

Surplus surtax law has local funds

By Adrienne Núñez

Gov. Maura Healey signed a \$1.3 billion supplemental budget bill on June 24 to allocate surplus Fair Share surtax revenue from fiscal 2024 for investments in education and transportation.

The Legislature passed the compromise bill on June 18, two days after it was released by a House-Senate conference committee.

The law includes investments in cities, towns and school districts, as well as the MBTA and regional transit authorities. Highlights for cities and towns include supplemental funding for the Chapter 90 local road and bridge maintenance program, the Special Education Circuit Breaker, and regional school transportation.

Funds from the Fair Share surtax on annual incomes over \$1 million can be used only for education and transportation programs. The signed law ([H. 4227](#)) proposes \$593 million for education investments

and \$716 million for transportation.

Allocations include the following:

Municipal infrastructure

- Approximately \$103.5 million for road and bridge improvements for cities and towns, including:
 - \$80 million for supplemental funding for Chapter 90, with half distributed through the current formula and half distributed based on road miles
 - Nearly \$16.5 million for municipally owned small bridges and culverts
 - \$7 million for a pilot program to provide grants to municipalities for the repair and maintenance of unpaved roads

The law prohibits supplemental Chapter 90 funding to communities deemed to be out of compliance with the MBTA Communities Act. The law's grants for culverts and small bridges require compliance with the MBTA Communities Act and will

prioritize communities that are “taking meaningful steps to produce new housing or have adopted best practices to promote sustainable housing development as determined by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.”

Education

- \$248 million for Special Education Circuit Breaker reimbursements (\$190 million to complement funding in the fiscal 2026 state budget and \$58 million for needs in the current fiscal year, using funds from the Student Opportunity Act Trust Fund)
- \$8.1 million to support regional school transportation costs
- \$10 million for the Green School Works program
- \$25.6 million for an early literacy tutoring initiative

■ **SURTAX LAW** *continued on 34*

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Committee's transportation bond bill has \$300M for Chapter 90

By Adrienne Núñez

The Joint Committee on Transportation on July 9 released a bond bill that would authorize \$300 million for the Chapter 90 local road and bridge program for fiscal 2026, a 50% increase over previous years.

The bill ([H. 4257](#)) would distribute \$200 million based on the traditional Chapter 90 formula and \$100 million based on road miles only.

The committee's proposal is a one-year authorization, whereas the [governor had previously proposed \\$300 million per year for five years](#).

The committee's nearly \$1.2 billion borrowing bill would also authorize \$200 million for a culvert and small bridge program overseen by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, along with



The Joint Committee on Transportation has released a bond bill with \$300 million for the Chapter 90 local roads program for fiscal 2026.

\$500 million for a MassDOT bridge and pavement asset management program and \$185 million for congestion and safety initiatives.

The MMA has long been advocating for increasing the base Chapter 90 funding level, as the program's buying power has

■ **CHAPTER 90** *continued on 24*

2025 MMA Board of Directors

The MMA Board of Directors holds regular meetings, often 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.

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Executive Director's Report

In face of federal pressures, protecting local funding is critical

In the June issue, I wrote about the economic uncertainty that the Commonwealth is facing and the importance of maintaining a strong state and local partnership in the face of these challenges. Fast forward to today, and we have already seen some of that uncertainty becoming reality, with the Legislature approving a smaller budget than either branch had approved individually, and then the governor signing an even smaller budget into law after vetoes were factored in.

Within this context, the fiscal 2026 budget highlights the House and Senate's commitment to partnering with cities and towns, even as we face unfolding implications of federal policy actions. It is a strategic spending plan that offers stability to municipalities while wisely incorporating an \$800 million "cushion" between spending and revenue expectations. This is an example of responsible budgeting that properly accommodates potential uncertainty ahead, stemming from the so-called "One Big Beautiful Bill."

We are deeply concerned, however, with provisions of a supplemental budget bill recently filed by the governor that would prematurely expand the governor's Section 9C emergency budget-cutting authority to allow potential reductions of all funding provided in the recently enacted budget. Expanded authority



By Adam
Chapdelaine

to allow cuts in areas such as local aid is absolutely unnecessary at this stage, and we are strongly urging the Legislature to remove this section in its entirety.

We understand that governors may offer these types of proposals from time to time, but such a provision would directly undermine the Legislature's focused efforts

to maintain a sound financial vision for the Commonwealth. This is why we are asking the Legislature to once again reject such a preemptive proposal, and remove Section 10 from the fiscal 2026 supplemental budget bill.

As we know, cities and towns are critical partners in ensuring that the most fundamental of services are provided to residents. Municipalities rely on state support — and the stability of this support — to provide these essential services and programs. Preemptively expanding this 9C authority is unnecessary and would threaten to destabilize local budgets, which are already navigating their own direct implications of federal policy actions, all within the restrictions of Proposition 2½.

We're all acutely aware of the budgetary distress that may lie ahead, but it's critical to keep in mind that the cities and towns of the Commonwealth are the literal foundation of the quality of life

■ DIRECTOR'S REPORT *continued on 30*



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

Amid fiscal concerns, Gov. Healey signs FY26 budget

By Adrienne Núñez

Amid growing fiscal concerns, Gov. Maura Healey on July 4 signed the \$60.9 billion state spending plan for fiscal 2026 after vetoing \$130 million in planned spending, including roughly \$20 million from charter school reimbursement funding.

The final budget increased by \$3.2 billion over fiscal 2025, but is \$1 billion smaller than the proposal the governor had filed in January. The spending plan was developed during a period of uncertainty about future economic conditions, particularly as federal policy actions and spending decisions loom large. As she signed the budget, Healey announced that an executive branch hiring freeze, implemented in May, will run through the end of fiscal 2026.

The budget law includes several key investments for municipalities, including a significant boost to minimum per-pupil education aid, school transportation funding, continuance of Rural School Aid, and a 1.1% increase for Unrestricted General Government Aid.

The House and Senate took their budget votes on June 30, a day after the compromise bill (H. 4240) was released by a House-Senate conference committee. Fiscal 2026 began on July 1, and an interim budget was passed and signed to be in effect until the governor signed the full fiscal 2026 budget.

The Division of Local Services has posted [preliminary Cherry Sheet estimates](#) for each city, town and school district based on the Legislature's budget.

The [Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website](#) has details about Chapter 70 and other school finance-related initiatives.

Here's a review of key municipal budget issues:

UGGA: The budget law increases Unrestricted General Government Aid by \$14 million, a 1.1% increase over fiscal 2025. The appropriation represents a compromise between the House's proposed level-funding and the Senate's proposed 2.2% increase. This discretionary local aid account helps cities and towns deliver vital services.

Chapter 70: The budget increases Chapter 70 education aid by \$497



Massachusetts had a fiscal 2026 state budget within a few days of the start of the fiscal year.

million, continuing implementation of the funding schedules in the 2019 Student Opportunity Act while increasing minimum new aid from \$30 per student to \$150 for fiscal 2026. Three-quarters of school districts — 245 out of 318 — would benefit from the minimum aid increase.

Charter schools: The Legislature's budget included \$199 million for the charter school reimbursement account, which would have covered 100% of the state's statutory obligation to mitigate Chapter 70 losses to charter schools. The governor, however, vetoed \$19.9 million from this account, aligning with her initial budget recommendation, to accommodate "historic fluctuations in enrollment." The MMA will be asking the Legislature to override this veto.

Special Education Circuit Breaker: The Special Education Circuit Breaker is funded at \$485 million in the state budget, to go along with \$190 million from the recently signed [surplus surtax supplemental budget](#), for a total of \$675 million in fiscal 2026. These investments are expected to meet the state's obligation for this account.

School transportation: The budget includes a total of \$103.7 million for two accounts to support school transportation costs: \$53.7 million for regional school transportation, and \$50 million to support both regional school and out-of-district vocational transportation (historically funded separately through line item 7035-0007). In addition, \$8.1 million was included in the recent [surplus surtax supplemental budget](#) to support fiscal 2026 regional school transportation needs. In fiscal 2025, regional school transportation was funded at \$99.5 million, and out-of-district vocational transportation was funded at \$1 million.

Rural school aid: The budget bill funds Rural School Aid at \$12 million 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.

McKinney-Vento: Reimbursements for the transportation of homeless students under McKinney-Vento is funded at \$28.6 million for fiscal 2026. According to updated cost projections from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Legislature's proposal represents 58% of anticipated claims for fiscal 2026.

Universal school meals: The budget includes \$180 million for the Universal School Meals program, which allows all Massachusetts students to eat for free at school, regardless of household income.

Green School Works: The budget includes \$10 million to fund the Green School Works grant program, which was established in fiscal 2024 to provide financial support to public school districts to install or maintain clean energy infrastructure.

PILOT: Payments-in-lieu-of-taxes for state-owned land is funded at \$54.5 million, an increase of \$1.5 million from last year. This amount is expected to hold communities harmless from recent valuations.

Policy provisions

The budget includes outside sections with the following policy provisions:

Chapter 70 local contribution study: The budget law directs the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to study the formula for determining a municipality's required local contribution under Chapter 70. A report is due by June 30, 2026.

Disaster relief: The budget law directs the state comptroller to transfer \$14 million from any consolidated net budget surplus from fiscal 2025 to the state's Disaster Relief and Resiliency Fund. The MMA strongly advocated for the creation of this fund, which will support rapid-response efforts by cities and towns as they incur emergency response costs from extreme weather.

■ **FY26 BUDGET** *continued on 35*

Gov.'s bill seeks to expand Section 9C authority

By Adrienne Núñez

As Gov. Maura Healey signed the [fiscal 2026 state budget](#) into law on July 4, and vetoed \$130 million in spending, she also filed a fiscal 2026 supplemental budget bill that she described as a “companion” to the state budget.

The bill ([H. 4251](#)) would appropriate \$100 million for a flexible reserve and transfer \$30 million to the Housing Preservation and Stabilization Trust Fund — both intended to provide flexibility to respond to potential federal policy implications.

The bill also includes a proposal that would expand the [governor's budget-cutting authority under Section 9C](#), to allow her to make emergency midyear budget cuts in areas beyond

the executive branch. This expanded authority would be authorized if fiscal 2026 revenues are at least \$400 million under consensus revenue benchmarks, or if federal policy changes result in a negative impact of \$400 million or more on the fiscal 2026 budget.

The MMA is raising concerns about this provision, since it could put local aid at risk, and [is opposing its inclusion in the bill](#).

[Section 9C of Chapter 29](#), a state law dealing with deficiencies in state revenue, authorizes the governor to make cuts to the state budget to bring into balance — commonly referred to as “9C authority” — but limits this power to executive branch agencies; it does not allow cuts to local aid, the courts, the

Legislature, or constitutional offices.

The governor's bill also proposes:

- Authority to make midyear Group Insurance Commission health insurance plan changes to limit coverage of GLP-1 drugs
- Line-item transferability that would allow the administration to transfer funding between line items for one year, capped at 5% of the amount appropriated in each line item
- Limited authority to move a portion of Massachusetts Department of Transportation employee salaries into the capital budget

H. 4251 has been referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means. ●

Planning is underway for MMA's Connect 351 conference in January

By Owen Page

The MMA staff is hard at work planning [Connect 351](#), the MMA's annual conference, which will return to Boston's Seaport District, at the newly renamed Menino Convention and Exhibition Center, on Jan. 22 through 24.

As always, the conference will feature a range of timely and informative workshops, inspiring speakers, countless networking opportunities, membership business meetings, receptions, awards programs and other activities.

The process is now open for booking booths at the [Trade Show](#), where more than 250 companies, nonprofits, and government agencies will be showcasing the latest products and services of interest to the cities and towns of Massachusetts. Sponsorship opportunities are open as well.

And nominations are now being accepted for the MMA's [Municipal Innovation](#), [Municipal Website](#), and [Town Report Contest](#) awards, which will be presented during Connect 351. The application deadline is Friday, Oct. 31.

The 2026 conference will open on the afternoon of Thursday, Jan. 22, with the Trade Show and two sessions for professional development and career networking. The Trade Show and [Headshot Station](#) for members will open at 2 p.m.

The Trade Show and conference



MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine addresses the Connect 351 audience in Boston this past January. The MMA is planning the next conference, to be held Jan. 22-24.

programming will continue all day on Friday, Jan. 23, with a keynote speaker, workshops, the annual Women Elected Municipal Officials Luncheon, and other events.

Saturday will open with a keynote speaker, followed by member business meetings, the MMA Annual Business Meeting, and workshops, with the conference concluding at 3:30 p.m.

The MMA continues to develop the program, and updates will be posted on [www.mma.org](#) in the coming weeks and months, including information about accommodations.

The MMA is accepting suggestions for workshop topics using a convenient [online form](#).

Registration for Connect 351 will open on Oct. 1.

On July 12, the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center was renamed as the [Menino Convention and Exhibition Center](#) in honor of the longtime mayor of Boston.

Trade Show

The Trade Show will be open on Thursday, Jan. 22, from 2 to 5:30 p.m., and on Friday, Jan. 23, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. An opening reception will be held on Thursday from 4 to 5:30 p.m. The Trade Show will not be open on Saturday, Jan. 24.

The [Trade Show web page](#) has details, including sponsorship opportunities, the contract for exhibit space, a new exhibit hall floor plan, and the list of exhibitors and sponsors from the 2025 event. The MMA will update the online floor plan as exhibit contracts are received, and sponsors and exhibitors will be updated continually on the event website.

If you know of a company that would be interested in sponsoring or exhibiting but is not currently listed, contact the MMA's new events and development coordinator, Stacey Compton-Maga, at [tradeshow@mma.org](#) or 617-426-7272, ext. 154. ●

Gov. Healey files \$2.9B, 5-year environmental bond bill

By Josie Ahlberg

The Healey-Driscoll administration joined partners, advocates and municipal officials in Braintree on June 24 to announce the filing of a \$2.9 billion, five-year environmental bond bill, called the Mass Ready Act.

The proposal includes authorizations for key climate, resilience and environmental priorities. Themes include strengthening infrastructure, investing in farms and local economies, protecting water and the environment, reforming permitting for housing and environmental initiatives, and supporting the western and central regions of the state.

The bill includes the following authorizations of interest to cities and towns:

- \$315 million for the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program, along with programmatic changes that would expand the list of eligible applicants, allow nonprofit organizations to apply for and hold grant funds, and expand the scope of funds to allow municipalities and others to appoint and retain sustainability and climate coordinators
- \$308 million to tackle high-risk dams, address inland flood control systems, and improve coastal and marine infrastructure to advance the state's hazard mitigation and climate change



MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine speaks during a press event held on June 24 in Braintree to announce the filing of a \$2.9 billion, five-year environmental bond bill, called the Mass Ready Act.

adaptation plans

- \$120 million to address contamination of public water supplies, private wells, and disposal sites by a group of chemicals known as PFAS
- \$93.5 million to help manage municipal and publicly owned dams, and to further support inland flood control infrastructure and nature-based solutions
- \$28.1 million to assess solid waste facilities and to support composting, recycling and waste reduction programs
- \$30 million for forestry and tree planting programs

The bill would create a new Resilience Revolving Fund, within the Clean Water Trust, to provide low-interest loans to cities and towns, as well as water and wastewater utilities, for climate-resilient infrastructure projects. Eligible projects could include stormwater management, floodplain protection, and nature-based solutions.

The administration estimates that every dollar invested as a result of the bill will save Massachusetts \$13 in future costs.

The most recent environmental bond law, [signed in 2018](#), came in at \$2.4 billion, including \$75 million for the MVP program.

In a letter to the administration in January, the MMA [outlined initial environmental bond bill priorities](#) for cities and towns. In a [press release about the filing of the governor's bill](#), MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine said the bill will "enable and empower municipalities to take action, prepare their communities, and respond to climate change impacts that most directly threaten their local environments and infrastructure."

A legislative hearing on the bond bill is expected in the near future.

For more information, visit the [Mass Ready Act website](#). ●

House passes Cannabis Control Commission reform bill

By Ali DiMatteo

The House has passed a bill that would overhaul the structure of the Cannabis Control Commission and make changes to the regulation of cannabis.

The bill ([H. 4187](#)), approved unanimously on June 4, would change the CCC's structure from a five-member commission appointed by the governor, attorney general and treasurer to a three-member commission appointed solely by the governor.

The bill would change some regulations around cannabis licenses and sales, including increasing the license cap, increasing the number of dispensaries a single owner can own from three to six, and changing the definition of "owner." Under the current law, a person or entity with equity of 10% or more is considered an owner, while the House

bill would increase that threshold to 35%, allowing smaller investments to avoid the "owner" label.

The House bill would also eliminate the "vertical integration requirement" — a rule requiring medical marijuana licensees to both grow and process the product they sell.

Additionally, new medical marijuana licenses would be reserved for social equity businesses for three years.

The House bill would regulate consumable CBD products and tax them at a 5.35% rate, on top of the state sales tax of 6.25%. Hemp-derived THC beverages would also face strict regulation, including a maximum THC limit per container and an additional \$4.05/gallon excise tax, but these products would be exempt from the state sales tax. The CCC would be required to maintain a list

of registered hemp beverage products and consumable CBD products.

Last June, Inspector General Geoffrey Shapiro called for the Legislature to appoint a receiver to manage the CCC after conducting a review of the commission. In March, an audit conducted by Shapiro's office found the CCC failed to collect more than \$500,000 in prorated license fees and up to \$1.2 million in provisional licensing fees from 2022-2024.

The state's [cannabis law was most recently changed](#) in 2022.

Recreational marijuana became legal in Massachusetts as a result of a ballot question passed in November 2016.

The House bill now heads to the Senate. ●

Housing and Livable Communities holds office hours

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities is continuing its series of office hours to support municipal planners and building officials in understanding the state's new accessory dwelling unit law and regulations, which became fully effective on Feb. 2.

The office hours kicked off on June 11 and have been held on June 25 and July 9. Additional sessions are scheduled for Aug. 13, Sept. 10, Oct. 8 and Nov. 12, from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities has added building officials and staff to the intended audience, which includes municipal planners, volunteer planning board members, consultants, and regional planning agency staff — but not the



The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities is hosting monthly office hours through November to assist municipal planners in navigating the state's new accessory dwelling unit law and regulations.

general public.

Under last year's [Affordable Homes Act](#), ADUs of up to 900 square feet are allowed by right in single-family zoning districts across Massachusetts. The

Healey-Driscoll administration highlights the ADU option as providing a key resource to address the state's housing needs.

The ADU office hours, held on the second Wednesday of the month via Zoom, provide an opportunity to engage with the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities and ask questions about the new regulations.

[Advance registration is required.](#)

Municipal officials are encouraged to check the state website, at www.mass.gov/adu, for continually updated information and resources on the law and regulations, such as [FAQs](#), and [Model ADU Zoning](#), to help cities and towns evaluate and amend their local ADU rules. ●

Court blocks immigration conditions on transportation funds

By Dave Koffman

A federal district court issued a preliminary injunction on June 19 preventing the U.S. Department of Transportation from making immigration enforcement a condition for receipt of federal transportation funding.

The [preliminary injunction](#), issued by the U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island in the case California v. U.S. DOT, protects funding for the 20 states that brought the suit, including Massachusetts, as well as the local governments in those states.

The suit came in response to a "Follow the Law" [letter](#) (commonly referred to as the "Duffy Directive") from the USDOT in April indicating that states and jurisdictions could lose federal funds for roads, bridges and other infrastructure

projects if they defy Trump administration directives, including immigration enforcement efforts.

The states' [lawsuit](#), filed last month, alleges that the conditions are beyond the USDOT's legal authority.

For the plaintiff states, and their municipalities, the injunction prohibits the USDOT from:

- Implementing or enforcing the Immigration Enforcement Condition as set forth in the Duffy Directive
- Withholding or terminating federal funding based on the Immigration Enforcement Condition as set forth in the Duffy Directive, absent specific statutory authorization
- Taking adverse action against any state entity or local jurisdiction, including



A federal court injunction on June 19 protects transportation funding for the 20 states that filed suit to maintain the funds, including Massachusetts, as well as the local governments in those states.

barring it from receiving or making it ineligible for federal funding, based on the Immigration Enforcement Condition ●



Sen. Rodrigues addresses graduates

Sen. Michael Rodrigues, chair of the Massachusetts State Senate Committee on Ways and Means, addresses graduates from the 24th class of the MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program on June 10 in Boston. Rodrigues discussed the importance of collaboration and the state-municipal partnership. For more on the MMA-Suffolk graduations, see story on page 18.

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.

Suit challenges termination of grant funding to states

A coalition of 22 state attorneys general, including Andrea Joy Campbell of Massachusetts, filed a lawsuit on June 26 challenging the Trump administration's "unlawful" attempts to invoke a single provision in federal regulations, known as the "agency priorities clause," to strip away billions of dollars in federal grant funding for states and other grantees.

The [lawsuit](#) seeks to limit the Trump administration's use of this regulation to "indiscriminately and illegally terminate critical funding" for combating violent crime, educating students, protecting clean drinking water, conducting life-saving medical and scientific research, safeguarding public health, addressing food insecurity, and more.

In a prepared statement, Campbell said, "Congress controls the power of the purse and appropriates funds to ensure states have adequate resources to protect our residents' safety and health while growing our economies."

She said the lawsuit "seeks broad and forward-looking relief to stop this administration's ... unlawful funding cuts."

Since Jan. 20, at the direction of President Trump and the Department of Government Efficiency, federal agencies have stripped away thousands of grants that had been awarded to states and other grantees.

The Trump administration slashed the federal funding by invoking a single clause in the federal regulations of the Office of Management and Budget, which [provides](#) that agencies may terminate an award of federal funding if it "no longer effectuates ... agency priorities." Those five words have formed the basis for much of the Trump administration's campaign to terminate funding authorized by Congress and awarded to states.

In Massachusetts, Campbell said, the Trump administration has cut off funding for programs that serve vulnerable communities. For example, the U.S. Department of Agriculture terminated an \$11 million cooperative agreement with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, which had supported 31 projects connecting nearly 500 local farmers and producers to more than 700 food distribution sites statewide, providing fresh, healthy food to residents across the state. And the U.S.



Andrea Joy Campbell

Environmental Protection Agency terminated a \$1 million grant awarded to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to reduce asthma triggers in low-income communities in Springfield, Holyoke and Chicopee —

areas with high rates of asthma due to aging housing stock. Both terminations cited the administration's claim that these programs no longer aligned with shifting agency priorities.

The lawsuit alleges that the Trump administration's use of the single regulation — the "agency priorities clause" — as a basis for slashing funding to states is a dramatic departure from past practice. Previously, federal agencies had not terminated grants "merely because the agency's priorities shifted midway during the use of the grant."

Under President Trump, the lawsuit says, federal agencies have "claimed unfettered authority to terminate grants" with no advance notice. In February, President Trump issued an executive order formally directing agencies — and the DOGE employees assigned to those agencies — to terminate grants en masse. And federal agencies have carried out that directive by invoking the regulation as grounds

for terminating entire programs based on a purported shift in agency priorities, without notice to the states and in conflict with the federal statutes appropriating funding for the programs.

The lawsuit states that the agency priorities clause does not authorize federal agencies to terminate grants based on changes in agency preferences that occur after a grant is awarded. The lawsuit also notes the importance of obtaining clarity regarding the scope of the regulation, as states collectively accept hundreds of billions of dollars a year that are at risk of termination pursuant to the regulation.

The coalition filed the suit in the District of Massachusetts, seeking a declaratory judgment that the OMB regulation and defendants' regulations do not independently authorize the Trump administration to terminate funding based on agency priorities that were identified after the grant was awarded. The coalition is also seeking to vacate the Trump administration's decision to invoke the regulation as grounds for terminating billions of dollars of federal funding based on purported changes in agency priorities.

In addition to Campbell, the coalition filing the lawsuit includes the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Nevada, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wisconsin. ●



MMA gets workforce update

Rep. Paul McMurtry, co-chair of the Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development, speaks with municipal leaders during a June 17 meeting of the MMA Policy Committee on Personnel and Labor Relations at the MMA office in Boston. McMurtry discussed top municipal issues for the current legislative session.

Guidance affirms legality of environmental justice

A coalition of 13 state attorneys general, including Andrea Joy Campbell of Massachusetts, [issued guidance](#) on June 25 affirming the “necessity and legality” of environmental justice initiatives.

In the face of federal administration efforts to brand environmental justice activities as illegal, the guidance says public and private entities can still lawfully engage in environmental justice work to ensure a healthy environment for all.

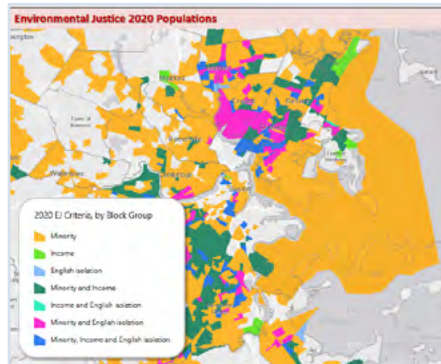
In a prepared statement, Campbell said recent statements from Washington have “no impact on the law.”

“As we try to remediate the longstanding and disproportionate environmental burdens faced by the many communities with environmental justice concerns,” she said, “it is critical that we do everything in our power to advance equity and support communities to participate in decision-making processes that directly impact their lives.”

The guidance states that environmental justice, which has its roots in the country’s civil, economic, labor, and immigrants’ rights movements, aims to ensure that every person has equal access to clean air; clean water; safe and healthy food; a healthy, sustainable, and stable environment; and protection from the impacts of climate change.

Campbell said environmental justice principles and practices “remain both necessary and urgent.”

Campbell said evidence-based studies



The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs web portal includes a data set and GIS maps that identify environmental justice populations across the Commonwealth using 2020 U.S. Census data overlaid with three demographic criteria.

and lived experience demonstrate that communities of color, indigenous people and tribal nations, low-income, rural, and unincorporated communities, people with disabilities, and non-English speaking communities routinely face disproportionate environmental and health burdens. Examples include lead poisoning and pollution-related asthma in children, the presence of waste dumping and contaminated sites, excessive car and truck traffic, and extreme temperatures, flooding and wildfires. She added that climate change is worsening these environmental dangers.

Environmental justice initiatives aim to overcome this division, developing solutions to persistent harms and advancing

public health, safety, well-being, and prosperity across communities.

The Trump administration has issued executive orders and memoranda attempting to undermine environmental justice, a longstanding federal policy. The administration has terminated environmental and climate justice programs and grants; discontinued environmental enforcement actions; and called for legal challenges to state environmental justice and climate laws.

A president, however, cannot change or dismantle laws passed by Congress, according to the guidance from the attorneys general, nor can executive orders or agency memoranda change protections afforded by the U.S. Constitution and other federal and state laws. In fact, civil rights and environmental laws support public and private efforts to advance environmental justice, as does the U.S. Constitution.

The guidance is directed to national, state, tribal, and local governments, non-profit and charitable entities, businesses, and neighborhood-based groups that are engaging in efforts to restore and protect environmental and public health.

Joining Campbell in issuing the guidance, which she co-led with the attorneys general of California and New York, are the attorneys general of Arizona, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Oregon. ●

AGO issues Dover Amendment guidance

The Attorney General’s Office issued guidance on July 10 on the regulation of religious and educational uses of land under the Dover Amendment (M.G.L. Ch. 40A, Sec. 3).

For over 50 years, Massachusetts law has exempted educational and religious uses of land from certain local zoning regulations through the so-called Dover Amendment. The statutory exemption

is just one sentence long, but it has been given shape by dozens of court decisions applying it to a variety of real-life situations across the state.

The AG’s guidance summarizes the law of the Dover Amendment as expressed through that case law. It is intended to help municipalities, developers and residents to understand the types of land use that are exempted from local zoning

requirements under the religious and educational use provision of the Dover Amendment and the practical implications of these exemptions.

The Attorney General’s Office will be making related materials, such as FAQs and one-page flyers, available soon on its website.

• [Download the AG’s Dover Amendment guidance \(PDF\)](#)

MMA to hold health care costs forum on Sept. 30

The MMA will hold a half-day municipal forum to discuss health care and insurance costs on Sept 30 in Wrentham.

The forum will feature experts in the field on the following topics:

- The Massachusetts health care cost landscape
- A panel discussion on health care costs
- The current legal landscape relative to municipal health insurance

The free, in-person event will be held at [Lake Pearl](#). The full agenda will be shared in the coming weeks on www.mma.org. ●

Mass. mayors, other officials issue statement on ICE

By John Ouellette

Reacting to federal immigration enforcement actions in their communities, leaders from 13 cities and one town issued a joint statement on June 13 calling on the U.S. Attorney's Office to investigate the activity of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The mayors and municipal managers, including Michelle Wu of Boston and Joseph Petty of Worcester, said enforcement actions are having the effect of "jeopardizing public safety," and they're asking the U.S. Attorney's Office to look into constitutional violations and to ensure that ICE "makes public their policies regarding how individuals are targeted, due process, and use of force."

"ICE has stated that they are prioritizing the removal of people who pose a threat to public safety," the statement says. "However, increasingly, ICE is arresting bystanders with no criminal record and removing so-called 'collaterals' without regard to the impact on our communities."

The statement alleges examples including the following:

- ICE agents have detained residents because they looked like someone who could or "should" be detained, raising questions of whether ICE is engaging in racial profiling.
- ICE comes into communities at times without notice, detains individuals, and then sends them to another jurisdiction without providing any information.
- ICE agents are breaking into vehicles without a judicial warrant.

"Our residents are impacted deeply by these actions," the statement says. "Families are frightened to leave their homes to go to school, medical appointments, workplaces, or church. These actions are fomenting distrust between residents and local law enforcement officials, which further erodes public safety and destabilizes our communities."

"These actions and some accompanying statements conflating all immigrants with violent criminals stigmatize an entire group of people based on ethnicity, race, or origin, putting them and others at increasing risk of harm or possibly the violation of their rights."



Municipal leaders allege that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement activities are creating distrust between residents and law enforcement, eroding public safety, and destabilizing communities.

The local leaders say ICE actions are leading to an increase in demonstrations and protests in communities, and urge the public to "peacefully exercise their freedom of speech and to respect the role of law enforcement in maintaining public order."

In addition to Wu and Perry, the statement was signed by City Manager Yi-An Huang of Cambridge, City Manager Fidel Maltez of Chelsea, Mayor Carlo DeMaria of Everett, Mayor Jared Nicholson of Lynn, Mayor Gary Christenson of Malden, Mayor Breanna Lungo-Koehn of Medford, Mayor Jen Grigoraitis of Melrose, Mayor Ruthanne Fuller of Newton, Mayor Patrick Keefe of Revere, Mayor Dominick Pangallo of Salem, Mayor Katjana Ballantyne of Somerville, and Brookline Town Administrator Charles Carey.

The sentiments of the joint statement have been echoed in other communities, such as this [official statement from the Select Board in Falmouth](#).



Also on June 13, Mayor Wu formally filed a public records request, under the federal Freedom of Information Act, asking for detailed information on ICE arrests and tactics in the city. At a press conference, Wu said she's urging the federal government to be more transparent about how it is conducting immigration enforcement in Boston.

Wu also signed an executive order outlining the city's plan to regularly submit public records requests about immigration enforcement and its intent to make "Know Your Rights" information available to all Boston residents.

The public records request asks the federal government to share a range of documents related to immigration enforcement activity in Boston, including arrest and deportation warrants; immigration detainer and apprehension documents; the basis for all immigration enforcement actions; the name of all people arrested or detained by ICE; and the detention location and any transfers of people ICE takes into custody.

The [Boston Globe reports](#) that ICE and other federal agencies made more than 1,400 arrests in Massachusetts in the month of May alone — more than any other month on record in the state. The [Globe website features a map](#) showing where ICE arrests have taken place since January of this year. In addition to greater Boston and other urban communities, ICE activity has been documented in places including Great Barrington, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, Acton, Plymouth, Abington and Newburyport. ●

Managers discuss recruitment

Caitlyn Julius, assistant human resources director in Springfield, speaks during the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association's Mini Boot Camp on June 12 in Charlton. Julius focused on employee recruitment and engagement and on some of the innovative ways Springfield conducts outreach, including broadcast and social media campaigns. Other panelists included Barnstable Town Manager Mark Ells and Tyngsborough Town Manager Colin Loisel.

'Andover At Work' exhibit focuses on municipal staff

By Owen Page

A building inspector walks through a job site, his right arm raised to shine a light on the exposed wall beams. A planner, seated at his desk, aligns an architectural ruler atop a site plan. A police officer holds out her hands, with a duckling's beak and eyes peering over her cupped fingers.

These are just a few of the 130 black-and-white images that comprise photographer David Whitney's "[Andover at Work](#)" exhibit, the culmination of a year-long volunteer project highlighting the daily work of municipal employees in Andover. The candid, in-the-field photos capture the essence of public service at the local level.

Whitney spent 15 months photographing town staff — riding along in police cruisers and firetrucks, touring the town's water facilities, and accompanying conservation staff to gather trash collection buoys on the Merrimack River.

"I ended up embedding in various departments and visited repeatedly, which allowed me to get deeper connections and build credibility," he said.

Whitney said his interest in photographing town employees grew out of his participation in the Andover Leadership Academy in the fall of 2023.

"I saw some of the behind the scenes, got to see a cross-section of the workers," Whitney said. "And a lot of things I didn't know."

A hobbyist photographer, Whitney saw an artistic opportunity to recognize those workers.

"I wanted to show what the job was," he said, "and give some insight into the person who was doing the job."

He discussed the proposed project with town staff responsible for the Leadership Academy. They pitched it to Andover Town Manager Andrew Flanagan, who saw it as an asset for Andover's employee engagement efforts — working to find ways to "tie people at all levels of the organizations to the overall goals, values and mission of the town."

"David came in with his proposal and we're like, 'What better way to engage folks?'" Flanagan said. "Not only engage, but recognize them for their work."

"Andover At Work," he added, is an opportunity to "see people in action from the public-facing side, and then employees, who may not otherwise get recognized regularly, have the opportunity to be recognized in a very public way."

Flanagan met with department heads to discuss the project, at one point introducing Whitney to the town's senior management team during a meeting before giving it the green light.

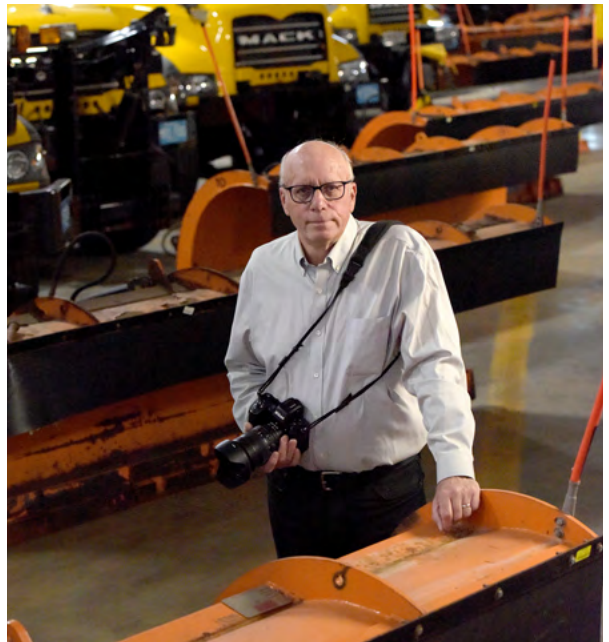
Whitney's first stop, in March 2024, was the Robb Senior Center, before moving to photograph the Public Works Department. From there, the project gained momentum.

Whitney compiled his photographs into books by department, and would then show each department the photos of themselves. He used these books to explain the project to departments he had not yet photographed.

Whitney's images graced the cover of the town's fiscal 2026 budget book, and some departments have displayed large prints within their workspaces. The town is considering other ways to incorporate the images into public spaces.

The "Andover At Work" exhibit includes a poster detailing the town's services by numbers. Whitney, who works in data analysis, described the exhibit "as an educational tool, through photos and these numbers, which are publicly available but no one ever sees [them]."

Flanagan suggested that municipalities "find an avenue to work through" when considering participation in projects like "Andover at Work," which has contributed to ongoing efforts to underscore how



Photographer David Whitney spent 15 months photographing Andover's municipal employees. (Photo courtesy Tim Jean)



A David Whitney photo depicts an Andover Facilities Department employee working to repair a furnace.

"investing in people has a return in the form of service delivery."

[The exhibition](#) will be on display at the Robb Senior Center through July 31 and will reopen in September 2025 at the Memorial Hall Library in Andover. ●

U.S. DOE withholds \$108M in K-12 funding for Mass.

By John Ouellette

In notices to grantees on June 30, the U.S. Department of Education said it is withholding a total of \$6.2 billion in K-12 federal education funds that were expected to be available to states and local schools across the country on July 1.

The department said certain federal education grants would not be issuing award notifications on July 1, as the programs are “under review” to make sure they align with President Trump’s priorities.

The extended withholding of funds, called impoundment, is expected to impact summer and afterschool programs, teacher training initiatives, education for migrant students, behavioral and mental health supports, bullying prevention and intervention, chronic absenteeism programs, classroom material and supply purchases, and more.

The funding had been approved by Congress.

In a prepared statement on July 7, the Healey-Driscoll administration condemned the federal action, which results in a loss of \$108 million for Massachusetts schools.

“Every day that goes by without this education funding hurts children, educators, communities and our economy,”



Massachusetts schools stand to lose \$108 million in aid as a result of a U.S. Department of Education decision to withhold funding.

The Department of Education said certain federal education grants would not be issuing award notifications on July 1, as the programs are “under review” to make sure they align with President Trump’s priorities.

Gov. Maura Healey said. “Without this funding, districts are going to be forced to lay off staff, delay or cancel programs

and services, and disrupt learning. Our schools were promised this funding, and the Trump administration needs to deliver it.”

The grants include:

- Title I-C, which provides educational support for children of [migratory agricultural workers and fishers](#)
- Title II-A, which provides [supplemental resources to school districts to support excellent teaching and leading](#)
- Title III-A, which supports [English learners](#)
- Title IV-A, which supports [high-quality educational experiences for students](#)
- Title IV-B, which supports out-of-school [21st Century Community Learning Centers](#)

In separate correspondence, the Education Department said it is withholding funds for the Integrated English Language and Civics Education programs, as well as the Adult Basic Education Grants to States program.

The Healey-Driscoll administration’s statement included remarks from numerous legislators and public education leaders and stakeholders condemning the impoundment. ●

MMA introduces enhanced classified ads service

By Owen Page

The MMA has unveiled new features for its popular Municipal Career Opportunities service and a new, streamlined classified ad rate structure.

The changes enable job seekers to filter the available ads by geographic region and by local government operational area (e.g., Human Resources, Finance, Public Works, etc.), in order to enhance overall utility for both prospective employers and employees. The search function also remains, for users who prefer using that method.

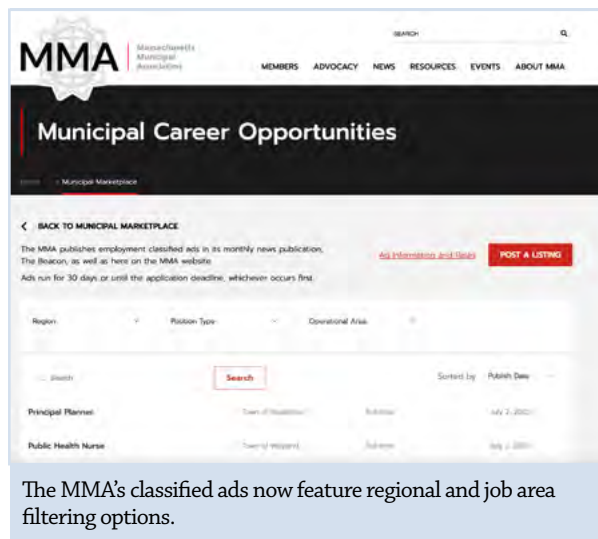
Each job listing now includes a map feature that shows where the advertiser is located, as well as a link to the community’s profile.

A [new ad placement form](#) incorporates the advertiser’s region as well as the list

of eight job categories to choose from. Advertisers may also select whether a position is part-time, full-time, an internship, contractor or per diem.

Advertising rates, for both MMA members and nonmembers, are determined by whether an ad is over or under 200 words, greatly simplifying the rate structure. The MMA’s advertising rates had not been adjusted since 2018. ([Click here for details.](#))

Questions can be directed to MMA Communications Coordinator Owen Page at opage@mma, org or 617-426-7272, ext. 135. ●



MMA Webinars

Financial policies

The MMA hosted a webinar with the Division of Local Services on June 3 on developing financial policies.

“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail,” said Sean Cronin, senior deputy commissioner at the DLS, to begin the session.

Financial policies are at the core of financial planning to promote long-term financial stability as well as fiscal transparency.

Theo Kalivas, project manager with the DLS’s Financial Management Resource Bureau, discussed what his bureau has identified as core policies, such as capital planning and financial reserves.

“Sound financial policies can help us prepare for the unexpected by defining parameters for budget decisions, including the budget process, capital planning debt, long-term investments, and adding a layer of strategic planning for budget preparers to build from.”

Kalivas reviewed the anatomy of a policy, offering templates, questions to consider when drafting a policy, and advice.

The Financial Management Resource Bureau has published policy manuals on its website that municipalities can download and use as templates.

Webster Finance Committee Member Kaitlin Morin,

Creative economy

Using case studies from local communities, an MMA webinar on June 11 explored how to transform surplus municipal buildings into creative economy and artist spaces.

Jay Paget, program director of the Mass Cultural Council’s [Cultural Facilities Fund](#), led a conversation with representatives from three municipalities about their projects:

- Harwich Cultural Affairs Director Kara Mewhinney ([The 204 Cultural Arts Municipal Building](#) in Harwich)
- [CitySpace](#) President Burns Maxey (Easthampton)
- [Mother Brook Arts and Community Center](#) Executive Director Erin Becker and former Select Board Member Paul Reynolds (Dedham)

In these municipalities, surplus school buildings or former town halls were adapted into community buildings focused on arts and creativity.

These initiatives aim to “revitalize the historic property through the activation of space by really lifting up the arts,” Maxey said.

Panelists discussed the process, including the redevelopment decision, timelines, operating costs, and other issues. Paget emphasized the essential role that municipalities played in these projects, “whether they end up operating it, like Kara does in Harwich, or whether they incentivize the 501(c)(3) [nonprofit] to be formed.”

The session offered tips for effective risk management when adapting vacant buildings, including insurance considerations.



Local and state officials discuss developing financial policies during a recent webinar that the MMA hosted with the Division of Local Services. Speakers included, clockwise from top left, Webster Finance Committee Member Kaitlin Morin; Theo Kalivas, project manager with the DLS’s Financial Management Resource Bureau; and Sean Cronin, senior deputy commissioner at DLS.

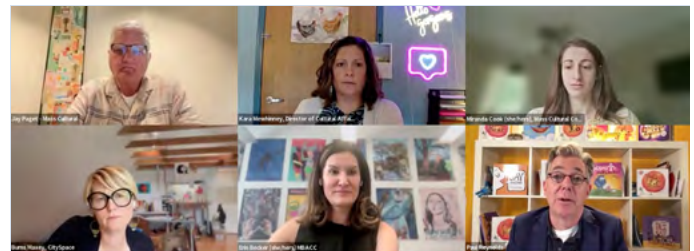
Date: June 3

Length: 75 minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR ↗](#)

who’s also a director with the Association of Town Finance Committees, moderated 30 minutes of questions and answers, addressing inquiries regarding Financial Management Resource Bureau reviews, free cash, and overlay reserves.

– *Kristianna Lapierre*



Panelists discuss transforming surplus municipal buildings into creative economy and artist spaces during an MMA webinar. Speakers included, top row, left to right, Mass Cultural Council Program Director Jay Paget; Harwich Cultural Affairs Director Kara Mewhinney; Miranda Cook, program officer of the Cultural Facilities Fund; and bottom row, left to right, CitySpace President Burns Maxey (Easthampton); Erin Becker, executive director, Mother Brook Arts and Community Center; and former Dedham Select Board member Paul Reynolds.

Date: June 11

Length: 75 minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR ↗](#)

Attendees are eligible to receive 1.25 hours of AICP Continuing Education credits with the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Planning Association.

Miranda Cook, program officer of the Cultural Facilities Fund, moderated 25 minutes of questions and answers, addressing inquiries regarding funding opportunities, adapting buildings designated as historic, and accessibility.

– *Kristianna Lapierre*

MMA Webinars

Mental health in the workplace

An MMA webinar on June 18 discussed understanding and supporting mental health in the workplace.

Jon Mattleman, a retired municipal employee and mental health consultant, offered attendees the tools necessary to identify their own mental health challenges in order to better support themselves, colleagues, and community members.

Three-quarters of U.S. workers reported at least one symptom of a mental health condition in the past year, according to MindShare Partners' Mental Health at Work Report. Mattleman wants to break down barriers, such as shame and stigma, that prevent many individuals from accessing support and speaking about their mental health.

Mattleman shared physical and emotional signs of anxiety and depression among individuals, as well as best practices for how to support someone who may be struggling.

He discussed suicide warning signs, and specific conversation starters that can be used to broach the subject with someone who may need support. "Tell me more," he said, are three simple words that can open up communication and help move someone toward getting assistance.

Private roads

An MMA webinar on July 15 gave an overview of private roadways and related issues, providing information municipal officials need to navigate community conversations.

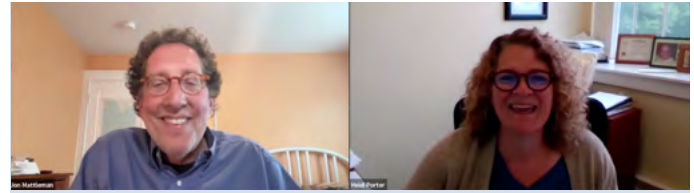
Karis North, an attorney with Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehan, provided legal context, covering state laws regarding betterments (Ch. 80, Sec. 1), street acceptance (Ch. 41, Sec. 811), temporary repairs on private ways (Ch. 40, Sec. 6N), and optional snow and ice removal (Ch. 40, Sec. 6C).

Richard Benevento, chair of the Parking and Traffic Commission in Beverly and chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals in Middleton, explained the distinction between private ways and private roads. Private ways may be open to the public for travel, but private roads are intended for the use of only specified individuals and may not be open to the public.

Tonya Capparello, public works director and town engineer in Wilbraham, discussed his town's private way maintenance procedure. He shared resources including a petition for temporary repairs and his town's private ways bylaw.

Roby Whitehouse, assistant public works director in Yarmouth and president of the Massachusetts Highway Association, moderated 25 minutes of questions and answers, which addressed inquiries regarding discontinuing private ways, municipal responsibilities for private roads, and how to determine if a road is public or private.

– Kristianna Lapierre



During an MMA webinar, panelists discuss the importance of understanding and supporting mental health in the workplace. Speakers included Jon Mattleman, left, a retired municipal employee and mental health consultant, and Heidi Porter, health and human services director in Bedford.

Date: June 18

Length: 75 minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR ↗](#)

Mattleman emphasized prioritizing self care, and closed with a brief mindfulness exercise.

The webinar was offered at no cost to MMA members thanks to the sponsorship of Human Resources Services Inc.

Heidi Porter, Health and Human Services director in Bedford, moderated 15 minutes of questions and answers, addressing inquiries regarding managing anxiety during the work day and creating a workplace culture that supports self care.

– Kristianna Lapierre



Panelists discuss issues related to private roadways during a recent MMA webinar. Panelists included, clockwise from top left, Tonya Capparello, public works director and town engineer in Wilbraham; Richard Benevento, chair of the Parking and Traffic Commission in Beverly and chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals in Middleton; Karis North, an attorney with Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehan; and Roby Whitehouse, assistant public works director in Yarmouth and president of the Massachusetts Highway Association.

Date: July 15

Length: 75 minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR ↗](#)

Webinar topic suggestion form available

The MMA invites members to submit topic ideas for webinars or offer their expertise to present on a topic. Visit the [webinars form](#) on our website.

MSA hosts training for new select board members

By Anneke Craig

The Massachusetts Select Board Association held its annual free training for newly elected members on June 13 in Devens.

The meeting covered key topics in municipal law and finance, as well as strategies for developing and setting town goals and tips for select board members in their first term.

Attorney Karis North, a partner at Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehane, led an introductory workshop on the open meeting and public records laws, providing an overview of how the laws affect select boards and best practices for compliance, including in digital settings such as social media.

"It can feel challenging not to respond to a post or comment that's inflammatory or incorrect," North said. "But I always tell my clients, sit on your hands and save it for town meeting."

Jessica Ferry, a project manager at the Division of Local Services' Financial Management Bureau and a town councillor in Palmer, led a 101-level session on municipal finance, which covered the budgeting process and schedule, key terms and definitions, and the role of select board members in overseeing their community's finances.

Ferry encouraged attendees to cultivate a sense of teamwork between elected leaders and staff in order to effectively address municipal budgeting challenges.

"From my experience as a former town administrator and on your side as a current town councillor, I have found that making sure your relationship with staff is supportive in nature, and that your communication is strong and you're always collaborating, fosters a feeling of trust and honesty," Ferry said. "We're all here to serve the community, and that's something no one person can do. It's a massive team effort."

In the afternoon, Leicester Select Board Member Peter Cusolito led a panel discussion on collaborative town goal-setting processes, with Sharon Select Board Chair Kiana Baskin and Andover Town Manager Andrew Flanagan.

Flanagan described how Andover's goals not only provide a shared vision for the

town's elected and appointed officials, but also serve as a useful recruitment tool.

"Having goals is so helpful if you work in our form of town government and you're recruiting for town boards and committees, because you can share the goals with candidates in interviews to help them understand the community's values and priorities," he said.

Baskin discussed her experience helping to lead the development process for the [Sharon Select Board's objectives and priorities](#) for 2024-2025, which were identified with input from board members, town staff, and residents.

Cusolito also led a brief, interactive goal-setting exercise. In small groups, attendees outlined goals and objectives, as well as a rough timeline, under a common mission statement.

The meeting concluded with an interactive panel discussion featuring MSA Board officers Jill Hai, a Lexington Select Board member, and Jennifer Glass, chair of the Lincoln Select Board. Moderated by MMA Membership Director Jackie Lavender Bird, the panel discussed their experiences as elected local officials and strategies for new select board members to navigate their transitions from campaigning to governing.

Glass, now in her eighth year serving on the Select Board, reflected on the early challenges she encountered as she adjusted to her new role, and the steps she took to overcome them.

"For me, one of the main challenges was going from that single-minded focus on



Jessica Ferry, a project manager at the Division of Local Services' Financial Management Bureau and a town councillor in Palmer, leads a 101-level session on municipal finance during the Massachusetts Select Board Association's annual training for newly elected members on June 13 in Devens.

school projects I had from when I was a school committee member to engaging with *everything* in town government," she said.

To address this, Glass made efforts to connect with town stakeholders directly in her first term, and to demonstrate her resolve to be a strong advocate for all town issues.

Hai, also in her eighth year, encouraged attendees to stay connected with one another through the MMA and the MSA's many virtual and in-person resources and networking opportunities.

"Please know that just like we're all learning from each other right now in this room, there are more opportunities online and in the future—it doesn't just happen in person here today," she said.



Senior tax relief eyed

During a Joint Committee on Revenue hearing on June 16 at the State House, MMA Legislative Director Dave Koffman testifies in support of proposals that would allow cities and towns a local option to adopt a means-tested senior citizen property tax exemption.

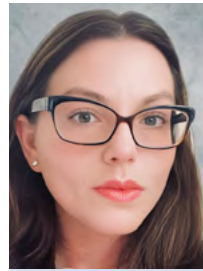
MMA to host webinar with MMLA on legal issues Aug. 6

A panel of attorneys with the Massachusetts Municipal Lawyers Association will address timely legal topics affecting municipalities during an MMA webinar on Aug 6.

- John Finnegan, an attorney with Hill Law, will provide an update on an April Land Court decision relative to tax title takings and the calculation of interest.
- Nicole Costanzo, an attorney with KP Law, will discuss cannabis law and policy, particularly as it pertains to delivery and social consumption.
- Kelli Gunagan, an assistant attorney general and director of the Municipal Law Unit, will discuss recent accessory



John Finnegan



Nicole Costanzo

dwelling unit (ADU) bylaw decisions.

- Sam Dinning, policy and strategic initiatives counsel for the city of Boston, will discuss establishing community policies related to

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement activities.

The webinar will feature brief presentations on each topic and time for questions.

The 75-minute webinar will begin at noon. [Online registration is available.](#)

Only MMA members may register. MMA members include elected officials and municipal employees from MMA member communities across the state. Media members are not permitted to attend.

Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre at klapierre@mma.org

MMA to host webinar on strategic communications for local government

The MMA will host a webinar on July 30 reviewing how to transform municipal communications work “from scattered to strategic.”

Ashley Curtis, digital media marketing manager in Cambridge, and Florencia Rullo, communications manager in Nantucket, will share insights on streamlining municipal communications.

Topics will include:

- Simplifying your social media presence with a clear visual identity
- Navigating algorithms to reach your audience



Ashley Curtis



Florencia Rullo

- Establishing effective social media policies

The 75-minute webinar will begin at noon. [Online registration is available.](#)

Only MMA members may register. MMA members include elected officials and municipal employees from MMA member communities across the state. Media members are not permitted to attend.

Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre at klapierre@mma.org

MMA seeks input for annual conference workshops

The MMA is seeking topic suggestions from members for the timely, informative and interactive workshops that are a key component of the MMA's annual conference each January.

Please offer your input on topics that would help you in the work you do in your city or town. To submit ideas, use our convenient [online form](#).

Connect 351 will be held Jan. 22-24 in Boston. ●



WLG learns to 'Say Yes'

Professional coach Carrie Stack of the Say Yes Institute speaks during a Women Leading Government event on June 26 in Sturbridge, where she focused on setting boundaries, maintaining optimism, and building a support network. The half-day event was attended by 140 women from every level of local government, representing dozens of departments. The Say Yes Institute focuses on building emotional intelligence skills through training and coaching, and helping people find and focus on the positive.

MMHR discusses Medicare, elects FY26 officers

By Anneke Craig

At its Annual Meeting on June 5 in Danvers, Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources focused on strategies for helping employees navigate the Medicare system.

Thomas Adamson, director of market development at Brown & Brown Absence Services Group, provided an overview of the Medicare system, including different parts and plans and important enrollment considerations for municipal employers. He also shared tips for supporting employees who are transitioning from active to retiree health plans.

“There are a lot of myths around Medicare — that it might not be quality coverage, or that it’s only for low-income people or retirees,” said Adamson. “But it’s really for anyone who’s eligible.”

Adamson encouraged attendees to compile resources for their employees to refer to while navigating the transition



During the Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources annual meeting on June 5 in Danvers, Thomas Adamson, director of market development at Brown & Brown Absence Services Group, discusses how to help employees and retirees navigate the Medicare system.

into retirement and related health plan changes.

“As more and more employees reach age 65, it’s important to have some sort of resource library to help folks understand exactly what they need to do when they

become Medicare-eligible,” he said.

The meeting opened with an interactive demonstration of the LITIX Insights CTC [salary survey tool](#), led by staff members from ArxED, a Massachusetts-based company that provides municipal leaders with data to support critical insights for labor negotiations, salary benchmarking and proactive budget planning.

During the annual MMHR business meeting, attendees voted to approve the organization’s fiscal 2026 budget, make key updates to the MMHR bylaws, and elect the [slate of Board officers and directors for fiscal 2026](#).

MMA Legislative Director Dave Koffman concluded the meeting with updates on the current legislative session and the status of the fiscal 2026 state budget, as well as highlights from key bills like the [Francis Perkins Workplace Equity Act](#) and the [Civil Service hybrid option](#). ●

Town Report Contest entries due Oct. 31

The MMA is accepting entries for its Annual Town Report Contest.

First-, second- and third-place winners will be selected from each of four population categories: less than 5,000; 5,001-15,000; 15,001-30,000; 30,001-plus. Winners will be recognized and given a certificate during the MMA’s Connect 351 conference in January 2026.

Judging criteria include:

- Attractiveness of report cover and layout
- Material arrangement
- Presentation of statistics and data
- Summary of the year’s achievements
- Evidence of local planning for the future
- Practical utility of report

Each entry will be reviewed by two judges, chosen based on their expertise in the field and their ability to remain impartial.

To enter, please complete the [form on the MMA website](#) with a link to, or a PDF of, your town report.

Entries are due by Friday, Oct. 31.

For more information, visit the [MMA website](#) or contact Daniel Yi at the MMA

at 617-426-7272, ext. 125, or dyl@mma.org. ●



MMA testifies to get Mass Ready

Beverly Mayor Michael Cahill, right, testifies about coastal challenges his city faces, the resilience work it has undertaken, and the importance of state environmental funding during a hearing before the Joint Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources on July 15 at the State House. He joined Conway Town Administrator Véronique Blanchard and MMA Senior Legislative Analyst Josie Ahlberg, also pictured, to testify in support of the governor’s proposed \$2.9 billion, five-year environmental bond bill, called the Mass Ready Act, to help Massachusetts prepare for extreme weather events.

MMA-Suffolk offering 3 sessions of finance and HR

By Kate Evarts

The MMA and Suffolk University will be offering three Municipal Finance Management Seminar programs during the 2025-2026 academic year, in the fall, winter and spring.

The seminar is for municipal employees interested in furthering their careers in municipal finance or employees who are new to municipal finance.

The seminar provides an overview of municipal finance in Massachusetts, including the structure and purpose of local government, municipal budgeting systems and sources of revenue, financial reporting and record keeping, financial management, principles of property assessment, the intersection of human resources and financial resources, and best practices in local government finance.

Participants must be currently employed by a city or town, and must have the approval of their municipal manager, administrator or mayor to apply.

Seminars will be held via Zoom over the course of five Fridays, with start dates as follows:

- Fall 2025: Oct. 17
- Winter 2026: Jan. 9
- Spring 2026: March 6

“We’ve seen great success with the program and are addressing a longstanding need,” said John Petrin, a retired town manager and senior fellow and liaison for the MMA-Suffolk programs. “We’re filling an important gap in preparing the next generation of municipal finance professionals.”

Students are expected to attend all course sessions, participate in class activities, and complete all course assignments. Each session can accommodate up to 25 students, and the cost is \$925.

Registration is first-come, first-served. Applicants will be vetted to ensure that they’re a municipal employee and that there are no more than three participants per municipality.

Registration details for the fall session will be emailed to chief municipal officials in early August.

Questions about the registration process can be directed to Kate Evarts at

kevarts@mma.org or 617-426-7272, ext. 172.

Municipal Human Resources Seminar

The MMA and Suffolk University will host three sessions of the Municipal Human Resources Seminar during the 2025-2026 academic year.

The seminar is designed for municipal employees interested in furthering their career in municipal human resources, employees who are new to municipal human resources, and employees who work in a municipal function with human-resources-adjacent tasks.

The seminar covers human resources management, policies and practices specific to Massachusetts cities and towns. Topics include hiring and onboarding, benefits administration, policy development, collective bargaining, and employee reviews and evaluations.

Students also review relevant labor laws and best practices in municipal human resources management.

The Municipal Human Resources Seminar will be held via Zoom over the course of five Fridays, with start dates as follows:

- Fall 2025: Oct. 17
- Winter 2026: TBD
- Spring 2026: TBD

The application for the fall seminar is available on the [MMA website](#) and is due by Aug. 1. This is a competitive application process; applicants will be informed of their status by the end of August.

Waitlisted applicants will receive emails when additional sessions are confirmed.

Questions

The MMA has partnered with Suffolk University since 2011 to offer programs designed exclusively for municipal employees to help them further their professional careers. For more information on any of the MMA-Suffolk programs, visit [mma.org/suffolk](#) or contact Katie McCue at 617-426-7272, ext. 111, or kmccue@mma.org, or Kate Evarts at 617-426-7272, ext. 172, or kevarts@mma.org. ●



MMA gets POST update

Matthew Landry, director of standards for the Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission, speaks with the MMA Policy Committee on Personnel and Labor Relations during a June 17 meeting at the MMA office in Boston. Landry gave an update on the POST Commission's work.

49 graduate from MMA-Suffolk leadership program

By Kate Evarts

Forty-nine graduates received their certificates in Local Government Leadership and Management this spring, as the MMA-Suffolk program completed its 23rd and 24th classes.

Nearly 600 municipal officials have completed the Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program since its inception in 2011.

The MMA and Suffolk University program is designed for municipal employees looking to further their careers in municipal management. Graduate-level courses cover topics including strategic leadership, budget and financial management, and human resources management.

The five-course program is held over 25 Fridays in two locations each academic year. The 2023-2024 programs were based in Pittsfield and Sharon.

Pittsfield class

The 2024-2025 Pittsfield program graduates are:

- Hayley Bolton, town administrator, Shutesbury
- Laura Brennan, assistant director and economic development manager, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
- Colleen Canning, planning/conservation coordinator, South Hadley
- Jennifer Catolane, accountant, Lee
- Anthony Gattuso, head clerk, Treasurer's Office, Pittsfield
- Brandon Gill, community development accountant, Pittsfield
- Jay Green, town manager, Lenox
- Amy Hahn, Land Use Coordinator, Deerfield
- Alison Manugian, assistant town manager/community development director, Dracut
- Dillon Maxfield, associate planner, Easthampton
- Paul McLatchy III, town administrator, Ashfield
- Kimberly Mew, principal assessor, Amherst
- Clarissa Mitchell, administrative assistant, Hinsdale
- Sarah Navin, assessor, Lee
- Michael Obasohan, chief diversity officer, Pittsfield
- Brett Roberts, senior planner, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
- Marie Ryan, town administrator, West Stockbridge
- Lindsy Sekula, executive assistant, Easthampton
- Janey Snyder, town manager, Sandisfield
- Tammy Tefft, chief procurement officer, Westfield



Graduates of an MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program that was based in Pittsfield gather on May 9 at the Berkshire Innovation Center in Pittsfield.



Graduates of an MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program that was based in Sharon gather on June 10 at Suffolk University in Boston.

- Sabrina Touhey, executive assistant to town administrator and Select Board, Lee
- Brittany Walsh, executive assistant, Pittsfield

Tom Bernard, the former president and CEO of the Berkshire United Way and a former mayor of North Adams, was the keynote speaker for the Pittsfield graduation. The faculty speaker was Scituate Finance Director Nancy Holt, and the student speaker was Jay Green.

Sharon class

The 2024-2025 Sharon program graduates are:

- Christopher Aylward, detective lieutenant, Westwood Police Department
- Tiffany Benoit, local public health nurse consultant, UMASS Amherst College of Nursing
- Kevin Bishop, detective lieutenant, Sharon Police Department
- Leeann Brady, director of planning and

■ SUFFOLK *continued on 25*

Entries sought for municipal website contest

The MMA is accepting nominations for its annual municipal website awards, which will be presented during the MMA's Connect 351 conference in January 2026.

The awards recognize excellence in customer service, functionality, convenience and government transparency delivered by a municipal website.

To enter the contest, chief municipal officials may simply [fill out a short online nomination form](#). The entry deadline is Friday, Oct. 31.

The awards recognize the best municipal websites in five population categories: under 5,000; 5,001-12,000;

12,001-25,000; 25,001-35,000; and 35,000-plus. One winner is selected from each category.

Judges evaluate municipal websites based on the following criteria:

- Current and timely information
- Intuitive navigation tools and organization of material
- Ease of access to resources for residents, such as the ability to apply for licenses and permits, pay bills, order documents, and make suggestions
- Use of social media and tools for online community engagement (including the

use of an events calendar)

- Availability of public records
- Clear branding as the official municipal government site
- Robust search function
- Mobile-responsive design
- Details about municipal departments
- Visual appeal and overall experience

Please note that previous winners are not eligible to re-enter the contest unless their website has undergone a significant redesign.

For more information, contact Daniel Yi at dyi@mma.org. ●

MMA and Constellation to discuss energy outlook on Sept. 24

The MMA and its partners at Constellation will hold a free presentation and conversation via Zoom on Sept. 24 to cover two energy topics.

- Brandon Fong, principal in Constellation's Commodities Management Group, will provide an update on the current energy landscape for cities and towns, including winter energy costs, weather updates, global challenges facing the energy markets, and more.
- The team managing Constellation's electric vehicle charging solution



Brandon Fong

will discuss how it can help municipalities offer an important charging amenity, while gathering data to support further electrification efforts. This energy efficiency program, available to MMA members, can be an effective entry point for cities and towns in the early development of their electrification strategy.

The meeting is free, but [registration](#) is required to receive the link. The hour-long meeting will begin at noon.

The Constellation team offers a wide range of services to help communities

manage summer energy costs, including strategic energy buying, efficiency projects, and clean energy options. As electricity production is struggling to keep up with demand and New England prices rise, Constellation can help cities and towns explore alternative energy and cost-savings solutions.

For 25 years, the [MMA's MunEnergy program](#) has helped cities and towns manage energy costs through a program designed specifically for public entities. For more information, visit the [MunEnergy webpage](#) or contact MMA Deputy Executive Director Katie McCue at 617-426-7272, ext. 111, or kmccue@mma.org. ●

NLC awards \$20,000 grant to Chelsea for economic mobility program

The National League of Cities has awarded a \$20,000 grant to the city of Chelsea as part of its 2025 Advancing Economic Mobility Rapid Grant program.

The initiative, supported by the Gates Foundation, aims to assist municipalities in developing and implementing strategies that facilitate upward economic mobility for their residents.

Chelsea is one of 12 municipalities nationwide to receive funding in 2025, the NLC announced on June 3. The NLC also provides direct assistance, peer learning opportunities, and guidance to award recipients.

The program seeks to empower local leaders to design and scale economic mobility programs that provide residents with access to essential services as well as employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

The NLC website has more information about the [Advancing Economic Mobility Rapid Grant program](#) and a [full list of grant recipients](#). ●



The city of Chelsea was one of 12 municipalities nationwide that received funding through the Advancing Economic Mobility Rapid Grant program.

MMLA to hold program on code enforcement on Aug. 7

Effective and efficient code enforcement will be the focus of a Massachusetts Municipal Lawyers Association half-day program on Aug. 7 in Sturbridge.

The program is open to MMLA members, local officials, employees and others involved in code enforcement.

Panel discussions include:

- Conservation and Environmental Enforcement Issues
- Enforcement Via the Courts and Receiverships
- Effective and Efficient Enforcement of Zoning and Land Use Laws

Presenters will be:

- Caitlin Castillo, first assistant clerk

magistrate, Western Division Housing Court

- Kathleen Connolly, attorney, Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehane
- Maja Kazmierczak, assistant attorney general, Neighborhood Renewal Division, Office of the Attorney General
- Carolyn Murray, shareholder, KP Law
- Karis North, partner, Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehane
- Barbara Saint Andre, director of community and economic development, town of Medway

The meeting will be held at the [Publick House](#) in Sturbridge, opening at 11 a.m. A luncheon and awards ceremony

will be followed by a full afternoon of programming.

The registration cost is as follows:

- MMLA members and local officials, program only: \$85
- MMLA members and local officials, program and luncheon: \$100
- Nonmembers, program only: \$90
- Nonmembers, program and luncheon: \$110

[Visit the MMLA website for the detailed agenda and online registration.](#)

Direct questions or special dietary needs to MMLA Executive Director Jim Lampke at executivedirector@massmunilaw.org. ●

Green School Works program offers technical assistance

The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center is accepting requests for technical assistance through the [Green School Works](#) program to decarbonize the state's public schools.

The technical assistance is open to eligible public K-12 schools, districts, and educational collaboratives seeking to create healthier, modern and energy-efficient school buildings and facilities.

According to the MassCEC, the state's roughly 1,800 public school buildings are responsible for about 880,000 metric tons of carbon every year, and electrifying and decarbonizing these buildings can help the state reach its goal of net zero emissions by 2050. The MassCEC said school districts may not have the experience or technical expertise necessary to incorporate energy efficiency, electrification and decarbonization measures into their capital planning projects.

Participants can benefit from up to \$250,000 worth of technical assistance, which can include guidance on available incentives and funding opportunities for investing in energy-efficient and fossil fuel-free technologies and infrastructure. Participants may choose among several options: a comprehensive building assessment, a building decarbonization roadmap, or a focused study.



The Green School Works program offers technical assistance such as a comprehensive building assessment, a building decarbonization roadmap, or a focused study.

To be eligible, participants must:

- Be public K-12 schools, including charter schools, school districts, or educational collaboratives in

Massachusetts

- Own their buildings, or have long-term ground leases of at least 20 years, and have capital responsibility
- Affirm that the buildings will remain in use as a public K-12 schools serving public school students for the next 20 years
- Serve or have served a student population that is at least 40% low-income in one or more of the last three school years

[A Green School Works Technical Assistance Services Enrollment Form is available online.](#)

The MassCEC is accepting enrollment on a first-come, first-served basis. ●



Gove discusses rising energy costs

During a virtual meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on June 10, Amesbury Mayor Kassandra Gove emphasizes the importance of managing rising energy costs and the impact on all customers. "Municipalities deal with cost challenges just like our residents and businesses do," Gove said. "And we know we're at a moment where energy costs, in particular, are causing stress and concern for customers and rate-payers across the Commonwealth."

Jim Malloy joins managers' Senior Advisor Program

By Jennifer Kavanaugh

Retired town manager James Malloy is now available as a senior advisor to other managers and administrators through a partnership between the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association and the International City/County Management Association.

Malloy joins retired manager Keith Bergman in the Senior Advisor Program in Massachusetts, which launched in 2020.

The advisors offer confidential advice and support to professional town and city managers, administrators and their assistants, as they encounter challenges in their careers.

Malloy retired as town manager in Lexington last September after six years there. He previously served for eight years as a town manager in Westborough and for 14 years as town administrator in Sturbridge, among other roles. In 2020, he became the first town manager from Massachusetts to serve as ICMA president.



James Malloy



Keith Bergman

Bergman has been involved in the Senior Advisor Program since its inception. He retired in 2018 after almost four decades of municipal service, which included 11 years as the town administrator in Littleton, and 17 years as the town manager in Provincetown.

Retired managers Robin Crosbie and Rick Reed previously served as senior advisors.

The ICMA's Senior Advisor Program, launched in 1974 as the Range Rider Program, allows members to benefit from the knowledge and experience of retired managers. More than 100 senior advisors serve in the program, providing coverage

for about 90% of ICMA's membership.

The program is open to all Massachusetts professional town and city managers and administrators and their assistants, regardless of their membership in the ICMA or the MMA, as well as to department directors who are ICMA members. The senior advisors are volunteers selected from retired ICMA members in good standing, and who have a breadth of experience in municipal government.

Senior advisors can help managers with issues including relations with elected officials, general management questions, relations with the ICMA, local issues such as proposed council-manager plans, and career development. Senior advisors can also help communities interested in creating a professional local government management position, including adoption of a council-manager form of government.

For more information or to participate in the program, contact Bergman at keith@kbergman.com or 774-353-8706, or Malloy at jmalloy@charter.net or 774-230-5986. ●

Send us your Municipal Innovation Award entries!

- Has your community been working on a new and unique project?
- Do you have a new or different solution to a problem facing your community, and possibly others in Massachusetts?
- Has your community found a way to improve efficiency in providing municipal services?

If so, your community should enter the MMA's Innovation Award contest!

The Kenneth E. Pickard Municipal Innovation Award is sponsored each year by the MMA to recognize municipalities that have developed unique and creative projects or programs to increase the effectiveness of local government. It is named in honor of Kenneth E. Pickard, executive secretary of the Massachusetts League of Cities and Towns from 1969 to 1973. Any city or town that is a member of the MMA is eligible to apply. The awards will be presented at the Connect 351 in January 2026.

Entries are due by Friday, Oct. 31.

HOW TO ENTER

- Fill out the summary sheet found on the MMA website (at www.mma.org/connect-351/awards/municipal-innovations/), including a description of the project, the groups and individuals involved, goals, strategy, results and funding structure.
- Have your community's chief municipal official sign the nomination form (found at www.mma.org/connect-351/awards/municipal-innovations/).
- Include any additional materials that would assist the judges in understanding the project or program. Feel free to send photos, brochures, maps, newspaper articles, videos, etc.

Entries MUST include a summary sheet and signed nomination form and must be submitted by email.

JUDGING

Entries are judged by the following criteria:

- Project originality or novelty
- Adaptability to other communities
- Cost-effectiveness
- Efficiency or productivity
- Improvement of a municipal service / administration / performance
- Consumer / community satisfaction

Please send one electronic copy to dyl@mma.org.

For more information, please contact Daniel Yi at the MMA: 617-426-7272, ext. 125, or dyl@mma.org.

Administration awards \$7.7M in municipal fiber grants

The Healey-Driscoll administration on June 10 announced \$7.7 million in Municipal Fiber grants to cities and towns across Massachusetts to enable construction or completion of municipal fiber networks that support IT infrastructure, cybersecurity, and records management.

The Municipal Fiber grant program connects municipal facilities and helps communities achieve network goals such as enhanced cybersecurity and ease of access to local government services online. A cohesive municipal network also creates opportunities for savings by aggregating internet bandwidth purchases and associated security infrastructure.

The fiscal 2025 grants will support municipal fiber networks in 40 communities. The full list of awards is available on the [Municipal Fiber Grant Program website](#).

The Community Compact Cabinet has awarded more than \$33 million in Municipal Fiber grants since fiscal 2022. The program awards grant amounts up to \$250,000, or \$500,000 if multijurisdictional.

The Municipal Fiber grants are among [four annual Community Compact funding opportunities](#) offered to municipalities. ●



The Municipal Fiber grant program connects municipal facilities and helps communities to enhance cybersecurity and support ease of access to local government services online.

Administration awards \$9.5M for electric school buses

The Healey-Driscoll administration on June 10 announced more than \$9.5 million in awards for eight school districts and private transportation providers as part of the third round of the School Bus Deployment program.

The program, managed by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center and funded by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, supports replacing diesel-powered school buses with electric alternatives.

The School Bus Deployment Program provides both financial support and hands-on technical planning assistance. The program seeks to ensure a smooth transition to electric alternatives and focuses support on high-need and environmental justice communities.

Grants ranging from \$500,000 to \$1.6 million were awarded to the following: Acton-Boxborough Regional School District; Beacon Mobility supporting Ipswich Public Schools and Salem Public Schools; Beverly Public Schools; First Student Inc., supporting Fitchburg Public Schools; Highland Electric supporting Amherst-Pelham Regional School District and Hingham Public Schools; and Mercedes Cab supporting Cape Cod Regional Technical School.

The MassCEC's School Bus Program has awarded more than \$27.5 million to school districts and consultants as of June 2025, while leveraging more than \$100 million in external funding.

Selected applicants can receive access to technical consulting services and up to \$2.5 million in funding per electric bus deployment project.

More information and application details are available on the [Massachusetts Clean Energy Center website](#). ●



The School Bus Deployment Program provides both funding and technical planning assistance to communities to ensure a smooth transition to electric school bus options.



Municipal focus on Beacon Hill

MMA Legislative Director Dave Koffman, right, speaks to members of the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government during a June 10 hearing at the State House in Boston. Koffman joined MMA Senior Legislative Analyst Josie Ahlberg, and MMA Legislative and Policy Counsel Ali DiMatteo, not pictured, as part of an MMA panel testifying on several municipal-related issues, including municipal empowerment legislation, legal advertisement reform, sustainable water resource funds, and modernizing public tree management.

DPH offers mosquito season information and safety tips

With mosquitoes making their summer return, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health is reminding residents and municipal officials to remain on guard against mosquito-borne illnesses such as [West Nile virus](#) and [eastern equine encephalitis](#).

The DPH works with established Mosquito Control Districts to trap and test samples of mosquitoes to help measure and track risk throughout the season. The agency posts updates online at [Massachusetts arbovirus update](#).

EEE infections in people don't happen every year in Massachusetts, according to the DPH. But the state did have four cases last year, which could indicate that there may be more cases this year. West Nile is more common, and last year the state had 19 human cases.

No human cases of either disease have been detected so far this year, but on June 17 the state announced the first detection of West Nile in mosquitoes, from a sample collected in Shrewsbury four days earlier.

"Mid-June is earlier than we typically first find West Nile virus-infected



The Department of Public Health has recommended precautions to help avoid mosquito-borne illnesses.

mosquitoes in Massachusetts," Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein said in a statement.

He added that West Nile activity is difficult to predict, which is why the mosquito surveillance system is so important. The earlier onset of disease detection in mosquitoes, while concerning, does not necessarily forecast a bad season this year.

"This early detection serves as a reminder that people should take steps to prevent mosquito bites," Goldstein said.

Only a small number of mosquitoes

are infected at any given time, so being bitten by a mosquito doesn't mean someone will get sick. But people should still try to avoid these illnesses by doing the following:

- Use insect repellents with an EPA-approved active ingredient while outdoors
- Wear long-sleeved clothing, long pants and socks as weather permits
- Schedule outdoor activities to avoid the hours from dusk to dawn during peak mosquito season
- Install or repair window and door screens
- Remove standing water from the areas around your home

For more information, visit the DPH's [Mosquito-borne Diseases page](#), which is updated with new results, or call the DPH Division of Epidemiology at 617-983-6800.

- [Visit DPH's web page with FAQs about mosquitoes in Massachusetts](#)

MA250 grant program expands to support Revolutionary storytelling

The Healey-Driscoll administration and the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism announced a second round of funding through the Massachusetts 250 Grant Program on July 2, with \$2 million going to 59 organizations across the state.

The competitive grant program supports projects that commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution in dynamic, inclusive and regionally meaningful ways. Funded initiatives reflect key themes such as revolution and independence, celebrate the state's many historic firsts, and employ creative storytelling to engage residents and visitors in the state's lasting legacy.

The second round builds on the program's launch last year, when \$1.5 million [was awarded to 37 organizations](#).

The grants are helping communities bring forward untold stories, elevate local voices, and spotlight Massachusetts's role in shaping America. From historical reenactments and exhibitions to education programs and cultural festivals, the



MA250 Grant Program is supporting a wide range of efforts that inspire reflection, participation and celebration across Massachusetts.

Of the 59 projects funded this round, 10 are located in Gateway Cities.

Grantees include:

- Springfield Performing Arts Ventures, which will receive \$16,000 for Revolutionary Love Community Theater's Saving the Revolution, a musical drama and video series highlighting Henry Knox's 300-mile cannon trek and love letters

- Discover Central MA, which will receive \$50,000 for its Central MA250 Revolutionary Firsts Trail campaign highlighting the region's Revolutionary history through digital content, trail maps, and event promotion
- New Bedford Whaling Museum, which will receive \$25,000 for "When New Bedford Lit the World: Revolutionary Innovation and Culture in a Port City," a multi-part project exploring the city's revolutionary contributions to innovation and culture

The Massachusetts 250 campaign celebrates 250 years of the country's independence and the state's revolutionary spirit. The statewide campaign highlights often-told stories like Paul Revere's ride while uplifting underrepresented voices and unveiling untold stories with hundreds of events across the Bay State.

For more information, visit [massachusetts250.org](#).

- Link to [full list of MA250 Grant awards](#)

State issues guidance for reducing wildfire risks

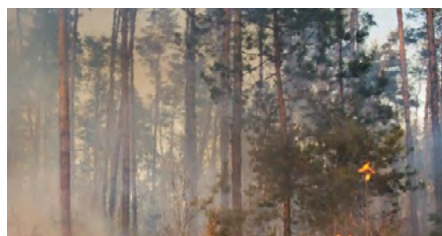
As a follow up to the historic 2024 wildfire season — marked by 1,300 wildfires in Massachusetts — the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Department of Fire Services have issued recommendations to reduce potential risks to property.

The DCR's Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry reported that wildfires increased by roughly 1,200% during last October and November, when the state faced widespread drought conditions. The vast majority of the wildfires were caused by debris-pile burning, abandoned campfires, and equipment.

The fire prevention guidance, from the National Fire Protection Association, covers three distinct property areas:

- Immediate Zone, which includes a structure and the five-foot area surrounding it
- Intermediate Zone, which covers from five to 30 feet from a structure's outermost point
- Extended Zone, which stretches up to 200 feet from the structure

For the Immediate Zone, property owners should take actions such as cleaning roofs, gutters and exterior attic vents of any debris, especially dead leaves and pine needles; replacing any loose shingles or roof tiles; and installing metal mesh screening in eaves. Flammable material should be moved away from exterior walls, including mulch, flammable plants, dried leaves,



Wildfires spiked last fall due to widespread drought conditions.

pine needles and firewood, as well as anything stored beneath a deck or porch.

In the Intermediate Zone, recommendations include clearing vegetation from under and around stationary propane tanks and trees; using fuel break property borders (areas free of flammable vegetation that help to interrupt the spread of fire), such as driveways, walkways, and patios; and keeping grass and lawns at or below four inches in height. Additionally,

trees should be pruned to the point that the lowest branches are six to 10 feet above the ground and spaced at least 18 feet apart.

Work within the Extended Zone should focus on removal and disposal of accumulated flammable debris, dead plants or trees, small conifers between trees, and vegetation around outbuildings. Property owners should prune canopies of trees 30 to 60 feet from the home to at least 12 feet between canopy tops while the canopies of trees 60 to 100 feet from the structure should be pruned so that they have at least 6 feet between canopy tops.

Additional guidance and fire risk reduction recommendations are available on the [Department of Conservation and Recreation website](#). Examples of home safety precautions can be found in a video available on [DCR's social media channels](#).

LGAC addresses energy costs

During a virtual meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on June 10, Acton Town Manager John Mangiaratti highlights the need for interconnection in mitigating rising energy costs. "A streamlined interconnection process can help reduce costs over time for residents who are installing solar on rooftops, and businesses and companies offering clean energy services," he said.



CHAPTER 90

Continued from page 1

been eroded by inflation. The governor's Chapter 90 Advisory Group reported that an annual appropriation of \$404.6 million would be needed to offset the impact of inflation since 2012.

"The MMA and local leaders across the state are deeply grateful that the governor and legislators appreciate the importance of this program to quality of life and economic development in our communities," said MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine. "Chapter 90 is a program that benefits all 351 cities and towns in the state, and a 50% increase in funding would have a substantial and meaningful impact in all corners of the Commonwealth."

With the Transportation Committee's proposal, 85% of municipalities would receive at least a 45% increase over their annual apportionment in the past several years. This funding boost would provide meaningful support and stability to cities and towns, as communities continue to face unpredictable impacts from federal policy actions.

Many municipalities are also set to receive additional support for roads and bridges through the [fiscal 2025 surplus surtax supplemental budget](#) that was signed by the governor on June 24, which allocates Fair Share surtax revenues for a variety of transportation and education initiatives. Included is \$7 million for a pilot grant program for unpaved roads, \$80 million for the Chapter 90 program, and \$16.5 million

for culverts and small bridges.

The Legislature has provided supplemental funding for Chapter 90 using Fair Share surtax revenues in recent years, but H. 4257 would be an important boost to the foundational Chapter 90 authorization.

The [governor's proposed transportation bond bill](#) was based on recommendations put forward by a [Transportation Funding Task Force](#) and the Chapter 90 Advisory Group. The governor proposed a total of \$1.5 billion for the [Chapter 90 reimbursement program](#) (\$300 million per year for five years).

The updated bond bill (H. 4257) now moves to the Joint Committee on Bonding and Capital Expenditures, which is scheduled to hold a hearing on July 21. ●

Communities invited to be good neighbors

By Jennifer Kavanaugh

In its mission to promote togetherness around the state, the Massachusetts Coalition to Build Community and End Loneliness is inviting local leaders to participate in the [Massachusetts Good Neighbor Day of Action](#) from Sept. 26 through 28.

The annual initiative focuses on fostering kindness and meaningful connections in an effort to lessen the sense of isolation and strengthen community resilience. The coalition asks communities to engage residents of all ages in building stronger, more connected communities by encouraging communities, their leaders and their residents to engage in acts of kindness, organize community events, and reach out to neighbors. The coalition is seeking to “create a culture of caring and respect that enhances the well-being of all.”

Communities can participate by hosting a range of activities that draw participants with different interests, backgrounds and generations. Examples include potluck dinners, pet parades,

music concerts, dance parties, service projects, neighborhood cleanups, inter-generational gatherings, volunteer days, and recognition events for outstanding neighbors.

Communities are encouraged to ensure that events make people of different backgrounds, cultures, mobility, and neurodiversity feel welcome and included in the activities. Toward that end, the coalition suggests appointing event ambassadors to encourage people who do not typically attend community events to participate.

Established in 2019, the [Massachusetts Coalition to Build Community and End Loneliness](#) has more than 240 members representing nearly 150 organizations, including municipal governments, nonprofits, academic institutions, advocacy groups, thought leaders, and other partners. The group seeks to ensure that all residents of the Commonwealth feel connected to their community and enjoy a strong sense of social health.

The coalition’s work continues as leaders and public health professionals sound

alarms about a growing loneliness epidemic in which people feel increasingly isolated, lacking social connections and support. In 2023, Vivek Murthy, the U.S. surgeon general at the time, issued an [advisory report](#) calling attention to the public health crisis of loneliness, isolation, and lack of connection in our country.

The event’s organizers are looking to build on the success of last year’s event, after Gov. Maura Healey made a proclamation officially declaring Sept. 28, 2024, as Massachusetts Good Neighbor Day. At least 32 communities joined the effort last year by hosting neighborhood events.

“We’re so lucky to live in a state full of history, culture and community,” Healey said in a [video](#) about last year’s effort. “But sometimes we need to remember to slow down a little bit and connect with the people around us.”

Visit the [Good Neighbor Day website](#) for more information about this year’s plans and to download a 2025 toolkit. ●

SUFFOLK

Continued from page 18

- community development, Middleborough
- John Cianciarulo, director of administrative services, Norwood
- Paul Dell’Aquila, land use and inspectional services director/town planner, Boylston
- Christopher Flanagan, deputy chief, Norwood Police Department
- Frank Gervasio, town manager, Holliston
- Kate Hinckley, GIS director, Franklin
- Rajon Hudson, assistant town administrator, Boxborough
- Sophie Jean-Felix, education and workforce development director, Massachusetts Association of Community Health Workers
- Rebecca Johnson, assistant town administrator/human resources coordinator, East Bridgewater
- Alexandra Kalkounis, city solicitor, Worcester
- Aoife Kelly, executive assistant, Walpole

- Thomas Kenvin, assistant fire chief, Foxborough
- David Kurczy, Police Chief, Mendon
- Jody Kurczy, finance director, Millis
- Robert Lussier, planning and engineering director, Bellingham
- Rana Mana-Doerfer, assistant finance director, Dedham
- Magnolia McComish, communications coordinator, Dartmouth
- Elizabeth McGovern, library director, Westwood
- Indira Pisupati, assistant town accountant, Sharon
- Brandy Silva, finance and operations manager, New Bedford
- Lauren Taylor, assistant town administrator/Town Accountant, Blackstone
- Kevin Weber, deputy public works superintendent, Sharon
- Mikaela Wolfe, library director, Natick

Massachusetts Senate Ways and Means Chair Michael Rodrigues was the keynote

speaker for the Sharon program graduation, which was held at Suffolk University in Boston. Scituate Finance Director Nancy Holt was the faculty speaker, and the student speaker was Jody Kurczy.

Looking ahead

MMA-Suffolk certificate programs that are scheduled to begin this fall in Barnstable and Winchester are fully enrolled.

Information about the 2026-2027 programs, in Littleton and Medfield, will be available in the fall, and applications will be available on Feb. 1 on the [MMA website](#).

For more information about the MMA-Suffolk certificate program, visit [mma.org/suffolk](#) or contact Katie McCue at 617-426-7272, ext. 111, or [kmcue@mma.org](#), or Kate Evarts at 617-426-7272, ext. 172, or [kevarts@mma.org](#). ●

Let us know about your local news

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

improve the effectiveness of services that have a direct impact on people’s lives.

The MMA wants to spread the word about these local efforts. If your

community has launched a new program or initiative, or has found a unique solution to a common problem, please let us know with our [Local News Tips form](#) on the MMA website. ●

Local leaders can take action against growing threat of wildfires

By Joyce McMahon

Once considered rare in the Northeast, wildfires are becoming an increasing risk as the region experiences longer dry spells, warmer temperatures, and more erratic precipitation patterns — all of which contribute to drier vegetation and more favorable conditions for wildfires.

This emerging reality was particularly acute last fall, as the [Bureau of Forest Fire Control and Forestry reported that 662 wildfires burned 4,000 acres between Oct. 1 and Nov. 27](#) — a significant increase over the five-year average of 1,200 acres burned annually.

In a [June 12 article in the Boston Globe](#), Dave Celino, chief fire warden for the Department of Conservation and Recreation, said “flash droughts” have become more common in Massachusetts. And when drought



Municipalities can help to prevent wildfires by engaging in public outreach and education campaigns.

comes on quickly, and persists, fires happen more frequently.

That was the story this year, until a recent rainy stretch ended the drought in most of the state, Celino told the Globe. In January, which had an average of seven fires over the last seven years, there were 25, mostly because of a lack

of snow. The seven-year average for March in Massachusetts is 164 fires, but there were 380 this year.

Changing nature of risk

Compounding the risk is the expansion of the wildland-urban interface areas, where homes and businesses abut forests, fields and other undeveloped lands. The Department of Fire Services reports that [nearly half of homes in Massachusetts are located in or near these zones](#), particularly in regions such as Worcester County, Cape Ann, and Cape Cod. Vegetation and human activity coexist in these areas in ways that increase the chance of ignition and complicate firefighting efforts.

According to the DFS, most wildfires in Massachusetts are caused by human activity. Common culprits include:

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Taking steps to protect employees from air quality risks

By Joyce McMahon

Massachusetts is increasingly experiencing degraded air quality due to extreme heat, drought and wildfire smoke. These conditions pose serious risks not just outdoors but indoors as well, especially in buildings without effective HVAC systems.

The American Lung Association's 26th annual “[State of the Air](#)” report, released in April, shows that air quality in the metropolitan area that includes Boston, Worcester and Providence has gotten worse, with wildfire smoke from Canada as a major contributing factor.

Wildfire smoke is rich in fine particulate matter, which penetrates deep into the lungs and bloodstream, [heightening risks of asthma, cardiovascular problems, and even cognitive damage](#).

Even when smoke isn't present, extreme summer heat boosts ground-level ozone, particulate matter levels,

and aeroallergens, compounding respiratory and cardiovascular challenges.

Protecting employees

The following are strategies for protecting outdoor workers:

- Monitor air quality: Use tools like [AirNow.gov](#) or the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's [MassAir Online](#) to track the local Air Quality Index (AQI).
- Understand your employees' health status: If the Air Quality Index is over 100 (orange category), sensitive groups may experience health effects. Be sure to limit the exposure of these individuals to outdoor air.
- Use respirators: Use NIOSH-approved respirators (N95 or P100) that seal properly; straps both above and below the ears are critical.
- Adjust work practices: Reduce exertion, schedule heavy tasks during

times of cleaner air, and implement more breaks.

- Provide clean-air shelters: Set HVAC to “recirculate” to reduce outdoor air infiltration.

The following are strategies for protecting indoor workers:

- Keep HVAC filters clean and use closed-loop recirculation during air quality alert events.
- Add portable HEPA air cleaners and run them continuously in occupied zones.
- Seal gaps around doors and windows to limit outdoor air intrusion.

By tracking the daily AQI, educating workers, and equipping both indoor and outdoor environments with appropriate controls, municipal employers can keep their workforce healthier and safer during summer air quality challenges. ●

Around the Commonwealth

Worcester

City debuts central meetings information hub

On July 1, the city of Worcester launched a public meeting document management platform designed to enhance transparency by providing access to agendas, minutes and documents for the city's nearly 120 boards and committees.

OneMeeting centralizes all documents and provides robust search options by both committee and specific agenda items, along with built-in translation for more than 30 languages through Google Translate.

The new system uses two search tools, Meeting Search and Item Search, along with a list of current and upcoming meetings and a general archived meeting database sorted by committee. Meeting videos are embedded into the agendas, providing easy access to streaming and recordings.

City Clerk Nikolin Vangjeli said plans to implement a new agenda and meeting management system had been “a long time coming.” His office had been trying to find ways to improve its Council Calendar system — a platform that was developed in-house and had been in use since 2006 — but were hampered by two problems: the system worked well for internal staff uses, but it lacked desired transparency and accessibility features; and the agendas and minutes were not formatted consistently, making specific items difficult to find.

Vangjeli noted that Worcester is “a bilingual community” for all its election operations, ballots and election materials, “but that was never the case with our agendas when it comes to City Council.” Any new system had to have translation options as well.

Vangjeli, who has been with the city since 2013 and became city clerk in 2020, said overhauling Worcester's agenda management system was one of his goals. He said preserving existing content was a priority, so he told vendors that the city “wanted to integrate all the historical items that we've been building not only as a city, but also as a



Worcester's OneMeeting portal translates documents into more than 30 languages, and meeting agendas include links to recorded and livestreaming council meetings.

city council.”

Worcester's chief information officer, Michael Hamel, worked with Vangjeli and the clerk's office on the meeting document system overhaul. The project went out to bid in 2020.

Vangjeli said a number of larger cities, including Boston, Los Angeles, and San Antonio also use OneMeeting for meeting material management.

Hamel said that the system is designed to simplify some of Worcester's governmental processes, like the existence of two separate agendas for the City Council and city manager during council meetings. Those agendas have been consolidated into a single searchable document.

Residents can “understand what's on the agenda without needing to understand the mechanics of City Hall,” Hamel said.

OneMeeting even includes each committee's pending list of items that aren't yet on an agenda, which are consistently updated and [available online](#).

“I think one of the issues we always heard was trying to have everything in one place,” Vangjeli said. “And now we finally do. We made a lot of progress as a city with this new product. to bring everything together into one portal.”

— Owen Page

Deerfield

Town offers child care at Town Meeting

Seeking to attract an often-missing

demographic at Town Meeting — parents of young children — the town of Deerfield has joined others in Massachusetts offering child care services at the event.

Deerfield began offering free child care services for children ages 4 and up at its April 28 Town Meeting, thereby helping parents participate in the proceedings. The pilot program, which brought in five children that night, emerged from a collaboration among community volunteers, town leaders and school officials.

“It is vital that our young families feel supported in Deerfield and that they feel they can participate in [the] governance of the town, where so many of the budget items affect them so directly,” said Trevor McDaniel, chair of the Deerfield Select Board. “It was a great success, and I am sure it will only build.”

The effort started because some residents expressed concerns that Town Meeting is lucky to draw 300 or so attendees out of 4,000-plus registered voters, and many attendees appear to be in the same age bracket. For many younger parents, they said, attending a Monday night meeting can't compete against dinner logistics, children's bed-times, activities, and supervision needs.

“I have a son, and he and my daughter-in-law, and my two granddaughters live in town, and they were like, ‘Oh, there's just no way. We can't do this. It's too late,’” said longtime resident Janice James. “And that just inspired me more, because every vote counts. There are so many issues.”

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A new child care program in Deerfield allows more parents to participate in Town Meeting. Pictured at Town Meeting on April 28 are, left to right, Town Moderator Daniel Graves and Select Board members Tim Hilchey and Trevor McDaniel.

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James' friend Annette Pfannebecker, treasurer for Engage: Deerfield, a local group that works to inform and engage residents around community issues, said it's important for Deerfield's parents to weigh in on topics affecting their families, particularly school funding, infrastructure, housing, and public safety.

"Town Meeting has many impactful issues," Pfannebecker said. "When that population does not come ... they're not having a chance to vote on the impact of the issues."

Pfannebecker and James strategized with school administrators and a coordinator from the Out-of-School-Time Program, a child care program within the school district that would provide the background-checked employees. By the time their proposal reached town leaders, their legwork made the concept an easier sell, Pfannebecker said.

Before Town Meeting, the organizers used a signup sheet to gather parents' contact information, and details about children's allergies or medical issues. On Town Meeting night, three Out-of-School-Time employees set up crafts and activities, as well as snacks and drinks, in the high school library, a short walk from the meeting.

"It was really great for the parents to not have to worry about their children and know they were safe while they took an hour or so to participate in their government," McDaniel said.

James said the program cost just \$120 for staffing, a bargain for the ability to participate in direct democracy. Though the service was called a pilot project, organizers are already planning ahead for future meetings.

Deerfield has joined a number of communities that provide child care at town meetings, including Concord, Lynnfield, Westford, West Tisbury, Easton and Orleans. (Orleans' tagline is, "Leave your child with us and focus on your civic duties without any distractions.")

The child care services range from free to minimal per-child charges. Some communities provide the service only

for the annual town meeting, while others offer it for special town meetings as well. Depending on the community, the programs are run by different departments, such as schools, recreation or the library, or they involve partnerships with outside organizations.

The Concord Recreation Department has been providing child care at annual and special town meetings for years, at a cost of \$10 per child or \$20 per family. Employees have undergone background checks and are certified in adult and pediatric first aid and CPR. They also have early education teacher qualifications or higher in most cases, according to Childcare Services Manager Anita Stevanazzi-Hill.

West Tisbury has offered free child care at its annual Town Meeting for the past seven or eight years, according to Library Director Alexandra Pratt, who organizes the service. Depending on the interest level in a given year's warrant articles, the service hosts between five and 20 kids each year, helping Town Meeting get closer to its 139-person quorum.

"I think it is so important to have this option so families with young children have less of a barrier for access to and participation in local politics," Pratt said. "I wish we could offer child care and food more often — at Select Board meetings, other committee meetings, etc."

— Jennifer Kavanaugh

Lee

'Voices and Votes' exhibit comes to town

Early this summer, the spirit of democracy could be found just off the Massachusetts Turnpike in Lee, proudly on display next to the Nautica outlet store.

From June 7 through July 18, the town has been hosting "[Voices and Votes: Democracy in America](#)," a traveling museum exhibit from the Smithsonian Institution's [Museum on Main Street](#) program. Using donated space from the Lee Premium Outlets mall, Lee's town government is one of six Bay State



Visitors learn about democracy at the Smithsonian's "Voices and Votes" exhibit this summer in Lee. (Photo courtesy town of Lee)

institutions chosen by [Mass Humanities](#) to host this year's exhibit from April through January 2026.

Lee officials said they wanted to celebrate American democracy, bring more tourism to town, and showcase Lee as a destination unto itself.

"The Berkshires are known as this big cultural place in the summer, and Lee is the gateway to the Berkshires," said Sabrina Touhey, Lee's executive assistant. "But I feel like a lot of people will come in and they'll come to our downtown area, but they're also going to Tanglewood and to Barrington Stage Company and Stockbridge [for] Norman Rockwell. So this brought a cultural event to Lee in the summer as well."

This year's traveling exhibit focuses on voting rights and responsibilities, ahead of the nation's 250th birthday next year. The Smithsonian works with the nonprofit Mass Humanities, and its counterparts in other states, to bring museum experiences to small-town main streets, and greater visibility to those communities. Selected hosts receive training and \$10,000 toward hosting costs.

Considering the program's title, Lee had hoped to locate the exhibit in a "Main Street" setting, but when a downtown spot failed to materialize, the outlets offered a vacant storefront for six weeks, Touhey said.

The exhibit features historical and contemporary photos, video footage, interactive multimedia displays, campaign souvenirs, voter memorabilia, protest material, activities and games.

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Besides support from Mass Humanities, Lee relied on local sponsoring organizations to cover the 10% grant match, and about 70 volunteers to staff the event.

Lee also planned several events, including a Juneteenth event; an elementary school vote on a movie to watch (“Home Alone”); a pub crawl featuring patriotic-themed drinks; a voter registration day; a preview of the unveiling of a bronze W.E.B. Du Bois sculpture in Great Barrington; and a March Madness-style event to select the “most American” foods.

Lee also hosted a facilitated community conversation on a complex topic, choosing the Housatonic River cleanup project and the planned construction of a landfill in Lee for the cleanup waste. Town officials sought to connect the project to the democratic process, and encourage more people to engage with local issues.

“In the presidential election, you know, we’ll get 80% turnout, and then you have a local election, and you’ll get 20% turnout,” said Town Administrator R. Christopher Brittain. “[It’s] the importance of being involved at all levels, on those things that are going to have a bigger impact.”

The other five Massachusetts exhibit hosts are Mohawk Trail Regional School in Shelburne Falls, the Ashby Free Public Library, the Douglas Historical Society, the Holbrook Public Library, and the Nye Museum in Sandwich. Mass Humanities has created a website, “[Building Blocks of Democracy](#),” that offers a state-level perspective on democracy and voting rights.

Mass Humanities received 12 applications, and wanted hosts that would help circulate the exhibit geographically and reflect the state’s diversity, according to Wes DeShano, the nonprofit’s communications manager. In particular, Mass Humanities wanted hosts to develop programming that connects local history to the national story.

“During a time of division and erasure, we believe that the humanities can

bring people together to find common ground,” he said. “‘Voices and Votes’ does exactly that.”

— Jennifer Kavanaugh

Newton

Historic armory to get new life as affordable housing

A historic armory along the Massachusetts Turnpike in Newton will soon see new life as an affordable housing development.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on June 8 at the castle-like West Newton Armory, at 1135-1137 Washington St., which [will be converted](#) into 43 units of affordable housing, with scheduled completion in the winter of 2026-27.

The building, constructed between 1910 and 1912, featured unique characteristics such as an indoor horse stable and shooting range. The Massachusetts National Guard operated the site for more than 100 years, until the building no longer met its needs. The Guard then transferred management to the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance, which declared it a surplus property.

In 2021, the state gave the city of Newton two options: the city could purchase the building for \$1 and restrict future uses to affordable housing, or the state would sell the building to the city at a market rate with no restrictions.

“It was an exciting day when the state reached out to us saying that the West Newton Armory was available for the city of Newton to purchase,” said Newton Mayor Ruthanne Fuller. “The option of affordable housing there got us immediately excited.”

The armory’s proximity to local transit options, as well as retail and grocery stores, makes it prime real estate for affordable housing.

Fuller said rising housing costs have made it difficult for people who work in Newton to find a place to live. The armory project represents an opportunity to “open the doors of Newton wider, so that we have a range of people who can afford to live here.”



The West Newton Armory project will have 43 total units, 15 of which are reserved for households earning up to 30% of the area median income, and 28 units of which are for households earning up to 60% of area median income. (Photo courtesy city of Newton, Metro West Collaborative Development, and Civico Development)

“We are a stronger city when we have a broad range of people living here,” Fuller said.

The sale agreement made its way through Newton City Council, the Legislature, and the governor’s office before Newton formally acquired the property in the early fall of 2021. Fuller credited Sen. Cynthia Creem, Rep. Kay Kahn and staff at the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities for their help.

Fuller said that the city prioritized creating as many affordable housing units as possible with the armory project, with added emphasis on historic preservation and sustainability.

The project went out to bid in July of 2021, and Metro West-Civico was selected as the city’s redevelopment partner. The project made its way through various stages of public engagement and committee hearings.

The housing includes 15 one-bedroom units, 21 two-bedroom units, and seven three-bedroom units. Fifteen of these units will be reserved for households earning up to 30% of the area median income, and 28 units will be available for households earning up to 60% of the area median income.

One of the critical components for developing new affordable housing, said Newton Planning Director Barney Heath, is “you’ve got to find a place” where development is possible.

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"If you have a municipally owned site, you can do away with the land costs," he said.

Selecting such a visible unique building was a way for the city to "make it very apparent that Newtonians truly care about having a wonderful mix of people of all ages living in our community," Fuller said, "and that we are excited to welcome them in such a visible way."

— Owen Page

Salem

City's 'Volt & Vibe' event showcases e-bike options

Furthering efforts to support more sustainable travel on its roads, the city of Salem recently hosted its first exposition to highlight e-bike and personal electric vehicle options for the public.

On June 29, the city hosted "Volt & Vibe: An Eco-Rider Showcase" on the campus of Salem State University. Attendees were able to learn about e-bikes and personal electric vehicles, and test-ride the vehicles.

"This showcase is a great way for people to try something new and explore alternative modes of transportation," Mayor Dominick Pangallo said in an announcement about the event. "It is another example of Salem's ongoing efforts to reduce emissions, traffic, and congestion, and make it easier to get around the city in a healthy and fun way."

Stacy Kilb, Salem's engagement coordinator and energy coach, has previously organized expos for electric cars and vehicles.

"I really thought personal electric vehicles — like bikes and scooters and one-wheels and unicycles — really kind



Salem's recent "Volt & Vibe" exposition featured e-bikes and personal electric vehicles, including this Tracer Raptor bicycle. (Photo courtesy Stacy Kilb)

of needed their own setting, their own thing," Kilb said, "because I've just seen more and more of them around town, and the interest is there."

"Volt & Vibe" arrived just a couple of months after the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center launched the Massachusetts E-Bike Voucher Program, to provide income-based incentives of up to \$1,200 toward electric bicycle purchases.

Kilb said the roughly 25 people who attended the event represented a range of interests and needs. At least half of the exhibitors came from Boston PEV, the area's largest community-run group of people with personal electric vehicles. Others were vehicle owners Kilb met through outreach and networking at other events, including the Salem Kicks Gas electric vehicle expo in April. One of the exhibitors rode in on two unicycles, with one foot on each.

"I think just having real people there who own the bikes and ride them every day — for them to talk and answer their specific questions that were particular to their situations — was helpful," Kilb said.

The event featured about 20 vehicles, including long-tail cargo bikes that can carry passengers; a smaller cargo bike;

a bunch bike, resembling a tricycle in reverse, with the rider sitting above the single wheel and a bucket placed atop the double wheels in front; a standard, non-cargo electrical bicycle; 10 unicycles; and a scooter. One exhibitor brought a Tracer Raptor bicycle, which Kilb described as the "low rider of e-bikes."

"The coolness factor of that was just off the charts," she said.

Kilb also worked with several sponsors, including HomeWorks Energy, A&A Services and Armstrong Field Realty, which paid for the police detail and box lunches for the exhibitors and volunteers. Other participating organizations included the Salem Alliance for the Environment and the Salem Bicycling and Shared Path Advisory Committee.

Kilb said safety was a key focus of the event. Work is underway on a Salem Safety Action Plan to improve road safety, and the Salem Walking Advocacy Group is engaged in safety issues for cyclists and pedestrians.

Based on positive feedback from exhibitors and attendees, Kilb said she would consider having another "Volt & Vibe" event next year, but she might move the event to September, when more people are around. This year's event was a good start, however.

"I think, overall, that people had a great time," Kilb said.

— 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.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Continued from page 2

enjoyed by the more than 7 million people who call Massachusetts home. This is a foundation that must be protected,

even in challenging fiscal times, to ensure the livability of our communities both now and into the future.

The MMA will be the leading voice in this effort, and we look forward

to working with the governor, the Legislature and all of you as we strive to protect local funding. ●

People



Nicole LaChapelle

Nicole LaChapelle stepped down as the mayor of Easthampton on July 15 to become the commissioner of the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

LaChapelle, who will assume her new role on July 21, had been Easthampton's mayor since January 2018, and had previously announced that she would not be running for reelection. Before becoming mayor, she served as chief of pupil services for the Holyoke Public Schools, and was an attorney who focused on civil rights advocacy, especially related to education and disabilities.



Salem Derby

City Council President **Salem Derby**, who has served on the Council for more than two decades, is serving as interim mayor until the Nov. 4 city election, when a new mayor will be elected and sworn into office

shortly thereafter.

At the DCR, LaChapelle takes the reins from **Brian Arrigo**, who served as commissioner for two years. Arrigo will become the vice chancellor of finance and operations at UMass Lowell this summer. He previously served as mayor of Revere from 2016 to 2023.

John Woodsmall became the new town administrator in Lancaster on July 9.

Before coming to Lancaster, Woodsmall was the public works director in Holden for almost 14 years. Previously, he served almost five years as the town engineer in Southborough, and before that was the public works engineer in Concord for several years. He has also served nine years on Upper Blackstone Clean Water's board of directors, three years on the board of directors for the Massachusetts Coalition for Water Resources Stewardship, and 13 years

as a steering committee member for the Central Massachusetts Regional Stormwater Coalition.

He has a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and he completed the MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management in 2012.

In Lancaster, Woodsmall is taking the place of **Kate Hodges**, who left in January to become the town manager in Dracut. **Jeff Nutting** served as the interim town administrator.

Michael Molisse is now the acting mayor in Weymouth, after **Robert Hedlund** stepped down from the role on July 15. Hedlund, a former longtime state senator, had served as mayor for almost a decade, and announced on June 17 that he would be leaving for personal reasons.

Before becoming acting mayor, Molisse was president of the Town Council, where he has served for the past quarter century. He will serve as acting mayor until after voters elect a new mayor on Nov. 4.



Emily Hill

Emily Hill became the new town coordinator in New Salem on June 2.

Hill was the residence life coordinator at Hampshire College from January to June of this year. Previously, she

worked four-and-a-half years at Utah State University, first as a resident assistant, and then as a residence hall director. She was also a camp director for the Boy Scouts of America from 2021 to 2023. She has a bachelor's degree in law and constitutional studies from Utah State.

In New Salem, Hill takes the place of **Jessica Mooring**, who left the position in May.



Virginia "Ginny" Desorgher (Photo courtesy Leise Jones)

Greenfield Mayor **Virginia "Ginny" Desorgher** received a "Housing Hero Award" during the Massachusetts Housing Partnership's Housing Institute on June 5 in Worcester. The awards, which were presented

by Housing and Livable Communities Secretary **Ed Augustus**, recognize individual and organizational leadership and commitment in supporting and furthering affordable housing. Other Housing Hero Awards this year went to **Elizabeth Rust**, director of the Regional Housing Services Office, a collaboration among 10 MetroWest communities; the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization; and **Whitney Demetrius**, the state's inaugural director of fair housing.



Stacey Compton-Maga

Stacey Compton-Maga joined the MMA as the new event and development coordinator on July 15.

For the past three years, Compton-Maga was the event services manager for the Massachusetts

Convention Center Authority. In that capacity, she had worked with the MMA in planning its annual conference in Boston. Previously, she worked for seven years as the senior events coordinator and sales, services and brand manager for Sephora. She was also an assistant manager and acting retail manager for MAC Cosmetics, executive director of the Greater Boston Urban Resources Partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and national campaign events coordinator for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. In addition, she is the owner of a consulting firm called On

PEOPLE

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Another Level Enterprises.

Compton-Maga has a bachelor's degree in human services and human resources management from Lesley University, a certificate in professional development for women from Roxbury Community College, and a fundraising certificate from the National Society for Fundraising Executives.

At the MMA, Compton-Maga will oversee the annual Trade Show held during Connect 351. **Karen LaPointe**, who served at the MMA for more than two decades, stepped down as the MMA's advertising and trade show manager on May 30.



Thomas Menino

On July 12, the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center in the Seaport District was renamed the **Thomas Michael Menino** Convention and Exhibition Center in honor of Boston's

longest-serving mayor. Menino had championed the building of the convention center, which opened in 2004 and eventually led to the transformation of the Seaport into a residential, dining and entertainment destination. Menino ran the city from 1993 to January 2014, leaving office shortly before his death later that year.



Wayne Marquis

On June 14, local and state officials dedicated a Danvers rail trail in memory of **Wayne Marquis**, the town's former longtime manager who died in 2022 at age 69. Marquis had served as Danver's town manager

from 1979 to 2014, and devoted much of his time to MMA policy committee

work, to the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, and to MIIA, of which he was a founding board member and board chair for many years.



Eric Paley

On June 24, Gov. **Maura Healey** announced the appointment of **Eric Paley** as the state's new economic development secretary. Paley, who is expected to start in September, is a co-founder and managing partner of Founder Collective, a venture capital fund. During his career, the Lexington resident has also served on the board of The Trade Desk, was CEO of Brontes Technologies, and launched Collective Future, an annual Boston conference bringing together innovators across the technology, government, media, cultural and nonprofit sectors to help shape the future of the innovation economy.

Paley will take the place of **Yvonne Hao**, who stepped down earlier this year. **Ashley Stolba**, who has been serving as the interim secretary, will return to a senior leadership position at the Executive Office of Economic Development.



Dr. Kiame Mahaniah

Dr. **Kiame Mahaniah** became the state's new secretary of health and human services on July 14.

Mahaniah had served as under-secretary for the Executive Office of Health and Human Services since April

2023. A practicing physician in the field of addiction and primary care, he was previously CEO of Lynn Community Health Center and chief medical officer at North Shore Community Health.

Mahaniah has taken over the role from **Kate Walsh**, who served as secretary for more than two years. Walsh, who has four decades of health care experience

and spent 13 years as CEO of Boston Medical Center, is planning to stay on as a senior advisor to the governor on health and human services matters.

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.

New select board members elected

The following are new select board members elected in annual town elections from May 20 through June 17.

This listing is meant to highlight first-time select board members, but it's possible that some listed here are returning to their board after an absence. If we are missing a new member, let us know by emailing newsselectboard@mma.org.

Bellingham: Cody Spencer

Blandford: Jacqueline Coury

Brimfield: Mitchell Frazier, Thomas Stewart

Carlisle: Christine Stevens

Charlemont: Wilder Sparks

Clarksburg: Seth Alexander*

Dudley: Christopher Starczewski

Hancock: James Rodda*

Holland: Ricky Lundin, Peter Molle

Lanesborough: Jason Breault

Leicester: Kellie Wilson

Longmeadow: Shelly Maynard-DeWolf

Marblehead: James Zisson

Russell: Illyd Fernandez-Sierra

Scituate: Nicolai Afanasenko, Freya Schlegel

Sutton: James Ettamarna, Christine Watkins

West Boylston: David Ashwell

Williamstown: Peter Beck*

** Elected before May 20, but not listed in earlier issues of The Beacon*

Leaving Needham, Fitzpatrick says now's 'best time ever' to serve

By Jennifer Kavanaugh

Longtime Needham Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick recently finished her decades-long tenure with the kind of work ethic that has defined her career: finishing performance evaluations, compiling a "massive" to-do list for her successor, Katie King, and, in her last act, riding off as the grand marshal in Needham's Fourth of July Parade.

Shortly before signing off in a town where she served for 35 years, Fitzpatrick said that she plans to stay busy. On July 28, she will assume her new role as the Northeast regional director for the International City/County Management Association. Though she said she "can do self-reflection later," she recently took time with the MMA to look back on her legacy in local government.

"I guess I'm very proud of working hard and being here," Fitzpatrick said. "The work is for the town, and its infrastructure, and the people who live here, and that's been my focus for 35 years — to help our employees do their jobs, and to help the residents who moved here because they feel there's a sense of community here."

On June 26, Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll, state and town officials, MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine, and Lexington Town Manager Steve Bartha, among others, gathered to celebrate Fitzpatrick's career in Needham, in roles including personnel director, assistant town administrator, town administrator, and two decades as town manager. At a party emceed by her daughter, Westwood Deputy Town Administrator Molly Fitzpatrick, she received an ICMA lifetime award and an honorary street sign bearing her name.

Fitzpatrick was president of the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association in 2009, president of the MMA in 2013, and served for more than a decade on the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission. Her numerous awards and recognitions include the 2001 Eugene Rooney Jr. Public Service Award for human resources service.

In 2017, Fitzpatrick was among



Kate Fitzpatrick holds up an honorary street sign with her name during a June 26 party in honor of her retirement as the town manager in Needham.

the co-founders of Women Leading Government, created to support women on all rungs of the municipal career ladder. She said it's "joyful" to watch her daughter Molly serve now. She said she does give Molly work advice, "which she sometimes takes," and "she gives me advice too, which I sometimes take."

Fitzpatrick has also made an impression with her popular [Very Kate](#) blog, in which she shares insights on work, life and local government. In 2022, she drew widespread attention for her [crowdsourced poem](#), "We Long For A City Where We Go Hard On The Issues And Easy On The People." With a title inspired by Chapdelaine, the poem drew more than 50 contributions about people's visions for a more civil and empathetic community during the depths of the pandemic.

Three years later, does she believe municipalities have moved closer to the kinder, gentler place the poem describes?

"I think people say we're farther," she said, "and I don't agree."

Fitzpatrick cites a 97% satisfaction level among Needham residents, and statistics showing that three-quarters of Americans feel good about their local government. Incivility and social media negativity remain challenges for communities, however, and emerging leaders will need to figure out how to recapture

a semblance of in-person politeness in a more hybrid environment.

She wondered aloud about how to get "the sense of familiarity ... cooperation and collaboration" of a small-chambers meeting when "you're asking people for their feedback in a different environment."

"I think that's something that we'll be talking about, that I'll be talking about," she said.

At the ICMA, Fitzpatrick said she will work with Northeast local officials, state municipal leagues and others to help advance the association's mission and professional development.

She also plans to travel, and spend more time with her family, including husband, Paul, daughters Molly and Colleen, one grandchild, and another on the way.

Her legacy in Needham will endure through the new Kate Fitzpatrick Professional Management Trust Fund, which the town is establishing to support manager-level professional development opportunities for Needham employees.

"A mentor of mine is always saying that we need local government professionals, the best and the brightest, in the dark times, not in the best times," Fitzpatrick said. "So this is the best time ever to be in local government and to join local government." ●

MIIA

Continued from page 26

- Debris burning and campfires
- Discarded cigarettes
- Sparks from landscaping or construction equipment

While large wildfires may still be rare, the risks from these events — both to buildings and public health — are growing.

What municipalities can do

Here are some steps communities should consider to reduce wildfire risks:

• Assess local risk zones

Use mapping to identify areas within the municipality that contain dense vegetation, forested land, or wildland-urban interface areas. Overlay these with infrastructure and residential data to understand where people and property are most exposed.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation recently issued an [advisory](#) with detailed recommendations covering three distinct property areas:

1. Immediate Zone, which includes a structure and the five-foot area surrounding it
2. Intermediate Zone, which covers from five to 30 feet from a structure's outermost point
3. Extended Zone, which stretches up to 200 feet from the structure

The DCR offers a range of [resources and technical assistance](#) to help with these efforts.

• Review open burning regulations

Many Massachusetts municipalities allow open burning from January to May, but policies vary. Local leaders are advised to ensure that their community's regulations are up to date, clearly communicated, and aligned with state

guidelines.

Additional restrictions should be considered during periods of drought, and these changes should be communicated to residents via websites, signage and public alerts.

• Educate residents on prevention

Public outreach is key. Communities can develop seasonal campaigns — particularly in spring and fall — about:

- Proper disposal of yard waste
- Safe use of fire pits and grills
- Reporting unattended fires or smoke
- Creating defensible space around homes (clearing leaves, pruning branches)

Some cities and towns distribute checklists, and some local fire departments conduct neighborhood walk-throughs.

• Safeguard indoor ventilation air quality

Air quality in municipal buildings is particularly critical because they may serve as emergency shelters during a wildfire event.

For buildings equipped with a building management system, providers should be asked to create an easily accessible emergency response button within the graphical interface specifically for wildfire events. This feature should promptly adjust all components to pre-set configurations designed to minimize the infiltration of airborne particulates.

Specifically, program controls should be set to:

- Maintain positive pressure within the building
- Maximize the efficiency of air filtration systems
- Optimize return air settings
- Reduce or completely close fresh air intakes
- Reduce and balance exhaust venting

settings

The following actions are recommended for buildings without a building management system:

- Ensure all windows and doors are tightly closed and locked
- Close all interior doors
- Securely close all wall openings, such as bay doors and garage doors
- Close any ceiling openings, including skylights and access hatches
- Use portable air filtration devices to further improve indoor air quality

• Manage municipal land and vegetation

Parks, trails, and town-owned open space can become high-risk zones if they're not properly managed. It's important to have policies for regular mowing and brush clearing; removal of dead or diseased trees; and controlled or prescribed burns (in coordination with DCR and the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife).

• Include fire risk in emergency planning

The local Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness plan or Hazard Mitigation Plan should be updated to incorporate wildfire scenarios. Consider evacuation routes, public sheltering options, and coordination protocols across departments.

Also ensure that communication systems — such as reverse 911, text/email alerts, and websites — can be activated quickly to inform residents.

Planning and preparedness matter

By updating policies, investing in preparedness, and educating the public, cities and towns can reduce the likelihood of serious wildfires and limit their impact if they do occur. ●

SURTAX LAW

Continued from page 1

Public transportation

- \$535 million to support infrastructure and operational needs at the MBTA
- \$25 million for regional transit authority workforce recruitment and retention
- \$25 million for equipment and facilities needs for regional transit authorities

- \$13 million for ferry infrastructure improvements
- \$10 million for micro-transit shuttles and “last mile” grants to support a multi-modal transit system

The law includes a provision directing the Office of the Inspector General to publish a report by next February on best practices for providing transportation services,

including procurement of those services.

Healey had filed her version of the surplus surtax supplemental budget in January as a key vehicle for her [transportation funding plan](#), informed by recommendations from the [Transportation Funding Task Force](#). ●

FY26 BUDGET

Continued from page 3

Alcohol license transfers: The budget includes a provision allowing, at local option, any onsite consumption licensee currently selling wine and malt beverages to trade its license in for a license to sell all alcoholic beverages.

Affordable housing exemption: The budget law requires the administration to study the feasibility and impact of allowing a local-option municipal property tax exemption for new affordable housing developments. A report is due by March 1, 2026.

Not included: The budget law did not include several proposed policy initiatives, including a proposal for “MassHealth Crossover” payments that would have jeopardized financial relief for emergency medical services transporting patients eligible for both Medicare and MassHealth; reforms to the municipal liquor license quota system; and a review of the Massachusetts School Building Authority’s capacity to meet the needs of current and future

school facility projects.

Fair Share

Fiscal 2026 is the third year for allocating revenue from the Fair Share surtax on annual incomes over \$1 million. The budget law will use \$2.4 billion from this revenue stream, more than \$400 million more than in previous years. This revenue — which can be used only for transportation and education programs — will support several key accounts and initiatives important to cities and towns in fiscal 2026, including:

- \$550 million for the Commonwealth Transportation Fund to expand the state’s bonding capacity for various transportation needs and projects
- \$497 million to support increases to Chapter 70 education aid
- \$180 million to fund reimbursements for Universal School Meals
- \$50 million for various school transportation needs
- \$10 million for the Green School Works program ●



LGAC discusses support for businesses

During a virtual meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on June 10, Stoughton Select Board Vice Chair Debra Roberts voices support for administration efforts to help local businesses by eliminating outdated rules and requirements. “This seems like a great jump forward in helping businesses cut red tape and make their processes more efficient and effective,” Roberts said.

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- State budget & local aid
- State & federal grant opportunities
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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Administrative Assessor

Town of Shutesbury

The town of Shutesbury seeks a 20-hour/week, Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR)-accredited Administrative Assessor. The Administrative Assessor values all real and personal property, annually sets the tax rate, prepares reports for the DOR, provides the Board of Assessors with information and technical support, and supervises a clerk. Compensation to be based on experience, up to \$35,000/year. This is a fully benefited position. Rolling deadline. For inquiries, to request a job description, or to submit a cover letter and resume, contact: assessor@shutesbury.org, 413-259-3790, or Shutesbury Assessors, P.O. Box 264, Shutesbury, MA 01072. The town of Shutesbury is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Town Manager

Town of Billerica

Billerica (43,000 population) is seeking an experienced, energetic and well-rounded government leader committed to excellence in municipal services to be the next Town Manager. The town of Billerica is located in Middlesex County, 20 miles northwest of Boston and 10 miles from the New Hampshire border. The town has a proud history; it was settled in 1652 and incorporated in 1655. Billerica is known as a great town in which to live and raise a family, and each neighborhood has their own distinct characteristics that make them unique and distinguish them from one another. Many families move to the town because of the desirable Billerica School District. Billerica's proximity to major highways and a commuter rail station makes it an ideal location in which to reside, in addition to the large and vibrant commercial opportunities. The Select Board is committed to furthering economic development and attracting new technologies and manufacturing to continue driving innovation and growth. The town is governed by a five-member Select Board and Representative Town Meeting. The appointed Town Manager works under a strong Town Manager Charter. With the help of the Assistant Town Manager and an excellent Senior Management Team, the Town Manager oversees a full-service municipality with an operating budget of \$225.6 million (includes town and school) and 346 full-time town employees. The town is in a stable and strong financial position with more than \$23 million of excess levy capacity, healthy reserves and investment grade bond ratings. The successful candidate must have a bachelor's degree (master's degree preferred) and five-plus years of progressively responsible experience in public administration, or an equivalent combination of education and demonstrated senior leadership experience. The salary range to \$250K commensurate with qualifications/experience plus a competitive total compensation package. EOE. Additional information: www.mrigov.com/current_recruitments. Submit a resume and cover letter, in confidence, as a PDF to recruitment@mrigrv.com by July 21.

Health Director

Town of Yarmouth

The town of Yarmouth is searching for a Health Director to join our team! Direct and administer all

health, inspection and enforcement programs with the authority to issue orders on behalf of the Board of Health; plans, organizes, schedules and directs the operations of the Health Division, in compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Works under the general direction of the Municipal Inspections Director and Board of Health in the implementation and enforcement of the Board's policies and rulings. Works closely with the Board of Health to develop new bylaws and regulations dealing with environmental and public health concerns. Supervises division staff; trains staff on division policy and procedure; reviews the work of subordinates; monitors and evaluates staff performance. Develops plans and programs relating to public health and public health requirements; prepares grant requests and administers grants; prepares articles for Town Meeting consideration, develops health division annual budget. Monitors town budget contribution to various human services agencies. Reviews and comments on hydrogeologic, environmental, and ground water discharge reports along with technical submittals for developments and renovations of buildings or properties. Performs similar or related work as required or as situation dictates. Please visit www.yarmouth.ma.us/jobs to download application.

Assistant to the Town Manager

Town of Westport

The town of Westport (pop. 16,881) is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Assistant to the Town Administrator. College graduate with a bachelor's degree in public administration, human resources, business administration or a related field preferred; a minimum of five or more years of experience in municipal administration, office management or human resources, preferably with supervisory responsibilities; experience with Massachusetts municipal government preferred. Candidate should have comprehensive knowledge of municipal government operations and human resources principles; familiarity with Massachusetts public employment laws, collective bargaining

and compliance requirements. Must have strong organizational, communication and interpersonal skills and the ability to handle confidential information with discretion. Should be proficient in Microsoft Office and ability to multi-task, prioritize workload and work under deadlines. Experience with municipal management software preferred. Works under the administrative direction of the Town Administrator and the Select Board. 40 hours per week; salary range is \$75,000 - \$85,000. For a full job description visit www.westport-ma.com under Town Resources, Employment Opportunities. Send resume and letter of interest by email to: employment@westport-ma.gov. Deadline is Aug. 8 or when the position is filled.

Town Clerk

Town of Groton

The town of Groton seeks qualified applicants for the full-time Town Clerk position appointed by the Select Board and reporting to the Town Manager. The successful candidate will be responsible for a wide variety of functions such as maintenance of municipal records, issuing various licenses and documents, administration of elections (federal, state, and local) and Town meetings, annual Town census, voter registration, and annual budgets. The Town Clerk is responsible for office management, including the supervision of two part-time employees on a daily basis and approximately 50 part-time election workers during elections and town meetings. This is a busy office, and the successful candidate must be able to multi-task, provide a high level of customer service, possess excellent organizational skills and be flexible. Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in public administration or business management; three to five years' experience in an administrative capacity or a combination of education and experience. Experience working in a municipality preferred. Special requirements: Must be able to be accepted as a Notary and be bondable. Salary: \$90,000-\$100,000 with a full benefit package. To apply, please send cover letter and

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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 www.mma.org, though a discount is available for those who request placement of an ad only on the website.

Member rates

- web only, 200 words or less: \$115; 201-400 words: \$225
- web & Beacon, 200 words or less: \$165; 201-400 words: \$325

Nonmember rates

- web only, 200 words or less: \$175; 201-400 words: \$285
- web & Beacon, 200 words or less: \$225; 201-400 words: \$385

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 published in mid-July.

September Beacon

Deadline: August 26
Publication: September 4

October Beacon

Deadline: September 26
Publication: October 2

Placing an ad

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

For more information, call Owen Page at the MMA at 617-426-7272, ext. 135.

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

See www.mma.org for details.

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CLASSIFIEDS

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resume by mail to Human Resources Director, Town Hall, 173 Main St., Groton, MA 01450 or by email to humanresources@grotonma.gov For questions, please call 978-448-1145. Job description is available by request. Deadline for applications: July 31. The town of Groton is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Assistant County Administrator Plymouth County

The county of Plymouth is seeking applicants for the newly created position of Assistant County Administrator. This position, under limited supervision, performs professional work in carrying out the goals and policies of the Plymouth County Commissioners under the direction of the County Administrator on a wide range of county administrative and operations issues. Duties include assisting the County Administrator by supervising designated departments towards the achievement of departmental objectives and the objectives of the county government. Duties include serving as a project manager for major building/construction projects and advising the County Administrator on the determination of program needs, the preparation and presentation of programs for the consideration of the Plymouth County Commissioners and the implementation of approved programs. Exercises considerable independent judgment within an assigned area of responsibility, and work is subject to evaluation based on results obtained. The position is a full-time five-day position (40 hours weekly with a one-hour lunch daily), with a starting salary of up to \$85,000 depending on experience and credentials plus the county full benefits package. To see the full job description, please click www.plymouthcountyma.gov/node/1/news. A letter of interest and a resume should be submitted to Plymouth County Administrator via email to FBasler@PlymouthCountyMA.gov. The position will remain posted until it is filled. The county of Plymouth is an equal opportunity employer.

CAREERS AT MMA/MIIA

Legislative Analyst MMA

The Massachusetts Municipal Association is seeking a Legislative Analyst in its Legislative Division. This is an excellent opportunity for someone who excels at policy analysis and development, and can serve as a key advocate on behalf of municipal government. About the MMA: The nonpartisan Massachusetts Municipal Association is the recognized voice of local government across the state, advancing cities and towns as centers of excellence in our economy and society. The MMA provides high-impact services to its member cities and towns statewide, including advocacy, policy research and analysis, multi-faceted education and training, multi-platform publications and nationally recognized municipal service programs. As a membership organization, the MMA works to advance the interests of all cities and towns, uniting local leaders to promote local government policies and programs that build strong communities. About the position: Under the direction of the Legislative Director and working within a talented six-member

legislative team, the Legislative Analyst meets regularly with municipal officials from across the state to develop local government positions on policy and legislative issues, represents the interests of the MMA and promotes municipal issues before legislative and executive branch officials and staff, and regularly speaks at meetings of municipal officials, state government officials and advocacy groups. Additionally, this person prepares written testimony on legislation and regulations, drafts Legislative Alerts and other advocacy materials, prepares articles for publication in MMA's monthly newsletter, and writes for the MMA website. This person serves as lead staff for one or more of MMA's five standing policy committees, and other special committees and task forces as assigned. This includes coordinating committee agendas, work plans, and preparing information and analysis for the policy committee(s), the Executive Director, and the Board of Directors. We are also interested in candidates who demonstrate knowledge of local government administration in Massachusetts, including public policy involving transportation, public works, and public utilities, as well as the ability to analyze complex statutes, regulations, and legislation. Qualifications: A college degree plus a minimum of three years of related experience in policy analysis, the legislative process and municipal and state government, or the equivalent. Knowledge and understanding of the structure and practices of local government in Massachusetts. Strong interpersonal skills and highly professional written and oral communication abilities are essential, as well as the ability to research and draft policy. A driver's license is required for in-state travel to meetings and events. Ability to immediately register as a legislative and executive branch lobbyist in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is required. Work environment and compensation: Our offices are located in Boston's Government Center neighborhood. The position offers a starting salary of \$87,500 and includes terrific benefits, and a great collaborative work culture. Our office uses a hybrid work schedule. If you are ready to devote yourself to work on behalf of our member cities and towns, then this position may be for you. How to Apply: Please send a PDF of your cover letter and resume to: hr@mma.org.

Member Program Coordinator MMA

The Massachusetts Municipal Association is seeking a full time Member Program Coordinator in the Membership team. This is an excellent opportunity for someone who excels at member services and has an interest in local government. About MMA: The nonpartisan Massachusetts Municipal Association provides an array of services to its member cities and towns statewide, including advocacy, education and training, research and analysis, and publications and information programs. As the voice of local government in Massachusetts, the MMA works to advance the interests of all cities and towns. About the position: The ideal candidate is a highly organized self-starter and team player with the ability to meet deadlines and manage multiple tasks. We need a candidate who is able to work in a fast-paced department, with strong organizational, program development, event planning, communication, database, spreadsheet, and writing skills. Attention to detail, a commitment to excellent customer service, technical skills, and the ability to work collaboratively on a team are a must. Our Member Program Coordinators provide direct administrative services to

the MMA's member groups which include elected and appointed professionals in municipal government. Responsibilities include organizing and planning in-person and online educational conferences and meetings, assisting in budget preparation, and working directly with elected and professional leadership of the member groups. Qualifications: Candidates should be highly motivated with a commitment to meet member needs and provide excellent service. A college degree is required and three to five years of experience working in a nonprofit or government office and knowledge of local government is preferred. The position requires regular in-state travel so a valid driver's license is required. Work environment: Our offices are located in Boston's Government Center neighborhood. The position offers a starting salary of \$75,000, terrific benefits, and a great collaborative work culture. Our office uses a hybrid work schedule. If you are ready to devote yourself to work on behalf of our member cities and towns, then this position may be for you. How to Apply: Please send a PDF of your cover letter and resume to: hr@mma.org.

Senior Risk Management Trainer MMA/MIIA

The Massachusetts Municipal Association and the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association are seeking a Senior Risk Management Trainer to join the MIIA Risk Management Team. This is an excellent opportunity for someone who is passionate about safety and risk management and excels at training and developing tailored safety, health, and risk management programs for municipalities. About the MMA: The nonpartisan Massachusetts Municipal Association provides an array of services to its member cities and towns statewide, including advocacy, education and training, research and analysis, and publications and information programs. As the voice of local government in Massachusetts, the MMA works to advance the interests of all cities and towns. About MIIA: The Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association provides property, liability, workers compensation, and group health insurance to cities and towns in Massachusetts. MIIA is a nonprofit organization and a membership service of Massachusetts Municipal Association. About the position: As Senior Risk Management Trainer, you will collaborate with the risk management and programming teams to deliver exceptional training experiences to members and peers. You will be responsible for creating, presenting, and revising training programs and materials for MIIA members and staff in a timely and consistent manner. Key responsibilities: Collaborate with the Senior Manager of Risk Management to set guidelines for the MIIA risk management training and program plan. Develop, implement, and evaluate MIIA's safety and health curriculum. Assist in developing and delivering training on other MIIA insurance coverages, including auto, property, general liability, professional liability, law enforcement, school board, and professional liability. Provide on-site and virtual training for members. Review member training requests and create training descriptions and course flyers. Facilitate online training and track member evaluations. Provide monthly training updates and annual training reviews to management. Additional responsibilities: Analyze member loss data to identify training needs and create materials to address high-loss and topical areas. Review materials with the risk management team, create and update technical documentation, and

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CLASSIFIEDS

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provide guidance for incident review and remediation. Serve as a liaison with the risk management team, outside consultants, and members, and conduct outside inspections. Become knowledgeable about MIIA's cyber risk management program and explore educational opportunities. Program review and analysis then update, implementation and evaluation. Project work as required. Qualifications: The candidate must have a bachelor's degree in a safety-related field preferably in occupational health and safety. Five years of work experience in safety or insurance related fields. Experience with adult learning principles and creating and implementing training curricula. Ability to work in a team setting and independently. Understanding of instructional design is a plus. Preference for an individual who is a current OSHA outreach trainer. Work environment: Our offices are located in Boston's Government Center neighborhood. The position offers a highly competitive salary, terrific benefits, and a great collaborative work culture. Our office uses a hybrid work schedule. If you are ready to devote yourself to work on behalf of our member cities and towns, then this position may be for you. How to apply: Please send a PDF of your cover letter and resume to: hr@mma.org.

Driver Training Instructor - EVOC and Simulator MMA/IIIA

The Massachusetts Municipal Association and the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association are seeking a full-time Driver Training Instructor (Simulator and EVOC) to oversee the driver simulator training program across the Commonwealth. The individual will also be a Certified Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) Instructor to train police officers in emergency driving scenarios. About the MMA: The nonpartisan Massachusetts Municipal Association provides an array of services to its member cities and towns statewide, including advocacy, education and training, research and analysis, and publications and information programs. As the voice of local government in Massachusetts, the MMA works to advance the interests of all cities and towns. About MIIA: The Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association provides property, liability, workers compensation, and group health insurance to cities and towns in Massachusetts. MIIIA is a nonprofit organization and a subsidiary of Massachusetts Municipal Association. About the position: The MIIIA simulator is a state-of-the-art driving simulator available to MIIIA member communities and offers a safe environment for driver operators to experience a variety of scenarios and conditions typical to emergency response situations. Simulator duties: The Driving Instructor will have knowledge of or ability to be trained in the use of the Doran simulator computer system, including police, fire, DPW and general municipal driving scenarios. They will be responsible for curriculum development, including vehicle and scenario updates. They will work with Doran to ensure a 24-hour customer support onsite visit with followup. They schedule and confirm training while maintaining the truck, trailer and simulator. They will track and communicate participant performance to their Police Chief/Fire Chief or Training Officer. EVOC Instructor duties: the Driving Instructor will train participants on vehicle pre-trip inspections, defensive driving,

backing emergency response pursuit and vehicle limitations. They will also discuss the importance of attitude, skill, capability and driving conditions. They will be responsible for course development, including setup and breakdown of courses. They will handle the onsite training logistics and facilitate driving instruction while supervising a team of EVOC instructors. Qualifications: The candidate must have knowledge and fluency of Police/Fire response policies, a valid driver license and the ability to drive the truck while towing the simulator trailer. They must have an understanding of the interaction between dispatchers and officers. EVOC Certification or the ability to obtain certification is required. Knowledge of EVOC course design, statement of program objectives and understanding of vehicle dynamics are necessary. Knowledge of commercial vehicles, federal highway regulations and CDL licensing is important. They must possess a DOT medical card. Five years of public safety employment, training and supervisory experience is preferred. Simulator experience is a plus. How to Apply: Please send a PDF of your cover letter and resume to: hr@mma.org.

The MMA and MIIA are committed to diversity in the workplace and are proud to be equal opportunity employers. Diverse candidates are encouraged to apply. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, genetics information, pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition, disability, age, or military or veteran status.

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.

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 who 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.

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.

Municipal Accounting and Consulting Services

Our outstanding team specializes in municipal financial consulting and outsourced accounting. Since 2008, we have worked with many Massachusetts cities and towns with interim accounting, special projects, fraud risk assessments, financial forecasts, and budgeting. We also provide permanent outsourced accounting solutions, which have proven successful for many years. Please contact Eric Kinsherf at eric@erickinsherfcpa.com or visit our website erickinsherfcpa.com for further information.

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 long-term claims. We offer training in sexual harassment, social media and the "just cause analysis" to municipal managers. We also serve as appointed hearing officers on a case-by-case basis. Many of our clients take advantage of a flat monthly rate for unlimited phone calls and emails, which encourages key managers to work with counsel prior to making critical personnel decisions. Check our website at CliffordKennyLaw.com to see a complete list of our satisfied clients or call John Clifford or Jaime Kenny at 781-924-5796 for more information.

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.

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Strategy 5 Consulting LLC is a boutique urban economics firm based in Andover, with national experience in a wide range of challenging projects. Over three decades, Principal Ernest Bleinberger has completed successful economic development strategic

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plans, achieved tangible downtown revitalization, conducted financial feasibility and market analyses in many sectors, formed TIF districts, induced significant private sector investment, and excelled in high-profile assignments from coast to coast. Our work ethic and professionalism ensure a close working relationship with our clients that has proven beneficial in achieving real economic results. Please contact Ernest Bleinberger by phone at 978-984-7125 or by email at eb@strategy5.net. www.strategy5.net.

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.

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 Bartlett St., Suite 186, Andover, MA 01810; 978-474-0200; hrcsconsulting@comcast.net; or visit www.hrsconsultinginc.com. WBE certified.

Town Counsel Services

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

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

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.

Special Counsel, Public Construction and Infrastructure Services

Petrini & Associates P.C. (P&A) is a recognized statewide leader in representing public owners in public construction and infrastructure disputes and litigation. P&A has decades of experience, having represented public owners in numerous bid protests, delay claims, differing site conditions, disputes between design professionals and project owners, and a broad variety of other construction disputes. Since its founding in 2004, P&A has represented more than 40 cities, towns, school districts and water and sewer districts in public construction litigation. For further information, please visit www.petrinilaw.com or contact Christopher Petrini at cpetrini@petrinilaw.com or 508-665-4310.

Human Capital Solutions

MGT provides executive recruiting, comprehensive interim staffing, and human capital consulting for local governments, school districts, businesses, and nonprofits. Drawing on decades of experience working across the country, our team collaborates with your organization to understand your unique needs, culture, and goals to deliver tangible results. We tackle immediate challenges, anticipate future workplace needs, bridge talent gaps, and enhance policies to foster lasting positive transformation within your organization. Visit us at mgt.us, post to our job board at govhrrjobs.com, or contact our team of experts at 847-380-3240.

Municipal Support Services

Capital Strategic Solutions (CSS) is a Massachusetts-based, certified woman-owned, disadvantaged business enterprise composed of municipal experts. We have hands-on experience that allows us to formulate and implement strategies tailored to the communities we serve. We specialize in public administration and municipal finance, human resources and policy development, emergency management services and public safety, public works and infrastructure operations, public relations and community engagement, project management and oversight, grant writing and administration, and onsite support services. For more information, visit www.capital-strategic-solutions.com, call 508-690-0046, or email info@capital-strategic-solutions.com.

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 www.k-plaw.com or contact Lauren Goldberg, Esq. at 617-556-0007, or toll free at 800-548-3522, or at lgoldberg@k-plaw.com.

Navigating Employment Law

Navigate the intricate world of public employment law with this indispensable guide, crafted to address some of the most challenging and pressing issues faced by public employers today. While it's impossible to cover every facet of employment law in a single volume, this resource focuses on providing practical guidance on key topics, including: Harassment in the Workplace; Combatting Disability Discrimination; FLSA; FMLA; Labor Relations; Management Rights; Freedom of Speech; IOD; Personnel Records. For more information or to purchase, visit mpitraining.com/product/navigating-employment-law-a-practical-guide-for-municipal-leaders.

RFPs

Legal Services

Barnstable County Retirement Association

The Barnstable County Retirement Association is seeking proposals from qualified Legal Services Firms and/or Attorneys specializing in providing legal services/advice to Massachusetts Public Employee Defined Benefit Plans governed under the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 32 and Regulations of the Massachusetts Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission 840 CMR. The RFP may be obtained by email sholmes@barnstablecountyretirement.org. The proposal's deadline is Friday, Aug. 1, 2025, at 4 p.m. EST. Late proposals will not be accepted. The Barnstable County Retirement Association reserves the right to cancel or reject any or all proposals in the best interest of the system. ●

Calendar



The Beacon

Massachusetts Municipal Association

3 Center Plaza, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02108

JULY

17 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, summer meeting, 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Granite Links, Quincy. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

23 Massachusetts Mayors' Association, meeting. Contact: MMA Membership and Project Assistant Maddie Roberts

30 MMA webinar, strategic communications, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

AUGUST

6 MMA webinar, legal updates, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

14 Massachusetts Municipal Communicators, meeting, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Foxborough Community Center, Foxborough. Contact: MMA Senior Executive and Membership Director Jackie Lavender Bird

20 MMA webinar, crisis communications, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

SEPTEMBER

9 Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, hybrid board meeting, 8:45-9:45 a.m., The Delaney House, Holyoke. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

9 MMA Board of Directors, hybrid meeting, 10-11:45 a.m., The Delaney House, Holyoke. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Elanienne Coste

9 Local Government Advisory Commission, hybrid meeting, 1-2 p.m., The Delaney House, Holyoke. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Elanienne Coste

17 Massachusetts Mayors' Association, meeting. Contact: MMA Senior Executive and Membership Director Jackie Lavender Bird

18-19 Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources, fall conference, Marriott Springfield Downtown, Springfield. Contact: MMA Senior Executive and Membership Director Jackie Lavender Bird

26 Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, regional meeting, 8:30-10 a.m., Marlborough Public Library. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

30 MMA/MIIA Health Care Costs Forum, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Lake Pearl, Wrentham. Contact: MMA Assistant Director of Events Timmery Kuck

OCTOBER

9 Massachusetts Select Board Association, leadership conference, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Cyprian Keyes Golf Club, Boylston. Contact: MMA Senior Executive and Membership Director Jackie Lavender Bird

14 MMA Board of Directors, long-range planning meeting, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., The Conference Center at Waltham Woods, Waltham. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Elanienne Coste

16 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, boot camp, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Sharon Community Center, Sharon. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

18 Association of Town Finance Committees, annual meeting, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Sharon Community Center, Sharon. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

23 Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources, labor relations seminar, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Devens Common Center, Devens. Contact: MMA Senior Executive and Membership Director Jackie Lavender Bird

27 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, reception at ICMA Conference, Tampa, Florida. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

NOVEMBER

13 Women Leading Government, meeting, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Devens Common Center, Devens. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

18 Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, virtual board meeting, 8:45-9:45 a.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

18 MMA Board of Directors, virtual meeting, 10-11:45 a.m. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Elanienne Coste

18 Local Government Advisory Commission, virtual meeting, 1-2 p.m. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Elanienne Coste

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

MMA contacts

Denise Baker can be reached at dbaker@mma.org

Jackie Lavender Bird can be reached at jlavenderbird@mma.org

Elanienne Coste can be reached at ecoste@mma.org

Timmery Kuck can be reached at tkuck@mma.org

Kristianna Lapierre can be reached at klapierre@mma.org

For more information, visit www.mma.org.