Vol. 49, No. 4

A Publication of the Massachusetts Municipal Association | www.mma.org

April 2022

# MMA cites UGGA, Ch. 70 as priorities

### By Jackie Lavender Bird

On March 15, the MMA testified before the Legislature's Joint Committee on Ways and Means on key municipal priorities for the fiscal 2023 state budget, leading with its case that unrestricted local aid should better reflect the historic state tax collections of the past few years.

The MMA is strongly advocating for a larger increase in Unrestricted General Government Aid, the state's main revenue-sharing mechanism, than the 2.7% that Gov. Charlie Baker proposed in his fiscal 2023 budget bill.

"Communities are facing a much tighter budget picture than the state" in fiscal 2023, said MMA Executive Director and CEO Geoff Beckwith. "This is a critical time for communities."

Joining Beckwith at the hearing was MMA President and Newton Mayor

Ruthanne Fuller, who said a 2.7% local aid increase "doesn't keep up with inflation," which is already straining local budgets.

"We're looking at layoffs this year," she said. "We need your help."

Beckwith pointed out that fiscal 2023 state tax collections are forecasted to be \$2.5 billion higher (7.3%) than the tax base that was used to pass the fiscal 2022 budget last July, and state tax collections have increased by \$6.32 billion (21.3%) since fiscal 2020.

Beckwith said the governor's budget (known as House 2) uses a recently upgraded revenue estimate for fiscal 2022, rather than the one used in the state budget as enacted, "leading to an artificially low growth projection" that fails to share the higher-than-expected revenue growth with cities and towns. He said the past two years have seen an "unprecedented divergence" between



Newton Mayor Ruthanne Fuller testifies during a March 15 Joint Ways and Means Committee hearing on education funding and local aid.

the growth in state revenues and local

The MMA is urging the Legislature to

■ **BUDGET** continued on 22

## Inside

House passes Ch. 90 bill for fiscal 20233
Auditor finds 29 laws impacting municipal finances4
MMA weighs in on draft MBTA community zoning rules5
MMA holds 5 virtual legislative briefings7
Mass Innovations17
Around the Commonwealth 18
People24
Classifieds28
Colombon 74

# Legislature OK's supplemental budget with dining rules

### By Jackie Lavender Bird

The House and Senate passed a \$1.6 billion fiscal 2022 supplemental budget on March 31 that includes \$100 million for repairing winter damage to local roads and an extension of rules for expanded outdoor dining and takeout cocktails.

The bill (<u>H. 4578</u>) would extend deadlines for expanded outdoor dining under rules that were initially created in response to the public health emergency — rules that had been due to expire on April 1.

Under an executive order issued in 2020, municipalities were permitted to use an expedited process to approve temporary permits for new or expanded outdoor dining and alcohol service. The rules have since been extended by legislation. The Legislature's bill would extend the rules through April 1, 2023.



A \$1.6 billion supplemental spending bill sent to Gov. Charlie Baker would extend deadlines for expanded outdoor dining. (Photo courtesy Abby Auld/Massachusetts Department of Transportation)

The bill would also extend, through April 1, 2023, an emergency provision allowing restaurants to sell beer, wine and cocktails to go. That provision was due to expire on May 1.

### **2022 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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# **Executive Director's Report**

## A permanent option to 'pandemic-proof' municipal governance

The public has seen the very best from government at all levels during the pandemic. Local, state and federal officials have collaborated as never before, responding to the public health crisis with agility, rapid change management and innovative approaches to vexing problems. The governor and lieutenant governor, members of the Leg-

islature, state agencies and our federal lawmakers have worked with cities and towns as true partners during the most complex intergovernmental action of our lifetimes. This has saved countless lives and made Massachusetts far safer than most states.

The omicron variants are still percolating throughout our communities, yet all leading health indicators point to a new phase of the pandemic. The massive spike of transmission in January receded as quickly as it came, and communities are moving toward a "new normal" mode, with contingency plans that can be quickly scaled to reintroduce vaccine and mask requirements in public places, testing protocols, and other active health interventions. Members of the public and businesses are moving forward as they feel comfortable, mostly in the same direction, but at their own speeds.

One of the unsung victories during the



**By Geoffrey** Beckwith

pandemic — especially during the extraordinary shutdown period two years ago — was the rapid implementation of virtual meetings to keep government operating. With COVID-19 transmission flattening, communities are gradually moving back to in-person meetings, many are allowing their individual public entities to decide

which mode feels most comfortable, and some — those fortunate enough to have the resources — are considering hybrid formats.

One of the unique characteristics of municipal government is that cities and towns are dominated by "nighttime" governance. Mayors and city and town managers hold the reins during the day and manage the professional staff and implement policy. In general, though, a huge portion of local government is shaped by community residents who are elected or appointed. Local government relies on volunteers (or near-volunteers) to make essential policy decisions. With few exceptions, city and town councils, select boards, school committees, health boards, and planning and zoning boards meet at night, as do dozens of citizen-led panels in every community. In total, there are thousands of local boards, committees, commissions, and authorities in our 351 towns and cities.

■ **DIRECTOR'S REPORT** continued on 23

# heBeacon

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TheBeacon (ISSN 0199-235X) is published monthly, except for a combined July-August issue, by the Massachusetts Municipal Association, 3 Center Plaza, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02108. The MMA is composed of the Massachusetts Selectmen's Association, the Massachusetts Mayors' Association, the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, the Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, and the Association of Town Finance Committees. Subscription rate for **TheBeacon** is \$36 per year. An \$18 subscription fee is included in dues payments for members.

We encourage readers to send comments, story ideas, news items, and events notices to editor@ mma.org.

## House OK's \$350M for range of road programs

### By John Quellette and Adrienne Núñez

On March 30, the House passed a Chapter 90 bond bill for fiscal 2023 that would continue to level-fund the local road and bridge program at \$200 million, while adding \$150 million for other infrastructure programs.

The additions include \$30 million for the Municipal Small Bridge Program, \$30 million for Complete Streets, and \$40 million for design, construction, repair and improvements on non-federally aided roads and bridges, including state routes and municipal roads.

The bill also adds a total of \$50 million to municipal grant programs to improve access to public transportation — \$25 million to improve bus stops and stations, and \$25 million for mass transit and commuter rail stations and parking lots, and related enhancements.

Base Chapter 90 funding has been held at \$200 million since fiscal 2012. The MMA and local officials have been pressing for a \$100 million increase to help offset a substantial loss of purchasing power over the past 11 years. The inflation-adjusted value of the proposed \$200 million allotment has dropped to \$117 million since 2012 — a loss of \$83 million (42.6%) in purchasing power. The MMA submitted written testimony that outlines the declining value of Chapter 90 funds.

The MMA's recently updated biennial survey about local road funding needs across the state shows that cities and towns need at least \$600 million in Chapter 90 funding to keep 30,000 miles of locally owned roads and bridges safe, in good condition, and able to support local economies.

During debate, legislative leaders said that they recognize how important Chapter 90 is to cities and towns, but are cautious about increasing funding until a consensus is reached about updating the decades-old formula, which is based on road miles, population and employment. Communities with slower growth or declining population, but the same number of road miles, have voiced concerns that the current framework makes it harder to maintain their share of the state's local roads.



Auburn Town Manager Julie Jacobson (left) and Mount Washington Select Board Member Jim Lovejoy (right) testify at a Chapter 90 hearing on March 9.

"Chapter 90 is something that we depend on on a regular basis to match with town funds, dollar for dollar, to do basic maintenance. ... With the climate changes that we're experiencing, it's becoming more and more difficult." - Mount Washington Select Board Member Jim Lovejov

At a preliminary hearing on March 9 before the Joint Committee on Transportation, MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith and local officials emphasized the urgent need for a permanent increase in Chapter 90 to \$300 million per year, indexed to grow with inflation. They also asked the committee to support a multiyear bill, in order to provide predictability for local budgets and road project planning.

Auburn Town Manager Julie Jacobson said her town receives approximately \$600,000 in Chapter 90 funds per year, but it needs to spend \$2.4 million per year to keep up with its 20-year pavement management plan. Over the past 10 years, she said, Chapter 90 represented just 42% of the town's roadway improvement budget, leaving the town to fund more than half the costs.

Mount Washington Select Board Member Jim Lovejoy testified that his town has 20 miles of roads, portions of which serve three state parks, but receives just \$70,000 per year in Chapter 90 funding.

"This is not very much, in today's construction scenario, to get work done," he said. "Chapter 90 is something that we depend on on a regular basis to match with town funds, dollar for dollar, to do basic maintenance. ... With the climate changes that we're experiencing, it's becoming more and more difficult."

Like many communities, the town of Dedham has invested in a pavement management program, but is finding it harder to fund scheduled maintenance due to the increasing costs of materials and construction, Public Works Director Joseph Flanagan testified.

The MMA panel also emphasized the importance of timely passage of the Chapter 90 bill, and an accompanying bond terms bill, so that cities and towns can spend their fiscal 2023 allocations during the spring construction season.

In mid-February, Gov. Charlie Baker filed a \$2.4 billion spending bill that included a one-time, \$100 million supplemental appropriation for Chapter 90. The House and Senate did not include that line item in the bill they enacted on March 31, but they did include a separate \$100 million line item for a municipal winter road recovery assistance program. The winter road funds would be distributed to all cities and towns based on road miles in the community, and could be used for the rehabilitation, reconstruction, resurfacing or preservation of roadways.

The House action on March 30 keeps the Chapter 90 bond bill on track for timely passage as it now moves on to the Senate.

## **Auditor finds 29 laws with municipal financial impact**

### **By John Ouellette**

A report from the State Auditor's Division of Local Mandates identifies 29 state laws passed between 2016 and 2020 that have a significant financial impact on Massachusetts cities and towns without sufficient state funding to offset the costs

The "Five-Year Statutory Fiscal Impact Report," released on March 23, finds that the state continues to pass laws that often require resources from cities and towns for implementation, and that these measures are largely financed by local property taxes as state aid lags behind increasing local costs. The report also documents that state aid as a share of total municipal revenue decreased between fiscal 2010 and fiscal 2020, while state assessments on cities and towns increased.

The report is called for by state law (M.G.L. Ch. 11, Sect. 6B) and covers calendar years 2016 through 2020.

"This report offers a thorough and detailed account as to how pieces of legislation and statutes impact the bottom line of municipal finances," State Auditor Suzanne Bump said of the report. "It details how, despite legislation having good intentions, there can be unforeseen cost elements associated, which can come in a variety of ways from adding staffing requirements, to adjusting formulas to determine costs, and requiring new services.

"It is our hope," she continued, "that this report is a useful tool to members of the Legislature to take into consideration how state laws impact the limited resources of our cities and towns."

The Division of Local Mandates reviewed 1,629 pieces of enacted legislation and identified 29 statutes with a financial impact on cities and towns, dividing them into the categories of education, elections, employees, employment benefits, licensing, municipal services, public safety, and taxation.

The 29 statutes include:

 An Act Modernizing Municipal Finance and Government (<u>Chapter 218 of the</u> <u>Acts of 2016</u>), which includes a section that provides a new formula for value of state-owned land that has a negative impact on certain municipalities • An Act Relative to Educational Opportunity for Students (Chapter 132 of the Acts of 2019), which includes a section that rewrites definitions for the Chapter 70 program, as well as rules for calculating



Suzanne Bump

foundation budgets — changes that could cause higher spending by some districts that do not receive additional aid from the adjusted formula

- An Act to Improve Public Records (Chapter 121 of the Acts of 2016), which requires municipalities to designate and post the contact information of at least one employee as a records access officer, required to coordinate, document and respond to public records requests, while limiting opportunities to charge for public record requests
- An Act Relative to Criminal Justice Reform (Chapter 69 of the Acts of 2018), which requires local lawenforcement agencies to improve accountability for in-service training required by the Municipal Police Training Committee, as well as by this law, with an enhanced curriculum that includes bias-free policing and handling complaints involving persons with mental illness or developmental disabilities, among other topics

MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith said, "We applaud the release of Auditor Suzanne Bump's report, which expertly documents the fiscal pressures that municipalities face as they seek to deliver core services to community residents. Auditor Bump's Division of Local Mandates clearly explains the financial challenges at the local level, with state aid to cities and towns not keeping pace with budget needs, state mandates that are not fully reimbursed, and a growing reliance on property taxes to fund municipal services. We fully support the auditor's legislative and funding recommendations, which would provide real relief to our communities."

The report finds that, in fiscal 2010, local property tax levies accounted for 55.3% of total municipal revenue, and state

aid accounted for 22.2%. By fiscal 2020, however, tax levies accounted for a larger share of total municipal revenue (58.4%), while the state aid share had decreased, accounting for 19.1%. Between fiscal 2010 and fiscal 2020, municipal tax levies and local receipts increased by 50.2% and 35.3%, respectively, but state aid increased by just 22.3%.

The report points out, however, that "state aid revenues do not show the entire picture of the actual funding that municipalities receive from the Commonwealth," as cities and towns are also charged assessments by the Commonwealth for certain services and programs.

In fiscal 2020, municipalities received \$5.9 billion in state aid, but were charged \$1.1 billion in assessments, so municipalities actually received \$4.8 billion in net state aid, representing 16.1% of total municipal revenue.

State assessments increased by \$497 million (82%) between fiscal 2010 and fiscal 2020. Considering these charges, state aid net of assessments increased by just 13.7% over the 10-year period.

The report did not examine years after fiscal 2020.

The <u>Division of Local Mandates</u> responds to requests from local governments to determine if a state law is an unfunded mandate on municipalities. The agency also serves as a source of information on issues harming municipal budgets, and provides recommendations to address those issues.

In addition to its five-year fiscal impact report, the Division of Local Mandates issues reports on various policies having a significant financial impact on municipalities that did not rise to the level of a mandate that requires state support. In recent years, the DLM has explored and made recommendations related to public infrastructure in western Massachusetts, water infrastructure, regional schools, educational services for children in foster care, municipal police training and accountability, and payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT).

 Download the Division of Local Mandates' <u>Five-Year Statutory Fiscal</u> <u>Impact Report</u>

# MMA, MMLA weigh in on draft MBTA zoning rules

### By John Ouellette

Days before the end of the public comment period, the MMA and the Massachusetts Municipal Laawyers Association jointly submitted a letter to the Department of Housing and Community Development on draft rules for a new multifamily zoning requirement for "MBTA communities," and requested an opportunity to be involved in a revision process to make them more workable.

The letter states the organizations' support for the goals of the new Section 3A of the state's Zoning Act (Ch. 40A) "to encourage local zoning that supports transit-oriented development with a particular focus on the creation of multifamily housing near public transit stations." The letter also acknowledges that some of the 175 MBTA communities, particularly more densely developed ones, may be comfortable with the draft guidelines.

"Both of our organizations, however, have heard from a greater number of municipal officials who express significant, grave concerns about the draft guidelines, including, among other concerns, that they are cumbersome, contain unrealistic requirements and timeframes, and, with the very limited technical assistance that will be available, create an unfunded burden upon their municipalities," the letter states. "Our organizations are therefore concerned that the goal of Section 3A cannot be successfully achieved through the draft guidelines in their current form."



New multifamily zoning rules are intended to promote housing around transit nodes.

The letter points out that the MMA "raised significant concerns" in a letter to the governor on Jan. 7, 2021, when the legislation was pending, "and those concerns have not been resolved."

Created by the 2021 economic development bill, Section 3A requires MBTA communities to have a zoning ordinance or bylaw that provides for at least one district of reasonable size in which multifamily housing is permitted as of right.

Such a district must meet the following criteria:

- Minimum gross density of 15 units per
- · Not more than one-half mile from a commuter rail station, subway station, ferry terminal or bus station, if applicable
- No age restrictions

Suitable for families with children

MBTA communities that fail to create a zoning district that complies with Section 3A would be ineligible for funds from the MassWorks Program, the Housing Choice Initiative, and the state's Local Capital Projects Fund.

The DHCD, in consultation with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, was charged with promulgating guidelines that would be used to determine if an MBTA community is in compliance with Section 3A.

The DHCD released draft guidelines on Dec. 15 and opened a public comment period through March 31. The DHCD also <u>created a web page</u> with draft compliance criteria, information about technical assistance, and other supplemental information.

During a Jan. 12 webinar, Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy and DHCD officials stressed that the guidelines are focused on zoning and protecting local flexibility, and are not a mandate for housing production in MBTA communities.

For the 2022 cycle, an MBTA community will be deemed to achieve interim compliance and remain eligible for the grant programs offered through Community One Stop for Growth as long as it completes an online MBTA Community Information Form by May 2.

## MunEnergy to hold meetings focused on energy markets, sustainability

### By Katie McCue

The MMA's MunEnergy program will host a series of meetings this spring for members to learn more about the value of the MunEnergy program, with a focus on the current state of energy markets.

The free meetings will cover:

- · Energy markets, including impacts due to the crisis in Ukraine
- · Constellation's sustainability offerings, and how they can help municipalities reach their climate goals
- MunEnergy's unique contract designed specifically for cities and towns

In-person breakfast meetings will be held from 8:30 to 10 a.m. on the following schedule:

- April 13: Westwood Police Department, 588 High St.
- April 29: Southborough Police Department, 32 Cordaville Road
- May 11: Lakeville Police Department, 323 Bedford St.

Registration, available on the MMA website, is required for these meetings.

On May 12, a virtual meeting will be held from noon to 1:30 p.m. (Register through

The MMA formed the MunEnergy program in 1998 to help Massachusetts cities, towns and government entities stabilize energy costs and simplify energy management. Constellation is the program's trusted partner for energy procurement and education for Massachusetts cities

and towns.

MunEnergy provides valuable resources to cities and towns, including a unique municipal contract, energy experts who provide information and answer questions, and a focus on sustainability solutions. MMA members can work with the team at Constellation on their climate goals through a range of innovative solutions.

Local officials can receive the latest energy information from the MMA by sending their energy contact information to energy@mma.org.

For more about the MunEnergy program, visit www.mma.org/munenergy or contact Katie McCue at kmccue@mma.org or 617-426-7272, ext. 111.

## Senate releases cannabis bill for debate next week

### By Ali DiMatteo

The Senate Ways and Means Committee has adopted a new draft of a wide-ranging cannabis bill that is expected to be debated in the Senate next week.

The new draft (S. 2801), released on March 31, removes the most problematic provisions that were in earlier versions, which were the subject of an MMA letter to the chairs of the House and Senate committees on Ways and Means on March 18.

While the new bill eliminates sections that would have retroactively interfered with existing host community agreements, the MMA continues to have

concerns about provisions that would expand Cannabis Control Commission powers, which could undermine established local authority, as well as the potential reduction of community impact fees.

In part, the bill would:

- Grant the Cannabis Control Commission expanded authority to approve contracts between host communities and local marijuana establishments
- Prohibit community impact fees as a share of total sales, and limit the fee to an amount less than 3% of total sales
- · Allow for local voter initiatives,

ordinances or bylaws to allow for the sale of marijuana products for consumption on the premises

The MMA is encouraging communities with host community agreements to share the language of the Senate proposal with their legal counsel and discuss the measure with their senators prior to April 7, when debate is scheduled to begin.

The MMA continues to be supportive of the bill's provision establishing a Social Equity Trust Fund, which would provide grants and loans to Economic Empowerment or Social Equity participants.

## ARPA webinar covers rules for non-entitlement units of government

### By Jackie Lavender Bird

The U.S. Department of the Treasury, which is administering the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds under the American Rescue Plan Act, hosted an <u>informational webinar</u> on March 21 for non-entitlement units of government.

ARPA's <u>State and Local Fiscal Recovery</u> <u>Funds</u> are divided into two categories: metro cities, which are typically municipalities with a population greater than 50,000, and non-entitlement units of government, which have populations below 50,000.

Treasury officials discussed <u>changes included in the Final Rule for the SLFRF</u> and answered questions concerning streamlined

reporting guidance for municipal officials.

The Final Rule, which was published in January and takes effect on April 1, provides state and local governments with broader flexibility to pursue a wider range of uses to respond to local public health and economic needs. The rules were simplified, so state and local governments can focus on responding to the needs of constituents and maximize the impact of their funds.

The Treasury Department has made it clear that, even prior to April 1, SLFRF recipients may take actions and use funds in a manner consistent with the Final Rule, and the department will not take action to

enforce the Interim Final Rule if a use of funds is consistent with the terms of the Final Rule, regardless of when the SLFRF funds were used.

The webinar details the documentation needed for non-entitlement units of governments to submit their first Project and Expenditure Report to the Treasury by April 30.

NEU's receiving more than \$10 million will need to submit additional Project and Expenditure reports 30 days following each quarter for the duration of the program. NEU's receiving less than \$10 million will file Project and Expenditure reports annually.

## The MMA office is open in a hybrid format

Two years after the MMA closed its office at One Winthrop Square in Boston due to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff are returning to the MMA's new office at 3 Center Plaza.

Staff are working in a hybrid format, and continue to be available to members both at the office and by phone and email while working remotely.

"We are thrilled to bring MMA and MIIA staff back together in our new office space in a way that feels safe," said Katie McCue, the MMA's director of Administration, Finance and Operations, noting the spacious layout and state-of-the-art ventilation system. "Our new office is an ideal space for staff to work to continue

to serve and support our members."

MMA staff look forward to bringing members and guests into the office sometime soon.

The MMA has begun holding member meetings and conferences in person again this spring.

Contact: Katie McCue at 617-426-7272, ext. 111, or kmccue@mma.org



Staff are returning to the MMA office at 3 Center Plaza.

## MMA holds legislative briefings for local officials

### **By Alandra Champion**

Unrestricted General Government Aid, Chapter 70 education funding, the Chapter 90 road maintenance program, and other local aid accounts were the leading topics at the series of MMA Legislative Briefings held in March.

Some 250 local officials and more than 30 legislators and their staff attended the five virtual meetings, held on March 4, 7, 11, 14 and 16.

The MMA presentations focused on key local government priorities for fiscal 2023. Legislative Director Dave Koffman and Senior Legislative Analyst Jackie Lavender Bird set the stage for upcoming major decisions and opportunities in the fiscal 2023 state budget.

The MMA is urging the Legislature to increase UGGA by 7.3% in fiscal 2023, instead of the 2.7% increase proposed in Gov. Charlie Baker's budget recommendation. Bird gave a state tax collections update, which provides context for budget discussions.

Koffman and Bird also discussed the MMA's call to increase Chapter 70 minimum aid to \$100 per student, fully fund school transportation accounts, fully

fund the state's obligation to payments in lieu of taxes for state-owned land (PILOT), and enact a <u>multiyear Chapter 90</u> bill of at least \$300 million per year.

They provided updates on a fiscal 2022 supplemental budget bill and a \$5 billion general government bond bill filed by the governor with spending for several municipal priorities. They also highlighted some major pieces of legislation, including extensions of pandemic-related allowances, election reform bills, recycling bills, and legislative redistricting.

The MMA thanked legislators for a \$4 billion COVID recovery law, enacted in December, which included strong assistance to municipalities.

At the March 4 briefing with local officials and legislators from Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire counties, Rep. William "Smitty" Pignatelli gave a timeline for the upcoming House and Senate budget proposals, and stressed the importance of discussing priorities with legislators during this time.

Rep. Tricia Farley-Bouvier, Rep. Susan Williams Gifford, Rep. Steven Howitt, Rep. Paul Schmid and Rep. Pignatelli all agreed that the Chapter 90 program



Rep. Sally Kerans of Danvers speaks during the MMA's March 14 Legislative Briefing.

needs an increase to support road projects across the state.

Local officials highlighted a range of issues affecting their municipalities, including affordable housing, economic development in smaller communities, revenue loss, regional partnerships, and water and climate challenges.

The MMA hosts the series of briefings across the state twice per year to give local leaders, legislators and MMA staff the opportunity to network, exchange information and discuss issues of importance in state and local government in an informal setting.

## **Administration files \$9.7B infrastructure bond bill**

On March 17, the Baker-Polito administration announced the filing of an infrastructure bond bill that would support the investment of \$9.7 billion in the Commonwealth's roads, bridges, railways, transit agencies and environmental infrastructure.

In addition to investments in transportation and environmental infrastructure, the administration said the bill, called "An Act Relative to Massachusetts's Transportation Resources and Climate," or MassTRAC, would provide required state matching funds to compete for and leverage federal formula and discretionary investments provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law enacted last November.

"Building upon the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law], this legislation will make a meaningful difference in the acceleration of projects that are set to receive federal funding," Gov. Charlie Baker said at a press event held in Worcester.

The legislation includes \$6.2 billion to support core federal formula programs for highway, transit and environmental projects to increase infrastructure investments with a focus on climate change mitigation, resiliency, equity, and safety for all users, particularly cyclists and pedestrians.

The bill would boost ongoing efforts by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority to invest in and modernize the state's transportation system, and includes \$3.5 billion in potential state matching resources to support the aggressive pursuit of new and existing federal discretionary and competitive grant programs available under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito pointed out that the bill includes \$55 million "to support investments in cities and towns to promote bicycle and pedestrian safety and invigorate our downtown community public spaces through several grant programs" including Complete Streets, Municipal Small Bridge, Municipal Pavement, and Shared Streets and Spaces.

Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides said the bill would "enable the Commonwealth to make significant investments in zero-emission vehicle programs and infrastructure" and further the administration's efforts to decarbonize the state's transportation system.

The bill includes provisions to enable the MassDOT and the MBTA to use certain project procurement and delivery tools that could speed the implementation of federally funded projects, as well as regular project delivery.

 See <u>administration press release</u> for more details

## Town meetings returning indoors on regular schedule

### By Jennifer Kavanaugh

More than two years after COVID-19 upended in-person public meetings, towns around the state are increasingly returning this spring to indoor town meetings, with fewer pandemic-related provisions.

In an online forum used by members of the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, more than 30 town managers recently shared their communities' town meeting plans. The vast majority of those who responded expect to hold in-person meetings indoors and on time this year.

Of the communities that responded, only a few, including Harvard and Truro, have plans for outdoor town meetings. Lexington decided to stick to its plan for a virtual Town Meeting, which began on March 28.

A few towns have postponed their meetings by a few days or weeks, but most communities that responded said they remain on schedule. For the indoor meetings, some towns are still spreading out into multiple rooms, or holding the meetings in larger venues than usual, to provide some level of distancing.

Marshfield will hold its Town Meeting on April 25 in the high school gym with open windows and fans. Concord's May 1 meeting will use several spaces within its high school. Acton plans to spread out its May 16 meeting for the comfort of attendees.

"We will offer two large rooms to offer spacing options for those who want it," wrote Mark Hald, Acton's assistant town manager.

Leaders from several communities — including Auburn, Foxborough, Nantucket, Sharon and Wilmington — described their meetings as being mask-optional, while Weston said that masks will be encouraged.

A few managers acknowledged the possibility that their town's plans could change depending on COVID and the



Groveland residents gather for their Town Meeting in 2020. Many more towns this spring are returning to in-person, indoor town meetings.

more-contagious BA.2 variant that is now the most common COVID strain in the United States. Arlington Town Manager Adam Chapdelaine said his town is planning an in-person, indoor Town Meeting on April 25, but with a caveat.

"We are also preparing for the possibility of it moving to virtual," he wrote, "depending on the trajectory of the BA.2 variant." ■

## State begins distribution of pandemic premium payments

On March 23, the Baker-Polito administration announced that it was starting distribution of the first round of \$500 payments for low-income workers under the COVID-19 Essential Employee Premium Pay Program.

The payments will be mailed to approximately 500,000 people over the next week, officials said.

Municipal employees who meet the income qualifications are among those eligible for this first premium pay program of its type in the nation, which was created by the state's \$4 billion COVID recovery law enacted last December.

Massachusetts residents will be eligible for first-round payments if, based on filed

2020 Massachusetts tax returns, their income from employment was at least \$12,750 — the equivalent to working 20 hours per week for 50 weeks at minimum wage as of 2020 — and their total income put them below 300% of the federal poverty level.

Individuals who received unemployment compensation in 2020 will not be eligible for the first round of payments, nor will Commonwealth executive branch employees who received or will receive a one-time payment from the state as their employer.

Eligible individuals will receive the payment in the form of a check mailed to them.

The state has created an informational

webpage about the program, including income eligibility by family size and FAQs.

The payments represent the first round of a \$460 million program established by the state's COVID recovery law, using a portion of the state's allocation from the American Rescue Plan Act. The administration announced its plans for the program last month.

The legislation creating the Premium Pay program also allocated \$40 million to fund previous agreements with state employee unions

A second round of premium pay payments will be made using information from 2021 tax returns.

## **Get MMA.org updates in your mailbox**

The MMA offers a weekly email newsletter that provides a digest of all the updates posted each week on <a href="https://www.mma.org">www.mma.org</a>.

The MMA website is a great source for all the latest developments related to local government in Massachusetts. The email newsletter ensures that subscribers won't miss any website updates, with a summary arriving in their mailbox every Friday morning.

The email subject line is "MMA Weekly Review."

The MMA also offers a Breaking News email option that provides up-to-the-

minute news on major stories.

To sign up for either or both newsletters, use the short and simple form at <a href="https://www.mma.org/about-mma/newsletter-sign-up">www.mma.org/about-mma/newsletter-sign-up</a>.

– Meredith Gabrilska

## Water infrastructure funding will provide boost

By Robert D. Cox Jr.

When President Biden signed the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law) last November, he pledged a much-needed influx of federal money for clean water projects over the next five years.

The law will invest more than \$50 billion to upgrade America's aging water infrastructure, address lead in drinking water, and deal with PFAS contamination, all the while ensuring that funding is directed to disadvantaged communities.

Most of the water infrastructure dollars will flow through existing State Revolving Funds (SRF), which have provided low-cost financing for such local projects for decades. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that states have successfully stewarded more than \$190 billion in SRF funds since 1988.

These state revolving funds receive EPA money in the form of annual capitalization grants, supplemented by state matching money and loan repayments to local governments. These are considered revolving funds, since local governments give loans, receive the repayments, then loan the money out again.

The Massachusetts Clean Water Trust administers two SRF programs in the state: The Clean Water SRF and the Drinking Water SRF. The trust manages the flow of funds to borrowers, while the Department of Environmental Protection handles project development and oversight.

The federal infrastructure law provides supplemental funding to Massachusetts clean water and drinking water SRFs, which already have annual capitalization grants of \$55 million and \$25 million, respectively.

While the EPA is still working on specific guidance, the new infrastructure law directs 49% of federal funds to communities as grants or principal forgiveness loans and makes the remaining 51% of funds available to communities for low-interest loans.

Nationwide, the drinking water and clean water SRFs will receive \$23.43 billion, while \$15 billion will be dedicated to replacing lead service lines and

The EPA claims the law is "the single largest federal investment in water ever made." But for close to 80 years, Congress provided federal funds to municipalities to address local water quality challenges. The water construction grant programs of the 1970s and '80s paid for the bulk of today's infrastructure.

another \$10 billion will address PFAS and emerging contaminants.

Massachusetts will receive about \$188 million as a first-year allotment in 2022. Over the next five years, the state is projected to receive \$375 million for the Clean Water SRF and \$257 million for the Drinking Water SRF, according to the most recent calculations by the MassDEP. In addition, \$328 million will be dedicated to removing lead from drinking water, \$32 million will address PFAS contaminants in clean water, and another \$87 million will deal with PFAS in drinking water over the next five years, estimates show.

Funding will also be given to 12 federally recognized geographic programs, including \$15 million to the <u>Southeast New England Coastal Watershed Restoration Program</u>.

While the infrastructure law is significant, it needs to be put in perspective. The EPA claims the law is "the single largest federal investment in water ever made." But for close to 80 years, Congress provided federal funds to municipalities to address local water quality challenges. The water construction grant programs of the 1970s and '80s paid for the bulk of today's infrastructure.

A decade ago, however, the EPA estimated that an investment of more than \$655 billion was needed for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure



The federal government is investing more than \$50 billion to upgrade aging water infrastructure.

over the next 20 years. The Massachusetts Water Infrastructure Finance Commission estimated in a 2012 study that there was a \$20.4 billion gap in water infrastructure funding. These figures, generated before PFAS became a contaminant of concern, are now outdated and most certainly an underestimate. Though the influx of more than \$50 billion nationwide for water programs — and more than \$1 billion to Massachusetts — is significant, the water funding gap identified a decade ago remains.

For most communities, water and wastewater infrastructure is long past its expected lifespan and in need of urgent repair, replacement and upgrade. Local ratepayers will continue to be largely responsible for the cost of clean and safe water, and rates will need to increase to make necessary investments.

Most local governments also face complex affordability challenges, with some communities addressing shrinking rate bases, while others, with growing populations, face increasing segments of their rate base unable to afford the rising costs of clean water.

The success of building a stronger infrastructure with these new federal funds will depend on the ability of local clean water utilities to put the dollars to work. While MassDEP staff can assist, communities will need to understand the process and take advantage of these expanded opportunities.

Robert D. Cox Jr. is an environmental attorney at Bowditch & Dewey LLP.

## \$1.6M in regionalization and efficiency grants awarded

On March 25, Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito announced \$1.6 million in grants through the Community Compact Cabinet Efficiency and Regionalization program, which helps municipalities improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of service delivery.

At an event in Buckland, Polito said this year's Efficiency and Regionalization grants will fund "a wide range of innovative projects that will have outsized benefits" for local residents and businesses.

"We appreciate the continued commitment of our local community leaders in identifying opportunities to drive maximal impact through these collaborative regional efforts," she said.

The administration launched the Efficiency and Regionalization Grant Program in fiscal 2017 to provide funds that may be used toward the planning and implementation of regionalization initiatives, including shared services, intergovernmental agreements, consolidations and other collaborative efforts.

The program has issued 86 grants for a total of \$7.1 million in funding for one-time or transition costs for municipalities, regional planning agencies, school districts and councils of government.

This year's awards are:

- \$200,000 to support shared police services for Buckland and Shelburne
- \$200,000 for regional fire training for Norwood, Bellingham, Canton, Millis, Norfolk, Sharon, Stoughton, Walpole, Westwood and Wrentham

- \$200,00 for regional wastewater management for Sandwich, Barnstable, Bourne, Falmouth and Mashpee
- \$200,000 for shared police services for Russell and Montgomery
- \$187,000 for shared police services for Leyden and Bernardston
- \$130,707 for regional animal control for Uxbridge, Blackstone, Douglas, Hopedale, Mendon and Millville
- \$100,000 for shared human resources for Adams, North Adams and Williamstown
- \$95,000 for regional economic development for the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, focusing on the following rural communities: Blandford, Brimfield, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Granby, Granville, Hadley, Hampden, Hatfield, Holland, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, Pelham, Plainfield, Russell, Southampton, Tolland, Wales, Westhampton, Williamsburg and Worthington
- \$94,902 for a regional sustainability coordinator for Westford and Carlisle
- \$70,280 for the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to develop a shared town administrator program, initially with Savoy
- \$46,852 for shared police services for Becket and Otis
- \$40,000 for Northfield to explore regionalization of its Emergency Medical Services



Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito announces the fiscal 2022 Community Compact Efficiency and Regionalization Grant Program awards at Buckland Town Hall on March 24. (Photo courtesy Joshua Qualls/Governor's Press Office)

 \$25,000 for shared police services for Dalton and Hinsdale

Formed in January 2015, the Community Compact Cabinet is chaired by the lieutenant governor and includes the secretaries of Housing and Economic Development, Education, Transportation, Energy and Environmental Affairs, and Technology Services and Security, the senior deputy commissioner of Local Services, and the assistant secretary of Operational Services.

The Cabinet elevates the administration's partnerships with cities and towns, champions municipal interests across all executive secretariats and agencies, and develops, in consultation with cities and towns, mutual standards and best practices for both the state and municipalities.

## MVP grant program opens FY23 funding round

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs is seeking proposals for Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning Grants, which provide support for Massachusetts cities and towns to complete climate vulnerability assessments and develop action-oriented climate resiliency plans.

The program helps communities define climate-related hazards; understand how their community may be impacted by climate change; identify existing and future vulnerabilities and strengths; and develop, prioritize and implement key actions. State-trained MVP providers offer technical assistance to communi-

ties in completing the assessment and resiliency plans.

Communities that complete the MVP planning grant program become certified as an MVP community and are eligible for MVP Action Grant funding.

The link to the RFR and required forms can be accessed through the MVP program website or directly on COM-MBUYS. Planning Grant applications are due by 4 p.m. on June 7 (via email) for MVP planning processes that must be completed by June 30, 2023.

### **Action grants**

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs is also seeking

proposals for MVP Action Grants, which provide funding to designated MVP Communities to implement priority climate adaptation actions identified through the MVP planning process or similar climate change vulnerability assessment and action planning that has led to MVP designation after EEA review.

Projects are required to use climate data and projections. Projects that propose nature-based solutions or strategies that rely on green infrastructure or conservation and enhancement of natural systems and that have robust

■ MVP GRANT continued on 21

## MMA profiles new leaders of MSA, MMCA

### By Jennifer Kavanaugh

As a way to introduce them to members, the MMA is sitting down for interviews with the new presidents of the member groups who took office in January.

This month, we feature Westwood Select Board Member Michael Walsh, president of the Massachusetts Select Board Association, and North Adams Councillor Lisa Blackmer, president of the Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association.

Last month, we spoke with <u>Pittsfield Mayor Linda Tyer</u>, president of the Massachusetts Mayors' Association, and <u>Sandwich Town Manager George "Bud" Dunham</u>, president of the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association.

### **Michael Walsh**



Michael Walsh

Depending on the time of day or season of the year, people might find Michael Walsh in any number of settings: at a select board meeting, in a courthouse, or behind a DJ console.

But for Walsh — whose titles include

Westwood Select Board chair, 2022 president of the Massachusetts Select Board Association, attorney, and disc jockey — all of those roles intersect as he connects with people. Even if it means getting the party started in his part-time job as DJ Mike Walsh.

"I like music so much, and it's kind of a public service," he said. "You're still out there. You're still with the public. And you're trying to make sure that everyone there has a good time.

"Believe it or not, it's kind of a continuation of just being in the public and getting a good result."

Walsh has practiced law for more than three decades, having earned degrees in communications and speech and in law from Suffolk University. He currently focuses on workers' compensation and Social Security law.

Walsh enjoys using his professional skills to help people, including on the Select Board, where he has served since 2014.

"I like being able to listen to people, hear their concerns and try to figure out the This month, we feature Westwood Select Board Member Michael Walsh, president of the Massachusetts Select Board Association, and North Adams Councillor Lisa Blackmer, president of the Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association.

best way that we can address them," Walsh said. "You get both sides, so you have to figure out what is that compromise, where is that middle ground, to try to help people see things from both perspectives."

Walsh served as the MSA's first vice president last year, after having served as secretary. As president, he hopes to get more members engaged with the group, especially as people emerge from a remote-only environment.

A father of six, Walsh lives with his wife and three youngest children, along with their 8-year-old labradoodle, Sandy. They also have a home in North Falmouth, and for the past 28 years in a row, he has enjoyed vacations in the Caribbean.

"I guess I would be an Arubaholic," he said, adding that being near the water brings perspective.

"When you sit next to the ocean," he said, "you realize what a small influence you are, compared to the ocean."

### Lisa Blackmer



Lisa Blackmer

For Lisa Blackmer, president of the Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, public service took root in western Massachusetts, where local government makes a big impact, and where neighbors help each other out.

Born in Pittsfield and raised in Williamsburg, Blackmer moved in 1986 to North Adams, where years of volunteering led to the City Council, of which she is currently president. There, she embraces the region's sense of community.

"When someone's down on their luck, we all step up," Blackmer said. "I've seen people show up at a spaghetti supper, or a chicken dinner or some fundraising event, when I know that they really don't have anything, but they still show up because something happened to somebody in the community."

Since January, Blackmer has been the school business administrator for the Northern Berkshire School Union. She was previously the treasurer and collector in Buckland, town administrator in Sandisfield, and human resources and accounting manager for the Wheatleigh Hotel in Lenox. She earned a bachelor's degree and master's degree in business administration from the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, and completed the MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program in 2019.

Blackmer served on the City Council for a decade starting in 2008. After a two-year break, she rejoined the council in 2020. She has also served on the North Adams Planning Board since 2018.

She became more involved in the MMA about a decade ago, when she joined the Policy Committee on Municipal and Regional Administration. She served as president of the MMA in 2016, has been president of the MMCA since January 2020, and currently serves on the MMA's Fiscal Policy Committee.

In terms of her MMCA goals, Blackmer wants to provide followup training for new councillors, after they've had a few months of experience. She also wants to alternate between remote and regional meetings, to increase access for members.

Councillors, she said, have one priority in their communities: "Funding, funding and funding."

Blackmer lives with her husband, Bill, and their cat Charlie. They look forward to traveling again, to Ireland and the beach. Closer to home, she finds refuge in the vegetable garden that she and her husband grow.

"I guess it's my happy, quiet place," she said. ●

## MMA members participate in 2 career fairs

### **By Candace Pierce**

A panel of local government employees spoke to 35 Suffolk University undergraduate, graduate and alumni students on March 31 about careers in local government, as an extension of the MMA's ongoing efforts to help municipalities attract new employees.

The Careers in Municipal Government event was a partnership effort between Suffolk University and the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association's Future Managers committee. It followed a similar panel discussion held at Bridgewater State University on March 15.

At the Suffolk event, held at the Suffolk Law School, Middleton Assistant Town Administrator and HR Director Jackie Bresnahan welcomed students and spoke about the importance and many benefits of working in local government. Maynard Assistant Town Administrator Megan Zammuto, who moderated the panel discussion, emphasized that there is an abundance of jobs available in local government. Both Bresnahan and Zammuto are Suffolk University MPA graduates.

### Panelists were:

- · Andover Assistant Town Manager Patrick Lawlor
- Needham Human Resources Director Chuck Murphy-Romboletti
- Brookline Health and Human Services Director Sigalle Reiss
- Dartmouth Development and Grants Director Cody Haddad



Justin Casanova-Davis, assistant town administrator and interim finance director in Brookline, talks about the impact of working in local government during the March 31 Careers in Municipal Government event at Suffolk Law School.

- · Cambridge Police Superintendent Robert Lowe
- Brookline Assistant Town Administrator and Interim Finance Director Justin Casanova-Davis

The panelists spoke about their career paths and why they love their jobs. They said they enjoy having a direct impact on improving the lives of the residents in their communities.

Getting your foot in the door is the most important step, they said, as an increasing number of retirements are leading to quick promotions and job openings.

The Bridgewater State University event was introduced by Franklin Town Administrator and Future Managers co-chair Jamie Hellen and moderated by Brookline Administrative Services Director Devon Fields.

Panelists were:

- Franklin Human Resources Director Karen Bratt
- Dennis Finance Director Josee Cardinal
- Franklin Public Health Director Cathy
- · Marion Town Administrator Jay McGrail
- Bridgewater Police Chief Chris DelMonte
- Randolph Public Health Commissioner Gerard Cody

The MMA has taken multiple steps to support cities and towns as they face a growing challenge — worsened by the pandemic — to fill a range of jobs, including in the areas of management, finance, information technology, and public works, as the result of retirements and a highly competitive job market. The MMA partners with Suffolk University to offer programs designed exclusively for municipal employees to further their careers in local government, and launched the MassTown Careers digital media campaign to raise awareness about the appeal of municipal jobs as a career choice for candidates of all ages.

The MMA is now partnering with various universities to talk to students about opportunities. In addition to the panel discussions, members of the Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources association have joined virtual seminars and job fairs.

Bridgewater State is now inviting municipalities to join its Virtual Job and Internship Fair on April 7 from 2 to 5:30 p.m. Click here to register.

## MSA discusses local economic development grants

### **By Isabelle Nichols**

A Massachusetts Select Board Association program meeting on March 4 discussed the local economic development grants made available through the Community One Stop for Growth program. The webinar was co-sponsored by the Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts.

2021 was the inaugural year for Community One Stop, a single application portal and streamlined, collaborative review process for grant programs that support local economic development initiatives.

Athol Town Manager and STAM Chair

Shaun Suhoski opened the program with an overview of Athol's 2021 Community One Stop initiatives and the highlights and challenges for his town.

A panel of speakers then reviewed the first year of the Community One Stop program and provided an overview of what the process will look like in the year ahead.

### Panelists included:

· Juan Vega, assistant secretary for Communities and Programs with the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

■ ONE STOP continued on 21



Juan Vega, assistant secretary for Communities and Programs with the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, discusses the Community One Stop for Growth program during a March 4 webinar.

## **Municipal Cybersecurity Awareness grants awarded**

At an event hosted by the city of Haverhill on March 8, the Baker-Polito administration announced the 2022 recipients of Municipal Cybersecurity Awareness grants.

The program, administered by the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security and its Office of Municipal and School Technology, will provide cybersecurity training to more than 57,000 employees from 210 municipalities and public school districts across the Commonwealth to better detect and avoid cyberthreats.

• Download the full list of awardees

The cybersecurity grant program, funded by \$250,000 in capital IT authorizations from a 2020 general governmental bond law, is designed to support local government efforts to improve overall cybersecurity posture through comprehensive online end-user training, evaluation and threat simulation.

Awarded communities will receive licenses for end-user training, assessment and phishing simulation procured by the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security. Demonstrated buy-in from the chief executive in the community is a requirement of all program participants.

Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito joined Secretary of Technology Services and Security



Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito announces the 2022 Municipal Cybersecurity Awareness Grant Program recipients at Haverhill City Hall on March 8. (Photo courtesy Joshua Qualls/Governor's Press

Curt Wood, legislators and municipal officials from across the Commonwealth to announce the award recipients. The city of Haverhill and the Haverhill Public Schools are first-time participants in the program and have been awarded a grant that will see 1,900 city employees receive end-user cybersecurity training.

"The city of Haverhill takes its job to protect the privacy of our residents and the general public very seriously, and we are committed to improving our cybersecurity defenses," said Mayor James Fiorentini. "Although we already provide cybersecurity training to our employees, this funding will allow us to do more and make our defenses and safeguards even stronger."

Wood said he is "thrilled at the response to this year's grant program, with executives from across the Commonwealth's cities and towns stepping up and making cybersecurity a priority."

MassCyberCenter Director Stephanie Helm said employee training programs "are an important component of a comprehensive security program and the establishment of a culture of cybersecurity." The grants, she said, will help each recipient meet the goals of the Minimum Baseline of Cybersecurity for Municipalities.

MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith said the grant announcement "demonstrates that the state is deeply committed to working with local governments to create resilient and cyber-secure cities and towns in every corner of Massachusetts." He added that the Cybersecurity Awareness Grant Program "is a model" for the rest of the nation."

- More information on the Municipal Cybersecurity Awareness Grant Program
- More information on the municipal cybersecurity and IT program offerings from the Office of Municipal and School Technology

## MMMA, MMHR to discuss birth order relationship to management

A joint meeting of the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association and Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources on April 14 in Worcester will feature a keynote presentation about the impact of birth order on management style and interpersonal relationships.

Human relations and management expert Jack Agati will lead an entertaining and informative session, "Birth Order: What's It Got to Do With Business, Anyway?" Agati will explore the impact that a person's place in the family has on styles of managing and dealing with people.

Attendees will learn how to avoid potential interpersonal conflicts, while tapping into a person's strengths as developed through the birth order process.

The meeting will also feature a panel discussion focused on civility in city and



Jack Agati

town halls. Panelists will include Bridgewater Town Manager Michael Dutton, Acton Human Resources Director Marianne Fleckner, and Norfolk Town Administrator Blythe Robinson. Randolph Town Councillor Katrina

Huff-Larmond, founder of Huff, Larmond and Associates, will moderate the session.

MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith will provide a legislative update.

Registration and networking will begin at 9 a.m. The program will start at 9:30 a.m., and lunch will be served.

The meeting will be held at the AC Hotel

Worcester at 125 Front St.

The registration fee is \$45. To register, visit www.mma.org.

Due to COVID, attendees of this in-person meeting will be required to show proof of being fully vaccinated (card, photo or QR code) on the day of the event. (Religious or medical exemptions are allowed with a negative PCR test taken within 72 hours.) Masks are optional. These safety protocols are subject to change based on the latest public health data and guidance.

- MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols at inichols@mma.org or 617-426-7272, ext. 104
- MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker at dbaker@mma.org or 617-426-7272, ext. 105

## **MSA to host Western Mass. Municipal Conference**

The Massachusetts Select Board Association will host its second Western Massachusetts Municipal Conference on Saturday, April 9, in Easthampton.

The event will bring together regional stakeholders, including municipal



Daniel Carey

officials, planning agencies and legislators from Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire counties, to address challenges facing the region.

Conference goals are to promote sustainable cross-governmental partnerships across western Massachusetts, to share best practices for adaptation to and mitigation of challenges facing the four counties, and to advocate more effectively for the region.

The conference is co-sponsored by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, and the Rural Policy Advisory Commission.

The conference will open with a legislative panel featuring Rep. Natalie Blais of the 1st Franklin District, Rep. Daniel Carey of the 2nd Hampshire District, and Sen. Joanne Comerford of the Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester District. The panel, focused on priorities for the next round of American Rescue Plan Act aid ("ARPA 2.0") and the remainder of the legislative session, will



Jo Comerford



Natalie Blais

be moderated by Williamstown Select Board Member Andy Hogeland, the first vice president of the MSA.

Following the panel, a number of workshops will cover topics such as police reform and its impact on small towns, ARPA funding and economic recovery from the pandemic, the impacts of post-COVID population shifts on housing affordability, and the state of public infrastructure in western Massachusetts.

Workshop speakers will include:

- · Pittsfield Police Chief and Peace Officer Standards and Training Commissioner Michael Wynn and Deerfield Police Chief John Paciorek discussing police reform
- · Heath Fahle, assistant secretary for federal funds at the Executive Office for Administration and Finance, and Holyoke Community Development Director Alicia Zoeller, discussing ARPA funding and economic recovery from COVID-19
- Great Barrington Assistant Town Manager/Director of Planning

Christopher Rembold; Alyssa Larose, real estate project manager/housing development director with the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority; and Jessica Atwood, economic development program manager with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, discussing housing affordability

 State Auditor Suzanne Bump and Sen. Comerford discussing public infrastructure in western Massachusetts

The conference will be held at Easthampton High School at 70 Williston Ave. Registration and networking will begin at 8 a.m., and the program will run from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Boxed lunches will be available for those who would like to take lunch to go or stay for networking after the confer-

Due to COVID, attendees of this in-person meeting will be required to show proof of being fully vaccinated (card, photo or QR code) on the day of the event. (Religious or medical exemptions are allowed with a negative PCR test taken within 72 hours.) Masks are optional. These safety protocols are subject to change based on the latest public health data and guidance.

The registration fee is \$35. Visit www. mma.org for registration and the conference agenda.

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

## MassDEP accepting applications for free PFAS testing of private wells

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection is continuing to accept applications from private well owners in 85 towns for free PFAS testing.

PFAS are a family of human-made chemicals found in a wide range of consumer products, such as non-stick cookware and stain- and water-resistant materials. PFAS have been found to seep into surface soils, groundwater and surface water, thereby contaminating drinking water. Negative effects of PFAS on human health and development are a growing concern.

The program is focused on towns where 60% or more of residents are served by

private wells. The 85 qualifying towns are: Alford, Aquinnah, Ashby, Ashfield, Becket, Belchertown, Berkley, Berlin, Bolton, Boxborough, Boxford, Brimfield, Buckland, Carlisle, Carver, Charlemont, Charlton, Chesterfield, Chilmark, Clarksburg, Colrain, Conway, Dover, Dunstable, Erving, Florida, Freetown, Goshen, Granby, Granville, Hampden, Harvard, Hawley, Heath, Holland, Hubbardston, Lakeville, Leverett, Leyden, Mendon, Middlefield, Millville, Monterey, Montgomery, Mount Washington, Nantucket, New Ashford, New Braintree, New Marlborough, New Salem, Newbury, Oakham, Otis, Pelham, Peru, Petersham, Phillipston, Plainfield, Plympton, Princeton, Rehoboth, Richmond, Rochester, Rowe, Royalston, Sandisfield, Savoy, Shelburne, Sherborn, Shutesbury, Stow, Sutton, Tolland, Truro, Tyngsborough, Tyringham, Wales, Warwick, Washington, Wellfleet, Wendell, West Tisbury, Westhampton, Westport, and Windsor.

To apply for the private well sampling program, residents should visit dwp-pfas. madwpdep.org.

- MassDEP FAQ webpage for PFAS in Private Well Drinking Water Supplies
- MassDEP web page about per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)

## MMHR to hold HR101 boot camp in Wrentham on May 12

The Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources association will offer its annual HR101 boot camp as a full-day, in-person event on May 12 in Wrentham.



Elizabeth Valerio

The boot camp will cover core functions

of the municipal HR office, including trends in negotiations related to COVID, first steps in creating a diversity, equity, and inclusion plan for cities and towns, key components of an HR audit, and an HR101 roundtable with seasoned human resources professionals.

Featured speakers will include:

 Wrentham Human Resources Director Mary Beth Bernard, who will discuss "big ticket" items in human resources audits



Beth Bernard



Teresa Cruz Foley

- Teresa Cruz Foley, founder and lead consultant of Brave Space Consulting, who will explore the first steps for municipal HR managers looking to undertake diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging initiatives
- Elizabeth Valerio, partner at Valerio, Dominello & Hillman, who will cover legal trends in labor law, with a focus on trends in negotiations related to COVID

The boot camp is geared toward newer municipal human resources profession-

als, but veterans in the field are welcome to attend for a refresher course.

Registration and networking will begin at 8:30 a.m. The program will start at 9 a.m., and lunch will be served.

The boot camp will be held at Lake Pearl, 299 Creek St. in Wrentham.

The registration fee is \$75 for members and \$85 for nonmembers. A registration link will be available at <a href="www.mma.org">www.mma.org</a> in early April.

Due to COVID, this in-person meeting requires attendees to show proof of being fully vaccinated (card, photo or QR code) on the day of the event. (Religious or medical exemptions are allowed with a negative PCR test taken within 72 hours.) Masks are optional. These safety protocols are subject to change based on the latest public health data and guidance.

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

## MMHR discusses municipal recruitment strategies

### By Isabelle Nichols

In its first program meeting of the year, Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources held a free webinar on March 10 focused on municipal recruitment.

Representatives from communities that participated in a first-of-its-kind municipal career fair on the North Shore last November, in partnership with MassHire-North Shore Career Center, gave an overview of why they wanted to host the event, how it came together, and what the experience was like.

Speakers included:

- Danvers Assistant Town Manager and Communications Director Jen Breaker
- Salem Human Resources Director Lisa Cammarata
- Beverly Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Director Abu Toppin
- Peabody Human Resources Director Beth O'Donnell

Toppin discussed how the municipal career fair prioritized recruitment of diverse candidates. He also discussed

diversity recruitment more broadly and provided some tips for municipal HR departments. Toppin provided a number of examples of job boards where diverse job seekers look for opportunities, and emphasized the importance of outreach and relationship-building beyond typical networks to reach diverse audiences.

The panel concluded with a discussion about lessons learned from the career fair and next steps that the communities will be pursuing.

More than 120 human resources professionals participated in the webinar. (Click here to view.) ●



Local officials discuss municipal recruitment during a Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources webinar on March 10. Pictured are (top row, l-r) Danvers Assistant Town Manager and Communications Director Jen Breaker and Peabody Human Resources Director Beth O'Donnell; (bottom row, l-r) Salem Human Resources Director Lisa Cammarata and Beverly Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Director Abu Toppin.

## MMA-Suffolk accepting applications for programs

### By Katie McCue

The application deadline is April 30 for the MMA and Suffolk University's Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management programs beginning this fall.

In September, the MMA and Suffolk University will launch the 19th and 20th Certificate programs in-person in Grafton and Dartmouth. The graduate-level academic program provides a solid grounding in municipal management, and covers topics such as human resources management, budgeting and financial management, and strategic leadership.

The program is held over the course of 25 Fridays from September through May. Suffolk programs currently have a vaccination requirement for in-person learning.

The program application is available on the MMA website.

### **Fellowship Program**

The application deadline is May 1 for the MMA and Suffolk University's Municipal Fellowship Program, which was launched last year to offer significant support to municipal managers and professionals to attend the master's in public administration program at Suffolk's Sawyer School of Business.

The fellowship program will provide a scholarship of up to \$28,000 while the recipient's municipality commits to



The MMA-Suffolk Municipal Finance Management Seminar holds an orientation on March 4. This spring, 25 students are participating in the program.

continuing their salary and position while they attend the program part-time. The application is available on the MMA-Suffolk programs web page.

Applicants must already be accepted for admission to the MPA 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 program.

### **Finance Seminar**

The MMA-Suffolk Municipal Finance

Management Seminar will hold three programs in 2022.

The five-week program, held on Fridays, is designed to provide a deep dive into municipal finance.

The application period for the fall 2022 session remains open through July 31. The application is available on the MMA website.

For more information on any of the MMA-Suffolk programs, visit mma.org/ suffolk or contact Katie McCue at 617-426-7272, ext. 111, or kmccue@mma.org.

## MMA Human Services Council to meet on April 28 in Westborough

The MMA Human Services Council will host its first program meeting of the year on April 28 in Westborough.

The in-person meeting will feature a presentation by UMass Amherst economist Marta Vicarelli about a recently released research report from the UMass School of Public Policy, "Impacts of COVID-19: A Survey of Massachusetts Households.' The research found that Massachusetts households experienced significant effects on income and careers, child care and educational outcomes, and mental and physical health during the pandemic's first year.

Following the presentation, a panel of local human services professionals will discuss creative ways that municipalities are looking to use ARPA funds to address some of the socioeconomic challenges detailed in the UMass report.



Marta Vicarelli

The meeting will be held at the Forbes Municipal Building at 45 West Main St., from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Registration is available through the MMA website.

The cost to attend the meeting, which includes breakfast

and a morning snack, is \$25 for HSC members and \$30 for nonmembers. (Anyone who has not paid their HSC FY22 dues by April 27 will be charged the nonmember rate.) Payment can be made by cash or check at the meeting, and checks should be made out to MMA HSC. Payment can also be mailed to Acton Town Hall, c/o Laura Ducharme,

472 Main St., Acton, MA 01720. Those who register online will receive a confirmation email that says a zero balance is due. Please ignore this automated response; it is incorrect and cannot be changed.

Due to COVID, attendees of this in-person meeting will be required to show proof of being fully vaccinated (card, photo of card or QR code) on the day of the event. (Religious or medical exemptions are allowed with a negative PCR test taken within 72 hours.) Masks are optional. These safety protocols are subject to change based on the latest public health data and guidance.

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

# **Mass Innovations**

## Somerville takes SMART approach to zapping rats

### By Jennifer Kavanaugh

Using an electrical current and real-time data tracking, the city of Somerville has embraced a modern approach to combat a centuries-old menace: rats.

A month ago, Somerville placed 50 SMART boxes in four areas as part of a five-month pilot program to reduce its rat population. As the second U.S. city to adopt this technology, after Portland, Maine, Somerville is using the boxes to electrocute the rats and collect data on them, and hopes the pilot effort will inform future rodent-control efforts.

Somerville officials said their approach offers a more humane and environmentally friendly solution to a problem vexing cities nationwide. The SMART boxes provide details about the number and locations of rats being captured.

When a rat enters a SMART box, the box senses movement and body heat and emits an electrical current. It then bags the dead rat, moves it into a compartment, resets automatically, and sends a signal about the capture. Each box can hold up to five rats at a time. Colin Zeigler, Somerville's environmental health coordinator, said the boxes intercept rats along their usual paths, including along fence lines and other spots where rats feel less exposed.

"This isn't necessarily just about killing rodents," he said. "It's more about data-driven approaches."

Somerville declared a "War on Rats" back in 2013 and undertook several measures, including increased inspectional activity, public education and outreach, and the hiring of an environmental health coordinator. When Somerville's new mayor, Katjana Ballantyne, named her immediate priorities on Jan. 3, her first day in office, she included rodent control among them.

"Yes, I just mentioned rats in my inaugural address," Ballantyne said, adding that residents had regularly mentioned the problem during her mayoral campaign.

Somerville is far from alone. The U.S. Census Bureau reported last year that people living in 14.8 million of the country's 124 million occupied units said



The city of Somerville has installed 50 SMART boxes to catch rats. (Photo courtesy city of Somerville)

they had seen mice or rats in the previous 12 months. In the bureau's 2019

American Housing Survey, the Boston-Cambridge-Newton Metropolitan Area ranked second for rodent sightings among the country's 15 most-populated areas. And the problem extends far beyond Greater Boston. In recent years, news reports have chronicled rodent complaints from the North Shore to southeastern Massachusetts, and from Cape Cod to the Berkshires.

According to Zeigler, Somerville received 928 rodent-related calls in 2019, 1,157 calls in 2020 and 1,172 last year. Some of the increased reporting owes to the city's expanded outreach to residents, he said. In addition, people working from home during the pandemic threw out more trash there, attracting rats, and development projects have displaced rats into residential areas, he said.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, rodents can transmit more than 35 diseases ei-

ther directly or indirectly. They can also damage public infrastructure and private property, leaving behind chewed car wires and yards defaced with burrows.

"I see them as a problem, and not necessarily an enemy," Zeigler said. "They're just a species that has adapted to what we do, and they're sort of living in our space. But they are a nuisance, and they do really harm the quality of life within a city."

Somerville will pay \$40,000 to cover the servicing, box rentals and data reporting by vendor Modern Pest Services. It chose the four pilot locations based on 311 complaints and inspectional services ticketing. According to the city, the diverse locations — including business and residential areas, open spaces, and locations close to construction and transit — will help the city gauge variables in rodent activity.

The boxes offer other advantages in that they avoid pesticides, and don't leave toxins in the environment, Zeigler said. The Norwegian rat can squeeze through the small hole, he said, but other wild animals, pets and children can't get into the locked devices, and the electrical components aren't accessible from the outside.

Somerville started installation on Feb. 28, and got its first alert within 20 minutes, Zeigler said. By mid-March, the city had received 39 alerts of captured rats.

After the five-month pilot, Zeigler said he hopes the program can expand to other locations. The city may also consider placing boxes in its sewer system, he said.

Other communities have been considering similar efforts. The Cambridge City Council last month asked the city manager to work with the public works department to explore the feasibility of a SMART box pilot program.

For more information about Somerville's program, contact Colin Zeigler at czeigler@somervillema.gov.

# Around the Commonwealth

### Needham

### **Town holds public discussions** on police and equity

Seeking to promote greater understanding between the community and its Police Department, the town of Needham is hosting public discussions this spring around policing issues.

Needham is hosting "Connections: Cops & Community," a three-part series focusing on various aspects of policing and on diversity, equity and inclusion. The series was organized by town leaders and community organizations in their ongoing efforts to make Needham a welcoming place for both residents and visitors.

Amid difficult national conversations about the relationship between police agencies and the communities they serve, Needham Police Chief John Schlittler said his department is working to build trust with the town's different constituencies, and wants residents to feel comfortable reaching out to the police if they have concerns or questions about the department's operations.

"Needham is becoming more diversified, and has been over the last several years," Schlittler said. "And I think we want the people in town, every person in town, to think that the Police Department is working for all of them, not just a portion of society."

The first discussion, on March 1, focused on the history of policing in the United States and in Needham, along with a breakdown of the department's current structure. Select Board Member Marcus Nelson said the town will only get stronger if the different parts of the community work together, listen to each other, and keep an open mind when approaching these issues.

"Everybody here loves the town that we live in, and I can say that with a smile on my face, because it's true," Nelson told the crowd. "So we all want to do things to the best of our abilities to help progress this town and take it to a place where any and everybody that enters the town of Needham feels safe, seen and heard."

The second session, on April 5, will focus on the department's work with youth. The final session, on May 17, is expected to expand on issues raised in the first two sessions, and focus on the relationship between law enforcement and people of color.

Shortly after the first session, Schlittler told the MMA that police departments should do a better job of explaining the complexities and challenges they face, as well as the positive work they're doing.

Needham's Police Department has already been making changes, he said, including providing more detailed statistics and increasing training. It is also working on its first annual report, which will include statistics on arrests, motor vehicle stops, use of force, and other actions, as well as information about training, officer awards and initiatives.

The idea for the community dialogues grew out of discussions by the Needham Unite Against Racism Initiative, which is composed of residents, community advocates and Select Board members, including Nelson. The initiative was formed in 2020 to "foster a dialogue about racism in Needham and produce actionable strategies to ensure Needham is a welcoming and inclusive community."

The group engaged community members to plan the policing discussions, and envisions future dialogues on other facets of society affected by racism and issues of equity, including housing and education.

"Our ultimate goal is that Needham is a desirable place for anybody of any race to feel comfortable and to live in," said Select Board Member Marianne Coolev. who serves as chair of the Needham Unite Against Racism Initiative. "We want anybody who lives in Needham to be able to say to a friend, 'You should live in Needham. It's a great place to live.' And we know that's not where we are today, and so that's what we're looking to change."

- Jennifer Kavanaugh



Needham Select Board Member Marcus Nelson speaks during the first session of Connections: Cops & Community on March 1.

## Pepperell

### Town converts streetlights to LEDs with smart tech

This past winter, Pepperell completed a two-year project to convert 409 streetlights from standard high pressure sodium lights to LEDs and deploy smart technology that allows the town to manage and troubleshoot each individual light from any smart device.

The primary goal was to reduce energy costs, but the project will also result in a better experience for drivers and wildlife, according to Town Administrator Andrew MacLean.

The project resulted from a collaboration between town government and residents. The town considered five possible light signatures, and through a survey chose a 2200 Kelvin lamp option. This lighting level falls in the "warmer" range, emitting a paler yellow light that's comparable to the original lights, but with less glare. "Cooler" light, at 4000 Kelvin, emits a brighter white light.

"We got a lot of community input on which lights to choose," MacLean said. "Our lights are more of a yellow signature and that's a signature that people tend to like and prefer."

MacLean said the town was one of the first communities to implement the

**■ COMMONWEALTH** continued on 19

# **Around the Commonwealth**

### **COMMONWEALTH**

Continued from page 18

The ability to control each light means "we can always make little adjustments. ...The residents who were pushing us to do this were thrilled," MacLean said, "and I'm glad we did it. We are saving money."

2200 Kelvin model, which was not available in the quantity the town needed when they started the project — part of the reason the conversion took two years.

"A lesson learned is to take your time with the decision because the technology is changing rapidly," MacLean said. "Had we done this three years ago, we would have gotten the white signature lights."

The smart technology uses a small transmitter attached to each lamp to send information and allow the town to control the intensity of each lamp. The technology also notifies the town if a lamp stops working or is compromised by damage to the infrastructure. Currently, the lights are managed day to day by public safety dispatch employees.

"We just call an individual light up on a website and can change the intensity as required at any time of day, or schedule automatic adjustments," MacLean said.

The town worked with RealTerm Energy, a company that has worked with a number of cities and towns in the state on LED projects of varying degrees. The project cost about \$250,000 and has been financed with payments coming from the energy savings.

MacLean said the town has reduced streetlight energy usage by more than 75%, and there are opportunities for future conversions of lights in town parks and play areas.

"Most of the cost is pretty linear,"



LEDs installed by the town each have a coffee-cup-sized "Smart Controller." (Photo courtesy town of Pepperell)

MacLean said. "The lamp is one price and then labor. The return on investment is seven years, which is longer than we first expected, because we decided to get the smart controllers, which ended up being one third of the cost."

The town is running the new lights at 30% intensity, he said, "and we did not get one complaint or call from the community."

The ability to control each light means

"we can always make little adjustments."

"The residents who were pushing us to do this were thrilled," MacLean said, "and I'm glad we did it. We are saving money."

– Meredith Gabrilska

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



## **Mayors discuss housing, ARPA**

Brockton Mayor Robert Sullivan welcomes members of the Massachusetts Mayors' Association to his city for the association's March 30 meeting. Mayors heard about housing and homeless issues from Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy and Linn Torto, executive director of the Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness. They also participated in roundtable discussions about the American Rescue Plan Act, led by MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith and MMA Senior Legislative Analyst Jackie Lavender Bird.

Serving Massachusetts' communities since 1982

# Cybersecurity best practices: Start at the top

### By Martha Keeley

Organizations in every industry are worried about information security. Attacks take place nearly every day, often resulting in the exposure of vital personal records or attackers using data to extort money.

The FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center reports that cyberattacks have roughly quadrupled since the COVID-19 pandemic began in early 2020. The shift to remote work increased the number of possible failure points and created a large, distracted workforce vulnerable to cyberattacks.

Erich Falke, chief information security officer for ePlace Solutions, a cyber risk management company that works with MIIA members, said building a strong security culture within an organization is essential to protecting against threats and mitigating attacks. An organizational commitment to cybersecurity, he said, must start at the top.

"Cybersecurity is a business issue that



Erich Falke

city and town leaders must manage," Falke said. "An attack can shut down your municipal website and all online functions. Any data that is stolen or accessed could result in financial and reputation loss.

"While a community could potentially pay the ransom, systems may still be down for days, oftentimes weeks. And even if a city or town doesn't pay the ransom and uses a backup, it can still take weeks for the municipality to restore operations."

A culture of security means that all employees feel accountable and the organization has prudent practices and policies to ensure resilience in the face of cyberthreats, Falke said. Humans are the weakest link in an organization's cybersecurity shield. If an employee is

compromised due to social engineering (coercion such as phishing), the entire cyber environment could be exploited by malicious users.

Two key aspects to fostering a strong cyber culture are:

- Building an understanding among employees and ensuring that they recognize their role
- · Regular education and training

# **Employee understanding and relevance**

Cybersecurity relies on more than just the IT department doing its job. Everyone in the organization must see themselves as responsible for ensuring data security. Leadership should understand employees' attitudes and behavior toward security protocols and issues. Do they see data security as the sole responsibility of IT and not something under their control? What are their workfrom-home habits (such as password

■ CYBERSECURITY continued on 27

## Know the law to reduce risk of pothole claims

### By Lin Chabra

With the arrival of spring weather conditions, MIIA is seeing a large volume of claims for property damage to vehicles because of potholes and compromised road conditions.

Claims for defects in or on public ways in Massachusetts are governed by Section 15 of Chapter 84, which sets forth conditions necessary to establish liability and establishes a maximum damage cap of \$5,000.

Two elements of the law are particularly important from a municipal risk management perspective.

### **Breach of duty**

A breach of duty claim requires two key elements: notice of the condition, and

an opportunity to repair the defect. Someone filing a claim must establish that the municipality had either actual or constructive notice of the defect prior to the accident. The claimant must also prove that the municipality had a reasonable opportunity to repair the defect prior to the loss and failed to do so.

### **Notice of claim**

A person intending to file a road defect claim must provide written notice to the municipality within 30 days of the incident. The written notice must contain specific information sufficient to allow a municipality to investigate.

From a risk management perspective, it is essential that a municipality be able to demonstrate when they received

notice of the defect and document the time and date of their repair response. What constitutes a reasonable response is fact-specific as to the nature of the defect and proximity to weather conditions.

Maintaining some type of tracking log is a critical best practice. This log can be something as simple as a spreadsheet. (Download MIIA's Pothole Log.) There are also applications available that allow for tracking as well as the ability to upload photographs of repair responses. The key is to be able to establish that you have a system to track and document notice of defects and the time and date of your response following notice.

Lin Chabra is MIIA's Senior Manager of Risk Management.

# MassDOT's Transportation Conference is May 24, 25

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation's annual Transportation Innovation Conference will be held on May 24 and 25 and focus on MassDOT's infrastructure investment.

The conference, to be held at the DCU Center in Worcester, will highlight the latest innovative transportation systems, management ideas, and initiatives in the Commonwealth. The event is open to all transportation practitioners

including federal, state and local agencies, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, transit agencies, academia and private industry.

MassDOT Secretary and CEO Jamey Tesler said the conference is a chance to "share 'best practices,' learn about new programs and technology, and hear from speakers in the transportation field." The MassDOT Transportation Innovation Conference began in 2012 and was originally used to assist a network of MassDOT transportation professionals. In 2015, the conference opened up to include a range of transportation professionals.

<u>Click here for more information and a link to registration.</u>

### **SUPPLEMENTAL**

Continued from page 1

Most of the spending bill is dedicated to COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery efforts, including expanded testing, vaccination sites and workforce development.

The \$100 million in winter road recovery funds may be used for the rehabilitation, reconstruction, resurfacing or preserva-

tion of local roads. The funds could also be used to repair or replace traffic control devices, signage, guardrails, and storm grates, as well as road striping or painting.

The measure does not include two other municipal priorities that were in the original version of the bill, filed by Gov. Charlie Baker in February: a \$100 million one-time supplemental appropriation for the Chapter 90 local road and bridge

program, and \$150 million for environmental initiatives, including the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program.

The governor has 10 days to consider the bill before signing or vetoing it or returning it with amendments. •



### **MVP GRANT**

Continued from page 10

community engagement plans are preferred.

Applicants can request up to \$3 million in funding (regional proposals may request up to \$5 million), and a 25% match of the total project cost is required (see RFR for new exceptions).

Significant changes to the RFR from the last funding round are outlined on

page 1. The link to the RFR and required forms can be accessed through the MVP program website or directly on COM-MBUYS. Action Grant proposals are due by 2 p.m. on May 5 (via online form) for project proposals that must be completed by June 30, 2023, or June 30, 2024.

The MVP team recently hosted a <u>webinar</u> about this FY23 funding round. The <u>slides can be downloaded here</u>.

# Managers share ARPA plans

Avon Town Administrator Greg Enos speaks during the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association's March 18 meeting in Wrentham, where he joined Brookline Deputy Town Administrator Melissa Goff and Acton Town Manager John Mangiaratti on a panel sharing plans for American Rescue Plan Act spending. The three panelists spoke about their commitment to community engagement for all ARPA-funded projects and how they are garnering buy-in from all stakeholders.

### **ONE STOP**

Continued from page 12

- Helena Fruscio Altsman, assistant secretary of Program and Performance Management with the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development
- Jen Cohen, vice president of real estate development with MassDevelopment

Panelists discussed the numbers and types of projects funded in Community One Stop's first year. They also shared high-level feedback that the program received from applicants.

Panelists also reviewed changes and improvements that are being made this year, including the addition of three grant programs offered through Mass-Development.

The webinar concluded with a review of the One Stop timeline.

More than 75 select board members and town managers and administrators attended the webinar. Click here to view.

### **BUDGET**

Continued from page 1

use the fiscal 2022 state budget figure as the base, which would increase the UGGA account by \$85.3 million (7.3%), rather than the \$31.5 million in the governor's budget plan.

The MMA has prepared a spreadsheet showing the difference for each community between the governor's proposed UGGA increase and the 7.3% increase called for by the MMA.

Cities and towns face rapidly rising costs and a tight cap on property taxes under Proposition 2½, Beckwith said, so they rely on "predictable and adequate state revenue sharing" to provide essential local services, ensure public safety and maintain vital infrastructure.

### **Chapter 70**

The governor's budget would fulfill commitments in the Student Opportunity Act by increasing Chapter 70 school aid by \$485 million to \$5.98 billion, but 136 of 318 operating districts (43%) would receive only the minimum per-student increase of \$30, providing those districts with a Chapter 70 increase of about 1%.

Mayor Fuller said the governor's Chapter 70 proposal would amount to just a 1.88% increase in Newton.

"We're going backwards this year," she said

The MMA continued its strong advocacy for minimum aid of \$100 per student to

ensure that all districts can at least keep pace with inflation and maintain their school services.

### Special education circuit breaker

The MMA expressed support for the governor's proposal to add \$41.2 million to fund the Special Education Circuit Breaker program at \$414 million, an increase of 11%. The Student Opportunity Act expanded the special education circuit breaker by including out-of-district transportation, an important enhancement for cities and towns.

### **Charter schools**

The governor's budget would increase the charter school reimbursement account to \$219 million, intended to meet the commitment in the Student Opportunity Act to fund 90% of the state's statutory obligation to mitigate Chapter 70 losses to charter schools.

The MMA argued, however, that charter schools continue to divert a high percentage of Chapter 70 funds away from many municipally operated school districts, and place increasing strain on the districts that serve the vast majority of public schoolchildren. The MMA reiterated its call for comprehensive charter school finance reform.

### **School transportation**

Beckwith pointed out that House 2 would reduce funding for regional transportation reimbursements from \$82.1 million in the current fiscal year to \$77.8 million, which would create a hardship for virtually all communities

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

The governor's budget would increase reimbursements for the transportation of homeless students under the federal McKinney-Vento Act from \$14.4 million this year to \$22.9 million in fiscal 2023.

#### **PILOT**

The governor's budget would level-fund payments-in-lieu-of-taxes at \$35 million, which, the MMA pointed out, would create 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 very small communities, and level-funding this account would fall short of the Legislature's goal of phasing in full funding by fiscal 2024.

### **Budget process**

The MMA urged legislators to announce an agreement as soon as possible on the two main local aid accounts — UGGA and Chapter 70 — which would be tremendously helpful to the municipal budget planning process.

The Joint Ways and Means Committee concluded its budget hearings in mid-March. The House is expected to debate its budget bill in April, with the Senate deliberating its own bill in May. The Legislature will work to get a final budget bill to the governor by the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1. ●

## ATFC to hold spring conference on April 30

COVID-related recovery programs and capital planning will be the focus of the Association of Town Finance Committees' Spring Conference on Saturday, April 30, at Pine Ridge Golf Club in Oxford.

In the first educational session, MMA Senior Legislative Analyst Jackie Lavender Bird will discuss the American Rescue Plan and other COVID-related recovery programs.

The second session will highlight best practices in capital planning. Medfield Finance Committee Chair and ATFC Governing Board Member Jeremy Marsette will discuss his committee's work to establish and implement a capital plan over the past several years. Kasey



Kasey Bik

Jeremy Marsette

Bik from the Division of Local Services will offer guidance on developing a capital plan, focusing on three key areas: how to inventory, prioritize and pay for capital needs.

The conference will run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., with lunch served at noon. The cost is \$25 for ATFC members and \$35 for all other registrants. Click here for online registration.

Due to COVID, attendees of this in-person meeting will be required to show proof of being fully vaccinated (card, photo or QR code) on the day of the event. (Religious or medical exemptions are allowed with a negative PCR test taken within 72 hours.) Masks are optional. These safety protocols are subject to change based on the latest public health data and guidance.

Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker at dbaker@mma.org

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Continued from page 2

One of Gov. Charlie Baker's first COVID executive orders allowed communities to conduct public meetings remotely, using new and widely available internet-based technology. The Legislature moved swiftly to extend this authority twice after that executive order was phased out, providing much-needed flexibility during uncertain times, including several COVID surges during the past 18 months. However, the remote meeting extension will end on July 15 unless it is renewed in state law — presenting a perfect opportunity to make the virtual/remote meeting option permanent. Doing so will ensure a smooth transition during future health emergencies and build a new level of resilience into our system of municipal governance.

# Remote town meetings and caucuses

At the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, the governor's state of emergency powers suspended certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law (M.G.L. Ch. 30A, Sect. 20) and the laws governing town meetings. Municipalities worked quickly to adopt new platforms and technology to create successful remote town meeting experiences for their governments and the public. As technology continues to advance and improve these essential functions, there is a need to update outdated state law to make these options permanent, not only for representative town meetings, but for open town meetings and local caucuses as well.

With these laws set to expire on July 15, many communities are reluctant to return to confining meeting rules, while others simply don't have adequate physical capacity to return to in-person-only meetings, especially if social distancing is required. Enacting a permanent option for remote Town Meetings and caucuses would provide cities and towns with needed flexibility to prepare for important and timely local governance decisions, all while keeping public health as *the* top priority.

# Remote participation by public bodies

As noted, remote participation at public meetings has ensured continuity of operations during the public health

crisis and provided the additional benefit of enhanced equity in access, public engagement, and transparency in government operations. Thousands of public entities have relied on remote meetings and virtual platforms to conduct their business. With new technologies developing rapidly, and an increased investment in equipment by these public entities, remote meetings have been very successful and effective for cities and towns from the Berkshires to Cape Cod to Cape Ann and everywhere in between.

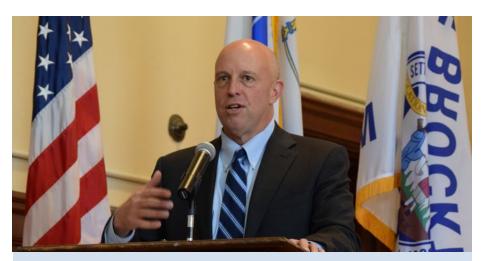
The existing state statute under the open meeting law is rigid, inadequate, does not allow remote participation unless a physical quorum is already present, and challenges the ability of officials who are participating virtually to fully engage. Snapping back to the pre-COVID rules would erode the progress that has been made in using technology to improve the effectiveness of public governance.

Additionally, it is important to note that *flexibility* is imperative, as different public entities have different capacities, needs and preferences. For example, legislation such as H. 3152 and S. 2082, which would *mandate* alternative means of public access to public deliberations, are not the answer. The bills would cause significant disruption by forcing communities to adopt expensive hybrid

meeting equipment and retrofit old buildings. With up to 30, 40 or even 50 local boards, commissions, committees, subcommittees, advisory committees and authorities subject to the open meeting law in every locality, cities and towns do not have the equipment, meeting space, technology licenses, or financial resources to implement a hybrid mandate.

If such a mandate is enacted, most entities would be effectively forced to meet in an all-virtual format, with very few in-person gatherings, as hybrid is extremely complex and infeasible for the vast majority of municipalities at this time. Instead, MMA is requesting that the *option* for remote meetings be made permanent, allowing communities to create a base to build on with best practices going forward, investing in technology on a budgeted, affordable, sustainable and self-funded timeline.

With the continued support of our valued partners in state government, local leaders can act on the innovations and lessons learned during the past 25 months, and use them to improve government operations and create a resilient framework to allow our hometown governments to operate safely no matter what the emergency or situation. Making remote meetings a permanent option is a key part of this agenda.



## **Kennealy meets with mayors**

Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy speaks during the March 30 meeting of the Massachusetts Mayors' Association in Brockton. He and Linn Torto, executive director of the Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness, discussed housing and homelessness issues.

# **People**



Glenn Cannon

**Glenn Cannon** became the new town administrator in Rochester on March 28.

Cannon had been serving as the assistant town administrator in Bourne since 2018, and had recently been filling in

there as the acting town administrator. From 1998 to 2018, he was the director of technical services at the Cape Cod Commission. He has also worked as a transportation engineer at Rizzo Associates in Framingham, as a traffic engineer for the Massachusetts Highway Department, and as an environmental engineer for Cumberland Farms in Canton. He earned a bachelor's degree in engineering from UMass Dartmouth, and completed the MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program.



Suzanne Szyndlar

In Rochester, Cannon takes the place of **Suzanne Szyndlar**, who had served as town administrator since 2016. Szyndlar, who had been Rochester's town accountant for eight years before becoming administrator, will

serve as the assistant town administrator until June 30, and will start in the newly created role of finance director/town accountant on July 1.

.....



Marc Strange

Marc Strange became the new town administrator in Ludlow on March 14

Strange served for the past seven years as director of planning and community development in Agawam. Before that,

he had worked for more than three years

for the state, as a review examiner and later as a western region audit supervisor and unemployment insurance benefits investigator. He had also served for more than four years as a senior attorney in the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance. He earned a bachelor's degree in marketing from Syracuse University, and a law degree from the Western New England University School of Law.

Strange had been serving as chair of the Longmeadow Select Board, but stepped down on March 11 so that he could devote his time to his new job.

In Ludlow, Strange replaces **Ellie Villano**, who retired on Feb. 25 after 14 years in the role. She had previously served in other roles for the town, including as administrative assistant to the Board of Selectmen.

**Marlene McCollem** became the new town administrator in Bourne on Feb. 28.

McCollem was the assistant town manager in Plymouth for the past four years. She previously served as director of planning and community development for the town of Carver. She earned a bachelor's degree in city/urban, community and regional planning from Ball State University, and a master's degree in public administration from Bridgewater State University.

In Bourne, McCollem replaces **Anthony Schiavi**, who stepped down last fall after two years in the role. Bourne's recently departed assistant town administrator, **Glenn Cannon**, had been serving as the acting town administrator. (See Rochester item, above.)



Annemarie Fagan

Annemarie Fagan, who served as town administrator in Milton for four years before retiring in 2017, has returned to the role on an interim basis.

Fagan returned on Feb. 17 and expects to stay until June 30. She has served a

total of 22 years with the town, including 13 years as assistant town administrator,

and as executive secretary to the Board of Selectmen and principal clerk in the Parks Department.

Fagan took over for Michael Dennehy, who left on Feb. 25 after more than five years of service to take a position as general manager at Volta Charging, which builds electric vehicle charging networks.



Brianna Sunryd

**Brianna Sunryd**, communications

manager for the town of Amherst, was recognized in Public Management magazine's March 2022 issue as one of the country's "Women to Know: The Next Generation in Local

Government." The magazine, published by the International City/County Management Association, honored Sunryd as one of five women nationwide who are "making an impact through their hard work, dedication and commitment to their organization and the residents in their communities."

Sunryd has been working in Amherst for the past seven years, serving in roles that included management assistant, applications analyst, and community participation officer before becoming communications manager in 2018. Earlier in her career, from 2007 to 2008, she was a special events coordinator for the town. She also spent three years working as an assistant manager and public outreach coordinator for the city of Worcester, from 2008 to 2011. She earned a bachelor's degree in communications and international relations and a master's degree in public policy and administration from UMass Amherst.

**Josie Ahlberg** joined the MMA on March 21 as a legislative analyst focusing on issues in the areas of energy and the environment.

Ahlberg previously worked as a research assistant for the Boston Municipal Research Bureau, where her responsibilities included conducting public policy

■ PEOPLE continued on 25

# **People**

**PEOPLE**Continued from page 24



Josie Ahlberg

research on pending legislative initiatives and writing literature reviews on public policy proposals. She also worked as a legislative assistant for InstaTrac and as a charities assistant for the Attorney General's Office. She earned

a bachelor's degree in political science, with a concentration in public policy, from Northeastern University.



Ali DiMatteo

Ali DiMatteo joined the MMA on March 21 as a legislative analyst focusing on municipal and regional administration.

Previously, DiMatteo served for three years as the covice president of

legislation for Mass NOW, where she advocated for intersectional feminist policy on the state level. In 2019, she also co-founded Run En Masse, which includes an organization that recruits and trains digital technologists in digital grassroots organizing and includes a political action committee focused on getting more women and minority candidates elected to the Legislature.

DiMatteo worked as counsel for McAllister & Quinn in Washington, D.C., from 2012 to 2014; as an independent consultant on government affairs in Shanghai, China, from 2011 to 2012; and as legislative counsel for then-Congressman Kendrick Meek in Washington, D.C., from 2007 to 2010. She serves on the Melrose Farmers' Market Board, having co-founded the board in 2016 and served as its vice president and later as president. She earned a bachelor's degree in political science from American University, and a law degree from the University of Miami.



Adrienne Núñez

Adrienne Núñez joined the MMA on March 21 as a legislative analyst focusing on issues related to public works, transportation and public utilities.

Most recently, Núñez worked as

a communications consultant with the Interaction Institute for Social Change. Her previous roles include research and teaching assistant at the UMass School of Public Policy, research consultant and Civic Action Project fellow at the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, and summer legislative aide to Rep. Paul Mark. She also has extensive experience working in graphic design, publishing and production management.

Núñez also has experience in local government, having served on the Greenfield School Committee from 2014 to 2019, including two years as chair.

Núñez earned a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies from the University of Missouri, a master's degree in cartooning from The Center for Cartoon Studies, and a master's degree in public policy and administration from UMass Amherst.



Kawanda Boyd

**Kawanda Boyd** joined the MIIA Health Benefits Trust on March 7 as the manager of retiree programs.

Boyd spent the past 22 years working for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts.

with a focus on Medicare. She worked as a reconciliation analyst for Medicare enrollment, a senior analyst, and a program manager. The last program she managed there, Bridge to Medicare, helps retirees with their initial transition to Medicare. She earned a bachelor's degree in management from Emmanuel College.



Meera Mathur

**Meera Mathur** joined the MIIA Health Benefits Trust on March 7 as a wellness representative.

Mathur had served as a general manager at Plus One Health Management in South Boston for

more than eight years. Previously, she worked as a wellness program manager for Pfizer for nine years, and as a project manager for the Wellness Connection at Osram Sylvania in Danvers for almost four years. She is also a positive psychology, vibrational sound and reiki practitioner and a stress management consultant, and she has taught exercise classes for more than 20 years, with the recent completion of her 200-hour yoga certification. She earned a bachelor's degree in health and fitness from Springfield College and a master's degree in fitness management from the University of Connecticut.



Lori Lambert-Osburn

**Lori Lambert- Osburn** joined the MIIA Health Benefits Trust on March 7 as a wellness representative.

Lambert-Osburn had already been working part time with MIIA over the past couple of years as a wellness educator

and a health and well-being coach. She is a part-time physical education and wellness specialty instructor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and she has been a yoga, meditation and mindfulness instructor for The Energy Barre in Stoneham, and a facilitator and mentor at the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health in Stockbridge. She taught biology for 15 years, at Our Lady of Nazareth Academy in Wakefield, and later at Austin Preparatory School in Reading. She is also a registered dietitian who has worked in numerous medical facilities, including the Joslin Diabetes Center and Tufts Medical Center.

She earned a bachelor's degree in nutrition

**■ PEOPLE** continued on 26

# **People**

### **PEOPLE**

Continued from page 25

from the State University of New York at Plattsburgh and a master's degree in nutrition from Tufts University.



Amanda Brangwynne

Amanda Brangwynne joined the MMA on March 28 as the new membership and project assistant.

For more than three years, Brangwynne worked as the membership and communications coordinator for the

Association for Commuter Transportation in Sharon. Previously, she had also worked as a forest and parks supervisor in South Boston for the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, and as an ecological representatives coordinator for the Dickinson Center for Sustainability Education in Carlisle,

Pennsylvania. She earned a bachelor's degree in environmental studies and policy management at Dickinson College.



Andrea Cannata-Vinciarelli

Andrea Cannata-Vinciarelli joined the MIIA Health Benefits Trust on March 28 as an enrollment and eligibility representative.

Cannata-Vinciarelli worked for the past two years as an employee service

representative for Fresenius Medical Care North America. From 2012 to 2019, she worked for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, as a member service associate and later as an account service consultant. She earned a bachelor's degree in communication from Bridgewater State University.

**Everett Poole**, a longtime town moderator and former selectman in Chilmark, died on Feb. 21 at age 91.

Poole served as town moderator 45 years before retiring last year. He served on the Chilmark Board of Selectmen in the 1970s, and on the Martha's Vineyard Commission.

Poole had owned a well-known fish market on Martha's Vineyard for more than six decades, and his relatives date back to the 17th century on the island. He also served in the U.S. Coast Guard during the Korean War

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.

## Grants offered to expand access to free, outdoor fitness centers

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and the National Fitness Campaign are partnering to expand free, equitable access to outdoor exercise programs in communities across Massachusetts.

The partnership is offering \$750,000 in grant funding to up to 15 qualifying communities across Massachusetts this spring. BCBS and the NFC will work with cities and towns, institutions and organizations to construct 15 NFC Fitness Courts in 2022, with the goal of making fitness facilities accessible to all.

Municipalities, schools and other organizations that own accessible public space may apply for \$50,000 in grant funding to assist in building an NFC Fitness Court. NFC consultants will work with qualified grant recipients to assist in planning, funding and launching their outdoor fitness court and community wellness campaign.

Applications are due by April 30, and awards will be made in July.

Current Massachusetts campaign



The National Fitness Campaign's outdoor Fitness Courts are built to deliver sevenminute, full-body workouts for people of all ages and ability levels. (Photo courtesy National Fitness Campaign)

members are Burlington, Everett and <u>Tewksbury</u>.

The NFC's durable, outdoor Fitness Courts will be built in public areas where they can be easily accessed. With more than 30 pieces of body-weight equipment, the courts are built to deliver seven-minute, full-body workouts for people of all ages and ability levels. Us-

ers can use free digital fitness coaching through the Fitness Court app.

The NFC opened its first fitness court in 1979, and recently redesigned and modernized the outdoor gym.

For more information, visit nationalfitnesscampaign.com/massachusetts. ●

### **CYBERSECURITY**

Continued from page 20

reuse or letting family members access work devices)? How often do they hear directly from municipal leaders about the importance of cybersecurity and are provided updated information?

A survey of 3,000 remote workers and IT professionals by CyberArk found that 77% of remote employees use unmanaged, insecure devices to access corporate systems, while 37% save passwords in browsers on their corporate devices.

Falke recommends protecting all remote access with multi-factor authentication. Privileged users such as the administrator and IT staff should have to go through multiple security layers before being able to access critical data.

### **Regular education and training**

Falke said employees must be educated about their responsibilities so they can willingly help build a strong security culture. Organizations should develop the context for employees, and be transparent about the risks, implications and cascading effects of inferior security practices.

Educating employees is not one size fits all. All employees need to understand their specific responsibilities and how their roles and behaviors can help or hinder the city or town's overall security. This includes developing cybersecurity procedures that integrate into daily work routines and procedures.

Ransomware is the biggest cyberthreat, followed by email fraud such as phishing, and wire transfer/invoice fraud. Falke recommends providing social engineering training to help employees understand the techniques used by cyber criminals.

Training should happen all year, with simulated phishing attempts (conducted by IT) taking place during the year to help keep employees alert. Employees also need to know how to respond when something happens.

MIIA offers its members an online e-learning platform called CyberNET, which they can use to train their employees on cybersecurity best practices. Among other resources, the platform includes phishing simulation services, access to expert cyber risk advisors, and Ransomware is the biggest cyberthreat, followed by email fraud such as phishing, and wire transfer/invoice fraud.

online training courses in the form of individually targeted training modules.

### IT best practices

Falke recommends three critical practices for IT departments – two that can be used to prevent problems, and a third to use in the event that a criminal gains access.

First, make sure all systems and software are up-to-date. New versions of software are often released daily to fix known vulnerabilities. IT staff should also test updates before deploying them to avoid business interruption.

Second, have "endpoint" protection that identifies potential issues before they start. Endpoints are desktops, laptops, mobile devices, printers, etc., that are connected to the central network. Endpoint protection works by examining files, processes, and system activity for suspicious or malicious indicators.

Third, have trusted backups and make sure at least one backup is isolated to prevent criminals from accessing/destroying that copy.

### The long-term view

Over the coming years, government agencies and other experts that track cyber issues say the problem can be expected to continue intensifying and

becoming more complex. The evolving "internet of things" landscape will surpass the traditional network in use today, further intensifying privacy and cybersecurity challenges.

Municipal leaders are advised to continue to beat the cybersecurity drum and prioritize collaboration and education for all employees. They should look to implement pragmatic solutions that address cybersecurity throughout their organizations, and be sure to recognize success at every turn.

### Resources

There are some great resources available to help.

The MassCyberCenter has developed a range of online online training materials to help local leaders implement cybersecurity best practices, and developed a Minimum Baseline of Cybersecurity for Municipalities.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services offers free <u>cybersecurity</u> <u>awareness training</u>.

The <u>U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency offers a range of free services</u> to help cities and towns protect against cyberthreats.

The Federal Virtual Training Environment (FedVTE) provides free online cybersecurity training to federal, state, local, tribal and territorial government employees, federal contractors, and U.S. military veterans.

MIIA offers training and grant options to its members, as well as phishing simulation.

Martha Keeley is a freelance writer.



# **Councillors delve into polling**

Steve Koczela, president of the MassINC Polling Group, speaks to the Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association at a March 9 statewide dinner in Waltham. Koczela discussed upcoming statewide races and recent polling data on the future of work. The meeting also featured an update from MMA Legislative Director Dave Koffman.

# **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Deputy Town Clerk** Town of Ashland

The town of Ashland seeks a full-time (40 hours) Deputy Town Clerk to oversee all the records and events management for the Town Clerk Department including vital records maintenance, managing the public records program, coordinating elections operations, census, and related duties. Position requires a bachelor's degree and three to five years' experience developing, maintaining, and/or managing Town Clerk-related processes, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Preference for candidates with experience with municipal government and designation as or coursework towards a Certified Municipal Clerk. Notary Public, Justice of the Peace designation is a plus. Salary is \$55,000-\$60,000 annually. Apply online: www.ashlandmass. com/597/Employment-Opportunities.

### Town Accountant Town of Sturbridge

The town of Sturbridge seeks a detail-oriented individual to serve as its Town Accountant. A full-time (35 hr/wk) position that reports to the Finance Director, the Accountant is responsible for financial monitoring, maintaining comprehensive records and generating required reports under statute and local policies. The preferred candidate will have a bachelor's degree in accounting or closely related field and a minimum of three to five years of municipal experience. Thorough knowledge of UMAS and experience with MUNIS software strongly preferred. Salary range \$80,141 to \$96,784 DOQ. Submit cover letter and resume to Barbara Barry, Finance Director at bbarry@sturbridge.gov. Sturbridge is an EOE.

### **Skilled Laborer** Town of Duxbury

Seeking qualified and experienced candidate for our full-time, benefit eligible skilled laborer position within the Lands and Natural Resource Dept. Must have extensive knowledge and skill in the operation of trucks, landscape equipment, and power tools. Removes and prunes trees, chip debris, and performs tasks in care of town owned lands. Must have a high school diploma or G.E.D., with three years of related experience, a valid driver's license and C.D.L. B. For a full job description and to apply go to: townofduxburyjobs.easyapply.co.

### **Building Inspector** City of Lynn

The city of Lynn seeks a certified Building Inspector. The successful candidate must be currently certified as a Local Inspector or Building Commissioner/Inspector of Buildings in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Candidates without current certification will not be considered. \$57,570.24 plus benefits (health and city retirement) in the first year. For more information, including how to apply, please visit the city of Lynn Personnel Department website. Applications will be accepted through Tuesday, April 5.

## Executive Assistant Town of Rutland

Department: Town Administrator/Select Board Office. Salary: \$18.78-\$19.63/hour DOQE. The town of Rutland is seeking qualified candidates to perform high-level secretarial, clerical, and administrative work assisting the Town Administrator and Select Board. This is a benefited, full-time 32 hours per week position. General Statement of Duties and Responsibilities: To work under the supervision of the Town Administrator on day-to-day office functions. Essential Duties and Responsibilities: Assists in submitting billing and payroll to the Town Treasurer and Accountant's Offices; performs general constituent services such as answering the office telephone and assisting people who visit the Executive Office; prepares meeting materials for the Select Board with the assistance of the Town Administrator and the Recording Secretary; administration of department issued permits and licenses; processing of insurance matters. Additional Notes: Candidates should possess strong interpersonal and communication skills, and experience with MS Word, Excel, and Outlook. Associate's degree in public or business administration preferred, a minimum of three to five years of office experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Familiarity with municipal procedures, Open Meeting Law, and the grant application process preferred, but not required. Resumes may be sent to the attention of: Ron San Angelo, Town Administrator, Town of Rutland, 246 Main St., Rutland, MA 01543. Please see the town website for a full job description and application. www.townofrutland.org/ home/news/town-employment-opportunities. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

## Town Accountant Town of Rockland

The town of Rockland is seeking highly qualified team-oriented candidates for the position of Town Accountant. The Town Accountant, under the general direction of the Town Administrator, is responsible for managing the Accounting Department, maintenance of all financial records, accounts payable, audits, compliance with applicable state laws and town policies and maintaining accounting systems. This position has significant professional responsibilities

The town of Rutland is an equal opportunity employer

which entails working closely with the Town Administrator, financial discussions with various boards and committees, public speaking, interacting with department heads and staff to establish policies and procedures which will ensure fiscal accountability for all town departments. This position requires thorough knowledge of municipal financial laws and regulations, policies and procedures, municipal budgetary functions, knowledge of financial software as well as extensive knowledge of GAAP, UMAS, and GASB accounting standards. Knowledge of MUNIS software is preferred. Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance or relative field required; five to seven years of general ledger experience in the accounting field preferred, preferably in municipal government with a minimum of three years in a supervisory position or any of the combination of education, training, and relevant experience. Full-time salaried position with excellent benefits including BCBSMA health insurance with the town contribution of 79% of the premium and 50% of the dental premium. Work extended hours two Tuesday nights/month Sept.-June and Fridays off in July and August. Salary range \$88,000-\$105,000 DOQ and relevant experience. Full job description, employment application and instructions for applying can be found at rockland-ma.gov. Application, resume and letter of interest should be emailed to scallahan@ rockland-ma.gov. Position open until filled.

# Wastewater Operator Technician (or Apprentice)

### Town of Uxbridge

Maintains facility, collection system and pump stations, operational controls, and maintenance duties. Grade 2 Wastewater Treatment license (Operator Technician), CDL B or higher w/ air brakes and tanker endorsements, Massachusetts Hoisting Class 1B and 3A license required. High school diploma or equivalent; at least one year of related level of responsibility comparable to operation of the facility OR an equivalent combination of education and

■ CLASSIFIEDS continued on 29

## **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 <a href="www.mma.org">www.mma.org</a>, 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.

### **May Beacon**

Deadline: April 25 Publication: May 2

### June Beacon

Deadline: May 25 Publication: June 1

### Placing an ad

You may use our convenient online form at <a href="https://www.mma.org/municipal-marketplace/">www.mma.org/municipal-marketplace/</a> add-listing/.

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 www.mma.org for details.

### **CLASSIFIEDS**

Continued from page 28

experience. Full-time union, \$26.09 to 30.52/hour DOQ - (Operator Tech or \$24.00/hour (Operator Tech Apprentice) stipends in accordance with AFSCME union contract. Detailed job description and to apply - <a href="www.uxbridge-ma.gov">www.uxbridge-ma.gov</a> or resume, cover letter, application, three references: HR@uxbridge-ma.gov.

### Outreach Coordinator/Van Dispatch Town of Groton

The town of Groton's Council on Aging Department is seeking qualified and dedicated applicants for a 32 hour/week Outreach Coordinator and a 5 hour/ week Van Dispatch for the COA Transportation Program. The pay range is \$24.15 to \$29.98 based on experience. One person will be hired to fulfill both roles. This is a professional position, requiring a thorough understanding of the Groton COA's mission. programs and activities, and an ability to engage clients with a welcoming and open demeanor. The Outreach Coordinator provides support, feedback and communication to existing programs in The Groton Center and outreach support both in The Groton Center and in the community through information and referrals regarding insurance, information, legal services, available home services and other pertinent information to older adults. While the focus is on older citizens, the Outreach Coordinator may provide information and referrals to Groton adults regardless of age. The successful candidate must have the ability to assess the needs of the older adults and design and coordinate appropriate services and programs to accommodate these needs. This position requires an associate's degree in social science or related field, bachelor's degree preferred; one to three years of experience in community-based social services, preferably with the elderly. Thorough knowledge of the federal and state services and local resources available to the elderly. Knowledge of federal and state regulations pertaining to programs for the elderly. Knowledge of grant writing techniques. Knowledge of counseling to the elderly. Ability to develop effective and constructive working relationships with the elderly, service providers, and the general public. To apply, please complete the internal application and deliver it to the Human Resources Director, Town Hall, 173 Main St., Groton, MA 01450 or by email to humanresources@townofgroton.org. For questions, please call 978.448.1145. Job description is available by request. Deadline for application: April 8. The town of Groton is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

# **Schofield Elementary Principal** Wellesley Public Schools

Venesies Public Schools

Start Date: July 1. Performance Responsibilities:
Instructional Leadership: 1. Facilitate the development of a shared mission and vision; 2. Encourage and use a variety of strategies to assess student performance accurately; 3. Apply current principles, practices, and research to foster effective teaching; 4. Lead the review of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices; 5. Promote and model the effective use of appropriate instructional technologies; 6. Hold teachers accountable for having high standards and positive expectations that all children can perform at high levels; 7. Work with teachers and staff to supervise and evaluate their performances, using performance standards, and to identify areas of growth; and, 8. Supports ongoing professional development for self,

colleagues, and staff. Organizational Leadership: 1. Applies research and organizational leadership skills; 2. Demonstrates communication skills that are clear, direct and responsive; 3. Creates a positive, informed climate for collegial teaching and learning; 4. Facilitates constructive change; 5. Plans for, models, and encourages collaboration and shared decision making; and, 6. Applies strategic planning techniques that foster systematic approaches and result in sound decisions. Administration and Management: 1. Carries out personnel selection, supervision, evaluation, and management functions for the school or district effectively; 2. Carries out all duties as outlined in state and federal special education laws and requirements and the No Child Left Behind Act, 3. Applies current knowledge of policy formation and legal requirements within the scope of responsibility; 4. Applies current knowledge of fiscal management policy and practices within the scope of responsibility; 5. Applies current knowledge of auxiliary programs within the scope of responsibility; and, 6. Uses appropriate technologies to lead, manage and communicate. Promotion of Equity and Appreciation for Diversity: 1. Strives to ensure equity among programs and learning opportunities for staff, students, and parents; and, 2. Demonstrates appreciation for and sensitivity to the diversity among individuals. Community and Corporate Partnerships: 1. Assesses the needs of parents, community and business members and involves them in decision-making; 2. Promotes mutually beneficial partnerships among staff, parents, businesses and the community; and, 3. Interprets, articulates, and promotes the vision, mission, programs, activities and services of the school and district. Professional Development: 1. Models professional behaviors that contribute to addressing the needs of students; 2. Demonstrates enthusiasm for his/her own learning; 3. Demonstrates and promotes an atmosphere of respect for self and others; and, 4. Models ethical behavior. Terms of Employment: 12 month (260 days), 40 hours per week with benefits and salary in accordance with an individual employment contract. Evaluation: Performance for this job will be evaluated in accordance with the provisions of the School Committee's policy on Evaluation of Professional Personnel. Qualifications: 1. MA DESE Certification for Principal PreK-6. 2. Master's degree in educational leadership, organizational behavior, or related field in education. 3. Three to five years' experience in an administrative role. 4. Three to five years' experience teaching, training, or providing staff development. Diversity is a core value of WPS. We are committed to building and sustaining an inclusive school environment for all and seek to hire team members who will enrich our diversity. Physical Demands: The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to sit and talk or hear. The employee is occasionally required to walk; use hands to finger, handle, or feel objects, tools, or controls; and reach with hands or arms. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 25 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision and the ability to adjust focus. Applicants for employment are considered without regard to age, physical, mental or psychiatric disability, genetics, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity,

marital status, national origin, or military status. Please apply via <u>wellesleyps.tedk12.com/hire/index.</u> aspx.

### **Cemetery Operator** Town of Saugus

Pay Rate (Union Scale): \$50,943-\$63,603. Applications are being accepted for a full-time Cemetery Operator (40 hours) within the Cemetery Department. This person operates a variety of motor equipment ranging from passenger cars and light pickup trucks to heavy trucks and truck-trailer combinations consistent with a Commercial Driver's License Class B. Perform excavation and subsequent backfill, seeding and all other efforts for burials. Maintain all buildings, headstones, walls, fences, roadways, sidewalks and other infrastructure and assist with record keeping. Operate a variety of electric hydraulic, pneumatic and gas power tools to conduct a variety of maintenance and construction operations. Secondary duties will include those duties associated with the Highway Division Operator Position. Qualifications: Two years' experience as a Motor Equipment Operator with a municipal public works operation of general maintenance or construction experience, or an equivalent and relevant combination of education and experience in a related field. Must possess valid Class B commercial driver's license (CDL), with airbrakes, tanker, and appropriate endorsements to operate Highway and Forestry equipment. Also, must possess or be able to obtain a class 2b hoisting license within the first 90 days of employment.

### Technical Project Lead City of Chelsea

Position Summary: The Technical Project Lead is a temporary full-time position. The successful candidate will guide the city through implementation of several key business system projects. The Technical Project Lead will report to the Chief Information Officer. Projects include those that support the public safety divisions, financial management and communications operations, among others, of the city. Education: Bachelor's degree in computer science, engineering, or related. Experience: Minimum of five years of related experience with previous project management and development; Software design and development experience. <a href="www.chelseama.gov/human-resources/blog/technical-project-lead-position">www.chelseama.gov/human-resources/blog/technical-project-lead-position</a>. EEO

## **Assessing Data Collector Town of Bourne**

The town of Bourne seeks qualified candidates for the position of Data Collector in the Assessing Department. This position is responsible for conducting inspections and collecting data on and for use in cyclical inspections and building permits for the purpose of taxation. Work includes visiting property sites, taking measurements and photographs, recording and analyzing data, and maintaining related records. Candidates for this position must have a high school diploma or equivalent and at least two years of municipal assessing or related experience. This is a fulltime (35 hours/week) union position with a starting wage of \$24.13/hour. Submit cover letter, resume, and application to Erica Flemming, Finance Director, at eflemming@townofbourne.com no later than April 15. For a complete posting and application visit: www. townofbourne.com/home/pages/employmentopportunities.

### **CLASSIFIEDS**

Continued from page 29

### **Director of Student Services** Wellesley Public Schools

Reports to: Superintendent of Schools. Definition: As a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the position of Director of Student Services will set the conditions and bear primary responsibility for a system of continuous student supports among faculty and students by providing vision, leadership, management, compliance, programming, professional development, and fiscal oversight in the following areas: Special Education (inclusive of: Grant Management, Circuit Breaker, Legal Settlements, Proportionate Share), Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), McKinney-Vento Liaison), Nursing, Guidance, Transportation (as it relates to above populations of students), Home/ Hospital Tutoring, Attendance, Discipline, Student Crisis/Suicide Prevention, Physical Restraint, Student Records/FERPA, Assistive Technology, Medicaid and Home School Programming. Nature and Scope: Major responsibilities include fulfilling the mandates of federal and state laws and regulations as they relate to student services for the school system and insuring that the variety of services provided for students at all levels are effectively organized and operated in their own right and in such a manner that they are well integrated with the regular instructional program. The incumbent will work with other administrators and staff to establish a positive climate for students' learning in which staff are perceptive and sensitive to students' abilities, interests and needs. The Director of Student Services will participate with Senior Leadership in arriving at decisions on system-wide procedures and policy development. Reporting directly to the Director of Student Services are the Director of Early Childhood Education, Department Head of Elementary Special Education, Department Head of Middle School Special Education, Department Head of High School Special Education, Out of District Coordinator, Department Head of Nursing, and Department Heads of Middle School and High School Guidance. The incumbent has line authority over student services personnel and a staff relationship with other school-based personnel, individual school administrators and K-12 administrators. Essential Job Functions: 1. Responsibility for Special Education services to students, ages 3 to 22, or until high school diploma is achieved, through all levels PK-12+ and direct involvement in all phases of the program. 2. Makes decisions with building-based teams and leads Student Services administrators, through consultation and direct involvement with families, on matters such as student crises and educational placement, in a manner that protects the well-being of all students and staff and is consistent with state and federal laws and regulations, as well as, local policy. 3. Ensures effective communication among student services staff and others across levels of the school system. 4. Is directly responsible for supervising and evaluating special education and nursing administrators and is responsible for the effective implementation of the supervision and evaluation process for student services personnel. 5. Recommends staff appointments, promotions and dismissals, when necessary, with the assistance of principals. 6. Jointly with Middle and High School principals oversees the development and administration of Guidance programs. 7. Represents the school department in due process proceedings and related adversarial

relationships. 8. Directs decisions for placement of students requiring tuition programs and oversees the Out of District Coordinator in monitoring the success of these placements consistent with special education laws and fiscal responsibilities. 9. Manages all DESE compliance activities related to Student Services, including Proportionate Share, Circuit Breaker, Indicators, Grants, and Coordinated Program Reviews. 10. Develops and directs the Health Services programs, in collaboration with the Department Head of Nursing, consistent with state mandates and School Committee policy. 11. Act as Title IX Coordinator for Students in accordance with Title IX and administer the District's bullying policies and procedures along with other administrators of the District. 12. Monitors attendance of students in order to enforce and protect their rights to appropriate public education. 13. Coordinates with families and schools around McKinney-Vento entitlements. 14. Reviews, approves and monitors all home school applications for compliance and effective progress. 15. Recommends action to the Superintendent in establishing residency of students and on all non-resident students requests to attend Wellesley schools on a tuition or non tuition basis. 16. Defines, plans and directs contracted services for staff development with and consultation to Student Services staff. 17. Organizes and directs the maintenance of all student records and reporting of student census data, in compliance with state and federal laws. 18. Provides for tutoring services for students with special needs and temporary disabling conditions and coordinates all other requests and inquiries about tutoring system wide. 19. Directs the development of budget for all Student Services programs, works with Central Administration to obtain funding for high quality and equitable curricula and instruction for all students, and directs responsible fiscal management of Student Services. 20. Attends School Committee meetings, as needed, and performs such other administrative assignments as the Superintendent from time to time may assign. 21. Supports and implements the District's Strategic Plan that includes work on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in all matters. Qualifications: Education and Experience: Minimum of five years' teaching experience in public education, with at least three of these in the area of special education, and at least three years of Administrative experience; Demonstrated knowledge of federal and state Special Education laws and regulations; A minimum of a master's degree in an appropriate field; Degree in Special Education; Massachusetts DESE licensure or license eligibility as a Special Education Administrator. Commitment to Cultural Proficiency. Preferred Qualifications: Academic preparation beyond the master's degree in an appropriate field; Demonstrated ability in working with parents and community-based groups; Demonstrated ability to work effectively with building administrators with regard to program implementation. Please apply via wellesleyps.tedk12. com/hire/index.aspx.

### Fire District Clerk/Treasurer Hyannis Fire District

The Hyannis Fire District is seeking qualified and experienced candidates for the position of District Clerk/Treasurer. The District Clerk/Treasurer reports directly to the Hyannis Fire District Board of Commissioners and is responsible for a range of municipal finance and district functions including, but not limited to cash management, payroll, expenditure reporting, budgets, and debt schedules, investment

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of district funds in a manner sufficient to provide necessary funds to cover District expenditures, and oversight of retirement and employee benefit programs. The District Clerk/Treasurer is responsible for conducting all District elections and meetings and serves as custodian of District records. Must be able to be bonded. Experience demonstrating thorough knowledge of governmental and treasury management, professional accounting, bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, business administration, or related fields; five-plus years of general ledger accounting experience, preferable within the municipal field; Or any combination of education, training, and experience which provides knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job. Ability to read and understand Massachusetts State statutes and District bylaws relating to duties and responsibilities of District Clerk/Treasurer. Demonstrated proficiency with Microsoft Office, Peachtree, or QuickBooks required. Salary range is commensurate with experience and qualifications. The position is full-time with benefits. Hyannis Fire District is an Equal Opportunity Employer. A full job description and online application can be found at www.hyannisfire.org employment. Applicants should submit a cover letter, resume, and completed online application together, and send them to the attention of kfoley@hyannisfire.org, no later than, Friday, April

### **Affordable Housing Consultant** Town of Burlington

The town of Burlington seeks an independent contractor to provide support services for housing related programs, projects and related work, to include maintaining an inventory of the town's Subsidized Housing Inventory and monitoring compliance with affordability and other requirements, responding to questions and requests for information, liaison with town departments to coordinate meetings, projects and programs as well attending related meetings when necessary, update and maintain housing related information on the town's website. For information and application procedure visit <a href="www.burlington.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=87">www.burlington.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=87</a>.

### City Manager City of Cambridge

Candidates must have a bachelor's degree plus 10 years of increasingly responsible public, private or nonprofit executive level experience. Assistant/Deputy Administrator/Managers in a larger community or organizations will also be considered, as will any combination of education and experience that will demonstrate the ability to perform the work (nontraditional candidates are encouraged to apply). Expected starting salary is \$275,000 to \$300,000. A higher starting salary will be considered depending upon qualifications. Open and competitive beginning salary DOQ is supplemented by an excellent benefit package. See full profile on position for details about community, timeline and benefits on www. cambridgema.gov/Departments/citycouncil/ citymanagersearch2022 and www.randifrank.com. To apply now for this amazing opportunity, email your cover letter and resume to Ms. Frank randi@ randifrank.com by April 8, 2022.

## Town Accountant

Town of Rutland

The town of Rutland is seeking a highly qualified

### **CLASSIFIEDS**

Continued from page 30

individual to fill the position of Town Accountant. The town is comprised of 9,200 residents with an approximate budget of \$23.3 million. Start Date: June 1. Compensation: \$30,000-\$40,000. Deadline: Open until filled. To view the entire posting and full job description please visit the town of Rutland's website following the link below: <a href="https://www.townofrutland.org/home/news/town-employment-opportunities">www.townofrutland.org/home/news/town-employment-opportunities</a>. Application Process: Send resume and three letters of recommendation to: Ron San Angelo, Town Administrator, Town of Rutland, 250 Main St., Rutland, MA 01543; rsanangelo@townofrutland.org.

### Sustainability Program Manager Town of Ashland

The Town of Ashland seeks a full-time (40 hours) Sustainability Program Manager who manages, coordinates, facilitates, and advises the development, implementation, monitoring, and improvement of local government policies, programs, and initiatives that promote local environmental, energy, economic, and social sustainability. Position requires a bachelor's degree in an environmentally-related discipline, and three years' experience developing, maintaining, and/or managing sustainability-based initiatives, processes, or programs. Preference for candidates with knowledge of urban sustainability, climate change, principles of energy and environmental management, social behavior change, and economic development. Effective communication and the ability to work independently and collaboratively are required. Salary is \$55,000-\$65,000 annually. Apply online: www.ashlandmass.com/597/Employment-

### Facilities Director Nauset Public Schools

Full-time position; Start Date: March 2022/ASAP. \$100,000-\$125,000 annually; Support the academic mission by overseeing the planning, operation and maintenance of Nauset Regional High School, Nauset Regional Middle School, and Central Office to ensure that these school facilities meet the changing needs of the academic programs, faculty, students and the community. The Director will provide oversight of new construction and renovation projects, including the construction of the new Nauset High School building. A complete job description is available on the Nauset Public Schools website: www.nausetschools.org. Apply online at www.schoolspring.com/ or mail cover letter, resumes, credentials and three letters of reference to: Giovanna Venditti, Director of Finance and Operations, Nauset Public Schools, 78 Eldredge Park Way, Orleans, MA 02653.

### City Manager City of Barre, Vermont

Barre City, Vermont (pop. approx. 8,500) is seeking an innovative, proactive, community leader to serve as its next City Manager. The city is located in beautiful Central Vermont and is known as the Granite Center of the World. Barre City is just seven miles from the Capital of Montpelier to two cities from one of the largest micropolitan areas in Vermont. The city of Barre operates under the City Manager form of government. Policy making and legislative authority are vested in the elected governing body

which consists of a Mayor and six council members. The City Manager oversees the city budgets which consist of the General Fund and Enterprise Fund. The FY23 Proposed General Fund Budget is \$13.2 million that provides funding for public works, police, fire, finance, planning and zoning, parks, cemeteries and recreation among other municipal services. The Proposed FY23 Enterprise Fund Budget is \$5.2 million that provides funding for the Water and sewer services. The City Manager is responsible for hiring all city employees including department heads, carrying out the policies and ordinances of the governing body and for overseeing the day-today operations of the city. Currently the city has 95 full-time employees and most of those employees are represented by the four collective bargaining units. Requirements: The successful candidate will possess proven leadership and management skills in a multifunctional organization. Bachelor's degree or higher in public administration, business or other appropriate discipline. Preference will be given to applicants with successful local government experience to include at least eight or more years in public management and financial administration combined with some being at the senior level. ICMA Credentialed Managers preferred. Compensation and Benefits: The salary for the position is negotiable based on qualifications and experience. The city offers an excellent benefit package that includes Health, Dental, Life and Short Term Disability Insurances, Defined Benefit retirement plan, generous holiday and vacation allowance and more. Application and Selection Process: The position will remain open until filled and the process will move forward immediately upon receipt of an adequate pool of well-qualified applicants. For more detailed information about Barre City and for the complete Job Description please visit www.barrecity.org/citymgr. html. If interested, you can email your resume, letter of interest and city of Barre Application to hr@ barrecity.org or mail to City of Barre Attn: HR, 6 N. Main St., Suite 2, Barre, VT 05641.

## **DPW Administrative Assistant**Town of Duxbury

Town of Duxbury, is accepting applications for a qualified full-time, benefit eligible Department of Public Works Administrative Assistant. The position provides broad senior-level administrative functions. Work involves letters, reports, documents, forms, maintains records systems, and assists the public. Excellent communication, customer service skills required involving courtesy, tact, diplomacy. Expertise, skill in utilizing personal computers, office application software. Required: High school or equivalent, including coursework in typing, bookkeeping, business machines, secretarial sciences, minimum of two years experience. Municipal experience preferred. EEO. Applications accepted beginning March 4 until filled. For job details, and to apply go to: townofduxburyjobs.easyapply.co.

### DPW Office Manager Town of Duxbury

Town of Duxbury seeking qualified candidates for full-time, benefit eligible, Department of Public Works Office Manager. Excellent communication, customer service skills required. Updates, compiles budget details, accounts, summaries; monitors expenditures, balances, assists department head with annual budget preparation, prepares monthly, annual, quarterly reports. Must have proficient computer,

mathematical, recordkeeping, clerical, written and oral communication skills and the ability to work effectively under time constraints to meet deadlines. Required: Associate's degree and three to five years of related work experience. Valid MA Driver's License. Municipal experience preferred. EEO. Applications accepted starting March 4 until filled. For job details, and to apply townofduxburyjobs.easyapply.co.

### Treasurer/Collector Town of Wayland

Position Title: Treasurer/Collector, Department: Treasurer/Collector's Office. Full-time/hours: 35 hours per week, Union/Grade: AFSCME 1/G-9. Starting Salary Range: \$78,173-\$82,907. Salary Range: \$78,173-\$103,902. Description of Position: Works under the administrative direction of the Town Administrator, Coordinates activities and responsibilities with the Finance Director/Accountant in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 41, performs administrative and supervisory work involving the receipt, expenditure and custody of municipal funds, the investment and borrowing of money, the custody of tax title properties, and the collection of all money due to the town; all other related work as required. Education: bachelor's degree in banking, finance, or related field of endeavor. Experience: Over four years' experience working in a senior financial management capacity; experience working in a municipal Treasurer/ Collector's office preferred. Licenses/Certificates: Certification by the Massachusetts Collectors and Treasurers Association desirable. Must be bondable. Date posted: March 7. Closing date: Open until filled. Apply to: Please submit a resume and cover letter to the Human Resources Manager, Town of Wayland, 41 Cochituate Road, Wayland, MA 01778 or hr@wayland. ma.us. The town of Wayland is an Equal Opportunity

# Conservation Agent/Natural Resource Protection Manager

### Town of Franklin

The town of Franklin is seeking candidates for a full-time Conservation Agent/Natural Resource Protection Manager. This position performs administrative and technical work related to the wetlands protection laws and regulations. They will also assist with land use, open space, conservation, and natural resource planning and management projects. The ideal candidate will have a bachelor's degree in environmental science, botany, biology, geology, or related field and work experience for a Conservation Commission or land use agency. For the full job posting and to apply, please go to the Job Opportunities page of the town of Franklin website.

### Town Accountant Town of Dudley

The town of Dudley is seeking a qualified leader who is collaborative-minded and self-directed for the critical position of Town Accountant. The Town Accountant, under the direction of the Town Administrator, is responsible for day-to-day activities of the town's accounting function as to maintenance of all financial records, accounts payable, internal, and external audit, compliance with applicable state laws and town policies, and maintenance of the town's accounting system. In this unique opportunity, the successful candidate will start in the role of Assistant Town Accountant, receive 90-120 days of intensive training,

### **CLASSIFIEDS**

Continued from page 31

and then transition under the outgoing, incumbent Town Accountant. The successful candidate will assume the role of full-time Town Accountant at the time of the incumbent's anticipated retirement. Required: A bachelor's degree in accounting; an understanding of GAAP and GASB; knowledge of Massachusetts municipal finance laws and MA General Laws. Preferred: A minimum of three years' municipal finance experience; familiarity with municipal financial software applications and Uniform Massachusetts Accounting Standards (UMAS); Massachusetts Certified Governmental Accountant (required within three years of hire). Any combination of education, training, and experience which provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job will be considered. Please see the job description for specific job details and essential functions. Salary range is commensurate with experience and qualifications, beginning within the established salary range of Assistant Town Accountant (Grade 3 - starting range \$24.04-\$26.71 per hour). Upon successful transition, candidate will receive established salary range of Town Accountant (Grade 4 - starting range \$33.18-\$36.87 per hour). This is a fulltime position with competitive benefits. Applicants should submit a cover letter, resume, and a completed town employment application to selectectaa@ dudleyma.gov and copy townadmin@dudleyma.gov. Please use the subject: Town Accountant. Interviews will begin in March for an anticipated hire date on or before May 1. Position will remain open and applications will be accepted until it is filled. The town of Dudley is an EOE.

### Senior Accountant Hudson Public Schools

The Senior Accountant is responsible for providing hands-on accounting and budgeting support to the Hudson School Department, including reviewing district processes, and providing guidance, support, and direction to those carrying out accounting activities. The position is responsible for maintaining chart of accounts, monthly account reconciliations. journal entries, and end of year financial reporting. The successful candidate should have an ability to work with minimal supervision, to work under deadline and prioritize workload, and effectively collaborate with co-workers and administration. Excellent computer and software skills, including Excel and financial software. Salary range of \$65,000-\$75,000. Find out more and apply now at www.schoolspring.com/job. cfm?jid=3781206

### **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 <a href="www.mma.org/about-mma/services/munenergy">www.mma.org/about-mma/services/munenergy</a>. 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.

### **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 <a href="https://www.GovHRusa.com">www.GovHRusa.com</a> 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 <a href="https://www.govhrjobs.com">www.govhrjobs.com</a>.

### **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 <a href="https://www.spatial-relationships.com">www.spatial-relationships.com</a>.

### **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 quickly 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

### **CLASSIFIEDS**

Continued from page 32

and coaching, leadership development, cultural competency, independent workplace investigations, stakeholder assessments, public engagement and process design. For more information, visit www.themediationgroup.org, 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**

 $\ensuremath{\mathsf{KP}}\xspace\mid \ensuremath{\mathsf{Law}}\xspace$  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 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.

### **Municipal Financial Management** Software: Accounting, Cloud, Utility and

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 www.VADARsystems.com. Locally owned and operated at 20 Main St., Suite G1, Acton, MA

### **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. com 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 www.hrsconsultinginc.com.

### **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.

## MCOA award nominations open through April 22

Municipal leaders can help recognize those working to improve quality of life for older adults by submitting nominations for the Massachusetts Councils on Aging Awards.

The MCOA is accepting nominations through April 22 for the following awards:

- Director of the Year: Recognizing a director from a council on aging or senior center who "achieves, articulates, brings together, and leads by example in the field of aging as well as in COA/senior center development, operations and marketing."
- Advocate of the Year: Recognizing a person or group that has helped

seniors find empowerment, enrichment and fulfillment, through messaging, achievements, legislation, coalition building, speaking up for older adults or helping older adults speak up for themselves, among other methods.

- Innovator of the Year: Recognizing a person or group that has come up with an idea or design, invention or variation, or a program, service or model that might help senior centers service older adults and that can be adaptable to other communities.
- Lifetime Achievement Award: Honoring "outstanding leaders whose

successes have made a lasting impact on the lives of older adults" during their careers.

Awards will be presented on June 23 during the MCOA annual meeting.

The MCOA is also accepting nominations throughout the year for its President's Award, which acknowledges small but noteworthy successes achieved by people at councils on aging and senior centers. The MCOA president may choose to award multiple certificates throughout the year.

To submit a nomination, fill out a form on the MCOA website.

# **Calendar**

### **APRIL**

Women Elected Municipal Officials, conference, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Courtyard Marriott, Marlborough. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols

**1CMA Northeast Regional Conference**, Boston. Visit
regionals.icma.org/northeast-regionalconference

Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, state dinner at ICMA, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Yard House, Copley Marriott, Boston. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

Massachusetts Select
Board Association, Western
Massachusetts Conference, 8 a.m.-12 p.m.
Easthampton High School, Easthampton.
Contact: MMA Senior Member Services
Coordinator Isabelle Nichols

Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, board meeting, 8:45-9:45 a.m., virtual.

Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

MMA Board of Directors, board meeting, 10-11 a.m., virtual.

Contact: MMA Executive Director's office

Massachusetts Select Board Association, board meeting, 2:15-3:30 p.m., virtual. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols

MunEnergy, spring breakfast meeting, 8:30-10 a.m., Westwood Police Department, Westwood. Contact: MMA Administration, Finance and Operations Director Katie McCue

Online registration is available for most of these events.

For more information, visit <u>www.mma.org</u>.



**Massachusetts Municipal Association** 

3 Center Plaza, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02108

Note: Until further notice, attendees of in-person meetings will be required to show proof of being fully vaccinated (card, photo or QR code) on the day of the event. (Religious or medical vaccine exemptions are allowed with a negative PCR test taken within 72 hours.) Masks are optional. These safety protocols are subject to change based on the latest public health data and guidance.

Association of Town Finance Committees, board meeting, 4-5:30 p.m., virtual. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

Massachusetts Municipal Management Association and Massachusetts Municipal Human

**Resources**, joint meeting, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. AC Hotel, Worcester. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker and MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols

Local Government Advisory
Commission, 1 p.m., virtual.
Contact: MMA Executive Director's office

Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, webinar, 12-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise

Baker

Massachusetts Mayors'
Association, monthly meeting,
9:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Leominster. Contact:
MMA Communications and Membership
Director Candace Pierce

28 MMA Human Services Council, 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Nichols

MunEnergy, spring breakfast meeting, 8:30-10 a.m., Southborough Public Safety Complex, Southborough. Contact: MMA Administration, Finance and Operations

Director Katie McCue

Association of Town Finance Committees, spring conference, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Pine Ridge Country Club, Oxford. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

**MAY** 

**Association of Town Finance Committees**, board meeting,
4-5:30 p.m., virtual. Contact: MMA Senior
Member Services Coordinator Denise
Baker

Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, board meeting, virtual. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

MMA Board of Directors, board meeting, 10-11 a.m.,virtual.

Contact: MMA Executive Director's office

Massachusetts Select Board
Association, board meeting, 2:153:30 p.m., virtual. Contact: MMA Senior
Member Services Coordinator Isabelle
Nichols

MunEnergy, spring breakfast meeting, 8:30-10 a.m, Lakeville Police Department, Lakeville. Contact: MMA Administration, Finance and Operations Director Katie McCue

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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