

## Forum explores health costs, solutions

By John Ouellette

The MMA brought together a panel of experts in Wrentham on Sept. 30 to examine the aggressive growth in health care costs in Massachusetts and to explore strategies for slowing the escalation.

The consensus: there's no silver bullet, given the complexity of the system, but a range of actions by all stakeholders — health care providers, insurers, employers, consumers, and state policy makers — could make a significant impact.

Lauren Peters, executive director of the [Center for Health Information and Analysis](#), an independent state agency, set the stage by presenting data about the use and cost of health care in Massachusetts.

Key takeaways:

- Health care spending continues to outpace inflation in other sectors of the economy.
- Increases are driven by provider



MIIA Health Benefits Trust Director Chris Bailey, second from right, participates in a panel during an MMA and MIIA health care costs forum on Sept. 30 in Wrentham. Joining him, left to right, are Paul Cohen, senior vice president of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts; Matt Veno, executive director of the Group Insurance Commission; and moderator Eileen McAnneny, president of the Employer Coalition on Health.

charges and drug prices, as well as changes in health care utilization.

- Cost increases are being borne by premium payers and members of health plans (via plan design changes

and higher cost-sharing).

Total health care expenditures in Massachusetts increased by 8.6% from 2022 to 2023 — the second highest rate since CHIA was established in 2012 — to a total of \$78.1 billion, or \$11,153 per resident.

The CHIA data show a trend toward higher-deductible health insurance plans and higher-cost prescription drugs. Health insurance premiums and cost-sharing have been increasing faster than wages in recent years, putting pressure on consumers and employers.

Regarding utilization data from acute hospitals, Peters said individuals are tending to be sicker when they arrive, staying for longer, and needing higher-cost services and care.

■ **HEALTH CARE COSTS** *continued on 19*

### Inside

**MMA to host Fiscal Summit on Oct. 9** .....3

**Hearings set for Municipal Empowerment Act**.....3

**MMA Legislative Breakfast Meetings continue** .....3

**State advances draft clean energy rules**.....5

**MMA Webinars**..... 10

**MIIA Report** ..... 20

**Around the Commonwealth** ..... 21

**People** .....25

**Classifieds** .....27

**Calendar** ..... 31

## MMA opens registration for Connect 351

By Owen Page

Registration opened on Oct. 1 for [Connect 351](#), the MMA's annual conference, which will be held Jan. 22-24 in Boston's Seaport District.

Connect 351 offers local leaders an opportunity to collaborate with and learn from their peers across the Commonwealth through a diverse program of events, including timely, information-packed [workshops](#), myriad networking opportunities, membership business meetings, receptions, awards programs, and other engaging activities.

The event will be held at the same location as last time, though the venue has a new name: the [Menino Convention and Exhibition Center](#).

The [Connect 351 program](#) is quickly taking shape, and MMA staff are hard at



Cynthia Shelton Harris, executive director of veterans services in Cambridge, participates in a session during Connect 351 this past January. Registration for the 2026 conference opened on Oct. 1.

work finalizing the remaining details. As always, the latest and most comprehensive information about the conference is available on [connect351.org](http://connect351.org).

### Speakers

Friday's keynote speaker, educator and

■ **CONNECT 351** *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.

### Executive Committee

**Jamie Hellen**, MMA President  
*Town Administrator, Franklin*

**Kassandra Gove**, MMA Vice President  
*Mayor, Amesbury*

**John McLaughlin**, MMA Immediate  
*Past President and MMCA Second Vice President  
Councillor, Waltham*

**Denise Casey**, MMMA First Vice President  
*Deputy Town Manager, North Andover*

**Lisa Feltner**, MMCA First Vice President  
*Councillor, Watertown*

**Josh Garcia**, MMAA First Vice President  
*Mayor, Holyoke*

**Jennifer Glass**, MSA First Vice President  
*Select Board, Lincoln*

**John Mangiaratti**, MMMA President  
*Town Manager, Acton*

**Michael Nicholson**, MMAA President  
*Mayor, Gardner*

**Debra Roberts**, MSA President  
*Select Board, Stoughton*

**Kevin Sullivan**, ATFC First Vice President  
*Finance Committee, Hanson*

**Brendan Sweeney**, MMCA President  
*Councillor, Beverly*

**Melinda Tarsi-Goldfien**, ATFC President  
*Industrial and Development Committee,  
Mansfield*

**Adam Chapdelaine** (non-voting)  
*MMA Executive Director*

**Kiana Baskin**, Select Board Member,  
*Sharon*

**Paul Bockelman**, Town Manager, Amherst

**Colleen Bradley-MacArthur**, Councillor,  
*Waltham*

**Peter Cusolito**, Select Board Member, Leicester

**Denise Dembkoski**, Town Administrator, Stow

**Yolanda Greaves**, Select Board Member, Ashland

**Jill Hai**, Select Board Member, Lexington

**Christine Hoyt**, Select Board Member, Adams

**Carole Julius**, Select Board Member, East  
*Bridgewater*

**Afroz Khan**, Councillor, Newburyport

**Andrea Llamas**, Town Administrator, Northfield

**Breanna Lungo-Koehn**, Mayor, Medford

**Mike McCabe**, Mayor, Westfield

**Kevin Mizikar**, Town Manager, Shrewsbury

**Michael Ossing**, Councillor, Marlborough

**Ryan Pereira**, Councillor, New Bedford

**Israel Rivera**, Councillor, Holyoke

**Sam Squailia**, Mayor, Fitchburg

**Liz Sullivan**, Town Administrator, Dennis

**Robert Sullivan**, Mayor, Brockton

**Michelle Wu**, Mayor, Boston

# Executive Director's Report

## To ease division, we must commit to dignity

It's October 2025, and there is no way to deny that the social and civic fabric that binds us together is being stretched as thin as perhaps it ever has. When you read the news, scroll through social media, or listen to coffee shop banter, it feels abundantly clear that there are forces in our nation that are dedicated to dividing us based on our differences and disagreements.

I'd argue that the strongest of these forces is the algorithmically driven content that so many of us consume across various social media platforms on a daily basis. It has been well-established that these algorithms, developed to maximize corporate profits, have figured out that enragement equals engagement. What this means is that your social media feed is designed to agitate you (and hundreds of millions of other users) so that you continue to engage with the platform, its content, and most importantly, its advertisements. It's a pernicious cycle, and it drives us to see those who disagree with us as enemies as opposed to neighbors.

Federal reforms, aimed at holding social media companies liable for content that is promoted disproportionately by their algorithms, could begin to curb this phenomenon, but our current political climate does not seem to be conducive



By Adam  
Chapdelaine

to such action. So, short of a massive social media boycott, what can we do?

I believe we need to find a pathway back to dialogue with those that we disagree with, and that dialogue needs to be based upon dignity. Such an approach can begin with all of us in our daily lives. It can also be scaled up to municipal governance and debate. From there, we can hope that action at the local level will begin to shift culture at a higher level of society and government so that as a nation, we can begin to focus less on division, and focus more on dignity.

It's for these reasons that I am so pleased that the MMA is partnering with [The Dignity Index](#) to provide a framework for starting this work at the municipal government level. As you'll see on their website, "The Dignity Index is designed to ease divisions, prevent violence, and solve problems." We will be joining other state municipal leagues that are working with the Dignity Index, and also following the impressive example of the town of Hull, which has already engaged in this work, and taken the "Dignity Pledge."

We will be kicking off this work at [Connect 351](#), with keynote speaker [Timothy Shriver](#), who is the co-creator of the Dignity Index. Following his keynote address, we will have [Tami Pyfer](#), co-creator of the Dignity Index, as the featured speaker at the WEMO Luncheon. After Connect 351, we will continue our work with the Dignity Index, with further training and

■ **DIRECTOR'S REPORT** continued on 24



October 2025 | Volume 52, Number 9  
Copyright © 2025, Massachusetts Municipal Association

#### Communications

**Director**  
John Ouellette

**Associate Editor**  
Jennifer Kavanaugh

**Digital Communications  
Manager**  
Meredith Gabriliska

#### Communications

**Coordinator**  
Owen Page

**Publisher**  
Adam Chapdelaine,  
MMA Executive Director

**Design**  
FCD, Inc.

#### Massachusetts Municipal Association

Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association  
3 Center Plaza, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02108

617-426-7272 • [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org)

Twitter and Facebook: @massmunicipal

**TheBeacon** (ISSN 0199-235X) is published monthly, except for a combined July-August issue, by the Massachusetts Municipal Association, 3 Center Plaza, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02108. The MMA is composed of the Massachusetts Select Board Association, the Massachusetts Mayors' Association, the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, the Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, and the Association of Town Finance Committees.

We encourage readers to send comments, story ideas, news items, and events notices to [editor@mma.org](mailto:editor@mma.org).



# MMA hosting Fiscal Summit for all members on Oct. 9

The MMA will hold a Fiscal Summit on Oct. 9 to examine the fiscal challenges facing municipalities across the Commonwealth.

The event is being hosted by the Massachusetts Select Board Association, but all municipal officials are invited to attend.

The summit will open with a keynote address by MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine on the current fiscal landscape in cities and towns.

There will also be two panel discussions.

The first, exploring the cost drivers in public education, will feature Holyoke Public Schools Finance Director Sean Mangano and Peabody Schools



Adam Chapdelaine



Maura Buckley



Sean Mangano

Registration and a networking coffee will begin at 8:30 a.m. The program will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 1:15 p.m. The cost to attend is \$25, including lunch.

The conference will be held at the [Cyprian Keyes Golf Club](#) in Boylston.

Online registration is available for all MMA members at [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org), along with the full agenda.

Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis at [mdavis@mma.org](mailto:mdavis@mma.org)

Superintendent Josh Vadala.

The second, covering public engagement strategies for municipal finance and budgeting, will feature Foxborough Communications Specialist Maura Buckley and Reading Assistant Town Manager Jayne Wellman.

## Municipal Empowerment Act hearings begin

By Ali DiMatteo

The first hearing on Gov. Maura Healey's proposed Municipal Empowerment Act was held by the Joint Committee on Public Service on Sept. 22.

The [wide-ranging bill](#) intends to increase municipal flexibility, reduce administrative burdens, strengthen municipal finances, address municipal workforce challenges, and improve the efficiency of local operations.

The bill was first filed last year, and was re-filed in January with some additional provisions. It has widespread support from local leaders across the state.

The Public Service Committee hearing focused on two provisions of the bill:

- One that would allow municipalities to apply for a critical shortage exemption from certain post-retirement limitations on employment for specific jobs titles and classes for a period of three years
- And one that would establish an Other Post-Employment Benefits Commission to address unfunded liabilities from non-pension employee benefits

The Sept. 22 hearing was the first of three that are expected on the bill.

The Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government has scheduled a hearing for Oct. 28. Most of the bill's provisions fall within this committee's jurisdiction, including provisions to reform procurement procedures and regulations; update borrowing rules for school projects; make permanent a number of popular pandemic-era allowances for remote or hybrid public meetings; and establish enforcement mechanisms for prohibitions on doubled-up utility poles.

The Joint Committee on Revenue has not yet scheduled the third hearing, focused on the bill's fiscal provisions. ●

## MMA holding Legislative Breakfast Meetings this month

By Daniel Yi

The MMA kicked off its fall series of Legislative Breakfast Meetings in Lee on Sept. 26, with additional meetings coming this month in Athol, Middleborough and Chelmsford.

The MMA's Legislative Breakfast Meetings, held each spring and fall in communities across the Commonwealth, give local leaders, legislators and MMA staff an opportunity to network in an informal setting and learn about and discuss issues of



Casey Pease, chief of staff to Sen. Paul Mark, left, Middlefield Select Board Chair Ann Marie Visconti, center, and Sen. Paul Mark talk during an MMA Legislative Breakfast in Lee on Sept. 26.

importance at the local and state level.

The MMA's Legislative Division staff discuss the latest activity in the Legislature

with implications for cities and towns. Topics include the state budget, the Chapter 90 program and the recently signed transportation bond bill, supplemental budget bills, an environmental bond bill, updates to the tax title foreclosure process, clean energy siting and permitting, regulatory updates, and more.

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

A light breakfast and coffee will be

■ **BREAKFAST MEETINGS** *continued on 11*

# Gov. has plan to cut environmental rules for housing

At an event in Medford on Sept. 9, Gov. Maura Healey announced a plan to cut environmental regulations in order to expedite housing production in Massachusetts and reduce costs.

Amid a longstanding statewide housing shortage that has driven up home prices and rents, the administration is proposing to cut the environmental review period for qualifying housing projects from 1 year or more to just 30 days.

The recommendations are rooted in a [report from the Unlocking Housing Production Commission](#) in February indicating that lengthy environmental reviews for new housing developments can delay projects for months and years, and can result in significant, unexpected added costs, which have the potential to render projects financially infeasible.

Healey described her proposals as “a game changer for the development of more housing in Massachusetts and bringing down housing costs for everyone.”

Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper said the development of the recommendations entailed “months of analysis and cross-agency collaboration.” She said the changes will incentivize dense, energy-efficient and resilient buildings, “while upholding our high environmental standards.”

The MMA will be carefully reviewing the proposed regulations in terms of their implications for municipal officials.

## Streamlining review

Under the proposed rules, projects that meet the qualifying housing criteria would be able to move quickly through review by the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Office. The proposed rules would allow qualifying housing projects to complete MEPA review with just an Environmental Notification Form, rather than a more detailed Environmental Impact Report — a change that the administration said would cut the review process down to just 30 days.

Requirements for advance notice and community outreach would be maintained to ensure transparency and engagement, as recommended by the Unlocking Housing Production

Commission.

An appeal of a local wetlands order would no longer trigger MEPA review for single-family homes.

Review of urban renewal plans that do not propose individual projects would also be reduced to a 30-day Environmental Notification Form filing.

The administration said the draft regulations go beyond recent changes to environmental review processes in other states by allowing developers to qualify for quicker approvals while still addressing critical climate and environmental concerns. The MEPA reforms emphasize a simpler and less restrictive self-verification process, which will enable faster approvals.

## Qualifying housing criteria

Housing projects would need to meet seven criteria to qualify for the streamlined process:

- **Housing-centered:** At least 67% of a project must be for a residential purpose, with the remainder being used for related commercial uses.
- **Density:** Projects must meet certain unit-per-acre thresholds for different types of housing.
- **Land-efficient:** Projects may alter up to five acres of undeveloped land, or up to 10 acres with a tree preservation and replanting plan, and Priority Habitat, Prime Farmland, and carbon rich forest must be avoided.
- **Flood and erosion:** All new developments must be constructed outside the current floodplain and other highest-hazard areas, and redevelopment projects must build outside highest-hazard areas and follow resilient design principles.
- **Energy efficiency:** Projects must comply with energy efficiency standards set out in the “stretch” building energy code.
- **Utility access:** There must be enough water supply, wastewater capacity and energy infrastructure to support the project.



The Healey-Driscoll administration has announced plans to cut the environmental review period for new housing from one year or more to 30 days in an effort to expedite housing production.

- **Transit orientation:** Developments must limit the extent of new traffic, with higher thresholds if located near transit.

The proposed regulations would complement other streamlining measures outlined in the governor’s proposed [Mass Ready Act](#), which is aimed at strengthening state infrastructure and streamlining permitting.

## Ecological restoration

The new regulations aim to simplify the process for certain ecological restoration projects that have important environmental benefits but do not qualify for existing streamlining, such as cranberry bog restoration and partial dam removals.

An estimated 23% of these projects filed with MEPA since 2022 would now only require an Environmental Notification Form, with more projects anticipated to take advantage of streamlining in the future.

The draft regulations were filed with the Secretary of State’s Office and are available for public comment.

The agency is inviting public feedback on the draft regulations until 5 p.m. on Oct. 31. There will be virtual information sessions and public hearings on Oct. 14 and 15.

More details are available at [www.mass.gov/regulations/301-CMR-1100-mepa-regulations](http://www.mass.gov/regulations/301-CMR-1100-mepa-regulations). ●



# Municipal feedback sought on draft permit rules

By Josie Ahlberg

The state's Clean Energy Siting and Permitting Division has released for comment [draft regulations](#) to implement a new consolidated permitting process for clean energy infrastructure facilities reviewed by local governments.

The new local siting and permitting process would apply to:

- Clean energy generation projects (e.g., solar, wind) under 25 megawatts
- Clean energy storage projects under 100 megawatt hours
- Certain transmission and distribution projects

(Note: Last month's Beacon story incorrectly stated that this local process would apply to storage projects under 25 megawatt hours, rather than 100.)

Projects over these size thresholds would be managed by a new permitting process that is being developed concurrently by the Energy Facilities Siting



New draft permitting regulations for small clean energy projects would give municipalities 12 months to review a clean energy infrastructure facility application.

Board. ([See related story.](#))

Under last year's [climate law](#), all necessary regulations must be promulgated by March 1, 2026.

Under the new local siting and permitting process, municipal governments would have 12 months to review a "clean energy infrastructure facility" application. Project applicants would undergo a pre-filing engagement process, and the application would need to meet baseline standards set by the regulations, along

with accompanying guidance developed by the Department of Energy Resources, the Department of Public Utilities, and the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

The draft regulations reference seven different guidance documents (five of which are not yet released), which articulate many of the baseline conditions and requirements for the application, review, and approval processes:

- Guideline on Public Health, Safety, and Environmental Standards (DOER)
- Guideline on Minimization and Mitigation Measures (DOER)
- Guideline on Pre-Filing Stakeholder Engagement (DOER)
- Guideline on the Consolidated Local Permit Application (DOER)
- Guideline on Common Conditions (DOER)
- [Site Suitability Guidance](#) (EEA)

■ **CLEAN ENERGY** *continued on 18*

## Energy Facilities Siting Board releases updated draft regulations

By Josie Ahlberg

The Energy Facilities Siting Board has advanced draft regulations related to implementation of a clean energy and climate law passed last November, and the public comment period has begun.

The independent state board, supported administratively by the Department of Public Utilities, reviews proposals for power plants, electric transmission projects, intra-state gas pipelines, and natural gas storage tanks.

Last year's [climate law](#) calls for the [Energy Facilities Siting Board](#) to play a key role in developing a new streamlined, consolidated application and review process for large and small clean energy infrastructure facilities. The law requires the state to promulgate regulations and guidance to implement the new siting and permitting policies by March 1, 2026.

The law requires the EFSB to begin accepting applications and reviewing proposals for large clean energy infrastructure facilities using this new framework starting on July 1, 2026.

The EFSB will be responsible for siting



New draft regulations call for the Energy Facilities Siting Board to oversee siting and permitting for clean energy generation projects exceeding 25 megawatts and clean energy storage projects exceeding 100 megawatt hours.

and permitting for clean energy generation projects over 25 megawatts (e.g., solar, wind), clean energy storage projects over 100 megawatt hours, and certain transmission and distribution projects. Projects under these size thresholds will be managed by the Department of Energy Resources' new permitting process, which is being developed concurrently ([See related story.](#))

### Hearings scheduled

The EFSB and DPU has scheduled four hybrid public comment hearings on this regulatory effort:

- Oct. 27, 6-9 p.m., Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School Auditorium, 1121 Ashley Blvd., New Bedford
- Oct. 29, 6-9 p.m., Berkshire Innovation Center, 45 Woodlawn Ave., Pittsfield
- Nov. 3, 6-9 p.m., 1 South Station (3rd floor, large hearing room), Boston
- Nov. 5, 6-9 p.m., North Shore Community College (cafeteria), 300 Broad St., Lynn

Remote attendees can [register here](#).

### Comments

Initial written comments on the EFSB proposals are welcomed through Oct. 17. The final deadline for comments to the EFSB is Nov. 7.

Information about how to submit comments can be found on the EFSB's [rulemaking website](#).

More information about the clean energy siting and permitting reform process can be found on the [Energy Infrastructure Siting and Permitting Reforms website](#), and questions can be directed to [energypermitting@mass.gov](mailto:energypermitting@mass.gov).



# MMHR discusses equity in hiring, cooling hostility

By Owen Page

Equity in the recruitment process, de-escalating tense and confrontational interactions, and employee morale were the key topics at the annual Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources Fall Conference on Sept. 18 and 19 in Springfield.

In a keynote address on day one titled “Recruitment Strategies for Greater Diversity,” Dr. Eden-Reneé Hayes of Pluralism Solutions, focused on recruitment planning, the recruiting process, and post-decision procedures.

With more than 15 years of experience in strengthening organizational hiring and staff retention, Hayes emphasized the importance of established best practices in hiring, as well as the role that diversity, equity and inclusion can play in that process.

“When we do something for one group, most of the time it helps every group,” Hayes said. “As long as there are humans, there’s a need for DEI.”

Hayes recommended widening the recruitment net by increasing presence in the public eye, whether that be a table at a farmer’s market, a presence by municipal officials at community events, or placing advertisements in community gathering spots.

When crafting position announcements,



Dr. Eden-Reneé Hayes of Pluralism Solutions discusses inclusive hiring practices to achieve greater organizational diversity during her keynote address at the Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources Fall Conference on Sept. 18 in Springfield.

human resources professionals should be aware of the language they’re using and how it can subconsciously encourage or discourage potential applicants. When crafting job descriptions, Hayes suggested using gender decoders, which analyze text for gender-coded language and make suggestions to appeal to a broader audience.

“We don’t want people to discount themselves before they apply,” Hayes said. “We won’t know they exist.”

Hayes cautioned against what she refers to as psychological pitfalls in decision-making processes — when

someone subconsciously rationalizes a decision based on relatively arbitrary criteria. Examples include prioritizing a candidate who is very similar to the employee being replaced, pre-ranking candidates before a decision is made, shifting evaluation criteria to disqualify a particular candidate, and evaluating candidates for culture fit rather than contributions they may make to the culture.

Such errors, she said, are “not going to help us keep moving forward.”

Hayes recommended an approach that covets candidates, to “give them the impression that we want them here.”

“It’s really doing our best job to be kind and cordial,” Hayes said. “We want to be thinking about, ‘How is it that I can invite this person in?’”

In the afternoon, training specialist and strategic coach Jerry Posner led a workshop on cooling hostility and strategies for moving conversations forward.

Emotions, Posner said, are “contagious,” and de-escalating tense interactions requires internal calm and clarity.

“Whoever has the strongest emotion will be the most contagious,” he said.

To counteract hostility, Posner said, communicate with empathy and compassion, use a lower vocal pitch, and understand that you may not be the reason that someone is upset.

“Before you take it too personally,” he said, “consider how much of this is about you and how much isn’t.”

The conference also included a legislative update from MMA Legislative Director Dave Koffman, an open mic session, group roundtable discussions, and panel discussions focused on employee wellness and morale and on employee resource groups. ●



## Mayor warns of potential 9C impacts

During a hybrid meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on Sept. 9 in Holyoke, Amesbury Mayor Kassandra Gove urges caution about an administration proposal to expand its emergency budget-cutting authority under Section 9c, which could potentially result in mid-year cuts to local aid. The proposal, included in a recent supplementary budget bill, “concerns every single local official,” Gove said. “Preemptively expanding 9C authority is unnecessary and would threaten to destabilize local budgets.” Also pictured is Franklin Town Administrator and MMA President Jamie Hellen.



# Two grant programs launched to support local efforts

The Healey-Driscoll administration on Sept. 8 launched two grant programs that it said would advance local infrastructure and economic development projects and bring more federal dollars into Massachusetts.

The programs will provide technical assistance support for municipal and tribal infrastructure projects that are seeking federal funds or have received federal funds.

The administration created the programs with a focus on rural towns and Gateway Cities.

In a prepared statement, Gov. Maura Healey said the new tools “will provide critical support” to local leaders.

Administration and Finance Secretary Matthew Gorzkowicz said the grants



During a hybrid meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on Sept. 9 in Holyoke, Quentin Palfrey, director of the state's Federal Funds and Infrastructure Office, discusses new grant programs and efforts to bring more federal dollars into Massachusetts.

“will help ensure that every community, regardless of size and access to resources, is well-equipped to compete for federal funding.”

The grant programs will be administered by the state's Federal Funds and Infrastructure Office and draw on interest from the state's stabilization fund, without reducing the fund's balance. They were created through last year's [federal funds law](#).

## MTTA

The competitive Municipal and Tribal Assistance Grant Program will allow local governments and federally recognized tribes to seek grants for infrastructure, climate and economic development project activities. About \$2.5 million will be available over fiscal 2026 and 2027.

Applications must be intended for projects that are seeking or have received federal funding.

■ **GRANT PROGRAMS** *continued on 24*

## Climate Beacon conference is Oct. 22-24 in Boston

Climate Beacon, New England's premier climate solutions conference, will be held on Oct. 22-24 in Boston.

The conference brings together corporate, municipal, institutional and community leaders, along with global and national experts and practitioners, to discuss strategies and resources that can propel climate crisis solutions into reality and chart paths to more sustainable, livable futures.

Conference speakers will include U.S. Sen. Ed Markey and Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper.

MMA Executive Director Adam

Chapdelaine will be a featured speaker during a Municipal Leaders Breakfast on Oct. 23 from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

Organizers recently announced a new program for this year's conference, E2C2 (Engage, Educate, Communicate, Celebrate), focused on community outreach, education and engagement strategies. This all-day program on Friday, Oct. 24, will feature a speaker panel discussing climate information intake and dispersal,



Rebecca Tepper

followed by a variety of smaller discussions focused on core concepts like strategic communication, youth climate education, and climate storytelling.

Climate Beacon features tours of local sustainability projects, roundtable discussions, timely solution sessions, speaker panels, and networking receptions.

Complimentary tickets are available for students, public servants, and community, youth, environmental justice, and small nonprofit organizations.

[Climate Beacon](#) will be held at Lyrik, 1001 Boylston St. in Boston.

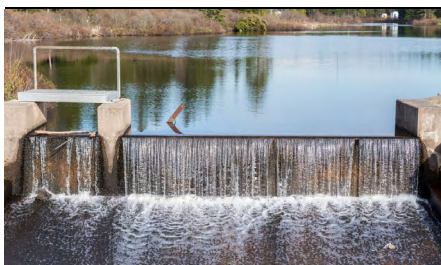
[Registration is available online.](#) ●

## State awards \$10.9 million for dams and coastal infrastructure

The Healey-Driscoll administration on Sept. 4 announced nearly \$11 million in grant funding to support the repair or removal of aging dams, levees and coastal infrastructure.

The funding for the grants is provided through the Department of Conservation and Recreation's [Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal Program](#).

Recipients received funding for design and permitting as well as construction projects. Repairing aging infrastructure along waterways and the coast improves public safety and restores existing ecological systems.



The state has awarded nearly \$11 million in grants to replace or remove old and damaged dams, levees and coastal infrastructure.

Grants ranging from \$41,000 to \$1.4 million were awarded to Blackstone

Watershed Collaborative, Brockton, Charlton, Connecticut River Conservancy, Dudley, East Quabbin Land Trust, Fitchburg, Grafton, Holliston, Holyoke, Hopkinton, Leominster, Massachusetts Audubon Society, Methuen, Middleborough, OARS Inc., Natick, Raynham, Salem, Shutesbury, Swansea, Wayland, and the Trustees of Reservations.

A full list of grantees is available on [mass.gov](#). ●

# Medford honored for solid waste reduction efforts

The city of Medford has won this year's Outstanding Community Award from the Northeast Recycling Council for its efforts to reduce waste and create a more sustainable waste collection system through its free curbside composting program.

The Northeast Recycling Council honors a community, an organization and a person each year for their contributions to recycling education and innovation. Medford will be recognized at the council's ninth annual Environmental Leadership Awards Ceremony on Oct. 7 in Boston.

The NERC cited the city's efforts to implement a municipal collection system that reduces waste — a multi-year collaboration involving a citizen Solid Waste Task Force, elected officials, residents, businesses, service providers, and nonprofit and academic institutions.

According to city officials, Medford has



The city of Medford has diverted more than 2 million pounds of waste from landfills since the inception of a new municipal collection program targeting waste reduction in July 2024. (Photo courtesy city of Medford)

diverted more than 2 million pounds of waste from landfills since the program began in July 2024.

"This award shows that the work we're doing in both composting and recycling

is having real, transformative effects on how our community thinks about waste and the steps we're taking to create a more sustainable environment for the future," Mayor Breanna Lungo-Koehn said in a prepared statement. "We are honored to be recognized by the Northeast Recycling Council for these efforts."

Sophie Leone, NERC's development and program manager, called Medford's program a "perfect representation of NERC's mission to minimize waste, conserve natural resources, and advance a sustainable economy through

facilitated collaboration and action."

— *Jennifer Kavanaugh*

## Administration awards nearly \$29M in climate resiliency funding

The Healey-Driscoll administration on Sept. 15 announced \$28.7 million in Massachusetts Vulnerability Preparedness grants to bolster climate resilience efforts in Massachusetts communities.

Rural and small towns received \$11.1 million during the 2025 MVP grant cycle, following efforts by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to increase program participation among those communities.

The MVP program aims to bolster local efforts to respond to both short- and long-term impacts of climate change by pairing local expertise and knowledge with funding and technical assistance from the state. The program has funded more than 500 projects across the Commonwealth since 2017.

MVP grants give communities the capacity to prepare before disasters arrive, Gov. Maura Healey said in a prepared statement.

"Preparation is the most affordable, effective way to protect people and avoid much higher costs down the road," she said.



Lexington Select Board Member Jill Hai discusses the importance of Massachusetts Vulnerability Preparedness grants during a hybrid meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on Sept. 9 in Holyoke.

Grant funding in this year's cycle supports improvements like rebuilding parks to include more shaded spaces for cooling off, protecting wetlands to reduce neighborhood flooding, and locating more affordable housing on higher ground.

A total of 54 communities, tribes, and planning commissions received MVP awards, with award amounts ranging from \$50,000 to nearly \$2.7 million.

Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper said in a prepared statement that more communities are embracing their role in mitigating climate impacts.

"These grants support that work by funding practical, local solutions," she said.

The MVP program is a component of ResilientMass, the statewide climate adaptation plan to reduce risk and strengthen communities in the face of climate change impacts.

In an effort to streamline the grant application process for resilience projects, the next round of MVP grants will be incorporated into a new Environment and Climate One Stop. The unified application process will allow applicants to access multiple funding opportunities for climate resilience and restoration projects.

More information is available on the Climate One Stop webpage: [mass.gov/environment-climate-one-stop](https://mass.gov/environment-climate-one-stop). Interested communities may submit expressions of interest for new projects through Oct. 28. ●



# Municipal poet laureates help elevate communities

By Jennifer Kavanaugh

In a state that celebrates Emily Dickinson, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Robert Frost among its literary giants, a growing number of Massachusetts communities are continuing the poetic tradition by appointing their own poet laureates.

Massachusetts has long been accustomed to finding itself in verse — think Emerson’s “Concord Hymn” and its “shot heard round the world” to describe the start of the American Revolution. In a more modern embrace of the artistic expression, at least 20 municipalities either have poet laureates, or are considering getting one, and their efforts were amplified by this year’s appointment of the state’s first poet laureate, Lexington resident [Regie Gibson](#).

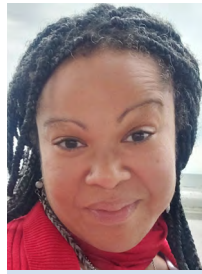
Communities that have appointed poet laureates say they help foster community building.

“Poetry might not fix potholes, but it strengthens and celebrates community spirit, cultural identity, and emotional well-being,” said Salem Mayor Dominic Pangallo, whose city recently appointed its first poet laureate. “In times of uncertainty or division, poetry offers a powerful means of reflection, connection, and healing. It creates space for diverse voices, fosters empathy, and encourages creative expression.”

For [Michelle “LaPoetica” Richardson](#), becoming Lynn’s first poet laureate in April has helped her elevate a city that has lifted her up through difficult times. A poet, community organizer and arts volunteer, Richardson was a homeless mother less than a decade ago, and she remembers the local leaders, including City Councillor Nicole McClain, who gave her work opportunities and offered venues for her poetry.

“I want to break boundaries, break barriers, you know, pave ways and paths in my city,” Richardson said. “I love my community. I love Lynn. Lynn has carried me and ushered me through so many chapters of my life.”

Richardson, whose nickname LaPoetica means “the poetic one” in Spanish, is the daughter of Dominican immigrants. Fluency in Spanish and English allows her more creativity in her poetry, she said, and will allow her to expand her



Michelle “LaPoetica” Richardson



J.D. Scrimgeour



Carolyn Zaikowski

Scrimgeour started his two-year tenure in January. An English professor at Salem State University, he has published more than a half dozen books of poetry, essays and nonfiction. He has also organized poetry

festivals and seminars, which has helped lay the foundation for the poetry workshops, community readings and school visits that he is now undertaking as poet laureate.

Salem appointed its inaugural poet laureate to coincide with the city’s 400th anniversary next year. Scrimgeour is overseeing the compilation of “Pieces of Salem,” an anthology showcasing poetry and prose from people living and working in the city. After the book is completed, he said he also wants to produce podcasts of local poets reading and discussing their poetry. Even in this age of social media and doomscrolling, he still sees a role for poetry in communities.

“You know, good poems use language very precisely and evocatively, and I think they make you have to slow down,” Scrimgeour said. “But I think there’s also a hunger for that.”

[Carolyn Zaikowski](#), who became Easthampton’s newest poet laureate in late April, said she wants to engage diverse groups of people with poetry, by taking poetry to wherever people are, whether that’s in orchards or parking lots or places downtown. A poet, fiction writer and essayist, Zaikowski said the arts are especially powerful in pushing back against injustice and attacks on freedom of speech.

“Word workers not only offer comfort, entertainment, community, and beauty — they also help people navigate turbulent times by being able to name truth and paint possibilities for a new world,” Zaikowski said. “That’s exactly why we’re at threat, and it’s exactly why we are needed.” ●

---

“I want to instill a love for poetry and spoken word, you know, throughout all ages, stages, levels, pasts, walks of life, religions, faith, ethnicity, all of it — because everybody needs a voice.”  
– Michelle “LaPoetica” Richardson

---

outreach through public readings and other engagement efforts in Lynn, a city with a diverse population.

“I want to instill a love for poetry and spoken word, you know, throughout all ages, stages, levels, pasts, walks of life, religions, faith, ethnicity, all of it — because everybody needs a voice,” Richardson said. “Everybody needs to be connected with their inner instinctual ability to express themselves.”

Salem poet laureate [J.D. Scrimgeour](#) traces his roots back centuries to some of his city’s darkest times. A Salem resident for almost three decades, Scrimgeour descends from two figures in the Salem Witch Trials: Mary Eastey, who was executed for alleged witchcraft, and one of the male jurors who found her guilty. He remains moved by Eastey, who, on the eve of her death, authored a petition that helped hasten the end of the witch trials.

“I think as writers, we all wish we could affect the public in some way with our work,” Scrimgeour said. “I’ll never reach that level, but I am inspired by it.”

Chosen from among 16 applicants,

# MMA Webinars

## American Red Cross

Representatives of the American Red Cross of Massachusetts participated in an MMA webinar on Sept. 16 to discuss how the agency supports cities and towns.

CEO Holly Grant, along with three regional directors, gave an overview of the services the organization provides, including blood drives, CPR and other lifesaving skills trainings, disaster preparedness programs and support for members of the military.

They encouraged attendees to get in touch with their region's executive director: Grant for Greater Boston Chapter; Nia Rennix for the Central-Western Chapter; Kyle McWilliam-Lopez for the Northeastern Massachusetts Chapter; and Barbara Cotton for the Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter.

"Know us before you need us," Cotton said.

Taunton Mayor Shaunna O'Connell and Lawrence City Councillor Celina Reyes shared examples of the impact that the Red Cross has had on their communities. O'Connell said the Red Cross has responded to 10 residential fires in Taunton in the last 20 months and is a member of the Taunton Local Emergency Planning Committee.

Panelists closed with three ways that municipalities can partner with the Red Cross: hosting a blood drive, organizing a preparedness event, and promoting opportunities to volunteer.

## Councils on aging

On Sept. 25, the MMA hosted a webinar with the Massachusetts Councils on Aging, a nonprofit membership association for the 350 councils on aging in Massachusetts.

MCOA Executive Director Betsy Connell opened with context for why the work of these councils is critical right now.

"One in five residents will be over the age of 65 by 2030," she said. "And every municipality will feel that impact."

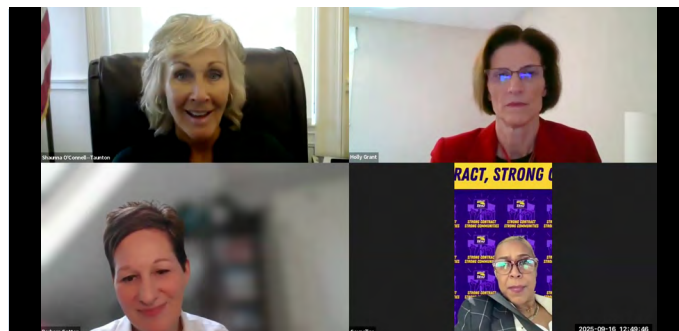
For more than 50 years, councils on aging have been essential community lifelines, she said. The growing population of older adults is causing an unprecedented demand for their services, including outreach, meals, transportation, caregiver support, and social connections.

Connell said the MCOA has three key pillars of impact: Advocate, Educate, and Collaborate.

On the first pillar, she said the MCOA serves as the collective voice for the statewide councils on aging network during the state budget deliberations and any other legislative matter affecting older adults.

Andrea Cordis, training and education manager at MCOA, discussed the opportunities available to council on aging staff for continuing education and professional development, including the MCOA's annual fall conference, workshops in partnership with local hospitals, and a professional certification program.

MCOA Assistant Director Madeline Noonan shared examples of collaboration between local councils on aging and municipalities. These include Barnstable's annual Community Safety



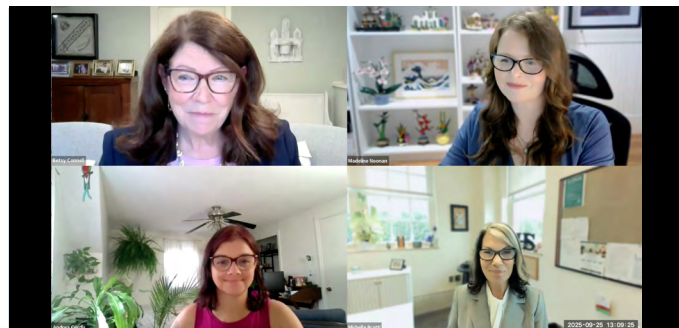
Webinar panelists discuss how municipalities can collaborate with the Red Cross to achieve mutual goals. Speakers included, clockwise from top left, Taunton Mayor Shaunna O'Connell; Holly Grant, CEO of the Red Cross of Massachusetts; Lawrence City Councillor Celina Reyes; and Barbara Cotton, executive director of the Red Cross Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter.

**Date:** September 16 **Length:** 60 Minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR](#)

Grant moderated 25 minutes of questions and answers, addressing inquiries regarding Red Cross training, providing resources to all sized communities, and local food banks.

– *Kristianna Lapierre*



Webinar panelists discuss the importance of local councils on aging and collaboration between state and local partners. Speakers were, clockwise from top left, Betsy Connell, executive director of the Massachusetts Councils on Aging; Madeline Noonan, MCOA assistant director; moderator Michelle Bratti, Plymouth health and human services commissioner; and Andrea Cordis, MCOA training and education manager.

**Date:** September 25 **Length:** 75 Minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR](#)

Day event for older adults and Swampscott High School's intergenerational art projects.

Michelle Bratti, Plymouth's commissioner of health and human services, moderated 20 minutes of questions and answers, addressing inquiries about age- and dementia-friendly initiatives, training available to council on aging boards, and tips for rebranding councils.

– *Kristianna Lapierre*



# MMA Webinars

## Workplace Equity Act

The MMA hosted a webinar on Sept. 10 about the Frances Perkins Workplace Equity Act, enacted in 2024.

The webinar featured presentations from the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and the Attorney General's Office covering the key provisions of the law, including data reporting requirements and salary range transparency.

Labor Undersecretary Josh Cutler began by reminding attendees that the law was named after Frances Perkins, who served as the U.S. Secretary of Labor from 1933 to 1945.

The law requires municipalities to submit their most recent EEO-4 report to the state by Feb. 1, 2026, and each subsequent even-numbered year.

"Getting better data on wages and workforce data demographics really helps to identify and guide better policy-making decisions for ourselves, for people at the municipal level, and our colleagues in the state Legislature," Cutler said.

Beginning on Oct. 29, employers with 25 or more employees are required to disclose pay ranges in job postings, to applicants and to current employees.

Assistant Attorney General Trini Gao added that, "Salary range transparency is one of the best tools to close gender and racial wage gaps by providing prospective employees with 'really critical information that enables them to negotiate for equitable pay and make informed employment decisions.'"

Jen Breaker, assistant town manager and communications director in Danvers, moderated 35 minutes of questions and



Webinar panelists discuss the Frances Perkins Workplace Equity Act and its implications for employers. Speakers were Assistant Attorney General Trini Gao, top left, and Labor Undersecretary Josh Cutler, bottom. Jen Breaker, the assistant town manager and communications director in Danvers, moderated the webinar.

**Date:** September 10 **Length:** 75 Minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR](#) ➔

answers, addressing inquiries regarding when to post the hiring range versus the full salary range, penalties for late reporting, and hiring college interns without public posting.

– *Kristianna Lapierre*

### 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.



## Mayors celebrate Ch. 90 boost

Surrounded by local leaders during a Sept. 17 meeting of the Massachusetts Mayors' Association in Gardner, Gov. Maura Healey participates in a ceremonial signing of the most recent transportation bond bill, which includes a 50% increase in funding for the Chapter 90 road and bridge maintenance program. The law was officially signed on Aug. 8.

## BREAKFAST MEETINGS

*Continued from page 3*

provided at these free meetings beginning at 8:30 a.m. Introductions will begin shortly thereafter, followed by presentations and a Q&A session. The meetings will end by 10:15 a.m.

Upcoming meetings will be held on the following Fridays:

**Oct. 3:** Athol – Athol Public Library, 568 Main St.

**Oct. 3:** Middleborough – Middleborough Town Hall, 10 Nickerson Ave.

**Oct. 17:** Chelmsford – Chelmsford Center for the Arts, 1A North Road

MMA members are asked to [register online](#).

Questions may be directed to Daniel Yi at 617-426-7272, ext. 125, or [dyi@mma.org](mailto:dyi@mma.org). ●

## ATFC to hold Annual Meeting on Oct. 18

Local finance committee members are invited to the Association of Town Finance Committees' Annual Meeting on Saturday, Oct. 18, at the Sharon Community Center.

The opening speaker will be Quentin Palfrey, director of Commonwealth's Federal Funds and Infrastructure Office.

The meeting will feature four educational workshops, running concurrently during two time slots.

The first time slot will feature:

- "Finance Committee and Budgeting 101," led by Ashburnham Town Administrator John Coderre, covering the basics for new members
- A session on managing health

insurance costs led by Chris Bailey, director of the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association's Health Benefits Trust

The second time slot will feature:

- An in-depth look at Proposition 2½ overrides
- A session focused on revenue and expenditure forecasting

The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and end at 2 p.m.



Quentin Palfrey

All local officials are welcome to attend. The cost is \$65 for dues-paying ATFC finance committee members and \$75 for nonmember finance committee members and other local officials.

Online registration and the detailed agenda are available on [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org).

In conjunction with the meeting, the 2025 edition of the Finance Committee Handbook will be digitally published and made available to members. The handbook is free for all ATFC dues-paying members.

Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker at [dbaker@mma.org](mailto:dbaker@mma.org)

## Management Association to hold boot camp on Oct. 16

The Massachusetts Municipal Management Association will hold its annual "boot camp" on Oct. 16 at the Sharon Community Center.

The free boot camp is designed as a practical guide for administrators and assistants who are new to the profession, and for department heads and professional staff who are planning to move into a town manager or administrator role.

The meeting will include an interactive

roundtable session and workshops on career advancement, resiliency, and municipal finance basics.

In the afternoon, Sean Cronin, senior deputy commissioner of local services at the Division of Local Services, will discuss state and



Sean Cronin

municipal finances.

The meeting will run from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The boot camp is not a training session for frontline staff or elected officials.

The agenda and online registration are available on [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org).

Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker at [dbaker@mma.org](mailto:dbaker@mma.org)

## MMA to host webinar on cybersecurity on Oct. 15

An MMA webinar on Oct. 15 will cover cybersecurity issues, including the MassCyberCenter's Minimum Baseline of Cybersecurity for Municipalities.

The baseline was created to encourage municipalities and schools to improve their cybersecurity posture and resilience against cyberattacks, inspire collaboration, and engage with other cities and towns to strengthen cybersecurity resiliency.

The webinar will identify the most common threats facing municipalities and review the four goals of the baseline to provide guidance and resources to help implement a robust cybersecurity program. The four goals are: training employees, improving threat sharing, cyber incident response planning, and securing the technology environment.

Updates on state programs, including cybersecurity training and grants, will also be provided.

Speakers will include:

- MassCyberCenter Director John Petrozzelli
- MassCyberCenter Resiliency Program Manager Meg Speranza
- Susan Noyes, director of the Office of Municipal and School Technology

[Online registration is available](#) for the 75-minute webinar, which will begin at noon. Only MMA members may



John Petrozzelli



Meg Speranza



Susan Noyes

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](mailto:klapierre@mma.org)



## MMHR to hold Labor Relations Seminar on Oct. 23

Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources will hold its annual Labor Relations Seminar on Thursday, Oct. 23, in Devens.

The seminar will open with a labor law update from attorney Meghan Sullivan of Sullivan, Hayes, & Quinn.

A representative from the National Public Employer Labor Relations Association will lead a training on the American Disability Act, and the MMA will provide a legislative update.

In the afternoon, attendees will participate in one of two breakout workshops:

- A session on navigating layoffs and furloughs presented by attorneys Jaime



Jaime Kenny



Jean Haertl

Kenny and Caitlin Morey of Clifford & Kenny

- A training on conducting internal investigations led by Jean Haertl, principal at Safety and Respect at Work

Registration is available at [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org). The full agenda will be made available in the coming week.

Seminar registration and a networking coffee will begin at 8:30 a.m., and the event will conclude at 3 p.m. Lunch will be provided.

The registration fee is \$90 for MMHR members and \$110 for nonmembers.

The seminar will be held at the Devens Common Center, 31 Andrews Parkway in Devens.

Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis at [mdavis@mma.org](mailto:mdavis@mma.org)

## Free public sector cybersecurity summit is Oct. 30

Public sector employees are invited to a free [Public Sector Cybersecurity Summit](#) on Oct. 30 in Worcester.

The summit, sponsored by Government Technology, will focus on addressing the public sector's unique cybersecurity challenges. It will bring together government leaders and IT security professionals to

discuss strategies for protecting sensitive information, upgrading cybersecurity infrastructure, and preempting threats before they happen.

Attendees will hear from cybersecurity experts, participate in collaborative discussions, and learn practical solutions tailored for public sector entities.

The event will be held at the DCU Center, at 50 Foster St. in Worcester. Registration is [available online](#).

Questions may be directed to Audrey Houser at [ahouser@erepublic.com](mailto:ahouser@erepublic.com) or 916-932-1420. ●

## 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 [dyi@mma.org](mailto:dyi@mma.org). ●



### LGAC highlights Ch. 90 benefits

During a hybrid meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on Sept. 9 in Holyoke, Westfield Mayor Michael McCabe thanks the Healey-Driscoll administration for increased investment in the Chapter 90 local road and bridge maintenance program. The funding increase will allow Westfield to pave 10 additional streets, he said. "It can't be stressed enough how important this is for all communities." Also pictured is Waltham Councillor John McLaughlin.

# MMA-Suffolk kick off certificate programs

By Kate Evarts

The MMA and Suffolk University kicked off two Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management programs in September, in Barnstable and Winchester.

Nearly 600 local officials have graduated from the certificate program since it began in 2011. The two current offerings are the 25th and 26th certificate classes.

Offered over the course of 25 Fridays during the academic year, the program covers a wide range of municipal management topics.

The next certificate programs will begin in September 2026 in Littleton and Medfield. Applications will be available on the [program website](#) on Feb. 1, 2026.

## Municipal finance seminar

The MMA and Suffolk 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 (fully enrolled)
- Winter 2026: Jan. 9
- Spring 2026: March 6

"We've seen great success with this program, which is 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 municipal employees and that there are no more than three participants per municipality.

Registration details for the winter session will be emailed to chief municipal officials in mid-October.

Questions about the registration process can be directed to Kate Evarts at [kevarts@mma.org](mailto:kevarts@mma.org) or 617-426-7272, ext. 172.

## Human resources seminar

Applications are due on Oct. 10 for the winter 2026 session of the MMA-Suffolk Municipal Human Resources Seminar.

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:



Twenty-six students participate in the orientation for the 2025-2026 MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program in Barnstable on Sept. 5.



Twenty-five students participate in the orientation for the 2025-2026 MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program in Winchester on Sept. 12.

- Fall 2025: Oct. 17 (fully enrolled)
- Winter 2026: Jan. 9
- Spring 2026: April 10

The application for the winter seminar is available on the [MMA website](#). This is a competitive application process; applicants will be informed of their status by early November.

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](http://mma.org/suffolk) or contact Katie McCue at 617-426-7272, ext. 111, or [kmccue@mma.org](mailto:kmccue@mma.org), or Kate Evarts at 617-426-7272, ext. 172, or [kevarts@mma.org](mailto:kevarts@mma.org). ●



# 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](mailto:dyi@mma.org). ●

## MSA seeks nominations for its 2026 Board and MMA VP

The Massachusetts Select Board Association, a member group of the MMA, is seeking nominations for its 2026 Board of Directors as well as for vice president of the MMA.

Nominations will be accepted for five officer positions: president, first vice president, second vice president, and secretary of the MSA, and MMA vice president, all of whom serve a one-year term.

With the exception of secretary, MSA board members also serve on the MMA Board of Directors.

Any select board member in Massachusetts may complete the [online nomination form](#) and submit his or her

name for consideration. The deadline is Oct. 17.

For the position of MMA vice president, applicants must have served, or be currently serving, on the MSA Board of Directors.

MSA board responsibilities include attendance at MSA and MMA Board meetings. The MMA board meets on the second Tuesday of most months from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. These meetings are typically hybrid: Zoom as well as in-person at locations across the state. The MSA board also meets monthly on Zoom.

Board responsibilities also include working with MMA staff to develop agendas

and identify speakers for MSA conferences and webinars, and participation in these events throughout the year. Previous participation in MMA events is strongly preferred.

After interviewing all nominees, the MSA Nominating Committee will prepare a slate of nominations for election during the MSA's Annual Business Meeting, to be held during Connect 351, the MMA's annual conference, on Jan. 24 in Boston.

Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis at [mdavis@mma.org](mailto:mdavis@mma.org)

## MMCA seeks nominations for its Board of Directors

The Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, a member group of the MMA, is seeking nominations for its Board of Directors.

Any councillor in Massachusetts may complete the [online nomination form](#) and submit their name for consideration. The nomination deadline is Nov. 1.

Nominations are sought for three officer positions on the MMCA Board of Directors. These include president, first vice president and second vice president. Officers serve a one-year term.

[Board member responsibilities](#) include attendance at MMCA and MMA board

meetings. The MMA Board of Directors meets on the second Tuesday of most months, at various locations throughout the state, including Boston, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. MMCA Board responsibilities also include assisting in planning MMCA events and attendance at in-person and virtual meetings for councillors.

After interviewing all nominees, the MMCA Nominating Committee will prepare a slate of nominations for election during the MMCA's Annual Business Meeting, to be held during Connect 351 (the MMA's annual conference) on Jan. 24, 2026, in Boston.

In performing its responsibilities for

identifying, recruiting and recommending candidates to the MMCA Board, the Nominating Committee is committed to including qualified candidates who reflect diverse backgrounds. Previous attendance at MMA and MMCA in-person and virtual events is strongly preferred.

For more information about the MMCA, visit [www.mma.org/members/councillors](http://www.mma.org/members/councillors).

Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker at [dbaker@mma.org](mailto:dbaker@mma.org)

# Survey seeks to assess how cities, towns use tech

Despite the essential role of technology in local governments, industry and academia tend to focus on the private sector and federal and state governments.

A research team at the Tilburg School of Economics and Management is seeking to better understand how local governments navigate emerging digital challenges and opportunities.

A 20-minute survey is open to municipal and county executives, elected officials, and staff on how cities, towns, and counties engage in digital transformation.

Multiple responses per jurisdiction are encouraged. Responses are confidential and will be reported in aggregate.

Although this is a national survey, a tailored research brief will be prepared for the MMA. Higher participation will produce more meaningful results.

The following topics will be covered: leadership behaviors, organizational alignment, decision rights, interdepartmental collaboration, demand for digital/AI services, organizational outcomes, reporting lines, and government/IT size

and budgets.

The survey opens on Oct. 1 and will close on Nov. 21.

[Click here to take the survey.](#) Questions may be directed to Daniel Rieger of at [d.p.rieger@tilburguniversity.edu](mailto:d.p.rieger@tilburguniversity.edu). ●



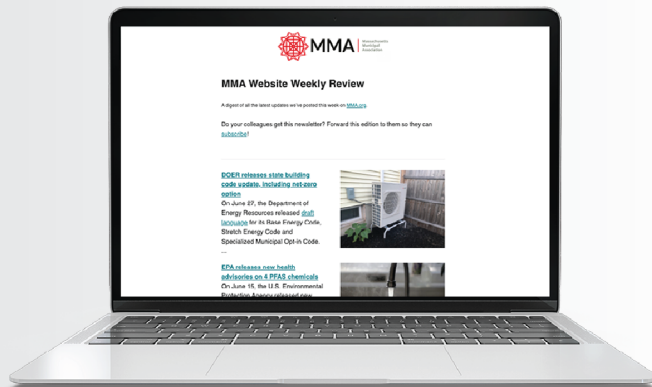
## Heiple speaks to WEMO

Bonnie Heiple, commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, highlights the department's ongoing initiatives and resources available to municipalities during a virtual Women Elected Municipal Officials Fall Symposium on Sept. 30.

## Everything new on the MMA website, straight to your inbox.

MMA.org is the best source for the latest developments affecting Mass. cities & towns:

- State budget & local aid
- State & federal grant opportunities
- Member group meetings & webinars
- Connect 351 announcements
- And much more!



Sign up for our Weekly Review newsletter, sent every Friday morning.

**SIGN UP TODAY**



**MMA**

Massachusetts  
Municipal  
Association

Visit [mma.org/weekly](https://mma.org/weekly) to get on the list today!



# MBI to host 2nd annual digital access celebration Oct. 8

The Massachusetts Broadband Institute will host the second annual [Massachusetts Goes DigitALL event](#), a celebration of digital access and economic progress in Massachusetts, on Oct. 8 in Worcester.

The event will feature a fireside chat hosted by Massachusetts Competitive Partnership President and CEO Jay Ash titled “Unlocking Digital Access: Building Opportunity and Economic Competitiveness.”

Ash served as secretary of Housing and Economic Development under former Gov. Charlie Baker and spent 14 years as the city manager of Chelsea.

The program for Massachusetts Goes DigitALL features awards recognizing achievement in bridging digital divides, perspectives from industry leaders and policymakers, and numerous opportunities for networking.

Massachusetts Goes DigitALL will be held at the Top of the Tower in Worcester (446 Main St.) from noon to 4 p.m. Registration is [available online](#).

Questions should be directed to [broadband@masstech.org](mailto:broadband@masstech.org). ●



## Healey meets with mayors

Gov. Maura Healey addresses the Massachusetts Mayors' Association on Sept. 17 in Gardner, where she discussed a range of topics, including local aid, fiscal issues and the economy, housing, vaccines and public health, her environmental bond bill, and her proposed Municipal Empowerment Act. Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll joined the governor at the meeting. (Photo courtesy Joshua Qualls/Governor's Press Office)

## 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/](http://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/](http://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 [dyi@mma.org](mailto:dyi@mma.org).**

**For more information, please contact Daniel Yi at the MMA:**  
617-426-7272, ext. 125, or  
[dyi@mma.org](mailto:dyi@mma.org).

## CLEAN ENERGY

Continued from page 5

- [Standards and Guidelines for Community Benefits Plans and Agreements](#) (EEA/Office of Environmental Justice and Equity)

Municipalities would need to comply with the standards and practices established in these regulations by no later than Dec. 1, 2026. Local governments would be able to set additional requirements or conditions if they do not conflict with the regulations or guidelines.

### Information sessions, public hearing

The [Clean Energy Siting and Permitting Division](#) is holding hybrid information sessions, on the following schedule, to discuss the proposal and receive feedback:

- Oct. 6, 6 p.m., at Massachusetts Maritime Academy, 20 Tower Lane (Maritime Conference Center),

Buzzards Bay

- Oct. 7, 6 p.m., at Essex North Shore Agricultural Technical School, 562 Maple St. (Larkin Center), Danvers
- Oct. 8, 6 p.m., at Fitchburg State University, 160 Pearl St. (Ellis White Hall, Hammond Building), Fitchburg
- Oct. 9, 7 p.m., at UMass Amherst Olver Design Building, Room 170, 551 N Pleasant St., Amherst

Remote attendees for the information sessions can [register here](#).

The division is also hosting a virtual public comment hearing on Oct. 15 at 7 p.m. ([Register here](#))

The public comment period on the draft regulations will close at 5 p.m. on Oct. 17. Additional information on submitting comments can be found on the division's [Clean Energy Siting and Permitting Regulations webpage](#).

### Additional resources

The Clean Energy Siting and Permitting Division has hired [siting and permitting regional coordinators](#), who can be contacted with questions. The team is responsible for providing technical assistance to municipalities, project proponents, and other stakeholders, but will not be involved in reviewing or permitting projects, or in the appeal of local decisions.

Questions and feedback on the division's work regarding siting and permitting of small clean energy infrastructure projects by local governments may be sent to [DOER.Siting.Permitting@mass.gov](mailto:DOER.Siting.Permitting@mass.gov).

### Site suitability assessments and community benefits webinar

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs is holding a public webinar on Oct. 9 at noon to explain its draft Guidance on Site Suitability Assessments for Clean Energy Infrastructure and the Office of Environmental Justice and Equity's draft Standards and Guidelines for Community Benefits Plans and Agreements. These will impact both the local and state siting and permitting process. Click here for registration information.

Feedback on the draft site suitability guidance can be submitted to [EnergyPermitting@mass.gov](mailto:EnergyPermitting@mass.gov) through Oct. 24.

Comments on the draft standards and guidelines for community benefits can be submitted to [ej.inquiries@mass.gov](mailto:ej.inquiries@mass.gov) through Oct. 24.

*MMA members may also direct questions and comments about the draft clean energy regulations and guidance documents to Josie Ahlberg at [jahlberg@mma.org](mailto:jahlberg@mma.org).*



### MMCA focuses on economic development

Kristina Johnson, planning and community development director in Hudson, speaks during a regional meeting of the Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association on Sept. 26 in Marlborough. Johnson gave a presentation on successes and challenges in economic development, housing and zoning in Hudson.



### LGAC discusses on resiliency funds

During a hybrid meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on Sept. 9 in Holyoke, Acton Town Manager John Mangiaratti (center) voices support for inclusion of a resiliency revolving fund in the governor's Mass Ready Act. "The environmental bond bill's proposal to create a resilience revolving fund stands out as a creative way to provide loans to municipalities for nature-based solutions and for public infrastructure projects," he said.



## HEALTH CARE COSTS

Continued from page 1

### Panelists weigh in

The trends found in CHIA's data have significantly worsened since 2023 (the most recent year with complete data), according to a panel representing the [Employer Coalition on Health](#), [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts](#), the [Group Insurance Commission](#), and the MMA's [MIIA program](#).

"Unfortunately, we don't see any significant cost abatement coming in the near future," said Chris Bailey, director of MIIA's Health Benefits Trust, which provides health insurance services to 160 cities and towns. "We expect challenges to go into 2026, 2027 and beyond."

Paul Sweeney, a senior vice president at BCBS, said health insurance premiums rose by about 4% per year in the couple of years before the 2020 COVID pandemic, about 5.5% per year during the pandemic, about 6% per year in the post-COVID years of 2022 to 2024, and then shot up by about 12% for this year. Even so, the insurer had a "terrible, unprecedented financial year" last year, he said.

GIC Executive Director Matt Veno said costs increased by 11.7% this year for his quasi-independent state agency, which has more than 280,000 subscribers (state and local government employees) and 460,000 members.

"Yes, it's a crisis," he said. "Certainly a crisis for the GIC."

Veno added that the GIC needed a \$300 million subsidy from the state last year to balance its books — just to sustain the same level of service — which drew funds away from other shared priorities. This precarious balance, he said, underscores the collective interest in bending the health care cost curve.

Recent surveys show that health care ranks alongside housing and food as top affordability changes for residents. Massachusetts is renowned for the quality of its health care, and life sciences are a cornerstone of the state's economy. But panel moderator Eileen McAnneny, executive director of the Employer Coalition on Health, said Massachusetts' ranking as the third worst state for health care costs is contributing to outmigration to more affordable states. Another irony is that the cost of providing health insurance for

employees is contributing to the fiscal instability of some hospitals and care providers.

The crisis is particularly challenging for municipalities due to tight budgets and strict revenue-raising limitations.

Panelists said there's plenty of blame to go around, among drug makers, health care providers, insurers, consumers and policy makers.

GLP-1s, a class of medications primarily used to treat type 2 diabetes and obesity, came up frequently in the health cost conversation, due to their skyrocketing popularity and exorbitant cost.

Veno cited pharmaceuticals as a cost driver overall, but noted that GLP-1s accounted for 4% of total GIC expenditures last year, which translates to roughly one-third of the premium increase for the current year.

Some insurers are ceasing or reducing coverage for GLP-1s, while others are considering placing lifestyle change requirements on consumers in order to ensure a long-term health benefit from the costly prescription. Veno pointed out, however, that GLP-1s are a proven treatment for a chronic condition, and it's "a slippery slope" to deny coverage for an effective drug simply due to its cost.

"Where are we going to look next?" he asked.

Panelists lamented the lack of price restraints for drug manufacturers. Veno said pharmaceutical costs have been steadily increasing "10% a year for many years, and now it's accelerating even further, so that is definitely a concern."

### Possible solutions

Panelists said strategies employed in recent years to manage health insurance costs — network design, copay design, tiered access levels, and prescription drug coverage restrictions — have been largely tapped out.

"You can't plan-design your way out of this," Veno said, "even if you wanted to."

Some strategies with promise include:

- Increasing market oversight and accountability for excessive spending
- Constraining provider prices, particularly highest-cost providers
- Establishing price controls on pharmaceuticals

- Dissuading consumers from seeking care from high-end providers, particularly for routine treatments
- Effectively incentivizing lifestyle changes that improve overall health, enhance the success of drug treatments when they're needed, and reduce demand for health care
- Pressuring the state and federal governments, as major health system funders, to demand efficiencies and cost controls
- Pressuring providers to improve efficiency
- Persuading state leaders to pursue impactful policy solutions

McAnneny said the threat to the heart of the state's economic health should unite stakeholders in pursuit of real solutions.

"These are systemic problems," Veno said. "They need systemic solutions. In a lot of cases, those are policy solutions."

"This isn't going to be easy to solve," Sweeney said. "We need to get uncomfortable. ... We have to be considering things that we haven't considered historically."

### Legal landscape

Attorney Timothy Zessin of KP Law discussed the legal landscape relative to municipal health insurance, particularly a 2012 law (Ch. 32B, secs. 21-23) that gave municipalities two options to manage costs: changing health plan design (e.g., copayments, deductibles and other cost-sharing features); or transferring employees to the GIC.

Zessin detailed the steps for adopting the local option and who needs to be involved. He said the law remains "an incredibly valuable tool for cities and towns."

### Closing thoughts

The forum generated strong engagement from nearly 250 local leaders who filled the room.

MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine, who kicked off the day's discussion, closed the forum with the following message: "Our commitment to you is that finding a pathway toward sustainable health care costs remains a top organizational priority for the MMA and MIIA. As we heard today, there are no easy fixes, but we will continue to engage with members and the range of stakeholders in the health care ecosystem to work toward meaningful solutions." ●

# What to know about seasonal affective disorder

By Joyce McMahon

Autumn in New England brings more than pumpkin spice, football and apples — it begins the shift to shorter days and longer nights. In the months of September and October, Massachusetts loses nearly three hours of daylight, and that trend continues until we reach the winter solstice in December, when we experience just over nine hours of daylight.

For some people, this significant loss of light can worsen their mood, sap energy, and impair concentration due to what's known as seasonal affective disorder, or SAD. It's a condition that can heighten risk both on and off the job.

The American Psychiatric Association estimates that about 5% of adults in the United States experience seasonal affective disorder, with symptoms lasting for as much as 40% of the year. Rates are higher in northern states like Massachusetts and among younger workers and women.

In addition, about 10% to 20% of the U.S. population experiences the "winter blues," which is milder than full SAD, but shares many of the same symptoms.

## Why it matters

SAD is a recurrent form of depression tied to seasonal changes. Core symptoms include low mood, reduced energy, oversleeping, carbohydrate cravings, slowed thinking, and difficulty concentrating.

For municipal employees, these symptoms can undermine alertness, judgment, and reaction time — a serious concern when plowing roads, operating public works equipment, driving buses, or managing public safety incidents.

Research shows that depressive symptoms increase the odds of workplace injury, even after accounting for prior injuries. Fatigue — often more severe during dark winter months — is another compounding risk.



Seasonal affective disorder, which affects about 5% of the U.S. population, can negatively impact mood, energy levels, alertness, concentration and reaction time.

Dark conditions also raise hazards for commuting and outdoor duties. Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration indicates that most pedestrian fatalities occur in dark conditions, with winter evenings (6-8:59 p.m.) being especially dangerous.

## What helps

The good news is that SAD is treatable. Employers can help reduce risk and support employees by combining policy, workplace design, and benefits guidance.

### 1. Normalize screening and seeking help.

Each fall, supervisors should remind employees that SAD is common and treatable. Encourage staff to use the Employee Assistance Program or their health benefits.

### 2. Connect employees with effective treatments.

The National Institute of Mental Health recommends light therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, medication, and vitamin D (when deficient) as options for treatment.

Light therapy with a 10,000-lux light box often reduces symptoms, especially when started early in the season.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy is as effective as light therapy, and offers more

durable benefits across multiple winters.

FDA-approved medications can help prevent recurrent SAD episodes. Have employees check with their health plan to see if it can provide access when appropriate.

### 3. Adjust schedules to maximize daylight and reduce fatigue.

When operations allow, hold trainings or high-focus tasks during daylight hours.

### 4. Improve workplace lighting.

Typical office lighting (300–500 lux) may not be enough. Guidance suggests about 250 melanopic lux at the eye during the day to support alertness. Alternatives include moving workstations to be near windows, using brighter fixtures in common spaces, or designating "bright break" rooms.

### 5. Promote protective routines.

Encourage consistent sleep schedules, outdoor breaks, regular exercise, and morale-boosting team activities. These small steps build resilience.

### 6. Integrate with municipal safety protocols.

Fold SAD and fatigue awareness into winter tailgate talks. Emphasize reflective personal protective equipment, temporary lighting at work sites, and buddy checks for night crews. These steps align with broader efforts to reduce pedestrian and roadside worker injury risks.

For Massachusetts cities and towns, SAD is more than a health issue; it's a workforce safety and risk-management concern. Supporting employees through awareness, health benefits, and workplace adjustments can help prevent accidents, improve morale, and sustain staffing through the winter season. ●



# Around the Commonwealth

## Lynn

### City transforms landfill into waterfront park

A once-neglected landfill on the Lynn waterfront has been reborn as Lynn Harbor Park, a 30-acre public space offering walking paths, benches, and sweeping views of the harbor from Nahant to the Boston skyline for residents to enjoy.

“For a long time, [the waterfront] housed the city’s least desirable uses,” Lynn Mayor Jared Nicholson said. “A landfill in this instance, but also the wastewater treatment plant, transfer station, natural gas, electrical superstructure. The city has really made a concerted effort over the last couple decades to reconnect the city to its waterfront.”

The park opened to the public in July, and the city held a ribbon cutting ceremony on Sept. 23, with officials from Lynn and state agencies along with Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll.

The park sits on the site of a former manufactured gas plant, which later became a landfill. Over the years, its condition deteriorated to the point of a potential collapse, threatening to spill waste into the harbor. Shoreline conditions led to a decades-long effort spearheaded by Lynn officials to reconnect the city to its waterfront, mostly recently in the form of Waterfront Open Space Master Plan in 2019.

Nicholson said the city’s goals for the waterfront were to prioritize community benefits.

“A critical part of that is to have open space that people can enjoy and participate in what’s happening on the waterfront,” he said.

Charter Development, a New England-based land remediation and development company, was brought in to cap the landfill and reinforce the shoreline to mitigate potential environmental impacts. Charter staff instead proposed developing the land and bringing in landscape architects to turn the landfill into a public park, like Cambridge’s Danehy Park and Boston’s Spectacle



Lynn Harbor Park, located on a former landfill site, provides residents with access to the city’s waterfront. (Photo courtesy city of Lynn)

Island.

The city signed a memorandum of understanding with Charter and the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs in 2022, and another in 2023 with MassDevelopment and the Economic Development and Industrial Corporation of Lynn to develop the site.

Nicholson said he’s focused on inclusive growth, ensuring that the waterfront “holds space for Lynn residents so that they can participate in and benefit from the transformed open space.”

Lynn Harbor Park is a component of a larger vision to make Lynn’s waterfront and the surrounding area inclusive of the larger Lynn community. A 550-unit apartment building just south of the park is already leasing to tenants, with another development in the pipeline that will add 850 units and 26,000 square feet of commercial space to the waterfront, along with a public park and promenade.

“I think we have a particular moment here where we have a lot of momentum,” Nicholson said, “where we’ve been able to accelerate the planning timeline and achieve a really important level of collaboration between the city and the state, but also within the city.

“In a lot of ways, the city sort of turned its back on the waterfront, and projects like this are giving us a chance to reverse that and let us reclaim it.”

— Owen Page

## Worcester

### City launches dashboard on maternal, child health

A new online [dashboard](#) created by the city of Worcester provides maternal and child health data as part of an effort to improve the health of residents, address disparities that worsen outcomes for mothers and children, and humanize the data that drives public health policy.

The dashboard, launched last month, focuses on three broad categories: maternal health, birth outcomes, and child health. It comes two years after a [Massachusetts Department of Public Health report](#) finding that rates of severe maternal morbidity nearly doubled in Massachusetts over the last decade. The state has since passed a law promoting access to midwife care and out-of-hospital birth options, the creation of a state dashboard, and a task force.

Worcester says its dashboard will help the city and its community partners work toward greater health care equity and justice, protect vulnerable populations, and ensure access to the services and support residents need to experience pregnancy and childbirth safely and raise healthy children.

“We look at maternal and child health as really some of the most powerful predictors of a community’s overall well-being,” said Worcester Public Health Director Tamara Lundi. “We think that when our mothers and our babies are thriving, our entire city is thriving. So we felt like the dashboard really shared more than just numbers. We look at it as a community compass, if you will.”

Lundi said the dashboard aligns with broader efforts to spotlight community health issues, including substance abuse disorders. She said Worcester is also working on dashboards tracking tobacco usage and cessation efforts, and public health nursing, covering everything from vaccination rates to screenings for health threats such as diabetes and colon cancer.

# Around the Commonwealth

## COMMONWEALTH

Continued from page 21

The city has been partnering with UMass Chan Medical School through the [Worcester Integrated Health Data Exchange](#) to promote information sharing. The exchange, which began last year, initially focused on opioid abuse, but has expanded to incorporate maternal and child health as a priority and will support the data being presented in the city's dashboard.

"That's going to definitely enhance and make our data collection and analysis much more rich, and help it be much more tailored and specific to our Worcester maternal-child health efforts," Lundi said.

City officials said the dashboard will bring together different data sets that may be scattered throughout state, federal and other websites.

In particular, Worcester seeks to improve conditions for its most vulnerable and medically underserved communities. Research has shown that people of color, and particularly Black mothers, are much more likely to experience severe health- and life-threatening complications around pregnancy and birth. Outcomes are also affected by patients' socioeconomic status, disabilities, and access to quality health care services, among other factors.

Offering comparisons to state and national data, the dashboard tracks a range of data from pregnancy through early childhood, including access to doctors, midwives and doulas; conditions including gestational diabetes and hypertension; Cesarean births; low birth weights; infant mortality; pediatrician access; and insurance coverage.

Wura Arowosegbe, Worcester's maternal and child health manager, said the dashboard "really empowers us to ask the right questions and also to look at our processes and plans, and see how much we're working toward the things that are most critical and most important when it comes to maternal and child health."

Because of the partnership with UMass Chan, Lundi said, the city will be able to incorporate more local and granular



information in the dashboard as time goes on. The city is also collaborating with diverse communities, and will include the "voices of moms and families that are living what it is that we're talking about [and] really bringing those numbers to life."

— *Jennifer Kavanaugh*

## Pittsfield

### City to begin ecological restoration project in park

A new phase in the cleanup and restoration of the Housatonic River is set to begin this fall, with [ecological restoration in Kirvin Park](#), an active recreation area in the city of Pittsfield.

From the 1930s through the 1970s, General Electric in Pittsfield used polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the manufacturing of electrical transformers — contaminating the water, sediment and floodplain soils of Silver Lake and the Housatonic River. The toxic chemicals were banned in 1979, and in 2000, a federal consent decree was signed by General Electric, the city of Pittsfield, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, and others.

General Electric paid over \$15 million for natural resource damages to the Housatonic River Natural Resources Trustees, which was split between Massachusetts and Connecticut, which share the river. The trustees, which includes state and federal agencies, have been tasked with overseeing the restoration, with MassDEP serving as the lead administrative trustee in the state.



The ecological restoration of 17 acres in Kirvin Park in Pittsfield will include the removal of invasive common buckthorn trees. (Photo courtesy Scott Egan/AECOM)

"In Massachusetts, this funding has supported over 25 restoration projects," said Michelle Craddock, a natural resource damages program coordinator with MassDEP and a state trustee representative.

The consent decree indicated areas where General Electric was responsible for PCB contamination, and required the company to install and monitor 12 acres of non-contaminated forested and wetland habitat within the Housatonic River watershed outside of the consent decree site.

Pittsfield has been partnering with GE on the river clean up over the years, and supported the 2019 selection of an area in the south portion of the 226-acre Kirvin Park, based on an evaluation completed by the MassDEP.

"The city has been working with the project partners to design a quality ecological restoration project that will offer multiple benefits to not only the ecosystem but park users as well," said James McGrath, Pittsfield's park, open space and natural resource program manager.

The project will eradicate invasive species and replace them with native plants, restore and expand the wetlands, and create a two-acre pollinator habitat with native wildflowers. The [restoration plan](#), which encompasses 17 acres, was prepared by AECOM, GE's consultant on the project.

A site investigation identified a total of 88 plant species, 15 of which are non-native. The dominant invasive species are goutweed, garlic mustard, common buckthorn, multiflora rose, oriental

■ **COMMONWEALTH** continued on 23



# Around the Commonwealth

## COMMONWEALTH

Continued from page 22

bittersweet, and Morrow's honeysuckle.

Invasive species threaten biodiversity and lead to soil erosion and water quality impacts. Ten acres of floodplain will see invasive species replaced by plantings of native trees like cottonwood and silver maple, shrubs like silky dogwood and arrowwood, vines like river grape and Virginia creeper, and herbaceous ground cover. There will be three acres of wetland creation and enhancement by removing invasive species and regrading the physical structure of the land. Native plantings in this area will include red maple and speckled alder trees, and pussy willow and silky dogwood shrubs.

The park, which has fields and trails used by hikers, mountain bikers and dog walkers, will remain open to the public during the project.

"The goal is to address this ecological restoration project with care and sensitivity," McGrath said. "This required significant outreach to park users and the larger community to educate them on the benefits of the project, while reassuring them that their beloved park would remain available during any work."

Final plan approval is expected next month, with a spring 2027 projected completion.

The consent decree requires GE to conduct post-construction monitoring and maintenance for a period of five years, which the city and MassDEP hope will allow the newly planted native species to become established and thrive.

The project team and the city will work together to establish a longer term plan for the site. McGrath said the city has made a commitment to improving stewardship of other areas of the park as well, in part to support pollinator species.

The public and property abutters were engaged in the process with a public hearing and comment period. McGrath said community engagement is a key component of any ecological restoration project "because it incorporates invaluable local knowledge and fosters a sense

of stewardship."

"In Pittsfield, we like to say, 'engage early and often.'"

—Meredith Gabriliska

## Weymouth

### State grant to support military base redevelopment

State and local officials hope that a \$32.4 million grant that Weymouth received this summer will help remove longstanding obstacles to the redevelopment of the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station. Plans would expand the town's access to water services and eventually help ease the housing crunch on the South Shore.

The \$32.4 million MassDevelopment grant will go toward water service, sewer, and road improvements needed for redeveloping the former military base's roughly 1,400 acres in Weymouth, Abington and Rockland. Weymouth, which currently provides water and sewer to the property and encompasses most of the property, also received a \$2.6 million MassWorks grant last year for design costs, bringing the total to \$35 million for the work.

The funding will also support efforts to explore Weymouth's potential for getting connected to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority as the town's water source.

Acting Mayor Michael Molisse, who took office in July and is running unopposed in next month's election, said the funding represents an important step forward.

"I've served on the council for 25 years, so I've followed this through since 2000, when I was first elected to the council," Molisse said. "And I've seen it up and down, up and down. I think this is the most positive spot I've seen it [in]. The base closed in 1997, so to see it at this point is very encouraging, and hopefully we can move it forward in my administration."

The grant agreement was the last document signed by Robert Hedlund, Weymouth's previous mayor who



The town of Weymouth has received \$32.4 million in state funding for infrastructure planning and upgrades to support the redevelopment of the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station. (Photo courtesy town of Weymouth)

stepped down on July 15 after almost a decade in office. Securing the funding entailed coordination among the town, regional officials, the Healey-Driscoll administration, and legislators. In a statement about the grant, House Speaker Ron Mariano said the redevelopment will help revitalize the community, with statewide implications.

"As a lack of housing continues to drive folks out of Massachusetts," Mariano said, "this project is a blueprint for how the Commonwealth can address the housing crisis head on, and bolster economic development at the same time."

The plan calls for the development of 6,000 new housing units and about 2 million square feet of commercial buildings, including restaurants, retail and office space. Officials said the development would result in an estimated \$22 million annually in local and state tax revenue. The plan also envisions the preservation of 885 acres of open space. Almost 1,300 housing units (not counted in the 6,000 estimate) have already been built on the property.

The military base was originally commissioned during World War II for blimps patrolling submarine activity in the Atlantic Ocean. After the war, it served numerous military functions.

Since the base closed, there have been numerous false starts, as development plans, and developers, came and went, due to financing, infrastructure needs, and the lack of water capacity. New developers are on board now, and officials said the state funding demonstrates public commitment to the

■ COMMONWEALTH continued on 26

---

## CONNECT 351

*Continued from page 1*

activist [Timothy Shriver](#), will discuss bridging the divisions between opposing viewpoints and focusing on one another's humanity.

Saturday's keynote, [Cassandra Madison](#) of the Center for Civic Futures, will discuss artificial intelligence and local government.

[Tami Pyfer](#), co-creator of the Dignity Index, will address the Women Elected Municipal Officials Leadership Luncheon on Friday afternoon.

### Workshops

The 2026 conference will feature a total of 17 [workshops](#) over two days, with 14 workshops in two blocks on Friday and three large interactive workshops on Saturday covering crisis communications, disaster response, and cybersecurity.

The Friday workshops will cover topics such as municipal law, clean energy siting and permitting, labor law, employee recruitment and retention, community event planning, strategic leadership, community engagement, and dealing with stress.

Complete workshop details will be available on the [Connect 351 website](#) by mid-November.

### Trade Show

Exhibitors continue to fill the rows for the annual [Trade Show](#), where more than 250 companies, nonprofits, and government agencies will be showcasing the latest innovations, technology and services of interest to municipal officials.

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.

More information will be available soon on the series of Learning Labs that will return to the Trade Show floor.

The [Trade Show web page](#) has complete information, including sponsorship opportunities, a 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 exhibitor lists 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 event and development specialist, Stacey Compton-Maga, at

[tradeshow@mma.org](mailto:tradeshow@mma.org) or 617-426-7272, ext. 154. [Click here to learn more about event sponsorship opportunities.](#)

### Schedule and features

The 2026 conference will open on the afternoon of Thursday, Jan. 22, with the Trade Show, a Women Leading Government session, and a new interactive networking and skills activity called Boardroom Breakout. The Trade Show and [Headshot Station](#) for members will open at 2 p.m.

Conference programming continues all day on Friday, Jan. 23, and Saturday events include MIIA's Annual Business Meeting and Breakfast, member business meetings, and the MMA Annual Business Meeting. The conference will conclude at 3:30 p.m. with a dessert reception.

### Member video

A new video on the [Connect 351 website](#) features interviews with municipal officials about why the conference is so meaningful for them.

"I think the greatest value from the conference is that it broadens your perspective," said Dennis Town Administrator Liz Sullivan. "Every year, you leave with an enhanced passion to go out there and keep moving forward with that positive energy after being recharged ... from the conference." ●

---

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

*Continued from page 2*

engagement around the index's curriculum with our member groups.

It's my belief that we collectively have the power to reject division and embrace

dignity, and to do that, we need more than platitudes, but rather a tool for harnessing this collective power. The Dignity Index holds great potential to serve as this tool.

I hope that you'll join me at Connect

351 in January to learn more about the Dignity Index and the role that you can play advancing this approach in your community. ●

---

## GRANT PROGRAM

*Continued from page 7*

Eligible uses for these funds include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Tax assistance (e.g., filing forms with the IRS for Direct Pay)
- Grant writing
- Project scoping and financial analysis
- Planning and feasibility studies
- Demonstration activities
- Post-award grant management support

Applications for the MTTA program are now [open online](#).

### TARPA

The Technical Assistance Grants for Regional Planning Agencies will be a formula-based grant program to provide direct technical assistance to cities and towns, particularly for infrastructure, climate, and economic development projects. About \$2 million will be available over fiscal 2026 and 2027.

Applicants must be one of the state's 13 regional planning agencies that is

seeking or has received federal funding. TARPAs funds may be used to address a variety of technical assistance needs for projects that RPAs are seeking or have received federal funds.

For more information, eligibility criteria, and upcoming events, visit the [FFIO website](#) or contact Raffi Freedman-Gurspan, associate director of federal funds and infrastructure, at [Raffi.M.Freedman-Gurspan@mass.gov](mailto:Raffi.M.Freedman-Gurspan@mass.gov).





# People



Denise Casey

**Denise Casey** will become the new town administrator in Wakefield on Oct. 6.

Casey served in the town of North Andover for the past seven years, as assistant town manager and later deputy town

manager. Previously, she served for two years as the assistant town manager in Wilmington, and for almost a decade as the human resources director in Lexington.

She is an adjunct professor at Suffolk University's Sawyer Business School, and an instructor in the MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program. She has also served as the MMA's program liaison for the MMA-Suffolk Municipal Human Resources seminar, but will step down from that role after this fall session.

Casey has a bachelor's degree in public policy and administration, and a master's degree in public administration, with a concentration in state and local government — both from Suffolk University.

**Steve Maio**, who served for 17 years as town administrator in Wakefield, retired in July, and **Kevin Gill** has been serving as the interim town administrator.



Keith Hickey

**Keith Hickey** became the new town administrator in Fairhaven on Sept. 29.

Hickey previously served for more than four years as the town administrator in Kingston, after serving

for five years as the town manager in Winchendon. He also served as the town manager in several New Hampshire communities — Salem, Merrimack and Bedford — from 2000 through the end of 2015. Earlier in his career, he had

worked as a director of finance and personnel, controller, and assistant finance director for several New Hampshire municipalities.

Hickey has a master's degree in business administration from Southern New Hampshire University, and a bachelor's degree in accounting from Franklin Pierce College.

In Fairhaven, Hickey took the place of **Angie Lopes Ellison**, who left last October after more than two years in the role. **George Samia** served as the interim town administrator.

.....  
**Nicholas Connors** will become the new town administrator in Swampscott on Oct. 6.

Connors has been the assistant town administrator in Milton since May 2024. Previously, he was a principal at Breakwater Public Affairs and served for more than eight years in state government, in roles including deputy commissioner for public affairs, policy and administration and director of external affairs and partnerships for the Department of Conservation and Recreation; and chief of staff and chief administrative officer, and director of the Green Communities Division at the Department of Energy Resources. He was also the director of public affairs at Schneider Associates, a communications officer at Harvard University, and a member of the Lynnfield Finance Committee.

Connors has a bachelor's degree in political science from Northeastern University, and a law degree from Suffolk University. He is a graduate of the MMA-Suffolk Municipal Finance Management Seminar, and is currently enrolled in the MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program for the 2025-2026 academic year.

In Swampscott, Connors will replace **Sean Fitzgerald**, who left in December after almost eight years in the role. **Gino Cresta** has been serving as the interim town administrator.



Andrea Wadsworth

**Andrea Wadsworth** became the new town administrator in Washington on Sept. 8.

For the past two years, Wadsworth has been the chief financial officer for the Massachusetts

Office of the Comptroller, a position she is retaining. Previously, she worked for more than two years as the vice president of administration and finance and chief financial officer at Berkshire Community College, and in business administration roles for the Mount Greylock Regional and Lee school districts, and as town treasurer in Lenox. She is also an adjunct professor at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, and worked as a consultant in K-12 school districts, and as a consultant serving as the finance director and chief financial officer for the Jacob's Pillow International Dance Festival in 2023.

Wadsworth was president of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees in 2022, and, thereby, a member of the Local Government Advisory Commission. She has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Westfield State University, and master's degrees in business administration and public policy, both from UMass Dartmouth.

In Washington, Wadsworth replaced **Sean Curran**, who left last November after more than a year in the role. The Select Board had taken on some of the town administrator's responsibilities in the interim.



Andrew Alward

.....  
**Andrew Alward** became the new town administrator in Chester on Aug. 25.

Alward was previously a practice/operations manager at Bay State Financial, and worked for

# People

## PEOPLE

Continued from page 25

almost five years as a staff accountant and universal banker at Dean Bank. He also served for eight years on the Millville Board of Selectmen, from 2017 until earlier this year.

Alward has an associate degree in applied science in business from DeVry University, a bachelor's degree in economics from Framingham State University, and a master's degree in business, with a concentration in accounting, from Fitchburg State University.

In Chester, Alward replaced **Donald Humason**, who stepped down recently after serving three years in the role.

.....  
**Melanie Jackson** became the new town administrator in Barre on Aug. 28.

Jackson previously spent more than four years in Phillipston, serving as treasurer, human resources director and chief administrative officer. She has also served as the town accountant in Templeton, treasurer-collector in Leicester, and as assistant health agent and assistant treasurer in Athol. She has a bachelor's degree in sustainability studies from UMass Amherst.

In Barre, Jackson has replaced **Tammy Martin**, who became the new town administrator in Granby in June. **Greg Balukonis** served as the interim town administrator.



Christine Hoyt

noted Hoyt's inclusive leadership, commitment to community, ability to build relationships, championing of the local business and nonprofit community, and contributions to civic pride.

Hoyt has served on the Board of Selectmen since 2017. She serves on the board of directors for both the MMA and MIIA, is the District 1 representative for the Massachusetts Select Board Association, and is president of the Berkshire County Select Board Association. She serves as director of member services for 1Berkshire, a nonprofit economic development organization in the region.



Paul McLatchy III

Berkshire Magazine recently named **Christine Hoyt**, a member of Adams Board of Selectmen, among its "Berkshire 25."

The magazine, which recognizes contributions to the region's vitality,

Ashfield Town Administrator **Paul McLatchy III** was the first person to register for the MMA's [Connect 351](#) conference in January. He registered at 8:10 a.m., just minutes after registration opened on Oct. 10.

McLatchy has served in Ashfield for more than four years and is a recent graduate of the MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program. He said he has attended four of the MMA's annual conferences to date.

"This is such a great event," he said, "I made sure to put it in my calendar to remember to register."

McLatchy said he loves seeing the different exhibitors at the Trade Show, learning about new topics and getting policy and legal updates in the educational sessions, "and most importantly, networking and seeing friends I've made over the years." He added that it's helpful and inspiring to gather with like-minded people who want to make a difference in their communities.

"It's great to get different ideas and perspectives from others, and to support each other as we discuss the challenges we face in our jobs," he said. "Whether it's in one of the educational sessions, or at some of the social gatherings, hearing from others and getting to share our stories helps me to be a better administrator."

---

*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](mailto:jkavanaugh@mma.org).*

---

## COMMONWEALTH

Continued from page 23

redevelopment.

"It's been probably the biggest challenge of where we're at right now with this process, and of the last 10 years, if you will," said Ted Langill, Molisse's chief of staff. "Because, you know, people have those memories about the start-and-stop. So it's on the trust level. It's a challenge to convince people that this is different."

The grant will help fund the design and permitting of new water and wastewater infrastructure, as well as roadway improvements. This will include design, permitting and construction documents for a new, roughly 7-mile water main from the existing MWRA system to the Weymouth municipal system; construction of water mains and design and construction of sewer mains; sewer main replacements; road widening projects; and design and construction of safety and traffic signal timing improvements and traffic calming measures.

— **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](mailto:editor@mma.org).*

---



# Classified Advertisements

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### Human Resources Director Town of Walpole

The town of Walpole is seeking a highly qualified professional to serve as its next Human Resources Director. This department head position is responsible for developing, implementing, and managing strategic and operational HR initiatives across all municipal departments (excluding schools). The Director provides expert guidance and policy leadership in workforce planning, labor relations, talent acquisition and retention, employee engagement, classification and compensation, compliance, and benefits administration. The role also plays a key part in collective bargaining negotiations and advises on complex personnel matters. The successful candidate will ensure that HR practices align with the town's commitment to operational excellence, legal compliance, and fostering a high-performing, inclusive workplace culture. Compensation: \$94,647 to \$124,884 annually. Full-time, non-union. Job posting, job description, and additional information available here: [www.walpole-ma.gov/personnel/pages/employment-opportunities](http://www.walpole-ma.gov/personnel/pages/employment-opportunities). Submit a cover letter, resume and employment application to the Town of Walpole, HR, 135 School St., Walpole, MA 02081 or [apply@walpole-ma.gov](mailto:apply@walpole-ma.gov). AA/EOE

### Sewer Superintendent Town of Rockland

The town of Rockland seeks an experienced professional to serve as Sewer Superintendent, reporting to the Board of Sewer Commissioners. This position provides strategic leadership for wastewater operations, including treatment facilities and collection systems, while overseeing staff, budgets, and regulatory compliance. Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in engineering, environmental science, public administration, or related field preferred; five-plus years of progressive wastewater operations experience with at least three in a supervisory role; Grade 7 MA Wastewater Operator's License (or ability to obtain within timeframe set by Sewer Commissioners); valid MA driver's license required. Compensation and Benefits: Salary range \$110,000-\$140,000-plus, commensurate with experience and qualifications. Offers a competitive benefits package to include Blue Cross Blue Shield health insurance, town contribution at 79%. How to Apply: Submit a letter of interest and resume to Lori Taylor, HR Director at [ltaylor@rockland-ma.gov](mailto:ltaylor@rockland-ma.gov). Position open until filled. Full posting and details at [www.rockland-ma.gov/184/Employment-Opportunities](http://www.rockland-ma.gov/184/Employment-Opportunities).

### Finance Director/Town Accountant Town of Harwich

The town of Harwich is seeking a forward-thinking, skilled and innovative finance professional to serve as its next full-time Finance Director/Town Accountant. Under the administrative direction of the Town Administrator, the Finance Director/Town Accountant will oversee and lead the finance team, encompassing Accounting, Assessing, Treasury, and Collections while ensuring full compliance with Massachusetts laws, bylaws, and GASB Standards. Harwich values strong collaborative leadership, strategic thinking and strong financial stewardship within its executive leadership team. The Finance Director/Town

Accountant is responsible for fulfilling daily financial requirements and all financial reporting to state and federal agencies. The town is looking for an ideal candidate who has public accounting and auditing principles, practices and procedures. Generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) standards, and applicable Massachusetts General Laws, regarding finance, insurance and procurement. Methods and techniques of municipal transactions and financial activity including revenue analysis/interpretation, as well as financial planning, forecasting and auditing. This is a benefited position with dental, health, PTO and retirement. Full time, 40 hours per week. The anticipated salary is \$170,000 +/- negotiable for exceptionally qualified candidates. Qualifications and Education. Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, business or public administration, or a closely related field, and five years of progressively responsible municipal finance work. A master's degree in public administration, accounting or finance is preferred. How to apply: To apply, please provide a cover letter, town employment application and resume to the human resources office, 728 Main St., Harwich, MA 02645 or [humanresources@harwich-ma.gov](mailto:humanresources@harwich-ma.gov). Applications are available on the town website or in the administration office. Preference will be given to applicants who submit prior to Oct. 14. Town of Harwich is an EEO/AA Employer.

### Assistant Director of Communications Town of Holbrook

The Holbrook Regional Emergency Communications Center will be conducting a search for the vacant contract position of Assistant Director of Communications. Interested candidates shall formally notify Administrative Assistant Maggie Duggan in writing of their interest to partake in the process by Wednesday, Oct. 15, 2025, at 4 p.m. Formal notification shall include a cover letter, application and current resume. Applications can be found at [Holbrook Regional Emergency Communications Center - Always There - Always Ready](http://HolbrookRegionalEmergencyCommunicationsCenter-AlwaysThere-AlwaysReady). Interested

candidates shall have flexible availability as well as experience in public safety communications, public safety radio systems, computer-aided dispatch (CAD), leadership, budget management, scheduling, grant management and a well-rounded understanding and support of public safety communications regionalization efforts. Selected candidate must successfully pass a background check and negotiate a contract to include salary and fringe benefits with the Holbrook Select Board in order to occupy the position. Please go to the [Holbrook official website](http://HolbrookOfficialWebsite) for job description and complete list of duties and responsibilities. To apply, please email your resume, cover letter, and application to: Maggie Duggan, Administrative Assistant, Holbrook Regional Emergency Communications Center, 781-767-1212 ext. 300, [mduggan@ncrecc.com](mailto:mduggan@ncrecc.com).

### Assistant Treasurer/Collector Town of Yarmouth

The town of Yarmouth is hiring an Assistant Treasurer/Collector. Performs administrative and supervisory work involving receipt, expenditure and custody of municipal funds, investment/borrowing of money, custody of tax title properties, collection of all money due to town, and payroll. Supports all activities/responsibilities of the Town Collector including billing, receipt, collection of property taxes (real and personal), motor vehicle excise taxes, boat excise taxes, and other miscellaneous receivables. Supports collection of water, service connection, septage and solid waste bills. Fosters collaboration, coordination and communication with other Town Departments/Divisions that contribute data and information required to issue bills timely and accurately. Supports all activities and responsibilities of Treasurer including: clearing committed amounts by timely collection, warrant to deputy collector, tax title, abatement; managing tax accounts affected by Bankruptcy and Land Court decision; receiving and verifying deposits and posting to financial system revenue from all departments. Establishes

■ CLASSIFIEDS continued on 28

## 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](http://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.

### November Beacon

Deadline: October 28  
Publication: November 3

### December Beacon

Deadline: November 25  
Publication: December 3

### Placing an ad

You may use our convenient online form at [www.mma.org/municipal-marketplace/add-listing/](http://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](http://www.mma.org) for details.

# Classified Advertisements

## CLASSIFIEDS

Continued from page 27

payment plans with delinquent payers and monitor payers adherence; carry out other specialized collection efforts. Auction Tax Titles and process Land of Low value delinquent properties. Serve as custodian for foreclosed properties. Bachelor's in business administration, accounting or related field; certification as MA municipal treasurer and collector preferred. Five years experience in a responsible position involving payroll, bookkeeping, accounting and treasurer/collector functions; or equivalent combination of education/experience. Must be able to be bonded throughout tenure. Please complete an employment application form. Submit completed employment application form, resume and cover letter to [humanresources@yarmouth.ma.us](mailto:humanresources@yarmouth.ma.us) with "Assistant Treasurer/Collector" in the subject line and include your full name, address, phone number and email address on the cover letter and resume.

### Deputy Fire Chief Town of Yarmouth

The Yarmouth Fire Department is seeking an experienced and dedicated fire service professional to serve as Deputy Fire Chief, with primary responsibility for overseeing the department's fire training program. This senior leadership position plays a critical role in ensuring operational readiness, safety, and professional development of all fire personnel, while also supporting accurate, timely reporting of fire department activity. Education and Experience: Bachelor's in public administration, fire science; master's preferred. Seven to 10 years of related work experience in a municipal fire department with minimum four years in a supervisory/command level including EMS or any equivalent combination of education, training, experience which provides the required knowledge, skills, abilities to perform essential functions. Special Requirements: Class D Motor Vehicle Driver's license; Must possess/maintain a valid Massachusetts EMT or Paramedic license, Certified Fire Officer One, Certified Fire Officer Two, Certified Fire Instructor One, Certified Fire Prevention Officer One. Fire Safety Officer and Massachusetts Fire Chief Credentialing preferred. As a condition of employment, the Deputy Fire Chief is required to successfully complete a background check. Application Procedure: Submit completed employment application form, resume, cover letter to [humanresources@yarmouth.ma.us](mailto:humanresources@yarmouth.ma.us) with "Deputy Fire Chief" in subject line. Include full name, address, phone number, email address on cover letter and resume.

### Public Health Agent Town of Dudley

The town of Dudley is seeking a qualified individual to serve as a full-time Public Health Agent. This position oversees department operations, programs, and grants; supervises staff and volunteers; enforces local, state, and federal public health regulations; conducts inspections; and serves as the technical advisor to the Board of Health. Working under the direction of the Board of Health, the Public Health Agent plans and manages departmental objectives and budget, ensures regulatory compliance, and coordinates public health programs and emergency response efforts. The position also represents the Town in interactions with state agencies, schools, housing authorities, and community partners. Key responsibilities include conducting inspections and

investigations, preparing reports and enforcement documents, supervising public health clinics and staff, managing grants, overseeing emergency plans, drafting regulations, and responding to communicable disease and environmental health concerns. This is a Grade 4 position, with a pay range of \$33.18 to \$38.31 per hour, depending on qualifications and experience. Competitive retirement and benefits package. Attendance at Board of Health meetings, typically held one Tuesday night per month, is required. Ideal candidates will have a bachelor's degree or equivalent experience, three to five years in public health, and a valid Class D driver's license. For full job description, visit [dudleyma.gov/jobs](http://dudleyma.gov/jobs). To apply, please submit a cover letter and resume to: Olivia Antonson, Assistant Town Administrator/Human Resources Manager at [townadmin2@dudleyma.gov](mailto:townadmin2@dudleyma.gov).

### Shared Town Planner Towns of Blackstone and Dudley

The towns of Blackstone and Dudley are seeking applicants for the full-time position of shared Town Planner. This position offers a salary of up to \$90,000, commensurate with qualifications and experience, plus an excellent benefits package. The shared Town Planner oversees planning, zoning, land use, and economic development activities in both communities. The Planner supports the Planning Boards, coordinates with Zoning Boards of Appeals and Economic Development Committees, and collaborates with municipal departments on land use projects, grant administration, and long-term planning initiatives. Key responsibilities include reviewing permit applications and development proposals; advising boards on zoning and land use matters; preparing and managing grants; supporting economic development efforts; organizing public hearings and workshops; representing both towns in regional/state initiatives; and updating zoning bylaws, subdivision regulations and planning documents. Attendance at evening board and committee meetings in both towns is required. Bachelor's degree in planning, community development, or related field required; three or more years of municipal planning experience preferred. Master's degree and/or AICP certification desirable. Strong communication, public engagement, and project management skills are essential. Full job description available at: [townofblackstone.org/jobs](http://townofblackstone.org/jobs). Applicants should submit a resume and cover letter to both towns at the following addresses: [PlannerRecruitment@TownofBlackstone.org](mailto:PlannerRecruitment@TownofBlackstone.org).

## CAREERS AT MMA/MIIA

### Medicare Specialist MMA/MIIA

The Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) and the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) are seeking a Medicare Specialist to join the MIIA Health Benefits Trust Team. 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 subsidiary of the Massachusetts Municipal Association. About MIIA Health Benefits Trust: The Trust provides insurance coverage for the employees and retirees of 180 cities, towns, and other municipal entities in Massachusetts. The Trust is the largest municipal joint purchasing association in New England and one of the largest and most successful in the nation. About the position: The Medicare Specialist is responsible for managing Medicare eligibility and enrollment processes for the Health Benefits Trust's (HBT) Medicare population. Acting as a Medicare subject-matter expert, this role supports subscribers and account contacts through education, technical assistance, and enrollment management, ensuring compliance with all relevant regulations. The Medicare Specialist will serve as the primary liaison for Medicare subscriber accounts and provide training and ongoing technical support to both new and existing account contacts. The Medicare Specialist handles most Medicare enrollments and verifies eligibility for retirees over age 65 and disabled individuals under 65. Maintain up-to-date knowledge of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 32B related to Medicare and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services regulations and compliance standards. Qualifications: The candidate should be highly motivated with a commitment to meet office needs and provide excellent service. Medicare knowledge is required. Nonprofit, municipal government office knowledge is preferred. Basic computer skills required; MS Office and Google Suite knowledge is preferred. 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](mailto: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

■ CLASSIFIEDS continued on 29



# Classified Advertisements

## CLASSIFIEDS

Continued from page 28

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 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](mailto: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. MIIA is a nonprofit organization and a subsidiary of Massachusetts

Municipal Association. About the position: The MIIA simulator is a state-of-the-art driving simulator available to MIIA 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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:energy@mma.org).

### **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.

### **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](mailto:sales@vadarsystems.com). Learn more at [www.VADARsystems.com](http://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 Kinsherb at [eric@erickinsherbcpa.com](mailto:eric@erickinsherbcpa.com) or visit our website [erickinsherbcpa.com](http://erickinsherbcpa.com) for further information.

### **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](http://mpitraining.com/product/navigating-employment-law-a-practical-guide-for-municipal-leaders).

### **Urban Economics Consulting**

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 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

■ CLASSIFIEDS continued on 30

# Classified Advertisements

## CLASSIFIEDS

Continued from page 29

achieving real economic results. Please contact Ernest Bleinberger by phone at 978-984-7125 or by email at eb@strategy5.net. [www.strategy5.net](http://www.strategy5.net).

### 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](mailto:contact@harringtonheep.com) or 617-489-1600.

### 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](mailto:rickwhite58@verizon.net); 781-572-6332; [www.grouxwhiteconsulting.com](http://www.grouxwhiteconsulting.com).

### 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](http://mgt.us), post to our job board at [govhrjobs.com](http://govhrjobs.com), or contact our team of experts at 847-380-3240.

### Public Management Consultants

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

### 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](http://CliffordKennyLaw.com) to see a complete list of our satisfied clients or call John Clifford or Jaime Kenny at 781-924-5796 for more information.

### Municipal 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](http://www.capital-strategic-solutions.com), call 508-690-0046, or email [info@capital-strategic-solutions.com](mailto:info@capital-strategic-solutions.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](mailto:hrcsconsulting@comcast.net); or visit [www.hrsconsultinginc.com](http://www.hrsconsultinginc.com). WBE certified.

### 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](http://www.petrinilaw.com) or contact Christopher Petrini at [cpetrini@petrinilaw.com](mailto:cpetrini@petrinilaw.com) or 508-665-4310.

### 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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:BLynch@CommunityParadigm.com); [www.communityparadigm.com](http://www.communityparadigm.com).

### General Consultant, Recruiting and Special Studies

Municipal Resources Inc. has been providing management solutions to New England municipalities since 1989. MRI is able to provide expertise when and where it's needed. Our services include executive recruitments, assessment centers and promotional testing; public safety organizational studies; finance operations; interim staffing; internal investigations; efficiency and regionalization studies. MRI has an extensive group of experienced subject experts 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@mrigrv.com](mailto:info@mrigrv.com). ●



# Calendar



# The Beacon

Massachusetts Municipal Association

3 Center Plaza, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02108

## OCTOBER

**9 Fiscal Summit**, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Cyprian Keyes Golf Club, Boylston. Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis

**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

**15 MMA webinar**, cybersecurity, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

**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

**22 MMA webinar**, Savi student debt navigator, 12-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

**23 Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources**, labor relations seminar, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Devens Common Center, Devens. Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis

**27 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association**, state event 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

**19 MMA webinar**, opioid settlement funds, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

**20-21 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association**, fall conference, AC Hotel, Worcester. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

## DECEMBER

**2 Massachusetts Mayors' Association**, newly elected training. Contact: MMA Membership and Project Assistant Katherine Christy

**3 Massachusetts Mayors' Association**, holiday dinner. Contact: MMA Membership and Project Assistant Katherine Christy

**5 Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association**, newly elected training, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Cyprian Keyes, Boylston. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

**11 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association and Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources**, joint holiday meeting, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., The Manor, West Boylston. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

**For more information, visit [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org).**

## JANUARY

**22-24 Connect 351**, MMA's annual conference, Menino Convention and Exhibition Center and Omni Boston Hotel. Visit [connect351.org](http://connect351.org) or contact MMA Conference and Meeting Planner Timmerly Kuck.

## FEBRUARY

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

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

**26 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association**, mini boot camp, Middleborough Town Hall, Middleborough. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

## MARCH

**5 Women Leading Government**, conference, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Holy Cross, Worcester. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

*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](mailto:editor@mma.org).*

### MMA contacts

**Denise Baker** can be reached at [dbaker@mma.org](mailto:dbaker@mma.org)

**Katherine Christy** can be reached at [kchristy@mma.org](mailto:kchristy@mma.org).

**Elanienne Coste** can be reached at [ecoste@mma.org](mailto:ecoste@mma.org)

**Martin Davis** can be reached at [mdavis@mma.org](mailto:mdavis@mma.org)

**Timmerly Kuck** can be reached at [tkuck@mma.org](mailto:tkuck@mma.org)

**Kristianna Lapierre** can be reached at [klapierre@mma.org](mailto:klapierre@mma.org)