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March 2023

Gov. Healey files FY24 state budget

By Jackie Lavender Bird

On March 1, Gov. Maura Healey filed her \$55.5 billion state budget plan for fiscal 2024, which includes funding for local accounts that she announced last week.

Healey's proposal, known as House 1, would increase the main discretionary local aid account by 2% over fiscal 2023, while increasing Chapter 70 school aid by \$586 million, which would fund commitments made in the 2019 Student Opportunity Act. The governor also proposed increases for regional school transportation, vocational school transportation, special education reimbursements, payments-inlieu-of-taxes (PILOT), transportation of students in temporary housing, library aid, and rural school aid.

- <u>See Division of Local Services</u> preliminary fiscal 2024 Cherry Sheet aid amounts for individual cities and towns
- <u>See Division of Local Services</u> preliminary fiscal 2024 Cherry Sheet

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aid amounts for regional school <u>districts</u>

"Local officials look forward to working with the Healey-Driscoll administration and the Legislature to build on this proposal to secure vital investments in our schools and essential municipal services, and continue a strong state-local partnership," said MMA Executive Director and CEO Geoff Beckwith.

"In particular, the MMA will be seeking a higher increase for Unrestricted General Government Aid, higher minimum aid levels for Chapter 70 school aid, and a solution to spiking special education costs, among other key priorities," he said.

House 1 would establish a new Education and Transportation Fund that would receive all revenues from a 4% surtax on incomes above \$1 million that was approved by voters last November. The new revenue generated from the tax is to be dedicated to education and transpor-



Gov. Maura Healey addresses local officials during the MMA Annual Meeting on Jan. 20, when she said she would give municipal leaders a preview of local aid accounts before filing her first budget on March 1.

tation.

House 1 would not tap into the state's Stabilization Fund, which has grown to a record \$6.94 billion and is projected to be at \$8.96 billion by the close of fiscal 2024.

As companion legislation, <u>the governor</u> also filed a \$859 million tax relief package

BUDGET continued on 18

House OK's budget bill with remote meeting extensions

By Ali DiMatteo

On March 1, the House passed a redrafted version of a \$282 million <u>supplemental 2023 budget bill</u> filed by Gov. Maura Healey in January that includes a majority of her <u>"immediate</u> <u>needs" bond bill</u>, as well as extensions of pandemic-related authorizations related to public meetings and outdoor dining.

The House bill's \$585 million in bonding authorizations include \$400 million for the <u>MassWorks Infrastructure Program</u> and \$104 million for the <u>Massachusetts</u> <u>Clean Water Trust</u>.

The House included other MMA priorities — extensions to pandemic-related authorizations that were set to expire within the next month. The bill would:

• Permit remote and hybrid meeting

options for public bodies through March 31, 2025

- Permit remote voting options for representative town meetings through March 31, 2025
- Permit reduced quorums for open town meetings through March 31, 2025
- Extend an expedited process for temporary permits for outdoor dining service and to-go cocktails through April 1, 2024

The House bill (<u>H. 58</u>) includes nearly \$86 million to address the migrant housing crisis, a slight boost over Healey's request. The funding would be used to expand shelter infrastructure and the provider workforce. It includes

2023 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. Board members are chosen by: Massachusetts Mayors' Association, Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, Massachusetts Select Board Association, Association of Town Finance Committees.

Executive Committee

Jill Hai, MMA President Select Board, Lexington

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Ruthanne Fuller, MMA Immediate Past President

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Debra Roberts, MSA First Vice President Select Board, Stoughton

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Ted Bettencourt, Mayor, Peabody Denise Casey, Deputy Town Manager, North Andover

Stephen Cavey, Select Board Member, Stoughton Lisa Feltner, Councillor, Watertown Andrew Flanagan, Town Manager, Andover Claire Freda, Councillor, Leominster Scott Galvin, Mayor, Woburn Christine Hoyt, Select Board Member, Adams Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator, Northfield John Mangiaratti, Town Manager, Acton Kevin Mizikar, Town Manager, Shrewsbury Irwin Nesoff, Select Board Member, Hull Brad Riley, Councillor, Easthampton Moises Rodrigues, Councillor, Brockton Colleen Roy, Select Board Member, Grafton Peter Spellios, Select Board Member, Swampscott Sam Squailia, Councillor, Fitchburg Brendan Sweeney, Councillor, Beverly Kevin Sweet, Town Administrator, Wrentham Linda Tyer, Mayor, Pittsfield Arthur Vigeant, Mayor, Marlborough Michelle Wu, Mayor, Boston

Executive Director's Report

Budget-setting season kicks off on Beacon Hill

In contrast to the state, cities and towns are facing major fiscal challenges and very tight budgets. That's because communities must live under Proposition 2½, which caps municipal revenues, and spiraling inflation, which has driven up expenses at double the allowable municipal revenue growth rate.



By Geoffrey Beckwith

State tax revenues increased by 34% from fiscal 2020 to 2023, an average growth rate of 11.3% per year. During this time, municipal property taxes and local receipts experienced average growth of just 3.7% per year. This disparity is clearly a problem, as the state's fiscal capacity has increased at triple the rate that communities have experienced. Inflation was 15.6% during this time, with an average rate over 5%.

This shows that the state's fiscal capacity has grown much faster than inflation, and local fiscal capacity has been crushed by inflation, with communities in a weaker financial position through no fault of their own.

Because costs are outstripping local capacity, municipalities are more reliant than ever on increases in state aid in order to deliver vital municipal and education services, ensure safe streets and neighborhoods, and maintain local roads and critical infrastructure.

We all know that local services are fundamental to our state's economic

success and competitiveness, which means that adequate funding of local aid is directly linked to our state's economic success and competitiveness.

The Healey-Driscoll administration kicked off the annual budget-setting season on Beacon Hill this week when they filed their first state budget proposal, known as House 1.

The process now moves to the Legislature, where lawmakers will start their months-long process of listening to constituents and stakeholders, diving into the details, making decisions based on their collective priorities, and delivering a final product to the governor by July.

Because of the stark fiscal realities facing cities and towns, we are asking our legislators to view the governor's budget as a first step, not the final step, on local aid.

Many aspects of the administration's budget proposal match up with challenges facing cities and towns, providing a better starting place than gubernatorial budgets filed in past years. Those previous budgets have typically offered increases for Chapter 70 school aid and Unrestricted General Government Aid, but have level-funded most other accounts, leaving it to the Legislature to increase funding for a wide range of state commitments.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT continued on 17

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Communications &

Candace Pierce

Publisher

Membership Director

Manager of Publications & Digital Communications John Ouellette

Associate Editor

Jennifer Kavanaugh

litor Geoffrey Beckwith anaugh **Design**

Digital Communications Full Circle Design **Specialist** Meredith Gabrilska

Massachusetts Municipal Association

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

MMA to hold Legislative Breakfast Meetings in March

By Daniel Yi

Registration is now open for the MMA's spring series of Legislative Breakfast Meetings, which will be held on March 17 and March 24.

Each year, the MMA hosts a series of meetings in communities across the Commonwealth to give local leaders, legislators and MMA staff the opportunity to network in an informal setting and learn about and discuss issues of importance at the local and state level.

The spring series of breakfasts will take place as legislative priorities begin to take shape for the new session, and as the Legislature begins to formulate its fiscal 2024 state budget plan.

Discussions will also be centered on the many bills that continue to be on the MMA's radar for the new session, including a proposed municipal and public safety building authority, a permanent option for remote meetings, and more. the new administration's immediate needs bond bill and Chapter 90 bond bill.

Municipal officials from every community are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to discuss issues of importance with MMA staff and legislators. Attendees are also urged to contact their local legislators and invite them to attend.

A light breakfast and coffee will be provided at 8:30 a.m. Introductions will begin shortly there-

after, followed by presentations and a Q&A session. The meetings will end by 10:30 a.m.

Meetings will be held on the following Fridays:

March 17: Fairhaven and Tyngsborough March 24: Adams and Westfield



Reps. Smitty Pignatelli (left), John Barrett III (center) and Paul Mark address local leaders during an MMA Legislative Breakfast Meeting on Oct. 21 in Lenox.

Location details will be available soon.

Meetings are free to attend. Members are asked to <u>pre-register online</u>.

For more information, visit <u>www.mma.</u> org or contact Daniel Yi at 617-426-7272, ext. 125, or dyi@mma.org. ●

Other topics of interest will include

Community One Stop for Growth accepting Expressions Of Interest

Community One Stop for Growth is accepting Expressions of Interest through March 17 from potential applicants prior to submitting a full application.

Submission of an Expression of Interest is a highly recommended but optional step in the process to compete for funding through the <u>Communi-</u>

ty One Stop program. Organizations may submit one EOI to seek input on a number of potential projects.

EOIs are reviewed by staff at all participating agencies, and feedback will be provided to help potential applicants strengthen prospective grant applications.

<u>Details about the EOI process</u>, including an EOI template, are available online.

Community One Stop, which was unveiled at the MMA Annual Meeting in January 2021, is a single application portal and collaborative review process



Potential applicants have until March 17 to submit Expressions of Interest for Community One Stop for Growth programs.

to help cities and towns compete for state grant funding for housing and economic development programs. Communities can be considered by multiple grant programs simultaneously, have access to guidance and partnership from state agencies, and are able to receive referrals to additional funding opportunities.

Twelve programs will be administered through the fiscal 2024 application process:

Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

- <u>MassWorks Infrastructure Program</u>
- <u>Urban Agenda Grant Program</u>

Department of Housing and Community Development

- Housing Choice Grant Program
- <u>Massachusetts Downtown Initiative</u>
- Community Planning Grant Program
- <u>Rural and Small Town Development</u> <u>Fund</u>

MassDevelopment

- <u>Brownfields Redevelopment Fund</u>
- Site Readiness Program
- <u>Underutilized Properties Program</u>
- <u>Collaborative Workspace Program</u>
- <u>Real Estate Services Technical</u>
 <u>Assistance</u>

<u>Commonwealth Places Programs</u>

The full application period for fiscal 2024 will open in May and close on June 2. •

Housing Working Group files report with governor

By Ali DiMatteo

A special task force established to help determine the structure of a new housing secretariat and inform the process of filling the position has filed its report with Gov. Maura Healey.

Over the course of several meetings in February, the governor's Housing Working Group "examined housing challenges and opportunities in Massachusetts, considered alternative federal and state responses to housing production, and explored programs and strategies that a new Housing Secretary could pursue to streamline, incentivize, and enhance the production of affordable, equitable, and sustainable housing across the Commonwealth," the report states.

The report, filed on Feb. 19, outlines 11 recommendations for the new housing secretariat.

"To adequately address the housing crisis, the new Housing Secretary must work with Governor Healey and Lt. Gov.



Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll

ality in addressing housing affordability, equity and sustainability will serve as the founda-

Driscoll to establish

bold goals and set

concrete plans to

and preservation

efforts," the report

states. "Intention-

housing production

rapidly increase

tion of the Commonwealth's future success."

The 17-member task force, created by an <u>executive order</u> that Healey signed on Jan. 20, was chaired by Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll and included Economic Development Secretary Yvonne Hao and Administration and Finance Secretary Matthew Gorzkowicz. Municipal representatives were Newton Mayor Ruthanne Fuller, Worcester City Manager Eric Batista, and Provincetown Town Manager Alex Morse. The group's 11 other members included housing advocates, developers and housing finance organization leaders. Healey convened the group's first meeting on Feb. 3.

The governor has said she expects to file legislation to create the new secretariat in March. At the Feb. 14 meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission, Driscoll said a housing secretary isn't likely to be appointed until this summer.

The Department of Housing and Community Development has not functioned as a separate entity since 1991, having been folded into other executive offices — transportation, environment and, most recently, economic development.

Healey has identified housing as one of her top priorities, saying she is concerned that high housing prices and low inventory will affect the long-term economic competitiveness of the state.

MassHousing offers Planning for Housing Production grants

MassHousing has opened the application period for the Planning for Housing Production Grant Program, which provides cities and towns with the technical capacity needed to implement local planning and transform priority development sites into new affordable homes.

MassHousing will fund pre-development activities on priority housing development sites by contracting directly with third-party consultants and then matching consultants with municipalities based on their respective expertise and local needs. redevelopment of municipally owned properties. Exceptionally positioned privately-owned sites may also be eligible for funding.

Grant funds will support pre-development planning activities that create development-ready sites, including technical assistance with a municipally led RFP process. In all cases, technical assistance funding will prioritize the robust public engagement needed to build pro-housing constituencies.

More information and the application are available on the MassHousing website. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.



The application period has opened for MassHousing's Planning for Housing Production Grant Program.

The program prioritizes the reuse and

Local Technical Assistance Program to host grant writing webinar

The Local Technical Assistance Program will host a free grant writing webinar on March 9 covering the basics of completing a grant or funding application and a method for approaching and completing applications.

Anticipated topics will include reviewing and understanding what an application requires, collection of the application's information, readability of an application, and considerations for strengthening an application's chances of being funded.

The Local Technical Assistance Program, with locations in all states and Puerto Rico, is a national network of local and rural road agencies that is facilitated by the Federal Highway Administration. The LTAP provides training, technical assistance, and technology transfer services to help local agencies manage and maintain their roadway systems. The webinar will run from 9 to 10 a.m., led by Victoria Beale of the Ohio LTAP Center. Beale has more than 19 years of experience in grant and application writing, with many successful awards.

<u>Register for the webinar</u>

Webinar offers strategies for facilitating meetings

By Lily Rancatore

Nearly 400 local officials attended an <u>MMA webinar on Feb. 7</u> focused on effective public meeting facilitation.

Adams Select Board Vice Chair Christine Hoyt opened the session by reviewing steps for building a meeting agenda. She said it's important to plan ahead and specify the time, input expected from content experts, and supporting materials or technology needed for a successful meeting.

Hoyt discussed a planning document that outlines the details of upcoming meetings and helps her stay organized. She also discussed standard protocols for timely follow-ups and establishing future agenda items.

Deerfield Select Board Chair Trevor Mc-Daniel reviewed a public participation policy that his town adopted in February 2022. Under the policy, the Select Board devotes the first 20 minutes of each meeting to public comment. Allowing public comments at the beginning of each meeting, he said, permits the public to speak on agenda items before the board deliberates, which fosters respect



Local officials discuss effective public meeting management during a Feb. 7 webinar hosted by the MMA. Panelists were (clockwise from top left) Deerfield Select Board Chair Trevor McDaniel, Stow Town Administrator Denise Dembkoski, Adams Select Board Vice Chair Christine Hoyt, and Easton Select Board Chair Dottie Fulginiti.

and kindness among members and the public, promotes a successful and civil meeting, and maintains efficiency.

Easton Select Board Chair Dottie Fulginiti shared response strategies in cases where a meeting becomes emotionally charged. She recommends that board members individually review agenda items before each meeting and anticipate possible public reactions, as well as how to calmly respond.

Fulginiti stressed the importance of setting expectations, remaining in control, and redirecting comments in a positive way. She said it's worth considering having a "side room" with appropriate town staff for working out issues that need personal attention, or calling a brief recess to reset the tone of the meeting if things become tense.

The webinar concluded

with 20 minutes of questions and answers, moderated by Stow Town Administrator Denise Dembkoski. Panelists addressed questions about public comments, establishing a code of conduct, and navigating hybrid meetings.

• <u>View the webinar and materials</u>

MMA to host 'Reframing Recruitment' webinar series

On March 15, the MMA will launch "Reframing Recruitment," a free monthly webinar series for appointed and elected municipal officials that will showcase timely hiring strategies that can set your community up for success.

Online registration is open for the first session of the series, "Setting the Table – Vacancies and Advertising," which will cover how to attract a broad pool of candidates and remain competitive by embracing innovative strategies for advertising vacancies and writing standout ads. Panelists will discuss unique spaces to place ads to maximize the potential for reaching diverse candidates.

Upcoming webinars in the series will include:

- Reframing Recruitment: The Interview Process – April 19
- Reframing Recruitment: What Happens After the Offer – May 17
- Reframing Recruitment: Key



Caitlyn Julius

Jen Breaker

Takeaways from Vacancy to Post-Recruitment – June 14

Jen Breaker, the assistant town manager and communications director in Danvers, and Caitlyn Julius, the assistant human resources director in Springfield, will lead each of the webinars. They will be joined each month by a special guest who has extensive experience in human resources and recruitment.

For more information, contact MMA Education and Training Coordinator Lily Rancatore at lrancatore@mma.org.

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LGAC looks ahead to FY24 budget

During the Feb. 14 meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission, Revere Mayor Brian Arrigo says municipalities will be unable to maintain local services at current levels if the Unrestricted General Government Aid account is increased by only 1.6% for fiscal 2024, matching the consensus forecast for state revenue growth. He adds that a 14% increase in out-of-district special education tuition costs for fiscal 2024 will put added strain on local budgets.

'Nero's Law' training deadline extended by a year

By Dave Koffman

The Office of Emergency Medical Services in the Department of Public Health has extended the compliance deadline for emergency medical service providers to be trained in police dog treatment and transport.

Under Chapter 23 of the Acts of 2022

(known as "Nero's Law"), ambulance services in Massachusetts must ensure that all certified EMTs, at all levels, complete a training course of at least three hours dealing with police dog (K9) treatment and transport.

In early February, the Office of Emergency Medical Services pushed the implementation deadline back by one year (<u>with AR</u> <u>2-270</u>), giving ambulance services without waivers until Feb. 10, 2024, to comply. The OEMS also made changes to the refresher training, course instructor and resource



Emergency medical service providers have until next February to be trained in the treatment and transport of police dogs injured in the line of duty.

requirements.

The MMA had joined the Professional Firefighters of Massachusetts, Massachusetts Ambulance Association, and the Fire Chiefs Association of Massachusetts in <u>writing a letter to the Department of</u> <u>Public Health</u> requesting additional time for review and a one-year extension for the thousands of EMS personnel in Massachusetts who must comply with the new training requirements.

Nero's Law, named after a police dog, requires emergency medical personnel to assess, treat and transport police K9s that are injured in the line of duty. This may include first aid, CPR, and other lifesaving interventions. Emergency medical personnel would be advised to not transport injured K9s, however, if providing such transport would inhibit their ability to provide emergency medical attention or transport to a person requiring services.

Nero's Law was filed in response to a line-of-duty shooting in 2018 that killed Yarmouth Police Sergeant Sean Gannon and severely injured his K9 partner, Nero. At that time, emergency medical personnel were not permitted to treat Nero's critical injuries.

MSA to host Western and Rural Mass. Municipal Conference on April 1

The Massachusetts Select Board Association will host its third Western and Rural Massachusetts Municipal Conference on Saturday, April 1, in Holyoke.

The event will bring together regional stakeholders, including municipal officials, planning agencies and legislators, from Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire counties to address the challenges facing the region, with a specific focus on rural issues.

Conference goals are to promote sustainable cross-governmental partnerships across western Massachusetts, to share strategies for addressing challenges facing rural communities in the region, and to improve rural advocacy efforts.

The conference will open with a legislative panel with Rep. Natalie Blais and Sen. Joanne Comerford focused on rural priorities.



Rep. Natalie Blais

Sen. Joanne Comerford

State Auditor Diana DiZoglio will lead a session covering her office's priorities for rural communities, with an opportunity for attendees to provide input and feedback.

The conference will conclude with a discussion about the <u>Chapter 90 program</u> and local road conditions, as well as other rural priorities, with Sen. Paul Mark.

The conference will be held at the Delaney



Auditor Diana DiZoglio House, located at 3 Country Club Road in Holyoke. Registration and networking will begin at 8 a.m. The program will run from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Boxed lunches will be available with the option to participate

in a networking lunch or take lunch to go after the conference.

More information and a detailed agenda will be made available in the coming weeks.

The registration fee is \$35. Registration is available at <u>www.mma.org</u>.

Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Jenkins at ijenkins@mma.org

Municipalities must respond by April 18 for additional opioid funds

In late 2022, the Attorney General's Office announced proposed opioid settlements with Teva, Allergan, Walgreens, Walmart and CVS, which will bring additional funds for prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery across Massachusetts.

On Feb. 9, the National Opioid Settlement implementation administrator, Rubris, emailed a package of information and materials to municipalities that they must complete for each of the settlements by April 18 to receive abatement funds from these settlements. A municipality must fill out these forms even if it has already agreed to participate in settlements with Johnson & Johnson and Cardinal, AmerisourceBergen and McKesson. Additional information about the settlements is available on the <u>AG's</u> <u>website</u>, including <u>estimated settlement</u> <u>payments</u> to participating municipalities and <u>answers to frequently asked</u> <u>questions</u>. Additional questions may be emailed to the Attorney General's Office at MAOpioidSettlements@mass.gov.

MMA webinar highlights the benefits of engagement

By Lily Rancatore

The MMA <u>co-hosted a webinar</u> with Health Resources in Action on Feb. 21 to review best practices for engaging residents in municipal decision-making processes.

Ben Wood, senior director of policy and practice for <u>Health Resources in Action</u>, began by reviewing the "spectrum of engagement" and describing community involvement, impact, trust and communication along a continuum. Ideally, Wood explained, resident engagement begins with outreach and evolves to a strong bidirectional relationship where municipal decisions are made at the community level and strong partnerships are formed.

When approaching resident engagement, municipalities are advised to consider how to promote transparency in their efforts, sustain authentic and diverse engagement, and strengthen municipal capacity to correct power imbalances.

Wood reviewed actions municipalities have taken to build trust and address power discrepancies across the Commonwealth, highlighting the creation of



An MMA webinar on Feb. 21 examines best practices for engaging residents in municipal decision-making. Pictured are (clockwise from top left): Cynthia Espinosa Marrero, senior manager of health and racial equity at Health Resources in Action; Lourdes Alvarez, Chelsea's communication and community outreach manager; and Gina Plata-Nino and Casey Burns, members of the Worcester Together Coalition.

interactive dashboards and allocation of funds for community-led decisions.

Cynthia Espinosa Marrero, senior manager of health and racial equity at Health Resources in Action, facilitated a discussion with panelists to showcase successful community engagement initiatives in Chelsea and Worcester.

Gina Plata-Nino and Casey Burns, members of the Worcester Together Coalition, and Lourdes Alvarez, Chelsea's communication and community outreach manager, discussed creative ways that local officials can use to engage residents who have been historically excluded from municipal decision-making processes. Panelists emphasized the importance of governing with intention, building trust for long-term relationships, and prioritizing engagement, rather than making it a "check-the-box" item.

Marrero facilitated a question and answer session, which included questions about tools for broadly reaching constituents, the importance of engaging persons with disabilities, and methods for compensating residents for participating in community-sponsored activities.

Wood closed the session by reviewing key takeaways for investing in community engagement and kickstarting outreach.

<u>View the webinar</u>

MMA Board approves policy committees for 2023

By Daniel Yi

At its Feb. 14 meeting, the MMA Board of Directors approved the rosters for the MMA's five policy committees for 2023.

More than 110 local officials from communities across

Michael Ossing

Massachusetts serve on the MMA policy committees, which advise the MMA Board of Directors, staff and MMA members on legislative, regulatory and public policy issues.

The committees also draft resolutions for the MMA's Annual Business Meeting, municipal Best Practices series, and the MMA's legislative package (biennially).

Policy committees hold a regular schedule of meetings, usually one per month. Each committee is assigned an MMA staff member to assist with its research, consideration of issues, and administra-



John Coderre

Linda Tyer

tive functions.

Each committee has 23 members, composed of mayors, select board members, councillors, city and town managers/ administrators, and finance committee members, plus five "presidential appointees" and five technical appointees. Presidential and technical appointees serve one-year terms, while the other members serve three-year terms.

The following are the chairs of each committee:

Energy and the Environment: Michael Ossing, councillor, Marlborough



Anthony Mazzucco

James Lovejoy

Fiscal Policy: John Coderre, town administrator, Northborough

Municipal and Regional Administration: Linda Tyer, mayor, Pittsfield

Personnel and Labor Relations: Anthony Mazzucco, general manager, Norwood

Public Works, Transportation and Public Utilities: James Lovejoy, Select Board member, Mount Washington

The <u>full committee rosters and descrip-</u> tions are posted on the MMA website. ●

EPA opens public comment on potable water permit

On Feb. 21, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 1 released a draft renewal of the region's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Potable Water Facilities General Permit.

A Potable Water Facilities General Permit authorizes the discharge of a specified amount of pollutants into U.S. waters. Multiple facilities in a given region with similar operations are issued a general permit that sets uniform requirements to cover these facilities.



These permits expire after five years and are then reissued through a public process.

A copy of the Draft General

Permit, related documents, and an informational webinar are available on the EPA's website. Public comments will be accepted for 60 days and must be submitted via email to Chien.Nathan@epa.gov by April 21.

- <u>Additional information about the draft</u> <u>permit</u>
- List of affected municipalities

MassRecycle Conference and Trade Show is March 23

The MassRecycle Conference and Trade Show will be held on March 23 in Marlborough.

The conference provides a platform for education on the latest solid waste and recycling challenges, highlights potential solutions and best practices, and creates unique networking and job development opportunities.

This year's programming will feature content relevant to mayors, town managers, sustainability coordinators, solid waste and recycling coordinators, environmental consultants, and more.



Conference panel topics include shifting the narrative on recycling, planning for success, and learning from established extended producer responsibility systems. The conference is hosted by <u>MassRecy-</u> <u>cle</u>, a statewide nonprofit coalition of individuals, municipalities, the waste industry, and other organizations dedicated to improving recycling, organics diversion, and sustainable materials management in Massachusetts.

The conference will be held at the Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel, and programming will run from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

<u>Visit the conference website for more</u> <u>details and registration</u>.

MMA to host social media best practices webinar on March 7

The MMA will host a free webinar on March 7 about how to use social media as a tool to communicate and engage with communities while complying with the unique requirements imposed on municipal officials.



Anne Marie Noonan

Panelists will explore best practices surrounding the broad legal considerations of social media for governing bodies, as well as internal and external policy development.

Speakers will include:

- Attorney Ann Marie Noonan of Valerio, Dominello & Hillman, LLC
- Brianna Sunryd, director of communications and civic innovation, Amherst



Briana Sunryd



Sean Dugan

 Sean Dugan, director of communications and special projects, Lexington

Appointed and elected municipal officials may <u>register online</u>.

For more information, contact MMA Education and Training Coordinator Lily Rancatore at lrancatore@mma.org.



Lt. Gov. Driscoll discusses housing

Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll discusses housing and infrastructure needs while presiding over her first Local Government Advisory Commission meeting on Feb. 14. She discussed the administration's plans to create a new housing secretariat to address state housing needs and to keep Massachusetts competitive. "We're really excited about having a housing secretary who can focus exclusively on housing," she said.

FTA accepting applications for bus grants

By Adrienne Núñez

The Federal Transit Administration is accepting project proposals and grant applications through April 13 for the Low or No Emission (Low-No) and Buses and Bus Facilities grant programs.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law makes \$1.2 billion available through the Low-No Program and \$469 million for Buses and Bus Facilities.

The Low-No Program is intended to support state and local governments in transitioning fleets to low-pollution and energy-efficient vehicles. Funding is provided to state and local government entities for the purchase or lease of zero- or low-emission transit buses, including acquisition, construction, and leasing of required supporting facilities. Municipalities, tribal governments, states, counties, local government authorities, and designated recipients are eligible to apply.



The Federal Transit Administration's Low-No Program seeks to help state and local governments transition bus fleets to low-pollution and energy-efficient vehicles.

The Buses and Bus Facilities Program helps with the financing of buses and bus facility capital projects. This includes replacement, rehabilitation and purchase or lease of buses, related equipment and facilities, as well as construction of new bus-related facilities.

States or local government entities operating fixed-route bus service, tribal

governments, and designated recipients that allocate funds to fixed-route bus operators are eligible to apply.

Recipients may use up to 0.5% of their requested grant award for eligible work-force development and an additional 0.5% for costs associated with training at the <u>National Transit Institute</u>. Projects related to zero-emission vehicles are required to spend 5% of requested funding for workforce development.

Both grant programs are included in one notice of funding opportunity, but a separate application package is required for each program. Applicants may apply for one or both grants through <u>Grants.</u> <u>gov</u> and must include <u>supplemental</u> <u>form</u> SF-424 with their submission.

<u>Click here for a grants summary with</u> <u>links to the notice of funding opportu-</u> <u>nity</u>.

MMA to host webinar on dealing with conflict March 28

A free MMA webinar on March 28 will highlight strategies for effective conflict management.

Conflict among appointed and elected officials may create a negative environment, hinder communication and collaboration, and impact goals and objectives. Municipal officials have the ability, however, to approach conflict positively and elicit favorable outcomes.

This webinar will cover how to skillfully manage conflict, neutralize its negative effects, and maintain a positive and healthy work culture.

Representatives from AllOne Health will review best practices for managing conflict in the municipal workplace, and



Katie Gilfeather

within volunteer committees, boards and councils, with a focus on effective communication and continued development of interpersonal skills.

AllOne Health Executive Director Michael Stuart has more than 30 years of



Michael Stuart

experience working in behavioral health care in Massachusetts and serves as the account manager for MIIA, working closely with municipalities to provide impactful assistance services. Katie Gilfeather, an EAP professional and clinician, has worked in the behavioral health care field for 40 years, developing various EAP programs for towns and cities throughout Massachusetts and demonstrating expertise and proficiency in this area.

Registration is available online.

For more information, contact MMA Education and Training Coordinator Lily Rancatore at lrancatore@mma.org. •

With energy costs in flux, it might be time to look at pricing options

As we near the end of the fourth warmest winter on record, energy costs are in a state of flux. Geopolitical events, warm weather, energy storage, and energy policies at the state and federal level all play into day-to-day volatility in the energy marketplace.

Constellation, the MMA's partner in the MunEnergy program for more than 20

years, offered a <u>webinar</u> on this topic in January.

With a mild winter so far, this might be a good time to start looking at pricing options, rather than waiting until spring.

Constellation is available to help cities and towns manage the complicated energy market. They are the MMA's trusted partner because they understand the municipal energy marketplace.

For more information on the MunEnergy program, visit the <u>MMA website</u> or contact Katie McCue at 617-426-7272, ext. 111 or kmccue@mma.org.

MMHR to discuss de-escalation techniques on March 9

from AllOne Health

and supervisors can

effectively manage

conflicts with and

The session will

include a discus-

sion about how HR

professionals can

between employees.

will then discuss

how HR directors

The Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources association's first program meeting of the year will cover de-escalation strategies and managing employee conflicts. The free webinar will be held on March 9.

Jean Haertl, president and founder of Safety and Respect at Work, LLC, will lead a training session on de-escalation techniques covering the skills needed to diffuse tense situations in the workplace.

Michael Stuart and Katie Gilfeather



Jean Haertl

best take care of themselves when dealing with difficult situations.

Stuart is the regional executive director for AllOne Health, and Gilfeather is an EAP professional and clinician.

Advance registration is required for the webinar, which will run from 10:30 a.m. to noon. An email with the registration link was sent to all MMHR members in early February.

Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Jenkins at ijenkins@mma.org

Affordable Housing Trust Study

Committee and vice president of Charlesbank Homes Foundation

Caitlin Madden, executive director of

The session will be moderated by MSA

Chair and Williamstown Select Board

The free webinar will run from noon

to 1 p.m., and advance registration is

link was sent to all select board mem-

required. An email with the registration

Member Andy Hogeland.

Metrowest Collaborative Development

Select Board Association to discuss affordable housing trusts

The Massachusetts Select Board Association's first program meeting of the year will be a free webinar covering best practices for affordable housing trusts on March 17.

The webinar will provide an overview of affordable housing trusts and examine best practices for communities using a trust, including an overview of some of the tools available to municipalities through the Massachusetts Housing Partnership.

The webinar will also review the process for establishing an affordable housing trust and will discuss examples of successful affordable housing trust projects.



Caitlin Madden

Featured speakers will include:

- Shelly Goehring, senior program manager at the Massachusetts Housing Partnership
- Kathryn Roy, chair of the Lexington



bers in February. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services

Coordinator Isabelle Jenkins at ijenkins@mma.org

Citizen Planner Training Collaborative annual conference is March 18

The Citizen Planner Training Collaborative will hold its annual conference on March 18 in Worcester.

The conference will feature 17 land use planning-related workshops held over three sessions throughout the morning to midafternoon. Workshop topics include zoning pitfalls, multi-family zoning requirements for MBTA communities, the Community One Stop for Growth program, Chapter 40B, and small-scale affordable housing.

Seven of the 17 workshops are eligible for MIIA Rewards credits. (See the conference website for details.)

The conference will be held at the College of the Holy Cross, opening at 8 a.m. The final session of workshops will end at 3:15 p.m.

The cost to attend is \$95, and advance registration is required. The event will include a continental breakfast and a huffet lunch

For more information and to register, visit the CPTC's <u>conference page</u>.

Let us know about your local news

Every day across the Commonwealth, municipal leaders are figuring out ways to deliver services more efficiently, save taxpayers money, engage more citizens in the vital work of local government, and improve the effectiveness of the

layer of government that has the most direct impact on people's lives. The MMA wants to recognize and help spread the word about these local creative solutions.

If your community has launched a new

program or initiative, or has found a unique solution to a common problem, please let us know by filling out our new Local News Tips form on the MMA website. 🔵

Kathryn Roy

AG Campbell to speak at WEMO symposium on April 28

to know some of

their fellow women

elected leaders and

Attorney General Andrea Campbell will give the keynote address at the Women Elected Municipal Officials spring symposium on Friday, April 28.

The free, virtual symposium will run from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The theme is "advancing women's leadership in policy making."

The keynote will be followed by a series of breakout discussions.



Andrea Campbell

The first 30 minutes will be an optional networking session before the program kicks off, giving members an opportunity to get

> Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Jenkins at ijenkins@mma.org

ATFC to hold spring conference on April 29

The Association of Town Finance Committees will hold its spring conference on Saturday, April 29, at the Pompositticut Community Center in Stow.

The agenda will feature "The ABC's of Grants," an overview of federal and state grants available to municipalities and the application process. A practitioner's panel will address how a finance committee is affected when a town pursues and receives grant funding. Topics will include budgeting costs associated with grants, factoring funding into long-range planning, and other lessons learned. Attendees will also learn about resources to assist towns with the grant process.

The meeting will kick off with a legisla-

tive and budget update from the MMA.

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.

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

NLC holding Congressional City Conference March 26-28

The National League of Cities will hold its annual Congressional City Conference on March 26-28, in Washington, DC.

At the conference, local leaders can meet with influential federal decisionmakers, learn about critical new programs, and discover tools to further support and protect their communities. Attendees can also work with the NLC and their peers from around the country to ensure that their local priorities factor into the national conversation.

The NLC will also host pre-conference activities on March 24 and 25, and will hold "Hill Day" on March 28. Hill Day is an opportunity for elected officials, city staff and state municipal league staff to meet with their U.S. senators and representatives for briefings on key legislation and federal funding programs affecting their communities.

For more information, visit <u>ccc.nlc.org</u>. <u>Click here for registration rates</u>.

TransitMatters publishes toolkit to promote 'Mobility Hubs'

<u>TransitMatters</u> has published a new toolkit to help municipalities, nonprofits and other community leaders bring <u>Mobility Hubs</u> into their neighborhoods.

Mobility Hubs are places that connect different modes of transportation and make transfers between them easy and convenient. Whether someone is walking or taking public transit to their final destination, Mobility Hubs offer infrastructure that is accessible and user-friendly, improving the transit experience with elements such as bus shelters and information displays. Mobility Hubs are designed to improve the functionality of a transit system by empowering people with information and connections to move around freely.

The free Mobility Hubs Toolkit was



created by Transit-Matters's strong volunteer network. It's designed to be educational and engaging, using accessible writing, broad coverage, and technical basics and considerations.

Mobility Hubs documents often target planners and technical experts, but TransitMatter chose a "ground-up" approach "because some of the best street interventions are bottom-up, community-informed ones."

The toolkit describes each element of a Mobility Hub, what it does, the benefits it brings, and anything that needs to be considered, such as costs, jurisdiction and equity considerations. The kit also highlights the benefits of Mobility Hubs through various characters' experiences with new hubs in their neighborhoods.

The toolkit details how to advocate for Mobility Hubs in any neighborhood. TransitMatters is a Massachusetts-based organization, but it uses worldwide examples in the toolkit.

 <u>Download the Mobility Hubs Toolkit</u> (PDF)

MMA-Suffolk to hold information sessions

By Katie McCue

The MMA and Suffolk University will hold information sessions on March 8 and 16 for upcoming Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management programs.

The two sessions, to be held via Zoom at 10 a.m. on March 8 and 2 p.m. on March 16, will cover the same information. To register, visit <u>www.mma.org/events</u>.

In September 2023, the MMA and Suffolk University will launch the 21st and 22nd certificate programs in-person in Barnstable and Danvers. The program is held over the course of 25 Fridays from September through May.

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 application is available on the <u>MMA website</u>. The application deadline is April 30.

Fellowship Program

The application deadline is May 1 for the MMA and Suffolk University's Municipal Fellowship Program, which offers 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 continuing their salary and position while they attend the program parttime. The application is available on the <u>MMA-Suffolk programs web page</u>.

Applicants must already be accepted for admission to the MPA program and have 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

Meeting space wanted

Does your municipality have a public meeting space that would be appropriate for an MMA event?

With more than 60 meetings each year, the MMA uses several different types



Students gather online for the Feb. 10 graduation of the MMA-Suffolk Municipal Finance Management Seminar's winter 2023 session. Twenty-five students completed the 10th session of the finance seminar, and to date, more than 250 people have graduated from the program.

program.

Finance Seminar

The MMA-Suffolk Municipal Finance Management Seminar will hold three programs in 2023.

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

The application period for the spring 2023 session has closed, but the application period for the fall 2023 session remains open through July 31. The application is available on the <u>MMA</u> <u>website</u>.

For more information on any of the MMA-Suffolk programs, visit <u>mma.org/suffolk</u> or contact Katie McCue at 617-426-7272, ext. 111, or kmccue@mma.org, or Kate Evarts at 617-426-7272, ext. 172, or kevarts@mma.org. ●





LGAC discusses remote meetings

During the Feb. 14 meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission, Pittsfield Mayor Linda Tyer calls for an extension of the remote access option for public meetings before the current option expires on March 31. She said remote access to public meetings boosts community participation, and asked state leaders to support a permanent option that includes flexibility in how communities use meeting technology. <u>See related</u> <u>story, page 1</u>

To offer your town or city's municipal function space, contact Timmery Kuck, the MMA's conference and meeting planner, at tkuck@mma.org.

USDA looks to boost farmland eligible for preservation

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service in Massachusetts and the American Farmland Trust are working with municipalities to increase the amount of farmland eligible for federal preservation funding.

Under its Agricultural Land Easement program, the NRCS works with partners such as the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, land trusts, and municipalities to preserve farmland by paying willing farmland owners the development value in exchange for ensuring agricultural land remains protected and available for farming.

Eligibility for NRCS funding is based in part on soil types. A parcel must consist of at least 50% important farmland soils (Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance) as depicted in the NRCS soil survey.

These soil survey designations do not capture all areas suited for crop production, however. Designating additional soil types as Farmland of Local Importance can increase the potential for federally funded farmland preservation.

Under the Code of Federal Regulations,



Clark, state lawmakers target waste

Congresswoman Katherine Clark praises the state's waste-reduction efforts in her keynote address during a public policy forum hosted by the Legislature's Zero Waste Caucus on Feb. 16 in Lexington. Clark said Massachusetts is "securing a future that honors every person's right to clean air, clean water and clean communities." The event was titled "Waste Not, Want Not."



The U.S. Department of Agriculture is working to increase the amount of farmland eligible for federal preservation funding. (Photo courtesy Keith Weller/ USDA)

a municipality can designate soils as Farmland of Local Importance by following this process:

1. The NRCS reviews the soil mapping and land use in the municipality via the soil survey maps and aerial imagery.

2. Soil types with evidence of crop production that are not classed as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance in the soil survey are presented to the municipality to be designated as Farmland of Local Importance.

3. A municipal official and the NRCS State Conservationist sign the list. The municipal official can be anyone duly recognized as representing the town regarding agriculture, open space, small business or conservation, such as the conservation commission chair, agricultural commission chair, select board chair, mayor, town administrator, open space and recreation plan committee chair, planning board chair, etc.

4. The list is housed on the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide, where it will be applied to determine eligibility for federal farmland preservation funding.

As of January 2023, 39 Massachusetts cities and towns have designated Farmland of Local Importance.

Key points

- There is no cost to the municipality in designating Farmland of Local Importance; the NRCS funds this initiative to ensure that all land that is eligible for ALE funding is recognized.
- There is no regulatory association with listing soils as Farmland of Local Importance.
- Inventories of important farmland

soils do not constitute a designation of any land area to a specific land use.

• The designation of Farmland of Local Importance does not affect property tax rates. The establishment of a farmland conservation restriction does not affect the tax rate for parcels under Chapter 61A.

The designation may not make a difference in preserving farmland. There are many factors in addition to soils, starting with landowner choice. Recognizing Farmland of Local Importance only addresses the 50% important soils ALE funding eligibility requirement.

For more information, contact Al Averill, certified professional soil scientist with the NRCS and American Farmland Trust, at albert.averill@usda.gov or 413-253-4356.

Related resources

- USDA soil survey information
- <u>Designations of Farmland of Local</u> <u>Importance in Massachusetts</u>
- <u>NRCS Agricultural Land Easement</u>
 <u>program</u>



LGAC discusses regional schools, PILOT funding

During the Feb. 14 meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission, Williamstown Select Board Member Andrew Hogeland asks the administration to fully fund regional school transportation and rural school aid for fiscal 2024, recognizing that rural districts face higher transportation costs per student. He also highlighted the importance of funding for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program, especially for rural communities.

Around the Commonwealth

Deerfield

Town produces, wins award for soil health study

As a part of its ongoing climate resiliency efforts, Deerfield received a \$40,951 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Action Grant to study and engage the public in the protection and management of soils to store water in flood events, filter water, release water in times of drought, and sequester carbon.

The town's <u>Healthy Soils Report</u> received a Sustainability Award this past December from the Massachusetts branch of the American Planning Association.

Following the award of the MVP grant in 2021, the town began working with Regenerative Design Group and Conservation Works on a study to determine a baseline of current soil health as well as the effects that land cover and current management practices have on the soil.

The town, which has a 2030 Climate Resiliency Plan in place, is located along the Connecticut River and Deerfield River valleys and is prone to flooding.

"The MVP program has been really great to us as a community," said Select Board Member Carolyn Shores Ness. "We've had huge damages in the past, not just from [Hurricane] Irene, but also from other terrible storms. ... Being climate resilient is critical for the town based on where we are located."

According to the report, healthy soil provides a number of useful functions related to climate resiliency, including carbon capture and storage, water filtration and storage, and nutrient storage, on top of its productive capacity and biological activity and diversity. Soil health is largely dependent on how people manage and use it.

The study identified the different soil types found across the town, along with the capacity for carbon sequestration.

"We know that good soil health in the community is related to having deeply rooted plants that withstand heavy rain and drought events better, and improve water storage, drainage and capacity," Shores Ness said.



Deerfield produced its Healthy Soils Report in June.

The study undertook extensive outreach and education efforts with town farmers, students and staff at Frontier Regional High School and Deerfield Academy, as well as the general public. Students at Frontier were engaged in field day activities for hands-on learning with study staff.

Shores Ness said that the town is now primarily focused on educational outreach about the science and results of the study as the town looks to implement strategies to improve soil health. Part of the goal is to empower residents to make changes within their own yards, while also looking to make changes in municipal practices.

The town is looking at tree preservation, as well as how lawn areas are managed by the Department of Public Works. The study identified the best trees for the town to plant in the public tree belt and promote for residential use, based on adaptability and resiliency.

"It is important to have municipal areas that are currently mowed lawn switched over to native meadows where possible," Shores Ness said. "It helps to lower operational costs but is also a climate benefit supporting soil health and pollinator and wildlife habitats."

The town has also developed a Yard-by-Yard program as a part of their 2030 plan that has been further supported

by the results of the study. The program supports residential lawn-to-meadow conversions and native planting projects, as well as outreach and training.

"We are trying to come up with ways that people feel they have power and ability to impact climate change," said Shores Ness, who also chairs the Board of Health.

The report identifies five actions the town and its residents can take to improve the health of their soils to positively support their climate change goals, and suggests new and updated bylaws to help build on the work that has already been done by the Planning Board. Shores Ness said two commercial entities are voluntarily working with the town to test out some of the suggested best practices to determine the impact on economic development.

"We are starting with the simplistic and will get more complex as we go on," Shores Ness said. "With outreach and then implementation, it is a slow process but we are working toward these great ideas in the next year or two."

– Meredith Gabrilska

Newton

Devices help Fire Department safely respond to EV crashes

With electric vehicles becoming more popular, the Newton Fire Department has become the second in the nation to secure devices that can immobilize electric vehicles involved in accidents.

Following New York City, Newton has unveiled devices that put electric vehicles "to sleep," so they can't move suddenly after an accident and injure emergency responders, passengers or bystanders. Newton has bought five of the devices, as fire departments increasingly confront safety challenges involving electric vehicles.

"Electric vehicles are such a new topic, and everyone is comparing notes and trying to figure out what's the best practice," said Newton Fire Capt. Phillip McCully, who leads the department's safety training efforts. "It's exciting

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Around the Commonwealth

COMMONWEALTH

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that Newton gets to be in the forefront of this, and we try to share the lessons we've learned, and take the lessons that other people have learned, to try to craft a really concrete and safe electric-vehicle response."

Electric engines pose specific challenges because they operate more quietly than gas- and diesel-powered engines, and people can have trouble figuring out if an electric vehicle is still running — a problem potentially made more complicated by accident-damaged equipment.

McCully began his research after a viral video in July showed an SUV suddenly moving and rolling over onto a New York City firefighter after it had crashed.

McCully discovered that a couple firefighters in Amsterdam had invented a hand-held device called <u>Emergency</u> <u>Plug</u> that prevents electric vehicles from moving after an accident. He befriended one of the firefighters, and got the devices shipped to Newton. The devices, which cost about \$850 to \$875 each,



Mayors discuss legal issues

Lauren Goldberg, a managing attorney at KP Law, discusses pressing legal issues affecting municipalities during the Feb. 22 online meeting of the Massachusetts Mayors' Association. Goldberg addressed municipal flag-flying policies and "First Amendment audits," in which self-appointed "auditors" record their interactions with public officials and post videos online.



The Newton Fire Department recently bought five Emergency Plug devices to immobilize electric vehicles involved in accidents. (Photo courtesy Newton Fire Department)

arrived just after the holidays and have been placed on different vehicles to ensure coverage throughout Newton.

The yellow device, which also works on hybrid plug-ins, has three adapters to accommodate various car brands. The device plugs into the same port as the charger and instructs the car to shift into neutral or park, depending on the make or model, McCully said. The devices restrict only vehicle movement, not hazards posed by electric-vehicle fires, he said.

According to McCully, the devices are popular with responders in Europe, Asia and the Middle East, but have been slower to catch on here. In general, U.S. responders have only begun grappling with the challenges involving electric

Form-of-government resources available

The Massachusetts Municipal Management Association offers free resources to help communities that are considering a change in their form of government.

The Management Association, a member group of the MMA comprising town managers, administrators and assistants, has compiled answers to frequently asked questions as well as descriptions of the different forms of government with a professional administrator.

Also available are reports on towns that have gone through changes in their forms of government. vehicles. To help bridge this gap, the National Fire Protection Association has been offering <u>online resources</u> and training for first responders.

"While firefighters have had more than 100 years to learn how to handle incidents with internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles, they've had very little time to understand and train for those involving EV and hybrid vehicles," said Andrew Klock, the NFPA's emerging issues lead manager, in a statement last year about training.

More than 180 Newton Fire employees have now been trained on the devices, and McCully said his department recently started analyzing Newton's accident data to track the percentage of accidents involving electric vehicles.

Since Newton firefighters started posting online about their devices, firefighters from as far away as Hawaii, and as nearby as Concord, have asked about them, McCully said. The department invited firefighters from local departments to attend its trainings, he said, and Newton would willingly deploy the devices to accidents in neighboring communities.

– Jennifer Kavanaugh

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.

A management chart shows the progression of management authority in a decentralized vs. centralized form of government.

<u>These and other related resources can</u> <u>be found in the MMA website Resource</u> <u>Library</u>.

Members of the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association are also available to meet with charter commissions, government study committees and select boards to discuss options and answer questions.

Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker Nonprofit Locally based Member driven

Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association www.emiia.org | 800.374.4405

Serving Massachusetts' communities since 1982

Municipalities emerge from pandemic challenges in stronger position

By Jennifer Ranz

Despite facing a range of new challenges over the past three years of the COVID pandemic, MIIA Executive Vice President Stanley Corcoran said MIIA members "have seized new opportunities to come out stronger and better equipped for the future."

Addressing MIIA's Annual Business Meeting on Jan. 21 in Boston, Corcoran outlined a number of ways that local public entities around the state have boosted safety preparedness and financial strength during tough times.

Municipalities have encountered a wave of obstacles, from inflation and rising energy costs to labor shortages, supply chain disruptions and weather-related events.

"To a greater or lesser extent, we've all been affected in some way by the pandemic," Corcoran said. "The theme of our 2022 annual report is Expanding Possibilities, which speaks to much of what we've collectively been doing to rebuild and find new ways of working while expanding our services."

Corcoran highlighted three local entities that have expanded possibilities through

innovative programs:

- The Franklin County Solid Waste Management District anticipated challenges that its 21 member towns would face with new Occupational Safety and Health Administration safety regulations on the horizon, but found there was no guidebook available that was specific to transfer stations. The district worked with MIIA to acquire necessary materials, develop a 200-page guide, and implement training for transfer station employees.
- After soliciting feedback from other municipalities and looking closely at rising renewal costs, the town of Danvers decided to return to MIIA's Health Benefits Trust. MIIA worked closely with the town to develop a rollout plan, engage with union members to identify specific plan features that they needed, and complete a smooth transition.
- The town of Plymouth, an inaugural member of MIIA's new Unemployment Services Program, has taken advantage of the program's expanded human resources and operations support to help reduce local spending. The town

estimates that the program has already saved thousands of taxpayer dollars, while further boosting town risk reduction.

Corcoran also commended municipalities that have implemented new technologies to address both rising and long-standing challenges. For example, towns are accessing federal and state resources to help prevent cyber breaches and mitigate their potential damages. Some municipalities have secured new boiler sensor technology to help prevent property losses from winter weather-related pipe breaks.

MIIA members also made great strides last year in designing and implementing training programs that further reduce risk exposure, Corcoran said. In 2022, more than 50 member municipalities completed OSHA Health and Safety Fundamentals certification training. Many members also accessed training courses that support police reform efforts, including seminars focused on legal updates, mental health intervention, de-escalation, and bias-free policing.

MIIA plans to launch a member portal for accessing account history and MIIA continued on 21

Tips for addressing unemployment insurance fraud

After spiking at the beginning of the COVID pandemic and eventually leveling off, fraudulent unemployment claims are on the rise again.

Over the last three years, more than \$60 billion has been paid out in fraudulent claims across the country, according to a <u>recent report from the U.S. Government</u> <u>Accountability Office</u>, including about \$1.9 billion in Massachusetts alone.

Fraud is often committed by criminal organizations using stolen personal information acquired over the course of decades, and municipalities have been especially targeted.

The Unemployment Tax Management

Corporation, one of MIIA's Unemployment Services Program partners, estimates that a single claim can end up costing a municipality more than \$30,000.

The UTMC recommends taking the following steps when fraud is suspected:

1. Verify with the employee that he or she has not filed a claim in the past year.

2. Respond to the request for information from the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance and indicate that the claim appears to be fraudulent — and that the employee has confirmed he or she did not file. 3. Instruct the employee to file a fraud report using the form on <u>mass.gov</u>.

4. Review monthly reimbursable bills or charge statements and file a protest for any charges related to the fraudulent claim.

MIIA's new Unemployment Services Program provides unemployment risk management and training, claims management, streamlined payment processing, and full-service administration for its members. For more information, visit <u>www.emiia.org/</u> <u>unemployment-services</u> or call 800-526-6442.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Continued from page 2

In a welcome break from that pattern, Gov. Healey and Lt. Gov. Driscoll have proposed increases for regional school transportation, vocational school transportation, special education reimbursements, payments-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT), transportation of students in temporary housing, library aid, and rural school aid.

This is a solid start. While further increases are still needed to get school transportation reimbursements, PILOT, and rural school aid up to full funding levels, and special attention must be given to addressing an unaffordable spike in special education costs, the gap between House 1 and full funding is smaller than in past years. Local officials look forward to diving into the details with members of the House and Senate, and building on this progress, with the goal of reaching full funding.

At the outset, there are two headline issues that require special attention, in addition to the special education, school transportation, PILOT and rural aid programs noted above. These are Unrestricted General Government Aid and Chapter 70 school aid.

A 2% UGGA increase is too low

For the past eight years, funding for discretionary local aid (UGGA) has followed a revenue sharing compact that increases aid each year by the same rate of growth as state revenues, providing predictable increases in unrestricted municipal aid, with a framework that is affordable for the Commonwealth because it uses a growth index that matches the state's revenue capacity.

During the past three fiscal years, however, while the state has benefitted from record tax revenue collections, the method of calculating state revenue growth undercounted the increases the state has enjoyed, creating a challenging process for cities and towns because UGGA increases were lower than the actual revenue growth rate. This was a major reason why the Legislature doubled the UGGA increase from 2.7% to 5.4% in its fiscal 2023 budget, a step that local leaders and the MMA applaud and deeply appreciate.

To avoid this problem in the fiscal 2024 budget cycle, the MMA strongly requests that the \$1.23 billion UGGA account be increased using a stable measure of state revenue growth. Using a rolling three-year average of state revenue growth would anchor the framework with real data, would even out large swings, and would avoid the flaws that have kept revenue sharing increases below the actual growth in the state's fiscal capacity.

Instead of the below-inflation 2% increase proposed in House 1, which would provide only \$24.6 million more for fiscal 2024, UGGA funding should be based on a more accurate calculation of the recent growth in state revenues. This would generate a 6% increase, or \$75 million, allowing cities and towns to keep pace with inflation. This would approximate the increase that the Legislature initiated last year and move communities forward with UGGA funding that is much closer to the actual need.

Chapter 70 funding must provide all districts with enough funding

Regarding Chapter 70 school aid, the MMA strongly supports full funding of the Student Opportunity Act, which is included in House 1. At the same time, communities and districts should all receive an adequate level of minimum aid to ensure that all schools receive a meaningful Chapter 70 increase in fiscal 2024, which should be at least \$100 per student.

Under the school funding distribution in House 1, 119 communities and school

districts, serving 257,000 students, would be relegated to increases of just \$30 per student. Their education aid would increase by 0.7%, forcing these districts to impose painful cuts. Increasing minimum aid to \$100 per student, would allocate an additional \$18.8 million to provide some assistance to partially cover inflation.

Again, we know that lawmakers understand this issue, and we applaud the Legislature's initiative to double minimum aid in this year's budget. Local officials look forward to engaging with their representatives and senators to address this critical issue impacting so many communities and schools. Going forward, \$100 per student would result in an average increase much closer to historical inflation.

Another aspect of Chapter 70 that calls for attention is the very high increase in mandated local contributions to the foundation budget formula. House 1 is based on a calculation that calls for a \$400 million increase in required municipal spending on the school budget, a 5.6% increase. This is far above the growth in municipal revenues. Without addressing this aspect of the Student Opportunity Act funding challenge, districts with required increases in local contributions that exceed the percentage growth in their own local property tax revenues would be forced to cut funding for essential municipal services, a harmful zero-sum process that would weaken their capacity to deliver critical non-school services to students and families outside the classroom.

Budget-setting season is shifting into high gear at the State House and in every town and city. The key priorities outlined here will establish fiscal stability and sustainability at the local level and ensure that the residents of Massachusetts receive the essential municipal and school services they expect and deserve.

EXTENSIONS

Continued from page 1

\$41 million focused on communities with a large influx of school-aged children due to shelter placement.

The House bill includes Healey's request-

ed \$65 million to extend the universal school meals pilot program, and \$130 million for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Last month, the federal government announced an <u>end</u> to Extra COVID SNAP benefits, known as SNAP Emergency Allotments. The House bill would provide a supplemental SNAP allotment equal to 40% of the previous federal benefits for three months.

The bill will now be sent to the Senate for consideration and debate in the coming weeks.

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BUDGET

Continued from page 1

intended to provide savings for families, renters, seniors, farmers, and commuters.

The governor's budget proposal is the first step in a months-long process to determine a final state budget. The House and Senate Ways and Means committees are expected to host a budget hearing in mid-March on municipal and school aid for fiscal 2024, and the House will 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.

Unrestricted General Government Aid

Healey is proposing a \$24.6 million increase (2%) in the Unrestricted General Government Aid account, slightly higher than the 1.6% consensus forecast for state tax revenue growth announced in January. The MMA will be working closely with lawmakers to build on this proposal and secure a higher level of UGGA aid to maintain essential municipal services.

"With inflation running far higher than 2%, communities will need a larger increase just to maintain existing programs and services," Beckwith said.

Chapter 70

House 1 would continue implementation of the funding schedules in the Student Opportunity Act, bringing Chapter 70 school aid up to \$6.58 billion. The majority of the funds would implement improvements to the foundation budget, adding weight for low-income students, English language learners, special education costs, and school employee health benefits.

An initial examination indicates, however, that 119 of 318 operating districts (37%) would receive only the minimum \$30 per-student increase in the Student Opportunity Act. This translates into an average aid increase of just 0.7% for these districts, which serve 257,000 students.

The Legislature set minimum aid at \$60 per student in the fiscal 2023 budget, and the MMA will continue to strongly advocate for minimum aid of \$100 per student to ensure that all districts can at least keep pace with inflation and maintain their school services. Healey's budget also proposes a special \$10 million reserve fund to provide relief to districts whose municipalities have been disproportionately impacted by increases in required local contributions under the Chapter 70 formula.

 See the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's calculation of fiscal 2024 Chapter 70 aid and net school spending requirements for individual cities, towns and regional school districts based on House 1 (including preliminary fiscal 2024 charter school assessments and reimbursements)

Charter school reimbursements

House 1 would level-fund charter school reimbursements at \$243 million, intended to meet the state's statutory obligation to mitigate Chapter 70 losses to charter schools as outlined in the Student Opportunity Act.

While the proposed budget may meet the requirement, the MMA maintains that it does not solve the serious flaws in the overall charter school finance system.

"Charter schools will continue to divert a high percentage of Chapter 70 funds away from many municipally operated school districts, and place greater strain on the districts that serve the vast majority of public schoolchildren," Beckwith noted. "Major problems will continue unless a true resolution of the charter school funding problem is achieved, which is a top MMA priority."

Special education circuit breaker

House 1 would add \$63 million to fund the Special Education Circuit Breaker program at \$503 million. The Student Opportunity Act expanded the special education circuit breaker by including outof-district transportation, an important enhancement for cities and towns. With concerns rising about a 14% rate increase for out-of-district special education providers coming on July 1, administration officials say they are examining funding options to assist local school districts, and the MMA will continue to work with the Executive Office for Administration and Finance and with lawmakers to address this challenge.

Rural school aid

House 1 includes \$7.5 million for Rural School Aid for eligible towns and regional school districts. The grant program helps districts facing the challenge of declining enrollment to identify ways to form regional school districts or regionalize certain school services to create efficiencies.

The MMA sees this as a promising step for rural school aid, and will continue to advocate to build on this progress.

Regional school transportation

House 1 would increase funding for regional transportation reimbursements by \$14.9 million, or about 18%, to \$97 million for fiscal 2024, which would reimburse districts for approximately 90% of local costs.

Out-of-district vocational school transportation

Reimbursements for transportation of out-of-district vocational students would see a significant boost, with the governor proposing \$5.2 million. The same account in fiscal 2023 was funded at only \$250,000. The governor's proposal would reimburse districts for approximately 90% of local costs.

McKinney-Vento

House 1 would fully fund reimbursements for the transportation of homeless students under the federal McKinney-Vento Act, increasing the account to \$28.7 million in fiscal 2024. The impact of this funding level would vary from community to community, depending on the number of homeless families that remain sheltered in local hotels and motels.

PILOT

House 1 would increase payments-inlieu-of-taxes by 14%, to \$51.5 million, which would benefit communities with large amounts of state-owned land. This increase is intended to ensure that no municipality sees a decrease in its overall PILOT payments due to recent valuation changes.

Public libraries

Local aid accounts for public libraries and regional libraries would each receive a 10% increase under House 1, bringing public libraries to \$17.6 million and regional libraries to \$15.9 million.

Shannon grants

House 1 includes \$12.3 million for the <u>Shannon Community Safety Initiative</u> grant program, which provides funding for cities and towns to respond to and suppress gang-related activities.

BUDGET

Continued from page 18

Regionalization efficiencies reserve

House 1 includes \$20.5 million for a Municipal Regionalization Efficiencies Incentive Reserve, which would double the funding for the Community Compact Program. Part of the reserve would be used to support emergency public safety staffing grants (\$5 million), the District Local Technical Assistance Fund (\$3 million), the Efficiency and Regionalization competitive grant program (\$2 million), and the Local Finance Commonwealth Fellowship Program (\$500,000).

Municipal transportation grants

In response to calls from municipalities for state support with the design and development of key transportation-related projects, House 1 proposes \$100 million for a new Massachusetts Department of Transportation Municipal Partnership grant program. The grants would help communities prepare for or apply for state and federal grant programs, fulfill local match requirements, begin construction, or leverage outside funding sources.

The grant account would be funded with

a portion of the \$1 billion in new revenue generated by the surtax on incomes above \$1 million.

Tax relief

The governor's fiscal 2024 spending plan includes a \$859 million set aside for tax relief. The governor's proposal would fund several categories of tax credits, resulting in the following budget impacts for fiscal 2024:

- Child and family tax credit: \$458 million
- Estate tax: \$167 million
- Renter deduction: \$40 million
- Senior circuit breaker credit: \$60 million
- Short-term capital gains: \$117 million
- Additional targeted credits: \$17 million

Fair Share

In House 1, the governor said she is recommending a mechanism to ensure that revenue from the surtax on incomes above \$1 million is "used in a manner that is sustainable and protected against future downturns and fluctuations in the revenue stream."

The proposal recommends the establishment of a required minimum fund balance that would be used only in the event of significant revenue decline to preserve base programs funded from Fair Share tax revenue. This balance would grow annually to account for inflation.

To ensure predictability, a cap would be established on recurring spending, with revenue collected above the cap used to support one-time investments in pilot programs, start-up grants, studies, onetime capital investments such as bridges, railroad right-of-way improvements, and other non-recurring projects.

In House 1, Healey recommends using \$1 billion in investments from Fair Share revenue in fiscal 2024 — \$510 million for education and \$490 million for transportation.

The proposal includes \$140 million for early education and care, \$10 million for K-12 education (specifically for Early College and Innovation Pathways), and \$360 million for higher education programs, as well as \$100 million for the new MassDOT municipal grant program, \$186 million for the MBTA, \$164 million for MassDOT Highway, and \$40 million for MassDOT Transit and Rail. ●

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- State & federal grant opportunities
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People



Gina Dario

On Feb. 15, **Gina Dario** became the new town administrator in Lanesborough.

Dario has more than two decades of experience as an elections observer and official overseas. For the

past 18 years, she served in the Australian Electoral Commission in Canberra, in roles including assistant director, director and assistant commissioner. She has also served as a consultant for the International Elections Administration and as an advisor for the Australian Electoral Commission Election Indonesia Program in Jakarta, Indonesia; as an election observer in the Russian Federation in 2003; as a project officer for the East Timorese and International Observer Groups in Dili, East Timor, in 2001 and 2002; and as a polling station officer in Kosovo in 2001. She also served as an associate political affairs officer for the United Nations from 2000 to 2001. More locally, she was a project manager for the International Executive Service Corps in North Adams from 2003 to 2004.

Dario has a bachelor's degree in foreign languages and literatures from Mount Holyoke College, and a master's degree in international relations and affairs from Columbia University.

In Lanesborough, Dario replaces **Joshua Lang**, who left the position in September.

Mark Stankiewicz became the new town administrator in Berkley on Feb. 14.

Stankiewicz gained municipal experience throughout southern New England. For the past decade, he was the town administrator in Charlestown, Rhode Island. Before that, he served for three years as the town manager in Plymouth, more than six years as the town manager in Stoughton, and a decade as the town administrator in Webster. He also served as the assistant city manager in Norwich, Connecticut, from 1988 to 1993. He has a bachelor's degree in political science and government and a master's degree in public administration, both from the University of Connecticut.

In Berkley, Stankiewicz replaces **Heather Martin-Sterling**, who left the position in June. **Kevin Partridge** had been serving as the interim town administrator.

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Attleboro City Councillor **Cathleen DeSimone** won a special election on Feb. 28 to serve as mayor for the rest of the year, following the departure of **Paul Heroux**, who left to become the Bristol County sheriff in January. **James DiLisio** has been serving as acting mayor.

Shawn Oliver won a special election on Feb. 28 to join the New Bedford City Council representing Ward 3. Oliver is filling the vacancy left by the resignation of **Hugh Dunn** in December.



Christine Lindberg became chief of staff to Haverhill Mayor James Fiorentini on Jan. 23.

Lindberg had been serving as the town administrator in Ashby since February 2022.

Christine Lindberg

Previously, she served as human resources director in Dracut from June 2017 until November 2021, and for four years as chief aide to the town manager in Salisbury and three years as assistant to the town manager in Hamilton. She served for nine years on the Middleton Select Board and served on the Middleton Planning Board from 2001 to 2016.

Lindberg has a master's degree in public administration from Suffolk University and a bachelor's degree in political science from Salem State University. She completed the MMA-Suffolk University Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program in 2012-2013.

In Haverhill, Lindberg replaces **Christopher Sicuranza**, who stepped down from the role in December.

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James Devine won a Feb. 7 special election to join the Quincy City Council. He is filling the Ward 4 seat left vacant by Brian Palmucci, who resigned late last year following his appointment as a state District Court judge.

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William Harker and **Jared Bellows** have joined the Charlemont Select Board after winning a Jan. 10 special election.

Harker fills a seat left vacant by **Marguerite Willis** and will serve the remaining five months of that term. Bellows fills a seat left vacant by **Dan Girard** and is serving the remaining year and a half of that term. Willis and Girard both resigned on Dec. 30.

Abbe Burt joined the Tisbury Select Board after winning a Jan. 24 special election. Burt fills a seat left vacant by the resignation of **Larry Gomez** in October.

Alec Rich joined the Norton Select Board after winning a Feb. 11 special election. He fills a seat left vacant by the resignation of **Christine Deveau** in November.

Paul Tassone joined the Gardner City Council on Feb. 6, when the council chose him to fill the Ward 3 seat left vacant by the resignation of **Nathan Boudreau** in December.



Martin Walsh

Former Boston Mayor **Martin Walsh**, who has served as the U.S. secretary of labor for the past two years, is stepping down from his cabinet post to become executive director of the NHL Players' Association later this month.

The U.S. Senate confirmed Walsh's appointment as labor secretary in March 2021, ending his seven-year tenure as Boston's mayor. Previously, he served for 16 years as a state representative for the

People

PEOPLE

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13th Suffolk District, which includes parts of Boston and Quincy.

As a former laborer, Walsh has extensive experience in union and labor issues. He rose through his union's ranks to become president of the Laborers Local 223 in Boston, and from 2011 to 2013 he led Boston's Building and Construction Trades Council, an umbrella organization of local construction unions.



Jon Santiago, who had served as a state representative since 2019, was sworn in as the state's first Secretary of the Executive Office of Veterans' Services on March 1.

Jon Santiago

A major in the U.S. Army Reserve and

a physician, Santiago brings military and medical experience to the role. He has served in the Army Reserve since 2013, including two overseas tours, and he started practicing emergency medicine at Boston Medical Center in 2015. He will be the first to lead veterans' services as an executive office, following a 2022 law elevating the office to the cabinet level.

In the House, Santiago represented the 9th Suffolk District, which includes parts of the city of Boston.

He has bachelor's degrees in biology and religious studies from the University of Texas at Austin, a medical degree from the Yale School of Medicine, and a master's degree in public health from the University of Washington. He previously served in the Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic.

After more than a decade serving as a state representative, **Edward Coppinger** is leaving the Legislature to become the head of government affairs for the Massachusetts Biotechnology Council, effective on March 1.

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Coppinger had represented the 10th Suffolk District, which includes parts of Brookline and Boston, since 2011.



Edward Coppinger



who served for almost three decades as Watertown's manager until his retirement in early 2022, died on Feb. 11 at age 70. Driscoll spent 45

years working

Michael Driscoll.

Until recently,

he had served as

a co-chair of the

Joint Committee

Small Businesses.

Previously, he

worked as a

loan officer.

on Community and

residential mortgage

Michael Driscoll

in Watertown, starting as the skating rink manager, a role he held from 1977 to 1985, followed by eight years as the treasurer/collector and parking clerk. In 1993, he became Watertown's town manager, and, with the town's recent transition to a city form of government, he ended his tenure as its city manager.



Robert Whynott, a longtime

public servant in Gloucester, died on Feb. 3 at age 77.

A lifelong Gloucester resident, Whynott served two terms on the City Council in the 1980s. He then served for 17 years

Robert Whynott

as city clerk until his retirement in 2009. After leaving the clerk's office, he was reelected to the council and served another three terms. He had also been a parttime deputy sheriff for the Essex County Sheriff's Department, and was a Justice of the Peace until the end of his life.

Anthony Troiano, who served in several municipalities over the course of two decades, died on Feb. 7 at age 67.



Anthony Troiano

Troiano served as town manager in Hopkinton from 2006 to 2008, after serving as the assistant town administrator in Burlington for two years. He also served for 15 years as the chief ranger and property manager

for the town of Barnstable. Since 2008, he was the president of Troiano Consulting.



John Olver, a champion of western Massachusetts on both Beacon Hill and Capitol Hill, died on Feb. 23 at age 86.

Olver represented the region for more than four decades on the state and then national level. He

became a state representative in 1969, and was elected to the state Senate in 1972, where he served for nearly two decades. He was elected to Congress in 1991 in a special election to fill the seat left vacant by the death of Rep. **Silvio Conte**, and he represented the First Congressional District until his retirement in 2013.

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.

MIIA

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submitting claims, and will also expand its risk management offerings with additional supervisory and leadership training.

"We're optimistic that 2023 will be another year of progress and expanded possibilities," Corcoran said, "as we work to build and support strong and resilient municipalities."

Jennifer Ranz is a freelance writer.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Assistant Town Clerk

Town of Scituate

The town of Scituate seeks qualified candidates for an Assistant Town Clerk position. The position maintains vital records for the Office of Town Clerk. Services the public by obtaining and providing information on vital records, marriage licenses, death and birth certificates, voter registration, and various licenses. Assists with coordination of town meetings. Attends all elections and town meetings, requiring periodic evening and night work. Supervises town meeting and election checkers/clerks, ensuring compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. May act as Acting Town Clerk in absences of Town Clerk. Experience in municipal setting preferred. Proficiency in Word and Excel required. Ability to interact in a positive and effective manner with residents is essential. Full job description available at <u>Scituatema.gov</u>. This is a 35-hour-per-week, benefited position. Salary range is \$25.92/hour to \$29.50/hour and is covered under the terms of the SEIU 888 TOSCA bargaining unit. Please submit cover letter and resume to HR@scituatema.gov.

Assistant Assessor/Assessing Specialist Town of Scituate

The town of Scituate seeks qualified candidates for an Assistant Assessor/Assessing Specialist position. Duties include property inspections, data entry, utilizing Nearmap, downloading deeds/updating ownership in CAMA system, processing exemptions, motor vehicle and boat abatements, and other work as required. Assessing/appraisal/real estate/municipal experience desired, but not required. Full job description available at <u>Scituatema.gov</u>. This position is a 35 hour per week, benefited position. Salary range is \$28.47/hour to \$32.39/hour and is covered under the terms of the SEIU 888 TOSCA bargaining unit. Please submit cover letter and resume to HR@ scituatema.gov.

Interim Town Administrator Town of Barre

The town of Barre is seeking to immediately hire a qualified professional to serve as the Interim Town Administrator until a permanent Town Administrator is chosen by the Select Board. Responsible for day-today operations of town government; administration of town policies and procedures set by the Select Board; assisting town officials with legal issues; preparation of capital planning; grant administration; contract administration; preparation of annual and special Town Meeting warrants and motions; budget preparation for accounts under the Select Board's authority; and administration of property and liability insurance policies. Also serves as Chief Procurement Officer, Parking Clerk, Right to Know Coordinator and ADA Coordinator. Applicants should have a bachelor's degree in public or business Administration and three years of related municipal experience, or equivalent combination of education/experience. The interim salary is to be determined. The position is available April 3 and is expected to last for up to three months while a permanent hire is sought. The interim may apply for the permanent position. A full job description is available upon request. Interested applicants should submit a letter of interest and resume to Sandy Hood, Administrative Assistant, shood@townofbarre.com. Position is open until filled.

For further information, please contact the Select Board's Office at 978-355-2504. EOE.

Town Planner

Town of Londonderry, New Hampshire

Job Summary: Performs and coordinates planning and zoning work within the Planning and Economic Development Department in the development of a comprehensive plan and implementation of the town's ordinances for orderly growth of the town. Provides administrative staff support to the Assistant Town Manager/Director of Economic Development, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Adjustment. The Town Planner provides staff support to the Planning Board and ZBA. See the job posting on the HR page of the town's website: <u>www.londonderrynh.gov</u>. Salary: \$75,810.03-\$99,176.61. How to apply: Send cover letter, resume and completed town application to hrdept@londonderrynh.org.

Assistant City Clerk

City of Chelsea

City Clerk's Office, annual salary range: \$69,252.45-\$86,769.76. Under the general direction of the City Clerk, this position coordinates office and staff clerical functions. Responsible for assisting in all aspects of mandates applicable to the Office of the City Clerk, including but not limited to vital statistics, voter registration, census, and filings of boards and commissions meetings. Performs highly responsible administrative/clerical functions. Possesses knowledge of basic federal, state and local elections. Five to seven years of related municipality or other state/ local government duties. Click on the link below for a full job description: www.chelseama.gov/job_ detail_T14_R47.php. The city of Chelsea is an equal opportunity employer.

Director of Public Health City of Easthampton

The city of Easthampton is searching for a Director of Public Health to oversee the city's Public Health Department. This position works to promote the city's expansive public health and harm reduction programs. It implements and enforces public health laws and regulations, ensures compliance with permits and licenses, and conducts field inspections. The Director manages the department budget and oversees the Healthy Youth Coalition, Public Health Nurse, Inspector, and Community Social Worker. Schedule: 35 hours per week, Monday to Thursday. Salary: \$64,000-\$82,000 (based on experience). To see the full position posting and apply, please visit our city website at <u>www.easthamptonma.gov</u>.

Laboratory Technician Upper Blackstone Clean Water

Qualified candidates will perform bacteriological and chemical tests and analysis and complete basic analyses in connection with wastewater treatment. Duties will include collection of wastewater samples, preparing reagents and glassware, use of laboratory instrumentation, entering laboratory results into a database or spreadsheet program, as well as assistance with industrial pretreatment activities. Requirements: An associate's degree related to environmental science or related studies is required. A bachelor's degree is preferred. Prior work in laboratory environment is required. A valid driver's license is required. This is a full-time position and some weekends and holidays are required. Upper Blackstone offers a competitive benefits package including medical, dental, vision, and 403(b) retirement plan. Employees are part of the Mass. State Retirement System. Send cover letter and resume to: Human Resources Manager hr@ ubcleanwater.org. Click here to learn more.

Laborer

Upper Blackstone Clean Water

Candidates will perform general tasks of a simple or routine nature. Duties will include performing building maintenance tasks, including but not limited to, preparing surfaces for refinishing and painting; cleaning building areas, floors, hallways, and

CLASSIFIEDS continued on 23

Classified advertising rates and information

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

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

Classified advertising rates

Classified ad rates include publication in The

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

Member rates

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

Nonmember rates

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

Beacon deadlines and publication dates

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

April Beacon

Deadline: March 27 Publication: March 31

May Beacon

Deadline: April 25 Publication: May 1

Placing an ad

You may use our convenient online form at www.mma.org/municipal-marketplace/ add-listing/.

For more information, call Amanda Brangwynne at the MMA at 617-426-7272.

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

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

CLASSIFIEDS

Continued from page 22

restrooms; washing, waxing and polishing floors; and washing windows, walls, and woodwork. Performs grounds maintenance; cuts grass, weeds and brush; trims bushes and trees; rakes grass, leaves and trash; seeds and cares for lawn and ornamental plantings. Removes snow and ice from walkways, driveways, parking areas and buildings and equipment as needed. Collects and disposes of trash. This is a full-time position. Upper Blackstone offers a competitive benefits package including medical, dental, vision, and 403(b) retirement plan. Employees are part of the Mass. State Retirement System. Send cover letter and resume to: Human Resources Manager hr@ ubcleanwater.org. <u>Click here to learn more</u>.

Wastewater Operator Upper Blackstone Clean Water

As one of New England's largest clean water treatment plants, the facility provides biological nutrient removal treatment for flows originating in the greater Worcester area and provides biosolids management using incineration for numerous Massachusetts communities. Operators will be responsible for safely and reliably operating and maintaining WWTP facility processes and equipment, including belt filter presses, multiple hearth incinerators, and a biological nutrient removal activated sludge system. Ability to perform process control laboratory analysis and work with and understand SCADA is necessary. Salary based on education level and experience, college level coursework in a related field is desirable. Holiday and weekend work is required. Must pursue work with energy and drive. Excellent potential for growth. Upper Blackstone offers a competitive benefits package including medical, dental, vision, and 403(b) retirement plan. Employees are part of the Mass. State Retirement System. Send cover letter and resume to: Human Resources Manager hr@ubcleanwater.org. Click here to learn more.

Industrial Electrician Upper Blackstone Clean Water

Skilled and committed to the inspection, maintenance repair, and rebuilding of instrumentation, electronic operating and control systems, industrial electrical systems and equipment of modern wastewater facilities. Performs work of a difficult and skilled nature. Provides detailed records of daily work activities, accident reporting, tool and equipment inventories and predictive, preventative, and corrective maintenance information to the Electrical Systems Manager. Assures security of tools and equipment used in completion of work. Coordinates health and safety concerns and policy with the Safety Officer. Interacts with plant personnel and outside vendors, suppliers, and engineers. Works inside and outside, as well as in tanks and other confined spaces. Performs maintenance work involving the inspection, calibration, troubleshooting, repair and replacement of electrical components and equipment, electronic operating and control systems, generation and power distribution systems, motor control and distribution centers, lighting systems and process instrumentation associated with operating a modern wastewater treatment facility. Performs minor mechanical work of an incidental nature during electrical repairs, adhering to safety program requirements and maintaining superior housekeeping standards. Must pursue

work with energy and drive. Possession of a valid Electrician Journeyman's license issued by the state of Massachusetts required. Must have a valid driver's license. Five years of industrial experience in electrical maintenance. Upper Blackstone offers a competitive benefits package, including medical, dental, vision, and 403(b) retirement plan. Employees are part of the Mass. State Retirement System. Send cover letter and resume to: Human Resources Manager hr@ ubcleanwater.org. Click here to learn more.

Water Technician Townsend Water Department

The Townsend Water Department is seeking qualified candidates for the position of Water Service Technician. This is a full-time position with overtime and full benefits. This is a union position (GRADE D) in the Highway/Water Union and pays \$20.32 to \$26.28, depending on qualifications and certifications. This union position is subject to collective bargaining agreements. Please forward a letter of interest with resume to the Townsend Water Department via email to water@townsendwater.org. Employment application and detailed job description are available at www.townsendma.gov. Applications will be accepted until a suitable candidate is found. The Townsend Water Department is an AA/EOE.

Mechanic Millwright

Greater Lawrence Sanitary District

This is a first shift position, M-F. Salary Range: \$26.44-\$34.79/hr. Candidate shall be mechanically inclined and have experience with the repair of industrial equipment. Reciprocating engine and heavy equipment experience is a plus. Stipends available for candidates with CDL B and/or Hoisting/Hydraulic Licenses. Please submit cover letter and resume to Ann Rader, arader@glsd.org. Candidates may also fill out an online employment application by visiting <u>GLSD.org</u>. Application deadline is March 31. EOE

Electrician

Greater Lawrence Sanitary District

This is a first shift position, M-F. Salary Range: \$31.73 - \$39.42/hr. Candidate shall possess a Mass. Journeyman's Electrical License. The chosen candidate will participate in and perform the testing, maintenance, operation, replacement, overhaul and repair of the electrical equipment of the treatment plant and associated facilities. Additional stipend available to candidates holding a Master's Electrical License. Please submit cover letter and resume to Ann Rader, arader@glsd.org. Candidates may also fill out an online employment application by visiting <u>GLSD.org</u>. Application deadline is March 31. EOE

Operator Trainee

Greater Lawrence Sanitary District

Salary Range: \$23.076-\$24.03/hr. Candidate will participate in the daily operations and maintenance of the Wastewater Treatment Facility. Must be able to obtain a Grade 4 Mass. Municipal Wastewater License within six months. Training will be provided. Please submit cover letter and resume to Ann Rader, arader@glsd.org. Candidates may also fill out an online employment application by visiting <u>GLSD.org</u>. Application deadline is March 31. EOE

Wastewater Operator

Greater Lawrence Sanitary District Salary Range: \$25-\$36.55/hr. Candidates shall possess a Grade 4 or higher Municipal Wastewater Operator License. The chosen candidate will participate in the daily operation and maintenance of the Wastewater Treatment Facility. This position has five different shifts which will be discussed during the interview process. Please submit cover letter and resume to Ann Rader, arader@glsd.org. Candidates may also fill out an online employment application by visiting <u>GLSD.org</u>. Application deadline is March 31. EOE

Skilled Laborer Town of Duxbury

Seeking a qualified and experienced candidate for our full-time, benefits eligible Skilled Laborer position within the Lands and Natural Resource Department. Must have extensive knowledge and skill in the operation of trucks, landscape equipment, and power tools. Remove and prune trees, chip debris, and perform tasks in care and maintenance of town owned lands. Must have a high school diploma, or GED, with three years of related experience, a valid driver's license and a CDL B. For a full job description and to apply, visit townofduxburyjobs.easyapply.co.

Firefighter Paramedic/EMT Town of Chatham

Come join Team Chatham as the newest member of the Chatham Fire Department! Chatham Fire is currently accepting applications for the position of Firefighter Paramedic/EMT (Paramedic preferred). Updated residency requirement includes the Cape Cod Canal to Provincetown. Position is full-time, pension/benefits eligible. Starting annual salary of \$57,893.98-\$74,474.26 and a \$7,500 signing bonus (see website for details). Chatham Fire is a communityfocused department recognized for its service-oriented endeavors. If you're seeking a fire department that prides itself on its inclusive and collaborative work environment, apply here! Chatham Fire is an equal opportunity employer. Submit application materials to jobs@chatham-ma.gov. More info at www.chatham-ma.gov. EEO/AA

Council on Aging Director Town of Freetown

The town of Freetown seeks a vibrant leader for the full-time position (36 hours/week) of Council on Aging Director. Under the overall direction of the Board of Selectmen and the COA Board, the Council on Aging Director administers and coordinates activities of the Freetown Council on Aging to ensure the development of plans, policies, and procedures necessary for the establishment and maintenance of services for Freetown's seniors; ensures that the programs and services run in accordance with town policy, legal boundaries and any contract funding service regulations. To learn more about this position/apply, visit <u>www.freetownma.gov</u> or email cover letter/

Head Administrative Clerk City of Chelsea

Position Summary: Under the direction of the Director of Public Works or designee, position is responsible for the administration of complex clerical functions in the management of permits, licenses, and public hearing requests. Collect and process payments for customer accounts. Weekly maintenance and update of payroll and personnel documentation to include employee attendance records. Coordinate, organize and maintain thorough office records to effectively meet department functions. Customer service duties. Research inquiries

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to provide thorough response and resolve issues. Click on the link below to view the full job description: <u>www.</u> <u>chelseama.gov/job_detail_T14_R54.php</u>. The city of Chelsea is an equal opportunity employer.

Town Accountant Town of Somerset

The town of Somerset seeks qualified and experienced applicants to serve as Town Accountant with an FY23 general budget of approximately \$25 million, \$7 million Water and Water Pollution Control Enterprise Fund and \$22 million school department budget. The Town Accountant is an integral part of the financial team and aids in ensuring effective, efficient municipal operations. The Town Accountant performs administrative, supervisory and technical work in monitoring, directing, and auditing the town's financial and accounting system, including computerized functions in order to maintain the fiscal records and systems of the town. Bachelor's degree in accounting or related field is required and at least three years of experience in accounting or financial management; municipal accounting experience highly desirable. Master's degree preferred, as is MCPPPO certification and Massachusetts Governmental Accounting Certificate. If not already certified, must obtain certification within three years of appointment. Required to attend annual courses offered by the Massachusetts Municipal Accountants and Auditors Association to obtain and maintain status as a certified government accountant. Thorough knowledge of Massachusetts municipal finance laws and relevant computer systems; proficient in municipal software systems. Full job description and application available at www.townofsomerset.org/town-administrator/ pages/employment-opportunities. Questions and applications should be submitted to the office of the Town Administrator at pramos@town.somerset.ma.us. Applications accepted until position is filled. The town of Somerset is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.

Senior Project Manager Town of Provincetown

The town of Provincetown is accepting applications for the full-time position of Senior Project Manager in the Department of Public Works. This full-time position is 40 hours per week. This position is responsible for managing assigned capital improvement projects and other town projects, from schematic design through occupancy, and coordinates with various town stakeholders and manages consultants and contractors to successfully complete projects and ensure alignment with the town goals. This is a Grade 12, non-union position with a scale of \$87,075 to \$113,198. The position is available immediately and will remain open until filled. For more information or to apply, please visit www.provincetown-ma.gov/6/Employment.

Community Development Admin Assistant

Town of Provincetown

The town of Provincetown is now accepting applications for the full-time position of Community Development Administrative Assistant. This fulltime position is typically 40 hours per week. This position provides direct support to the Community Development Department by assisting customers, managing the departmental phone, filing, and other administrative work in support of the building, health, licensing, planning and conservation divisions. This is a Grade 3, union position with a scale of \$51,266 to \$66,646. The position is available immediately and will remain open until filled. For more information or to apply, please see our website <u>www.provincetown-ma.</u> <u>gov/6/Employment</u>.

Treasurer/Collector Town of Norwell

Town of Norwell (AAA bond rating) seeks an experienced Treasurer/Collector who plays a central role in maintaining the town's fiscal health. Performs complex/highly responsible duties requiring a high level of independent judgment in the planning, administration and execution of the department's programs and services. Incumbent must have thorough working knowledge of various Massachusetts statutes and regulations including but not limited to treasury, tax collections, payroll, group insurance, benefits administration, retirement systems and 403B/457 investment savings plans. Must have the ability to understand and interpret MGL and skillfully apply knowledge to successfully manage each of these areas of operation with the department(s). Must have management/supervisory experience and the ability to mentor staff. Demonstrated technical proficiency in MS Office applications, payroll systems, and municipal financial software required. Applicants must have current or prior municipal experience as a Treasurer/Collector with a strong financial background and knowledge of banking and financial markets. Must qualify to be bonded for this position. Certifications as a Massachusetts Municipal Treasurer and Massachusetts Municipal Collector by the Massachusetts Collectors and Treasurers Association (MCTA) required. Visit www.townofnorwell.net under 'Employment Opportunities' for complete details. Send cover letter and resume to bchilds@ townofnorwell.net. Competitive salary commensurate with experience and qualifications. EOE/AA/ADA employer. Open until filled.

Assistant Assessor Town of Bloomfield, Connecticut

Hiring rate is \$41.82 hourly. Position has a six step hourly salary range (\$41.82 to \$52.28). Full-Time: 35 hours/week with excellent benefits. Under the direction of the Assessor, the incumbent has the responsibility to assess the valuation of personal property/inventory of commercial and industrial establishments; to inspect real estate and make appraisals of new building, building additions, and improvements according to recognized appraisal standards. Assists in maintenance of all records and documents of real estate and personal property value and ownership. Confers with property owners and provides information about laws pertaining to motor vehicle taxation, exemption for elderly citizens, and similar tax liability matters; compiles lists such as Grand List, assessments, properties, elderly homeowners, and other assessment information. Searches land records for changes in ownership. Records changes in assessment administrative documents and files for new construction or ownership of property. Minimum Qualifications: High school diploma plus three years' administrative experience, including one year in an assessment environment. Must have a Connecticut Municipal Assessor Certification and valid driver's license.

Applications and additional info found at <u>www.</u> <u>bloomfieldct.org</u> and must be submitted to HR with a resume and cover letter by March 20 or until filled. Applications accepted only by mail, email (sdaley@ bloomfieldct.org) or HR Department at Town Hall.

Environmental Planner/Conservation Agent

Town of Provincetown

The town of Provincetown is now accepting applications for the full-time position of Environmental Planner/Conservation Agent. This full-time position is typically 40 hours per week and occasional evening work is required. This position provides direct support to the Community Development Director and prepares materials, documents, and supports the Provincetown Conservation Commission. This is a Grade 12, nonunion position with a scale of \$87,075 to \$113,197. The position is available immediately and will remain open until filled. For initial consideration, send application, cover letter, and resume to: Human Resources, Town of Provincetown, 260 Commercial St., Provincetown, MA 02657 or hr@provincetown-ma. gov. For more information go to www.provincetownma.gov/6/Employment.

Deputy Finance Director/Controller Town of Bloomfield, Connecticut

Salary Range: \$87,727 to \$136,071 (expected starting pay maximum is mid-range). Full-time (35 hours), excellent benefits. As a town charter-defined position, this is a highly responsible supervisory position performing accounting and finance work. The position performs and oversees technical governmental accounting and performs administrative work in maintaining appropriate internal controls and financial records of the town. It provides administrative and technical support to the Director of Finance and manages Bloomfield's municipal accounting system, accounts payable, account receivables, payroll, and preparation of schedules for the annual audit. Assists in the development and monitoring of the annual comprehensive budget and five year community investment plan. Minimum Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance or a closely related field with over five years' increasingly responsible experience in accounting and finance, audit principles, and practices; associate's degree and seven years' experience; high school degree/GED and 10 years' experience. Plus two years' supervisory experience in a finance department. Municipal accounting and finance preferred. A CPA, CPFO or CPFM designation preferred. Applications and additional info obtained at www.bloomfieldct. org and must be submitted to HR along with a resume and cover letter by March 20 or until filled. Applications accepted only by mail, email (sdaley@ bloomfieldct.org) or at the HR Department at Town Hall

Finance Director

Town of Bloomfield, Connecticut

Salary Range: \$101,455-\$156,599 (expected starting pay maximum is mid-range). Full-time (35 hours), excellent benefits. The Director of Finance is a position established by the town charter which oversees a general fund budget of \$104 million, a \$29 million five year capital improvement plan, as well as enterprise and internal service funds. The town maintains a credit rating of AA+ with Standard & Poor's. The town's

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Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) has consistently received the GFOA's Certificate of Achievement award. Responsible for the development and monitoring of the annual comprehensive budget and five year community investment plan. Minimum Qualifications: Must possess a bachelor's degree in accounting, finance or public administration plus 10 years' experience or a master's degree in accounting, finance or public administration plus eight years' experience. Experience must be in a senior level finance position in a comparable municipal organization, including five years' supervisory experience. Special Requirements: Must have and maintain a valid Connecticut driver's license; CPA and/or CPFO preferred. Applications and additional information may be obtained on our website at <u>www.</u> bloomfieldct.org and must be submitted to Human Resources along with a resume and cover letter by March 20 or until filled. Applications accepted only by mail, email (sdaley@bloomfieldct.org) or at the HR Dept. at Town Hall.

Clerk to the Chelsea City Council City of Chelsea

The Clerk will contribute to the preparation and efficiency of the City Council meetings and ensure that overall parliamentary procedures are carried out. The Clerk will also provide advice and opinions to the city council on legislative process. Perform a variety of complex/confidential duties requiring a knowledge of organizational procedures and precedents and budgetary requirements. This position requires the ability to work independently, exercising impartial judgment, discretion and initiative. Position requires an understanding of the City Council and its members' obligations under Massachusetts general laws, the ordinances of Chelsea and rules of City Council. Click on the link: www.chelseama.gov/job_detail_T14_ R53.php. EEO

SERVICES

Municipal Energy Services

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

Workplace/Personnel Investigations

Colando Investigative Services, LLC, offers unbiased, professional, comprehensive, and confidential personnel investigations to cities and towns throughout the Commonwealth. The President of the firm is a former State Police officer with 28 years of service, who retired with the rank of Major.

Massachusetts Private Investigator License #LP1347B. Competitive rate. References upon request. Please call for more information: 617-590-3078. Please see LinkedIn profile. Member of the Licensed Private Detective Association of Massachusetts.

Athletic Courts

The Sport Court MA team would like to thank everyone who stopped by our booth at the MMA conference. Conveniently located in Andover, Mass., Sport Court MA has been the premier court surface and sports flooring expert for more than 25 years in New England. Our team has designed and installed over 3,000 indoor and outdoor courts for both commercial and residential properties. Pickleball, basketball, tennis, hockey, volleyball and much more. Visit www.sportcourtma.com. Call today for a complimentary estimate.

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 Paul DeRensis for all public law issues at 857-259-5200.

Life Insurance Solutions

Looking for life insurance solutions for your town or city employees? We know that providing peace of mind for your municipality's residents is important and so is providing peace of mind for your staff, too. At Boston Mutual Life, with more than 131 years in the insurance industry and 70-plus years providing insurance options for Massachusetts municipalities, we're familiar with you and your employees' insurance needs for life insurance, accident coverage, and more. We know that now more than ever, getting effective coverage at reasonable rates is a major factor for many employees when deciding which benefits to choose. Contact us to start finding the right solutions for your employees, or to learn more about your existing policy if your town or city is already insured with us. Our team, including our new Director of Client Relations, Nicole Girard, are here to help. Visit bostonmutual. com/solutions-massachusetts-municipal-market to connect with us today!

Creative, Cost-Effective Municipal Services

Capital Strategic Solutions (CSS) is a Massachusettsbased, woman-owned business, composed of former municipal employees. Our team of dedicated and experienced professionals provide an abundance of support services to guide municipalities through the challenges they face, allowing for continuity of services at a fraction of the cost of a full-time employee. We specialize in public administration, finance and grant management, human resources, public works and water quality, public safety, capital improvement planning, project management and oversight, emergency management and fire services, public relations/community outreach, and more. For more information, visit: Capital-Strategic-Solutions.com or call 508-690-0046.

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 <u>www.GovHRusa.com</u> 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 www.govhrjobs.com.

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

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and efficiently, and is consistent with our commitment to excellence. For additional information on the legal services that KP | Law provides, please visit <u>www.k-plaw.com</u> or contact Lauren Goldberg, Esq., at 617-556-0007, or toll-free at 800-548-3522, or at lgoldberg@k-plaw.com.

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.

Organizational Development and Conflict Resolution

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

Local photos sought

What's the signature photo of your community? Whether it's a historical site or natural resource, the MMA would personal service, diligent attention to our clients' needs, and good humor. Please contact us at contact@ miyares-harrington.com or 617-489-1600.

Tax Title Legal Services

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

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

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

Labor Counsel Services/Municipal Human Resources Specialists

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

Municipal Financial Management Services

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

Human Resources Consulting

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

Executive Recruitment and Municipal Management

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

like a copy for possible use in future editions of The Beacon or on the MMA website. Municipal officials may email photos (.jpeg format and high resolution if possible) to editor@mma.org.

Send personnel changes to the MMA

Retirements, elections, resignations and hirings bring about frequent changes in a community's personnel. Keep the MMA up-to-date with your community's personnel changes by sending an email to database@mma.org. Please include

the person's name, title, and start date. If you have any questions, contact the MMA database administrator.

Calendar

MARCH

2 Women Leading Government,

conference, 9:15 a.m.-3 p.m. Devens Common Center, Devens. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

7 **MMA webinar**, Social Media Best Practices, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Lily Rancatore at Irancatore@mma.org

9 Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources, webinar, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Jenkins

15 MMA webinar, Reframing Recruitment, 12-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Lily Rancatore at Irancatore@mma.org

17 Massachusetts Select Board Association, webinar, noon-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Jenkins

17 MMA Legislative Breakfast, Fairhaven and Tyngsborough, 8:30-10-30 a.m. Contact: MMA Project and Research Assistant Daniel Yi

22 Massachusetts Mayors' Association, monthly meeting, 9:15 a.m.-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Communications and Membership Director Candace Pierce

23 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, monthly meeting, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.,

Cyprian Keyes Golf Club, Bolyston. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

24 MMA Legislative Breakfast, Adams and Westfield, 8:30-10-30 a.m. Contact: MMA Project and Research Assistant Daniel Yi

MMA contacts

Denise Baker can be reached at dbaker@mma.org Isabelle Jenkins can be reached at ijenkins@mma.org Timmery Kuck can be reached at tkuck@mma.org Daniel Yi can be reached at dyi@mma.org



Massachusetts Municipal Association 3 Center Plaza, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02108

Note: The MMA is advising in-person meeting attendees to keep up with the latest COVID vaccines for which they are eligible. We highly recommend that attendees take an at-home rapid antigen test prior to attending, and not attend if they have any COVID symptoms or if a household member has tested positive for COVID. These protocols are subject to change based on the latest public health data and guidance.

28 MMA webinar, Coping with Conflict, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Lily Rancatore at Irancatore@ mma.org

APRIL

1 Massachusetts Select Board Association, Western and Rural Mass. Conference, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., The Delaney House, Holyoke. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Jenkins

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

Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, board meeting, 8:45-9:45 a.m., hybrid (MMA office and Zoom). Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

11 MMA Board of Directors, 10-11:15 a.m., hybrid (MMA office and Zoom). Contact: MMA Executive Director's office

Massachusetts Select Board Association, board meeting, 2:15-3:30 p.m., hybrid (MMA office and Zoom). Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Jenkins

13 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association and Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources, joint meeting, Devens Common Center, Devens. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker and MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Jenkins

Online registration is available for most of these events.

19 MMA webinar, Reframing Recruitment, 12-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Lily Rancatore at Irancatore@mma.org

26 Massachusetts Mayors' Association, monthly meeting, 9:15 a.m.-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Communications and Membership Director Candace Pierce

28 Women Elected Municipal Officials, spring symposium, virtual, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Isabelle Jenkins

29 Association of Town Finance Committees, Spring Conference, Pompositticut Community Center, Stow. Contact: MMA Senior Member Services Coordinator Denise Baker

MAY

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

9 **MMA Board of Directors**, 10-11:15 a.m., hybrid (MMA office and Zoom). Contact: MMA Executive Director's office

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.

For more information, visit www.mma.org