MaskUpMA and #WearAMask.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that everyone over the age of 2 wear a mask in public settings, especially when other social distancing measures cannot be maintained, or when around people outside of your household. Masks can help prevent the spread of respiratory droplets that carry the virus.

The MMA will be retweeting mask photos and content from members and state agencies.



MMA staff share mask selfies as a part of the #MaskUpMA campaign (MIIA Administration Manager and Finance Controller Anne Carlson, left, and MIIA Health Benefits Trust Project Manager Monica Smigliani).

Please share images with MMA Digital Communications Coordinator Meredith Gabrilska at mgabrilska@mma.org. ●

INNOVATIONS

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the meantime, residents with especially urgent needs could receive an "essential bag" containing basic groceries and supplies donated by Stop & Shop.

The command center also helped the School Department deliver school meals to families who weren't able to pick up the meals. Town employees also distributed masks, gave out gift cards and care packages, and made wellness-check calls to residents ages 75 and older.

In terms of outreach, the town mailed 6,000 postcards to seniors to explain federal COVID guidelines and reassure them that services continued, even if the senior center was closed. It also asked "trusted local influencers," including town and school officials and community group leaders, to spread the word about center services on social media.

The command center assisted with the delivery and distribution of more than 300 grocery orders, 110 essential bags, 6,000 school meals, 13,000 masks and \$14,500 in donated gift cards. To accomplish this, the town relied on donations, the support of local businesses, and federal Coronavirus Relief Funds.



Volunteers deliver school meals to the homes of students who couldn't pick them up, one of several services Stoneham initiated in response to the COVID-19 emergency.

"Everybody just came together," said Procurement Officer April Lanni. "It was just an amazing thing to watch, and to be part of."

The command center shut down in the summer, and ended the grocery deliveries as commercial alternatives improved. The town is still helping to get school meals to families, arranging transportation for seniors, and addressing other needs as they arise.

The strengthened relationships among town groups and the connections made

during those first pandemic months will be the command center's legacy, said Select Board Chair Raymie Parker. She and other officials credit the center's success to employees, including Senior Center Director Maureen Canova and Planning and Community Development Director Erin Wortman.

"I'm so proud of the town of Stoneham for stepping up and doing this, especially during these times," Parker said. "It would have been very easy for people to say, 'No, I'm staying home, it's COVID, I don't want to risk it.' And these people didn't stop. They put on their gloves and their masks, and they went out and did it."

For more information, contact Planning and Community Development Director Erin Wortman at EWortman@stoneham-ma.gov.

MIIA

Continued from page 21

a commitment to update facilities management, and has implemented full GPS mapping to better maintain key infrastructure. In response to COVID-19, Public Health Nurse Darcy Beall spent countless hours investigating confirmed cases of COVID-19, in addition to contact tracing for all those cases. She also assisted local businesses, summer camps and schools with reopening guidelines. Most recently, Beall has been giving flu vaccinations, and she planned and implemented the town's first drivethrough flu clinic.

Town of Northfield: Northfield Town Manager Andrea Llamas, who had served as president of Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts, partners with MIIA, the MMA and other organizations to ensure that important municipal information is disseminated and made operational for small towns within Massachusetts. She designed and shared a COVID plan to be used by smaller members, and worked with MIIA to sponsor a discussion titled, "What We Know and Don't Know, and What We Need or Want to Know, in Relation to Risk Management During Reopening." STAM also cosponsored one of MIIA's Regional EAP conferences in Northampton.

Wellness Awards

Town of Ipswich: Town Manager Anthony Marino actively supports and promotes a healthy workplace for employees. The town's Wellness Committee has broad representation, and all members actively participate in the planning, implementation and promotion of wellness programs and activities. The town built a gym in Town Hall and updated the fitness equipment at the Police Department with funds from a MIIA Wellness grant. The town also purchased first aid kits for all buildings and had the Police Department train employees on the kits as well as CPR/AED courses. Through these efforts and more, the town has created a culture of wellness.

Dighton-Rehoboth Regional School District: Superintendent Anthony Azar and Business Administrator Paul Kitchen are active supporters of

wellness programs. Most recently, they started a Phase IV COVID Committee that partners with local board of health members, school committee members, parents and staff to discuss the practical and logistical responses to federal health and safety recommendations. The district's Health and Wellness Committee also works in collaboration with stakeholders and town officials. In addition to on-site and virtual programs offered by MIIA, the school district offers its own mindfulness programs, maintains certified nursing staff in every building, and sends out regular staff wellness surveys and needs assessments. The district's programs are all well-attended.

Stephen Batchelder is MIIA's VP of Claims Operations and Risk Management, and Wendy Gammons is MIIA's Wellness Manager.

RISK

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lated efforts to circulate more fresh air throughout buildings to help to dilute and replace contaminated indoor air.

HVAC systems: Inspect and evaluate the condition and maintenance needs of key heating systems (boilers, furnaces, unit ventilators, sprinkler systems and water heaters). These systems have generally been working continuously over the winter months and may begin to show signs of wear and tear, inefficiency, corrosion and leakage — all key indicators of the need to repair, replace or upgrade faulty, outdated or underperforming equipment and systems.

Unit ventilator failure has been a high-frequency loss type. As heating and cooling systems are inspected and maintained in a building, it is imperative that all of the unit ventilators are included in the scope of work. Problems with unit ventilators, including freezing, seizing and failing, can often be identified before a failure occurs.

Evaluate HVAC systems for their

capacity for equipment upgrades, such as portable air purification units and bipolar ionization centralized filtration systems.

Building closures: Planning ahead for school and municipal building closures is vital, as some of the worst losses occur over holidays and vacations. Always maintain heat at 60 degrees at a minimum. The Insurance Information Institute recommends a temperature of 65 degrees to prevent pipes from freezing during the winter months.

Emergency systems: Test generators and service as necessary to ensure they are operational in case of emergencies. Due to their complexity, fire alarm systems should be inspected, tested and maintained at least annually by a qualified contractor.

Fire and smoke doors should be tested for proper operation at least annually, or more often depending on their level of use and abuse. Doors that are often propped open by building occupants may need to be inspected daily. Ongoing problems with propped doors may need to be addressed by adding magnetic hold-open devices that are released by smoke detectors.

For more information, see <u>MIIA's Prop</u>erty Protection Advisory Checklist.

Stephen Batchelder is MIIA's VP for Claims Operations and Risk Management.

People

Evan Brassard will become the new town administrator in Grafton on Feb. 22.

For the past seven years, Brassard has served as town administrator in Monson. Previously, he was director of quality improvement for Rehabilitative Resources Inc. from 2010 to 2013. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from UMass Amherst, and a master's degree in public administration from Anna Maria College.

Brassard replaces **Timothy McInerney**, who served in the role for 12 years before leaving last August. **Carter Terenzini** has been serving as Grafton's temporary town administrator in the meantime.

The Quincy City Council on Jan. 25 appointed **Anthony Andronico**, vice chair of the Quincy School Committee, as the city councillor for Ward 2. He replaced **Brad Croall**, who resigned Jan. 19 after nine years on the council. Andronico's term will last through 2021.

Joseph Shank was elected to the

Townsend Board of Selecture to the election on Jan. 23. He filled a seat left vacant by the Sept. 29 resignation of **Don Klein**. Shank's term will end in April 2022.



Jackie Lavender Bird

Jackie Lavender Bird joined the MMA on Jan. 7 as

a legislative analyst for fiscal policy. She is focusing on state and local finance issues and working with the MMA Fiscal Policy Committee.

Bird most recently

worked for the city of Melrose as director of city operations and community services. She has also been an elected official in Melrose, having served as an alderman at-large on the Board of Alderman (now called the City Council) from 2011 to 2015.

From 2014 to 2018, Bird worked as the marketing and communications direc-

tor for Mystic Valley Elder Services. She has also worked as an independent consultant and web designer, and as a mentoring program coordinator and an outreach and development specialist for the Melrose Alliance Against Violence.

Bird served as a deputy campaign manager for the 2010 state Senate campaign of **Katherine Clark**, who now represents the state's Fifth Congressional District and is the assistant speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. From 1999 to 2004, Bird served as director of constituent services for then-U.S. Rep. **Edward Markey**, currently a U.S. senator.

Bird earned a bachelor's degree in American studies and political science from Washington College.



Bernard Cooper, who spent almost a half century working for the town of Norwood, died on Jan. 24 at age 72.

Cooper had been Norwood's assistant general manager since 1979. Before that, he had worked as the administrageneral manager

Bernard Cooper

tive assistant to the general manager, and as a federal funds administrator. He worked a total of 49 years for the town.

In September, Cooper received a 45-Year Service Award from the International City/County Management Association. In its online notice about Cooper's passing, the town called Cooper the "heart and soul of Norwood."



Frederick Kalisz Jr.

Former four-term New Bedford Mayor **Frederick Kalisz Jr**. died from COVID-19 complications on Jan. 27 at age 63.

Kalisz was mayor from 1998 to 2006, and had the city's third-longest mayoral tenure. Before

becoming mayor, he had served as the

Ward 2 city councillor.

As mayor, Kalisz established the New Bedford Economic Development Council in its current form, oversaw the construction of three middle schools, created a new permanent home for the Sea Lab marine studies science program, renovated the Buttonwood Park Zoo, and led the resumption of ferry service to Martha's Vineyard.

After leaving office, Kalisz continued in public service and focused on education. He was a senior leadership fellow and guest lecturer at UMass Dartmouth from 2006 to 2008. He then became executive director of the Parents Alliance for Catholic Education, a role he held until 2015. He also taught as an adjunct professor at various institutions, including Bridgewater State University. In addition, he went on to earn a master's degree in public policy from UMass Dartmouth, and a doctorate in law and policy from Northeastern University.

In 2017, Kalisz was hired to lead the Bristol County Registry of Deeds' Southern District, a position he held until his death.

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George McGee

George McGee, a longtime town official and businessman known as Mr. Hudson, died on Jan. 21 at age 86.

McGee served on the Hudson Board of Selectmen for much of the 1970s and 1980s, first from 1971 to 1979, and

again from 1980 to 1986. He also served on the Cemetery Commission from 2010 to 2011.

McGee served in the U.S. Army National Guard, and later as a commander for the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Bedford. He ran a limousine company whose passengers included Sammy Davis Jr., Frank Sinatra, Wayne Newton and the late Gov. Endicott Peabody, for whom McGee later worked as an aide.

At the time of his death, McGee was still active in public service. He was serving as

People

a constable in Hudson, and on the town's Industrial Development and Finance Authority.



Robert Nason

Robert Nason,

who served as town administrator in Lee for 19 years, died on Jan. 5 at age 74.

Nason went to Villanova University to become a chemical engineer, but instead decided to earn a degree in political science.

After college, he joined the Peace Corps, working in Colombia to diversify agriculture and help build schoolhouses.

Later, Nason worked on affordable housing issues for the housing authorities in Melrose and Chelsea. He also worked for the state, at the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Mental Health. He and his wife moved to Lee in 1998, and he served as the administrator there until his retirement in 2017.

At the time of his death, Nason was training to be a mediator for the Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority.



Dennis Damata, a former Wareham selectman and retired police officer, died on Jan. 19 from complications due to COVID-19. He was 68.

Damata served on the Board of Select-

Dennis Damata

men from 1998 to 2003 and served on the Wareham Police Department from 1985 to 2010. After his retirement, he worked as a special police officer until the time of his illness.

This monthly column highlights transitions, accomplishments and awards, and life events of municipal officials. To submit information for People, contact MMA Associate Editor Jennifer Kavanaugh at 800-882-1498 or jkavanaugh@mma.org.

Long-time local official, active MMA member David Kielson dies at 85

By Jennifer Kavanaugh

David Kielson, a past president of the MMA and longtime Chesterfield official known for his kindness and commitment to public service, died from COVID-19 on Dec. 31 at age 85.

Kielson had served for 24 years on the Chesterfield Select Board before stepping down in 2014. He dedicated many years to the MMA's work, having served as MMA president in 2007, as president of the Massachusetts Selectmen's Association (now the Massachusetts Select Board Association), as chair of the MMA Fiscal Policy Committee for many years, and as a member of both the MMA and MIIA boards.

After describing Kielson's contributions, MMA Executive Director and CEO Geoff Beckwith led a moment of silence and appreciation during the MMA's virtual Annual Business Meeting on Jan. 22. "He was a strong and gentle and wise and humble person," Beckwith said. "He was kind and joyful, and he treated every person with dignity and respect. He loved nature and he loved life, and he luxuriated in both. For all of

David Kielson

this, David Kielson was deeply loved by many, including all of us at the MMA."

Kielson moved to Chesterfield in 1983, and soon became deeply involved in the community, including working for 25 years as the town's accountant. In news coverage about Kielson's passing, local officials credited his financial acumen for having kept the town on solid footing. Over the years, he had also served on numerous town boards and committees, including the Finance Committee; Planning Board; and the school building, senior housing, and green community committees.

In addition to Chesterfield, Kielson also worked as an accountant for the towns of Williamsburg, Shutesbury, Athol and Southampton. He also provided free accounting services for the Hilltown Community Development Corp. and the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, among other organizations.

In tributes posted on his online obituary page, people referred to him as "a treasure" and "an inspiration and a light." One tribute called Kielson "a force of warmth and compassion teamed with a passionate commitment to social justice."

Kielson leaves his wife of 62 years, Gail, and three daughters. ●

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Animal Control Officer/Junior Health Officer

Town of Watertown

The town of Watertown seeks an Animal Control Officer/Junior Health Officer to be responsible for the enforcement of state laws, sanitary code regulations and local ordinances/regulations pertaining to health codes, animal control and vector control matters, and all other related work as required. Investigates all complaints concerning animals and vector control issues. Attends hearings as needed and patrols the town to promote compliance with pertinent animal statutes, regulations and ordinances. Acts as an Inspector of Animals, impounds and/or quarantines dogs and cats. Educations the public. Also performs low risk food inspections, monthly swimming pool inspections and assists on housing and hazardous material inspections. Works under the direct supervision of the Chief Environmental Health Officer. Required Minimum Qualifications: Associate's degree in animal science, biology, or relevant field. Licensed as a pest control operator and Inspector of Animals preferred. One to three years of municipal experiences preferred, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Salary range begins at \$2,084.25 biweekly, plus excellent benefits. To apply: A town of Watertown application form is available at <u>www.watertown-ma.gov</u>. An application form along with a resume and cover letter is accepted by email: personnel@watertown-ma.gov; fax: 617-923-8195; or by mail to the Personnel Office, 149 Main St., Watertown, MA 02472. Affirmative Action/Equal **Opportunity Employer**

Custodian

Town of Saugus

The town of Saugus is looking for a Custodian to join our Building Maintenance Department. This position includes some of the following responsibilities: Cleans and polishes lighting fixtures, marble surfaces and trim. Cleans rooms, hallways, lobbies, rest rooms, corridors, elevators, stairways and other work areas. Sweeps, scrubs, waxes and polishes the floor. Cleans rugs, carpets, upholstered furniture. Replaces light bulbs and changes ceiling tiles as needed. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is required regularly to stand, walk, sit, use hands to finger, handle or feel objects, tools, or controls; reach with hands and arms; climb or balance; stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl; talk or hear; and taste or smell. Must regularly lift and/or move up to 25 pounds. Orders supplies and takes trips to the hardware store for supplies. Performs landscape cleanup, cleans outside drain traps, pressure washes walkway. Shoveling of snow from stairs and walkways. Must be able to work independently and prioritize tasks, as well as communicate effectively with department heads, various staff employees, the general public and vendors. Please submit your cover letter and resume via email to Human Resources Manager, Gabriela Lagattolla at glagattolla@saugus-ma.gov.

Senior Clerk/Water and Sewer Coordinator Town of Saugus

The town of Saugus is searching for a Senior Clerk/ Water and Sewer Coordinator in the Treasurer/ Collector Office. This position requires a thorough knowledge of office-related computer software including Microsoft applications. The applicant must possess strong technical skills in computer applications. This person will maintain our water/ sewer billing system, coordinate and prepare semiannual water/sewer billing including downloading readings from automated hand-held units, review pre-commitment reports for billing accuracy, create invoices, coordinate printing and mailing of invoices, and prepare final water bills as well as other responsibilities in the office as needed. Must have excellent customer service skills and a general knowledge of accounting principles. An associate's or bachelor's in accounting, finance or related field preferred or at least two to five years of financial municipal experience in an office setting. Please submit a cover letter and resume by email to glagattolla@saugus-ma.gov.

Town Planner

Town of East Bridgewater

The town of East Bridgewater is accepting applications for the position of Town Planner. Responsibilities include professional and technical work in planning, including community planning, economic development, land use planning, subdivision plan review, site plan review, zoning bylaw compliance, housing, historic preservation, transportation and infrastructure, and long-range planning for the community. The employee is required to perform all similar or related duties. Compensation: Commensurate with qualifications and experience. To download the job description and apply, visit www. eastbridgewaterma.gov/about-us. Please submit a resume and cover letter with the town's standard job application. Position is open until filled. The town of East Bridgewater is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Assistant City Solicitor City of Cambridge

Working under the direct supervision and direction of the City Solicitor, Deputy City Solicitor and First Assistant Solicitor, assists the City Solicitor in all duties

as set forth in the Cambridge Municipal Code, Chapter 2.26, §§2.26.020 through 2.26.040. Must have a JD degree from an accredited law school, be a member of the Massachusetts Bar admitted to practice before state and federal courts and have a minimum of two years' experience practicing law. Substantial experience in civil litigation strongly preferred; experience in municipal law and in employment, zoning, real estate, construction, contracts, personal injury, civil rights and/or environmental litigation highly desirable. The city of Cambridge's workforce, like the community it serves, is diverse. Applicants must have the ability to work and interact effectively with individuals and groups with a variety of identities, cultures, backgrounds and ideologies. View the job listing at www2.cambridgema.gov/viewjoblisting.cfm?Job_ ID=2448. \$101,288-\$117,726 plus excellent benefits. Submit both your resume and letter of interest to employment@cambridgema.gov by Feb. 22. We are an AA/EEO Employer.

Treasurer/Collector Town of Georgetown

The town of Georgetown is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Treasurer/Collector. This is a full-time position appointed by the Board of Selectmen and reporting to the Town Administrator/ Acting Finance Director. This individual will work independently under the general administrative direction of the Town Administrator and is responsible for supervising the receipt, collection, custody, deposit, investment and disbursement of town funds and other securities and the maintenance of related records. Required Minimum Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in accounting, business or public administration or a closely related field with five years' treasury management experience preferred an equivalent combination of experience and education may be considered. Certification by the Treasurer/ Collectors' Association of Massachusetts or the ability to obtain certification as soon as possible. Duties require considerable knowledge of legal provisions governing the receipt, custody and accounting of town revenues; accounting principles, practices,

Classified advertising rates and information

The Beacon publishes classified ads from units of government, public agencies, and companies.

Classified advertising categories are: Employment Opportunities, Requests for Proposals, and Services. Only one job opening or RFP can be listed per ad. The MMA cannot assume responsibility for information or claims made in any advertisement.

Classified advertising rates

Classified ad rates include publication in The

Beacon and on <u>www.mma.org</u>, though a discount is available for those who request placement of an ad only in The Beacon or on the website.

Member rates

- \$100 for first 100 words; \$100 for each additional block of up to 100 words
- Rate for one format only (print or website): \$75 for first 100 words, \$75 for each additional block of up to 100 words

Nonmember rates

- \$150 for first 100 words; \$150 for each additional block of up to 100 words
- Rate for one format only (print or website): \$125 for first 100 words, \$125 for each additional block of up to 100 words

Beacon deadlines and publication dates The Beacon is published on the first business day of each month, except in the summer, when a combined July-August issue is printed in mid-July.

March Beacon

Deadline: February 22 Publication: March 2

April Beacon

Deadline: March 25 Publication: April 1

Placing an ad

You may use our convenient online form at

www.mma.org.

For more information, call Meredith Gabrilska at the MMA at 617-426-7272.

Missed the Beacon deadline for an employment ad? You can still get the word out – right away.

See <u>www.mma.org</u> for details.

procedures and related computer operations; and treasury management principles, practices and procedures. Knowledge of modern office practices and procedures, and the operation of office equipment are required. Ability to maintain financial records, prepare and present complete financial reports and to reconcile departmental reports with those of the Accountant's office is essential. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with government officials, department heads, employees and the general public is essential to performing the functions of this position. Strong customer service skills and the ability to deal with the public in a calm, tactful and courteous manner are required. Familiarity with Munis software and proficiency in the use of Word, Excel, and presentation applications. Hours: Full-time (40 hours), four day week, salaried position. Salary: Commensurate with experience. Interested applicants should send a resume via email only to: Town Administrator's Office, Attn; Maureen Shultz, mshultz@georgetownma.gov. EEO/AA Employee

Director of Finance and Town Accountant Town of Norwood

The town of Norwood is seeking an experienced financial professional to fill the position of Director of Finance and Town Accountant. This position is under the appointment of the Board of Selectmen, and under the direction of the General Manager. The Director of Finance and Town Accountant serves as a member of the senior management team. The Director of Finance and Town Accountant serves as the strategic financial planner for all town financing objectives and is responsible for providing administrative direction and control of the Accounting and Finance Department, and oversees the Treasurer/ Collector. For a full job description, visit the town of Norwood Human Resources website. This is an FLSA Exempt, 40 hours per week, non-union position. Salary range: \$175,000-\$185,000 annually. Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and resume, referencing Requisition #2020-010 on all materials, to the email address listed below no later than Friday, Feb. 12, at 4 p.m. Molly Kean, Human Resources Director: jobs@ norwoodma.gov.

Full-time Finance Clerk Town of Georgetown

Under the supervision of the Treasurer/Collector, assists in the daily operations; processes tax payments, provides customer service, and prepares bank deposits. Under the supervision of the Town Accountant to help ensure the accurate maintenance of the town's financial records and accounting of funds, and other related duties as required. Essential Duties and Responsibilities: Treasurer's Office: Handles telephone inquiries and requests at the Treasurer/Collector window. Responds to a variety of inquiries, requests, and concerns relating to this department (payments, public information requests, and information for personal income taxes). Print vendor checks for accounts payable; prepare for distribution (mailing or pick up as required). Collects, processes, and posts payments of town taxes (Real Estate, Personal Property, and Motor Vehicle Excise). Posts payments and maintains necessary spreadsheets and prepares turn-in on a daily basis. Process and post receipts received from the Deputy Collector. Prepares and makes bank deposits. Sort and distribute daily mail for the department. Performs other related duties as needed. Town Accountant's Office:

Communicate with vendors, and consultants. Verify invoices; verify budget accounts for sufficient balance; run reports for warrants. Post all departmental cash receipts. Prepare a monthly budget report and verify accuracy of totals. Distribute reports to departments and provide information pertaining to balances and expenditures. Maintain vendor files; issue W-9 forms; process reports to generate 1099 forms. Reconcile revolving accounts. Perform similar or related work as required, directed, or as situation dictates. Qualifications: Successful candidates will have a background in accounting or other related fields; should possess knowledge of municipal accounting practices and procedures and demonstrate a strong understanding of the laws and regulations pertaining to Massachusetts and Town Government. Candidates must exhibit strong written and verbal skills, illustrate attention to detail and accuracy, and have the aptitude to become proficient with municipal financial software (MUNIS) and Microsoft applications (specifically Word and Excel). Ideal candidates must be able to handle multiple tasks and deal effectively with regular interruptions; ability to deal with the public in a courteous and consistent manner. Must be a U.S. citizen and qualify for a fidelity bond as required by law. Compensation: This position is 32 hours per week (Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.). Hourly rate not to exceed \$19 per hour depending on experience. To apply: Please submit resume and letter of interest to the Town Administrator's Office via email to Mshultz@ georgetownma.gov. Position to be filled ASAP. Electronic submissions only.

Public Health Director Town of Ashland

The town of Ashland is seeking a collaborative Public Health Director. This position enforces state and local public health laws, rules and regulations. Applicants should hold a bachelor's degree in public health or a related field and have five years' experience in public health or comparable. Minimum of three years of experience with food inspection and septic systems. Certifications required: MA Registered Sanitarian/ Health Officer, Lead Inspector, Licensed Soil Evaluator, Title V Septic Inspector, Food Program Manager, Registered Certified Pool Operator. This is a fulltime position (40 hours) in Ashland. Salary range is \$80,000-\$95,000 annually. Applicants can apply online at <u>www.ashlandmass.com</u>.

Administrative Assistant/Retirement Analyst

Brockton Retirement System

The Brockton Retirement System is seeking a highly skilled, self-motivated Administrative Assistant/ Retirement Analyst. The right candidate must be familiar with Microsoft Office, be proficient in Excel, and possess excellent verbal and written communication skills. Prior payroll skills are a plus. Preferred experience with M.G.L. Chapter 32 or other defined benefit retirement plan, or a bachelor's degree in accounting or related field. For more details and job description refer to <u>www.brocktonretirement.com</u>. Position will remain open until a qualified candidate is found. Email cover letter and resume to jmartineau@ brocktonretirement.com; subject MUST read Job Opening.

Motor Equipment Repairperson City of Salem

The city of Salem seeks qualified individuals for two full-time permanent positions of Motor Equipment

Repairperson to perform repairs and maintenance of gasoline and diesel motorized equipment. Responsible for tune-ups, electrical/hydraulic/driveline/brake systems. Repairs other miscellaneous power equipment owned by the city. Must have valid CDL B Massachusetts Motor Vehicle Operator's License and Hydraulic Hoisting License min. 2B and five years' experience in automobile/heavy equipment repair. Salary \$1,070.56 per week with attractive benefit package. Job description at <u>www.salem.com/humanresources/pages/employment-opportunities</u>. Apply to jobs@salem.com. DPS/Motor Pool - Growth Potential. Positions open until filled. Preference to applications received by Jan. 22.

City Clerk

City of Lawrence

The city of Lawrence is searching for a City Clerk. The City Clerk shall have the care and custody of all city records, documents, vital statistics, bonds of city offices, contracts, maps, plans and papers, and shall have such powers and duties with respect to the regulations and supervision of the elections and issuance of licenses as are provided by law. As Clerk to the City Council, the city clerk shall attend and give notice of all meetings of the city council to its members and to the public, keep a journal of the proceedings and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the charter, by ordinance, or by the vote of the city council. As the city's Chief Election Officer, the City Clerk is responsible for all aspects of voter registration, absentee voting and election administration for all elections and serves as the Campaign Finance Officer for local elections. The City Clerk serves as a member of the Board of Registrars of Voters and Clerk to the Board of Registrars of Voters. The City Clerk shall have such additional powers and duties as the City Council may from time to time prescribe. Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in business, government or related field and a minimum of five years' experience in a managerial and supervisory role. A combination of education and experience totaling 10 years of relevant experience may be substituted. For more information and to apply, visit www.cityoflawrence.com/Jobs.as px?UniqueId=98&From=All&CommunityJobs=Fal se&JobID=City-Clerk-165.

Local Building Inspector Town of Billerica

The town of Billerica seeks qualified applicants for the position of Local Building Inspector. Under the direction of the Building Commissioner this position is responsible for enforcement and interpretation of the Massachusetts Building Code and other applicable codes relating to building construction and design as well as local zoning bylaws. The local inspector will respond to inquiries and complaints from property owners, tenants, contractors, architects and others regarding code and bylaw interpretation, clarification of department policies and procedures, violations, and general information. For complete posting go to: <u>www.</u> town.billerica.ma.us.

Assistant Treasurer/Collector Town of Barre

Technical and clerical work assisting the Treasurer/ Collector in the performance of duties. In the absence of the Treasurer/Collector, may perform any of the required duties of the Treasurer/Collector; all other related work as required. The full job description can be viewed at <u>www.townofbarre.com</u>. Please submit

CLASSIFIEDS continued on 34

CLASSIFIEDS

Continued from page 33

a resume, cover letter and completed employment application for consideration. Starting hourly wage range of \$20.45-\$21.06/hour.

Library Director Town of Winthrop

The Library Director serves as chief administrator of the Library under direction of the Town Manager and the Board of Trustees and is responsible for all aspects of the Library's operations including maintenance of the facility and staff supervision. Primary responsibilities involve the overall direction of the Library, staff supervision, budget and report preparation, collection development and materials selection, program development, management, marketing and effective interfacing with community groups and boards. Plans, organizes, directs and evaluates day-to-day aspects of municipal library services to ensure their highest quality and to maximize cost-effectiveness. Performs a variety of complex professional administrative and supervisory duties requiring leadership, independent judgment, technical expertise in all areas of library/ information science as well as general personnel and fiscal management, planning, policy and building development, marketing and public relations. Pay Range: \$70,000-\$80,000. For a more detailed job description, vist www.town.winthrop.ma.us/ sites/g/files/vyhlif4061/f/pages/library_ director - job_description_december_2020.pdf.

Town Clerk Town of Amherst

We are a progressive, forward-thinking community focused on continuous improvement, innovation, and providing exceptional customer service. The Town Clerk leads an office charged with numerous statutory responsibilities in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, including elections, and is responsible for providing strategic direction, and leadership for the office. The Town Clerk reports directly to the Town Manager. Amherst seeks a workforce that reflects the diversity of its community, all are encouraged to apply. For more information and to apply online please visit www.amherstma.gov/jobs.

SERVICES

Municipal Energy Services

Through the MMA's MunEnergy program, MMA members have access to an energy contract designed exclusively for Massachusetts cities and towns. The MunEnergy program offers access to energy experts at Constellation, a vetted municipal energy contract, and options for sustainability programs. Energy professionals at Constellation, the MMA-endorsed supplier for MunEnergy, work with municipalities to manage electricity costs for the long-term. Constellation is also on the forefront of sustainability programs and provides financial support to the MMA for its promotional and marketing efforts. To learn more, visit www.mma.org/about-mma/services/ munenergy. To be notified about MunEnergy events, send contact information for the person on your team who handles energy for your city or town to energy@ mma.org.

Leadership Excellence Program

The UMass Donahue Institute, in collaboration with University Without Walls and UMass Online, is offering a new online leadership development certificate program. The Leadership Excellence program is for emerging leaders who need new skills and tools to implement organizational change and propel their careers forward. The five-module program provides 30 hours of hands-on learning over eight weeks in an interactive online classroom. Participants also complete two online leadership assessments and receive individualized coaching to interpret the results. Completion of this program will earn learners a certificate and is accredited to award three CEUs through UWW. Visit www.donahue.umass.edu/ ODLS for more information.

Public Management Consultants

MMA Consulting Group Inc. provides consulting services to cities, towns, and other public agencies. We specialize in public safety/emergency response (police, fire, EMS) issues, the design and administration of assessment centers, structured oral panels, and recruitment of police and fire executives. For information, contact Mark Morse, President, MMA Consulting Group Inc., 101 Court St. #7, Plymouth, MA 02360; 508-746-3653; mmacginc@gmail.com.

Municipal Accounting Services

Melanson is one of the largest non-national Certified Public Accounting firms in New England and has been a leader in the accounting and auditing profession for over 42 years. Our Governmental Services Department includes eight principals and 65 professionals who work exclusively on governmental services. Among them are our outsourcing professionals, who are here for you and have the experience and knowledge to help solve your internal accounting challenges. We provide both long- and short-term services as well as flexible access, either remotely or on-site without adding to your long-term employee benefit costs. Contact us today! contactus@ melansoncpas.com

Executive Recruiting, Management and Governance Consulting Services

Community Paradigm Associates provides comprehensive professional services to public sector, private sector, and not-for-profit clients, including organizational and management studies, executive recruiting, operational analyses, personnel studies, compensation and classification plans, charter development, strategic planning, leadership training, and facilitation services. Community Paradigm Associates has a team of seasoned associates with expertise in all aspects of municipal government. For more information, contact Principal Bernard Lynch at 978-621-6733 or BLynch@CommunityParadigm.com; www.communityparadigm.com.

Executive Recruiting, Interim Staffing, Human Resources and Management Consulting

GovHR USA/GovTempsUSA provides executive recruiting and interim staffing solutions, management and human resource consulting to local government and nonprofit clients across the country. Seasoned local government professionals provide five-star quality services including: Classification and Compensation Studies; Temporary and Outsourced staffing; Performance Evaluation System and Training. Visit our website at www.GovHRusa.com or contact us at 847-380-3240 or info@govhrusa.com to discuss

how we may serve your organization. Post to our job board at <u>www.govhrjobs.com</u>.

Management, Human Resources and Executive Search

Rutherford Advisors Inc., DBA The Executive Suite, with more than 40 years' experience, is an expert in providing comprehensive, detailed and effective classification and compensation plans; human resource, performance evaluation, and management efficiency studies; interim management; and executive and senior staff recruitment for public, nonprofit and private organizations. We emphasize innovative solutions to commonly encountered management challenges. For discussion on your needs, please contact Warren J. Rutherford at 508-778-7700 or wjr@theexecutivesuite.com, or visit www. theexecutivesuite.com.

GIS Consulting Services

As a local government, does your community expect more from you? Geospatial technology is a great tool to use to meet these expectations and build trust. Spatial Relationships is a GIS consulting firm in Boston that specializes in on-demand personalized GIS services for local government. Need extra GIS support for an important project, but don't want to deal with the overhead of a large firm? Don't have GIS staff, but have a one-time need? Indispensable GIS staff going out on leave? We're here to help. To learn more about us, please visit <u>www.spatialrelationships.com</u>.

Town Counsel Services

KP | Law is a municipal law firm. With offices in Boston, Hyannis, Lenox, Northampton and Worcester, we serve as town counsel to more than 125 towns throughout Massachusetts, from Provincetown to Williamstown, and as special counsel to another 90. For more than 30 years, we have devoted ourselves to municipal law and have become experts in the defense of all areas of municipal trial matters. We have specialists in all areas of municipal law and maintain an environmental and land use law department that is on the cutting edge of planning, zoning and conservation. KP | Law is highly sensitive to the limited legal services budgets of Massachusetts communities and thus has highly competitive billing rates to give your town the best quality legal counsel in the most cost-efficient manner. There is never a need for special counsel. Our breadth and depth of experience helps keep our cost per opinion to a minimum and enables us to service our clients guickly and efficiently, and is consistent with our commitment to excellence. For additional information on the legal services that KP | Law provides, please visit www.k-plaw.com or contact Lauren Goldberg, Esq., at 617-556-0007, or toll-free at 800-548-3522, or at lgoldberg@k-plaw.com.

General Consultant, Recruiting and Special Studies

Municipal Resources Inc. has been providing management solutions to New England municipalities since 1989. MRI is able to provide expertise when and where it's needed. Our services include executive recruitments, assessment centers and promotional testing; public safety organizational studies; finance operations; interim staffing; internal investigations; efficiency and regionalization studies. MRI has an extensive group of experienced subject experts that are able to provide the technical and management expertise that can help communities deliver quality

services and resolve complex problems with real-world solutions. Contact us at 866-501-0352 or info@mrigov. com.

Town Counsel/Legal Services

Brooks & DeRensis, P.C., is available to provide services to government entities at the state, county, city, town or regional district level. Legal services available include procurement law, contracts, eminent domain, labor relations and civil rights. Contact Jack Dolan for labor, employment, civil rights and retirement matters or Paul DeRensis for all other public law issues at 857-259-5200.

Organizational Development and Conflict Resolution

The Mediation Group is New England's one-stop shopping for conflict resolution and organizational development. With 30-plus years of experience, our multi-disciplinary team provides individuals and organizations with support to move forward constructively and improve functionality. Our services include: facilitation, mediation, training and coaching, leadership development, cultural competency, independent workplace investigations, stakeholder assessments, public engagement and process design. For more information, visit <u>www.themediationgroup.org</u>, email info@ themediationgroup.org or call 617-277-9232.

Town Counsel Services

Miyares and Harrington LLP provides Town and Special Counsel services to help build and implement local programs that serve community needs. We have the expertise you require, based on decades of real-world experience. We take the time to understand your situation. We inquire, listen, and respond. We provide options that will work for you. We are committed to the values of democracy, to preservation and enhancement of natural resources and the built environment, and to excellence and care in support of municipal objectives. We offer competitive rates, personal service, diligent attention to our clients' needs, and good humor. Please contact us at contact@ miyares-harrington.com or 617-489-1600.

Tax Title Legal Services

KP | Law has been providing a full range of legal services to municipal treasurers and collectors for more than 30 years. Our experienced tax title attorneys draft collection letters and payment agreements; prepare all instruments relative to tax takings and tax sales; draft pleadings for Land Court foreclosures; and provide full representation of municipalities in Land Court actions. We also provide assistance with disposition or reuse of tax parcels. The breadth of our experience, volume, use of experienced paralegals, state-of-the-art computer and informational services, and close proximity to the Land Court enables us to provide prompt, cost-effective services. For additional information, please visit <u>www.k-plaw.com</u> or contact Lauren Goldberg, Esq. at 617-556-0007, or toll-free at 800-548-3522, or at lgoldberg@k-plaw.com.

Municipal Financial Management Software: Accounting, Cloud, Utility and Collections

VADAR Systems provides financial management software to more than 100 Massachusetts municipalities. Our accounting, cloud, utility and collections applications are designed exclusively for Massachusetts municipalities by Massachusetts end users. The VADAR Cloud maximizes efficiency with 24/7 secure, remote access to all your applications from any device. Our user support offers unparalleled expertise. Proudly serving Massachusetts for 20-plus years. For a free on-site demonstration, please contact us at 877-823-2700 or sales@vadarsystems.com. Learn more at <u>www.VADARsystems.com</u>. Locally owned and operated at 20 Main St., Suite G1, Acton, MA 01701.

Labor Counsel Services/Municipal Human Resources Specialists

Clifford and Kenny, LLP provides quality representation to cities, towns and school districts in the area of labor and employment. Attorneys John Clifford and Jaime Kenny have many years of experience in representing clients for collective bargaining and personnel-related matters including discipline and discharge of unionized employees. We have extensive experience in the area of police and fire injured-on-duty cases, and have worked extensively with municipalities and insurers to resolve costly longterm claims. We offer training in sexual harassment, social media and the "just cause analysis" to municipal managers. We also serve as appointed hearing officers on a case-by-case basis. Many of our clients take advantage of a flat monthly rate for unlimited phone calls and emails, which encourages key managers to work with counsel prior to making critical personnel decisions. Check our website at CliffordKennyLaw. <u>com</u> to see a complete list of our satisfied clients or call John Clifford or Jaime Kenny at 781-924-5796 for more information.

Municipal Financial Management Services

Eric A. Kinsherf, CPA, has been involved in municipal finance since 1994 in various capacities, ranging from Finance Director to an auditor of municipalities as a Certified Public Accountant. Cities and towns in need of a CPA specializing in municipal auditing and consulting are offered services such as municipal audits, assistance in year-end closing, interim treasurer, collector and town accountant services, revenue forecasting, and capital financing plan assistance. If you are in need of a municipal audit or a financial consultant, please contact Eric Kinsherf at eric@erickinsherfcpa.com or at 508-833-8508. Learn more at www.erickinsherfcpa.com.

Human Resources Consulting

Human Resources Services Inc. provides a full range of human resource management consulting services to Massachusetts' local governments and other public agencies. Specialization includes compensation/ classification, performance appraisal, job analysis and evaluation, job descriptions, salary/benefits and total compensation surveys and analytics, personnel policies/handbooks, staffing and organizational management studies, HR audits and assessments, HR training services, recruitment and selection services, web-based HR services, and special projects. Please contact Sandy Stapczynski, President, Human Resources Services Inc., 9 Bartlet St., Suite 186, Andover, MA 01810; 978-474-0200; hrsconsulting@ comcast.net; or visit <u>www.hrsconsultinginc.com</u>. WBE certified.

Executive Recruitment and Municipal Management

Groux-White Consulting, LLC, is a full-service municipal management consulting firm specializing in executive recruitment, interim management, form of government studies, organizational effectiveness evaluations, strategic and financial planning and conflict resolution. Tom Groux and Rick White, One Pelham Road, Lexington, MA 02421; rickwhite58@verizon.net; 781-572-6332; www. grouxwhiteconsulting.com. ●

GRANT

Continued from page 7

to a woman who is the only person of color on her board and feels isolated for voicing inclusivity concerns. Grant suggested that she ask a sympathetic colleague to back her publicly, so she isn't advocating alone.

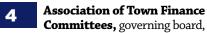
"You've got to kind of grab your allies, and shake them awake," Grant said. "And say, 'You know what, I know that you may be concerned about how this is going to come off, but what's right is right."

Arlington Town Manager Adam Chapdelaine, who relayed members' questions, said he wants to promote best practices for equity and inclusion as the MMA's president in 2021.

"We have to be brave, and we have to be courageous, and we have to understand that it's very likely that we are going to misstep," he said. "But we have to engage in this work, and we have to be allies. We have to be accomplices, and we have to be upstanders so that we can really start to address the BS that we all know that we have, and the people in our organizations and communities have."

Calendar

FEBRUARY



remote, 4-5 p.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

4 Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources, remote membership meeting. Contact: MMA Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols

9 Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association,

remote board meeting, 8:45-9:30 a.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

9 **MMA Board of Directors,** remote meeting, 10-11 a.m. Contact: MMA Executive Director's office

9 Massachusetts Select Board Association, remote board meeting, 2-3 p.m. Contact: MMA Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols

11 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association,

remote meeting, 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

24 Massachusetts Mayors' Association, remote monthly meeting. Contact: MMA Communications and Membership Director Candace Pierce

MARCH

Baker

- **3** Association of Town Finance Committees, governing board, remote, 4-5 p.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise
- 4 Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources, remote program meeting. Contact: MMA

Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols The Beacon

Massachusetts Municipal Association One Winthrop Square, Boston, MA 02110

If any part of the address on this issue is incorrect, please email the correct information to database@mma.org.

Due to the COVID emergency, the MMA has suspended in-person meetings until further notice and is hosting meetings remotely. Meeting details may be subject to change.

10 MMA-Suffolk programs, 2021 information session, remote. 10-11 a.m. Contact: MMA Bookkeeper and Project Assistant Kate Evarts

12 Massachusetts Select Board Association, remote program meeting, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Contact: MMA Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols

24 Massachusetts Mayors' Association, remote monthly meeting. Contact: MMA Communications and Membership Director Candace Pierce

25 MMA-Suffolk programs, 2021 information session, remote. 3-4 p.m. Contact: MMA Bookkeeper and Project Assistant Kate Evarts

APRIL

7 Association of Town Finance Committees, governing board, remote, 4-5 p.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

13 Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association,

remote board meeting, 8:45-9:30 a.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

13 MMA Board of Directors, remote meeting, 10-11 a.m. Contact: MMA Executive Director's office.

13 Massachusetts Select Board Association, remote board meeting, 2-3:30 p.m. Contact: MMA Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols

Online registration is available for most of these events.

15 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association and Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources, remote joint meeting. Contact: Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols and Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

28 Massachusetts Mayors' Association, remote monthly meeting. Contact: MMA Communications and Membership Director Candace Pierce

29 Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources, HR101 Boot Camp webinar #1, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Contact: Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols

MAY

5 Association of Town Finance Committees, governing board, remote, 4-5 p.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

6 Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources, HR101 Boot Camp webinar #2, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Contact: Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols

To list an event of interest to municipal officials in The Beacon, send information about the event, including date, location, sponsorship, cost, and whom to call for more information, to editor@mma.org.

MMA contacts

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For more information,

visit <u>www.mma.org</u>.