

The Beacon

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June 2026

Senate OK's state budget bill for FY27

By Adrienne Núñez

The Senate on May 21 passed a fiscal 2027 state spending plan that includes a \$53 million increase for Unrestricted General Government Aid and an education aid increase of \$160 per pupil for minimum aid districts.

After four days of deliberation and the consideration of more than 1,100 amendments, the Senate passed a budget bill totaling \$63.4 billion.

With state budget plans passed in both the House and Senate, the next step is for a House-Senate conference committee to reconcile the differences in order to produce a final fiscal 2027 state budget proposal.

The conference committee's bill must then be passed by both chambers before it can be sent to the governor for her consideration, with the goal of finalizing a budget before the start of the fiscal year on July 1.

The Senate bill includes language to create commissions to study distribution formulas for the two main local aid accounts: Chapter 70 education aid and UGGA.

Like the House proposal, the Senate budget does not include language that had been proposed by the governor to significantly change the collection process for overdue motor vehicle excise taxes and parking tickets.

Both the House and Senate budget bills are intended to be paired with proposed funding from a [fiscal 2026 supplemental budget](#) that is currently under negotiations by a conference committee.

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



Joined by Senate leaders and municipal officials from across the state on May 4 at the State House, MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine speaks in support of a proposed increase in Unrestricted General Government Aid for fiscal 2027. The Senate passed its version of the budget on May 21.

Local accounts

The following are key components of the Senate bill for cities and towns:

- **UGGA:** The Senate plan would raise total UGGA funding to \$1.376 billion for fiscal 2027. The \$53 million increase over fiscal 2026 would be distributed to municipalities based

■ **FY27 BUDGET** *continued on 20*

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MMA, local leaders voice strong opposition to income tax cut

By John Ouellette

Municipal leaders from across the Commonwealth gathered on the State House steps on May 12 to strongly oppose a proposed ballot initiative that would cut the state income tax rate by 20%, thereby slashing state revenue and harming essential services to residents.

"For cities and towns, the consequences for this proposal are very real," said MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine. Only small portions of the Commonwealth's budget are discretionary, he said, so "when state revenues decline, local aid becomes vulnerable."

The projected \$5 billion the proposed ballot question would take out of state revenue collections would "have a devastating effect all across the state budget," he said.



Joined by municipal leaders from across Massachusetts on the steps of the State House on May 12, Amesbury Mayor and MMA President Cassandra Gove speaks out against a proposed ballot initiative that would cut the state income tax rate by 20%.

"When municipalities lose state support, there are only a few options available:

■ **INCOME TAX** *continued on 26*

2026 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 the Massachusetts Mayors' Association, Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, Massachusetts Select Board Association, and Association of Town Finance Committees.

Executive Committee

Kassandra Gove, MMA President,
Mayor, Amesbury

Kiana Baskin, MMA Vice President
Select Board Member, Sharon

Jamie Hellen, MMA Immediate Past President
and MMMA District 2 Representative
Town Administrator, Franklin

Ted Bettencourt, MMA First Vice President
Mayor, Peabody

Denise Casey, MMMA President
Town Administrator, Wakefield

Lisa Feltner, MMCA President
Councillor, Watertown

Joshua Garcia, MMAA President
Mayor, Holyoke

Jennifer Glass, MSA First Vice President
Select Board, Lincoln

Kevin Mizikar, MMMA First Vice President
Town Manager, Shrewsbury

Michael Ossing, MMCA First Vice President
Councillor, Marlborough

Debra Roberts, MSA President
Select Board, Stoughton

Kevin Sullivan, ATFC President
Finance Committee, Hanson

James Walters, ATFC First Vice President
Finance Committee, Halifax

Adam Chapdelaine (non-voting)
MMA Executive Director

Colleen Bradley-McArthur, Councillor,
Waltham

Peter Cusolito, Select Board Member, Leicester

Denise Dembkoski, Town Administrator, Stow

Claire Freda, Councillor, Leominster

Melissa Goff, Deputy Town Administrator,
Brookline

Yolanda Greaves, Select Board Member, Ashland

Jill Hai, Select Board Member, Lexington

Heather Harper, Assistant Town Manager,
Sandwich

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

John McLaughlin, Councillor, Waltham

Shaunna O'Connell, Mayor, Taunton

Ryan Pereria, Councillor, New Bedford

Israel Rivera, Councillor, Holyoke

Sam Squailia, Mayor, Fitchburg

Liz Sullivan, Town Administrator, Dennis

Michelle Wu, Mayor, Boston

Executive Director's Report

Meeting the moment: Pass the MEA before July 31

If you walk into any town or city hall across our 351 municipalities right now, you will hear a version of the same story: Local leaders are facing a perfect storm of mounting fiscal pressures, workforce shortages, and outdated administrative hurdles that eat up precious hours and tax dollars. Local leaders are not operating in a stable "new normal"; they are actively managing communities through a period of historic upheaval.

To meet this moment, local governments need modern tools. They need flexibility. They need the Legislature to pass the Municipal Empowerment Act before the formal session concludes on July 31.

Originally filed by the Healey-Driscoll administration after consultation with the MMA and local leaders, the bulk of this [wide-ranging bill](#) is currently sitting with the House Committee on Ways and Means. While proposed local-option revenue expansions were recently sent to study, the remaining portions of the bill hold critical lifelines. With less than two months remaining in the legislative session, the time to convert these common-sense proposals into law is right now.

Passing this package matters immensely for our communities for several fundamental reasons:

First, cities and towns will benefit greatly



By Adam
Chapdelaine

by codifying operational efficiency. For example, for the past several years, cities and towns have relied on temporary extensions to offer remote and hybrid options for public meetings. These flexibilities have fundamentally transformed local democracy; the Municipal Empowerment Act would make these popular flexibilities permanent.

Further, the MEA would make critical procurement reforms under Chapter 30B, raising the advertised procurement threshold to \$100,000 for all municipal purchases (to match schools), and streamlining cooperative purchasing agreements. While these might not be considered flashy policy debates — they are critical modernizations that prevent local projects from getting bogged down in costly red tape.

The bill would also extend the borrowing term cap for municipal building projects from 30 years to 40, to better reflect the life expectancy of municipal infrastructure while lowering annual debt impacts.

The MEA would also help ease the municipal workforce crisis. From assessors to public works crews, cities and towns are struggling to compete with the private sector for talent. The MEA takes aim at this by introducing temporary flexibilities for post-retirement municipal employment to fill critical shortages,

■ DIRECTOR'S REPORT *continued on 26*



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**Communications
Director**
John Ouellette

Associate Editor
Jennifer Kavanaugh

**Digital Communications
Manager**
Meredith Gabriliska

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

617-426-7272 • www.mma.org

Twitter and Facebook: @massmunicipal

**Communications
Coordinator**
Owen Page

Publisher
Adam Chapdelaine,
MMA Executive Director

Design
FCD, Inc.

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

Senate OK's bond bill with \$300M for Chapter 90

By Violet Gehr

The Senate on May 21 passed a transportation bond bill that includes \$300 million for the Chapter 90 program in fiscal 2027 to support local transportation infrastructure projects across the Commonwealth.

The \$300 million allocation matches last year's funding level, which represented a 50% increase over previous years — and would benefit all 351 Massachusetts municipalities as they head into peak road construction season. Of the total, \$200 million would be allocated under the traditional Chapter 90 formula, and \$100 million would be distributed based on road mileage in a bid to boost regional equity.

The \$1.4 billion transportation bond bill ([H. 5375](#)) also includes the following infrastructure investments:

- \$500 million for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Bridge and Pavement Lifecycle Asset Management Programs
- \$200 million for transportation improvements that support expanded housing development
- \$200 million for a new Parkway Resilience Improvement and Safety Modernization (PRISM) investment program
- \$200 million for the MBTA's Rail Reliability Program

The Senate bill mirrors the

transportation bond bill passed by the House on April 15. Both branches are now expected to enact a final bill in the coming days.

The MMA has long advocated for timely, adequate [Chapter 90](#) authorizations to help cities and towns budget more effectively and efficiently for critical local road and bridge maintenance.

"We appreciate our partners in the Legislature for moving this bill forward swiftly to ensure local governments have the critical road maintenance resources they need," said MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine. "We look forward to the bill making its way to the governor's desk for her signature." ●

Municipal Empowerment Act awaits action in House

By Ali DiMatteo

Major sections of the governor's proposed [Municipal Empowerment Act](#) have been sent to the House Committee on Ways and Means and are awaiting action in the last months of the current legislative session.

The wide-ranging bill, strongly supported by the MMA and local leaders, is

intended to increase municipal flexibility, reduce administrative burdens, strengthen municipal finances, address municipal workforce challenges, and improve the efficiency of local operations.

After Gov. Maura [Healey filed the bill last year](#), various portions were initially assigned to three committees: the Joint Committee on Public Service, the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government, and the Joint Committee on Revenue.

The House Committee on Ways and Means now holds the bulk of the bill's provisions after they were favorably reported by the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government.

Those provisions would:

- Make current remote and hybrid public meeting flexibilities permanent
- Reform procurement procedures and regulations, including increasing the threshold for all municipal purchases under Chapter 30B, streamlining cooperative purchasing agreements, and including snow-hauling services with snow-plowing services as exempt from rules of the Uniform Procurement Act (Chapter 30B)
- Extend the borrowing term cap for municipal building projects to 40 years
- Establish enforcement mechanisms for prohibitions on doubled-up utility poles, including the creation of a civil



During a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on May 12 in Boston, Lexington Select Board Chair Jill Hai thanks the Healey-Driscoll administration for procurement reforms in its proposed Municipal Empowerment Act.

penalty for old attachments to be paid into a Double Pole Municipal Fund

The Public Service Committee favorably reported out its provisions of the bill to the House Rules Committee. Those provisions would allow flexibility for filling critical workplace shortages and a section that would create an Other Post-Employment Benefits Commission to address unfunded liabilities from non-pension employee benefits.

Sections of the Municipal Empowerment Act that had been sent to the Joint Committee on Revenue, including some local-option revenue expansions, were recently sent to study.

The MMA and municipal officials continue to advocate for passage of the bill before the end of the formal legislative session on July 31. ●



Managers discuss leadership strategies

Needham Town Manager Katie King, left, Forward Partners founder Chad Wright, center, and Rockland Town Administrator Douglas Lapp participate in a panel during the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association's spring conference on May 28 in Brewster. Panelists discussed strategies for being present and showing up for employees as a leader.

EPA announces PFAS regulation plans, changes

By Josie Ahlberg

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on May 18 announced plans to move forward with regulatory changes to federal drinking water regulations for certain PFAS chemicals.

PFAS, or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, are chemicals that are considered hazardous to human health, remain in the environment for a very long time — hence the shorthand “forever chemicals” — and are resistant to traditional contaminant remediation measures. PFAS have been commonly used in manufacturing because of their stain-resistant, water-resistant, and non-stick qualities.

In May of last year, the EPA [announced](#) its intention to revisit drinking water regulations finalized under the Biden administration. Now, the EPA has proposed two rule changes.

PFOA and PFOS compliance extension

The EPA said it plans to uphold the federal drinking water Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) for per-fluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and per-fluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS). As established in the [2024 final drinking water regulations](#), the MCLs for PFOA

and PFOS are 4.0 parts per trillion (ppt) for PFOA, and 4.0 ppt for PFOS.

These levels represent the enforceable level of pollution for any public drinking water system. Public water systems with test samples scoring above the limits for either chemical, on a running annual average, would need to take action to lower the level to below 4.0 ppt.

The original regulation gave public water districts nationwide until April of 2029 to implement solutions to reduce PFAS levels below the threshold. The proposed extension rule would give public water systems until April of 2031 to comply with the enforceable limits, if they provide required information to the EPA. [\(See more in the extension rule FAQ.\)](#)

Written comments on the rule will be accepted through July 20. (See the public docket and submitted comments on the [corresponding website](#) or search Docket ID: EPA-HQ-OW-2025-1742 on [www.regulations.gov](#).)

PFHxS, PFNA, HFPO-DA and Hazard Index Mixtures

The EPA took a different approach when considering the other regulations finalized in 2024 that tackle not only other PFAS chemicals individually, but also mixtures of certain PFAS chemicals.

The EPA’s rulemaking would rescind individual regulations and maximum contaminant level goals on PFHxS, PFNA, HFPO-DA (commonly known as GenX Chemicals). The rescission would include the hazard index for mixtures containing two or more of PFHxS, PFNA, HFPO-DA and PFBS.

The EPA has stated that the rescission is necessary because the regulatory determinations promulgated by the Biden administration were unlawful. The EPA also stated that the change is likely to reduce expected national compliance costs.

Written comments on the rescission will be accepted through July 20. (See the public docket and submitted comments on the [corresponding website](#), or search Docket ID: EPA-HQ-OW-2025-0654 on [www.regulations.gov](#).)

Public hearing and resources

A virtual hearing on both proposed rules will be held on July 7 at 11 a.m. More information and registration details are [available online](#).

The EPA’s [PFAS webpage](#) has PFAS resources, including webinar recordings, a communications toolkit, and technical information for water systems. ●

Hearing held on economic development bill

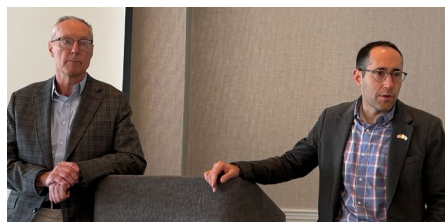
By Ali DiMatteo

The Joint Committee on Economic Development held a hearing on May 19 on an economic development bill filed by Gov. Maura Healey in April, called the [Mass Wins Act](#).

The bill is aimed at strengthening the state’s competitiveness and lowering costs for businesses, building upon investments made in the [Mass Leads Act](#) of 2024.

The bill’s \$305 million in capital authorizations include funding for the following key municipal economic development programs:

- \$25 million for the Downtowns Initiative, delivered through the Community One Stop program and intended to reduce storefront vacancies and enhance pedestrian infrastructure to revitalize downtown areas



Economic Development Secretary Eric Paley, right, and Patrick Field, undersecretary of Community Foundations, discuss the state’s economic conditions and the administration’s economic development bill during the Massachusetts Mayors’ Association spring conference on May 15 in Harwich.

- \$25 million for the Creative Economy Capital Program for grants to initiate streetscape improvements, historic district rehabilitation, wayfinding signage, and the modernization of public gathering and performance spaces

The bill includes a number of policy provisions aimed at accelerating municipal processes to help spur development, including provisions that would:

- Establish consistent definitions for the site plan review process
- Enable municipalities to opt in to zoning changes focused on commercial conversion incentives, intended to transform underused properties into housing
- Allow mayors to initiate zoning proposals in their cities
- Increase the number of home inspectors by allowing engineers with certain qualifications to automatically qualify as a housing inspector

Previous practice with economic development bills suggests that this legislation would be one of the final “omnibus” bills passed in the House and Senate ahead of the July 31 session deadline. ●

Gov. files bill to create rules for micromobility devices

By Violet Gehr

Gov. Maura Healey filed a legislative package on May 4 that would create a comprehensive regulatory framework for motorized “micromobility” vehicles in an effort to bolster public safety.

The governor’s [Ride Safe Bill](#) reflects recommendations made by a [Special Commission on Micromobility](#), on which the MMA had two seats.

The use of micromobility devices, such as motorized bikes, scooters and skateboards, has been on the rise, but local and state-wide regulations have not been able to keep up with the quickly evolving landscape of the technology.

Central to the legislation is a new, speed-based framework for categorizing various micromobility devices.

Lower-speed e-bikes, not exceeding 20 miles per hour, would continue to follow standard bike lane rules, with an added helmet requirement for riders under age 16.

For mid-speed devices (21-30 mph), riders



Gov. Maura Healey has filed a legislative package to create a comprehensive regulatory framework for motorized “micromobility” vehicles, including a speed-based framework for categorizing various micromobility devices.

would still be permitted on bike lanes and paths, but under heightened safety rules. The bill calls for a minimum age of 16 and a helmet requirement for all operators and passengers, regardless of age.

Devices that reach speeds of 30 or more miles per hour would be subject to stricter requirements, including mandatory registration and insurance and a minimum age of 16. To minimize conflicts on the street and protect vulnerable road users, the fastest devices would not be permitted in bike lanes or on pedestrian paths.

The bill also introduces several provisions aimed at maintaining the integrity of the new safety standards. It would prohibit the modification of devices after purchase to increase their speed, and would ensure that law enforcement officers can apply consistent rules to unsafe behaviors across all device types.

The bill seeks to improve the collection of crash data, allowing the state and municipalities to more comprehensively track injuries and identify safety risks within the existing infrastructure.

The legislation would establish a statewide working group to guide the next phase of street and micromobility policy, with the MMA holding one appointed seat. The working group would be responsible for overseeing the future of micromobility regulations in Massachusetts, offering recommendations on registration, enforcement and infrastructure.

The Joint Committee on Transportation has scheduled a hearing on the bill on May 28. ●

PROTECT Act bills go to conference committee

By Ali DiMatteo

Legislation aimed at keeping federal immigration enforcement out of sensitive places has passed the House and Senate and is before a six-member conference committee to resolve differences between the two versions.

The legislation — “promoting the rule of law, oversight, trust, and equal constitutional treatment” or PROTECT — was filed earlier this year by members of the Black and Latino Legislative Caucus. The legislation is closely related to [executive action](#) by Gov. Maura Healey to prohibit federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel from making civil arrests in non-public areas of state facilities, and

prohibiting the use of state property for immigration enforcement staging.

The House and Senate versions of the bill differ in their scope.

The [House version, passed in March](#), would restrict warrantless arrests in courthouses and includes language that would allow the governor to ban or limit civil immigration enforcement in nonpublic areas of any “state entity.”

The House bill includes provisions for jails and prisons to follow on legal access, interpreter services, and transfer notifications, which the Senate did not include.

The Senate version, passed in early May, would include schools, childcare centers,

hospitals and places of worship as areas where federal immigration enforcement cannot be pursued without a warrant.

The Senate bill would create a right-of-action allowing individuals to sue under state law for constitutional deprivations. The House bill does not include such a provision.

The Senate bill would also prohibit law enforcement agencies and political subdivisions from executing or renewing a 287(g) memorandum of agreement with federal immigration authorities. Like the House version, the Senate bill would allow the state Department of Correction to maintain its existing agreement. ●

MMA opens DEI Advisory Committee application

MMA members are invited to participate in the MMA’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee.

The committee works to ensure that the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion are fundamentally understood and integrated into all aspects of the MMA and the services it provides to members.

The committee supports the MMA’s chief equity officer and serves as a thought

partner and conduit for advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and racial equity work across communities and at the MMA.

The committee also serves as an advisory resource to municipal leaders seeking guidance and support related to DEI matters in their respective communities.

The committee meets on the first Wednesday of each month for 75 minutes.

• [Click here for a full description of the committee and its responsibilities.](#)

• [Click here for the online MMA DEI Advisory Committee application.](#)

The MMA is seeking applications by July 31. The application will remain open, and submissions will be reviewed on a rolling basis until committee vacancies are filled.

• [DEI Advisory Committee flyer](#)

– Jillian Harvey

For 250th anniversary, towns cite role of town meeting

By Owen Page

As the country prepares to celebrate its 250th anniversary, residents around the Commonwealth are using their annual town meetings as a platform for reflecting on the nation's founding and recognizing the role that town meeting played in the lead-up to the American Revolution.

North Andover Town Moderator Mark DiSalvo, president of the Massachusetts Moderators Association, wanted to create a project for the association that coincided with the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. He recruited Longmeadow Town Moderator Rebecca Townsend, a former president of the association, to assist with the effort.

"The 250th anniversary of the American Revolution offers us an easy chance at reflecting on why we're doing what we do," Townsend said. "Town meeting is essentially the same kind of environment that it was 250 and nearly 400 years ago, when it was first crafted as a form of self-governance — and that heritage deserved both celebration and reinforcement in both of our views."

In 2024, the [Moderators Association](#) began the Spark of a Revolution initiative, which highlights the role of town meetings in colonial America and the outset of the American Revolution.

In 1774, the British government passed an act banning town meetings, but towns continued meeting in defiance of the act, barring the doors to prevent British soldiers from entering. By 1776, nearly 60 towns discussed independence from British rule during their town meetings, with some issuing their own declarations in support.

DiSalvo and Townsend wanted to recognize the right to self-govern established by those town meetings 250 years ago.

"The warrant was called in the name of the king prior to 1776, and then there's a switch to, 'in the name of the people,'" said DiSalvo. "In Princeton, for example, the clerk began writing 'in the name of the king,' and crossed it out to then write 'in the name of the people.'"

DiSalvo and Townsend have been urging town moderators throughout the Commonwealth to recognize the historic



Natick Town Meeting Member Joshua Ostroff, left, and Natick Historical Society Director Niki Lefebvre stand with the town's original Resolve for Independence document, which was endorsed by Natick Town Meeting in 1776. (Photo courtesy Joshua Ostroff)

relevance of the town meeting form of government through formal statements made to local press, social media, and at public meetings.

There was near-unanimous support among moderators for the effort, DiSalvo said, with many incorporating local history associated with the American Revolution into their statements. Some went a step further: the town of Lincoln reenacted the community's 1774 town meeting, while Reading and Lynnfield staged one-act plays.

In Natick, one of the 60 towns to discuss independence in 1776, former Select Board Member and current Town Meeting Member Joshua Ostroff developed a warrant article recognizing the town's June 1776 Resolve for Independence, independent of the Moderators Association initiative.

"I felt it was important to not just memorialize what we did around the Natick Resolve for Independence, but to contextualize it with where we are today," Ostroff said.

DiSalvo, Townsend, and Ostroff all acknowledged the paradoxical nature of the early resolutions for independence: Indigenous claims and rights to land were not acknowledged, slavery was legal throughout the colonies, and the only people who could vote and participate in government were white male landowners.

Ostroff said town meeting provides valuable lessons 400 years after its

inception in Massachusetts.

"The spirit of debate is foundational to town meeting and to our country," Ostroff said. "And even if people have strong disagreements, we resolve our differences peacefully through debate and voting."

As town meetings have grown and become multi-day events, some may wonder whether this form of government remains efficient and effective in the modern era. DiSalvo said town meeting is far from being anachronistic and redundant, as it provides an outlet for residents to share power and make decisions about their shared future.

"In town meeting, you get the chance to humanize the votes," DiSalvo said. "You're not hiding away in some secluded voting booth and ending someone's job with a decision on a referendum. You have to confront people face-to-face and be aware of the impact of your decisions."

"The continued practice of town meeting, by itself, affords its preservation," he said. "You learn democracy by doing democracy." ●



LGAC discusses education funding

During a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on May 12 in Boston, Stow Town Administrator Denise Demboski discusses the impact of inflation on public education. "Districts across the Commonwealth are facing rising costs beyond our control — general inflation, rising healthcare costs, contractual obligations, escalating transportation costs, and so much more," she said. "These costs to districts are rising faster than our communities can maintain."

MSA to hold free training for newly elected members

The Massachusetts Select Board Association will hold a free training session for newly elected select board members on Friday, June 12, in Devens.

The training will open with a panel discussion featuring seasoned select board members, giving attendees the opportunity to ask questions.

Next, attorney Karis North, a partner at Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehane, will provide an overview of open meeting and public records laws and detail how they affect the work of select board members.

In the afternoon, Jessica Ferry and Jamie Farnum, project managers at the Division of Local Services' Financial Management Resource Bureau, will lead an introductory workshop on municipal finance. The presenters will discuss the role of select boards in municipal finance, share budgeting and organizational best practices, and highlight resources available to municipalities through the DLS.



Karis North



Jaime Kenny



Jessica Ferry

The training will conclude with a session on municipal labor and employment led by attorneys Jaime Kenny and Caitlin Morey of Clifford & Kenny. Attendees will learn about municipal labor law, including potential pitfalls and risks relevant to select board members, and then walk through a series of hypothetical scenarios.

Attendees will also have opportunities to network with colleagues from around the state.

Registration and breakfast will begin at 8:30 a.m. The program will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 3:30 p.m. Lunch will be served.

The agenda is available on www.mma.org.

The training is targeted to newly elected select board members, but any select board member is welcome to attend for a refresher.

Newly elected select board members will receive a welcome letter via email and are also encouraged to share their contact information with the MMA (by email, to database@mma.org) in order to receive information about MSA events.

Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis at mdavis@mma.org

MMA offers leadership development focused on change, equity

By Jillian Harvey

In partnership with Learning Lab International, the MMA is offering a “cross-sectional” professional learning opportunity for municipal teams called Leading Now.

Cross-sectional teams intentionally bring together an array of key roles (elected and appointed) from all corners of the government to undergo intensive leadership development as a group, with a particular focus on leading through change and leading for equity.

Leading Now, based on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's successful Leading With Perseverance coaching series, is the MMA's first cross-sectional professional learning opportunity.

The MMA is now recruiting municipal teams to participate. The goal is to have teams of five to 10 members (ideally eight to 10) from between 10 and 12 cities or towns. All of the teams will meet as one larger group for six half-day sessions.

In DESE's model, teams consisting of superintendents, assistant superintendents, school principals, teachers, and various specialists and supporting staff members rigorously investigate and

improve their communication practices, collaborative dynamics, and active forms of stakeholder engagement. They specifically learn to survive and thrive in productive conflict, and welcome meaningful contact and problem-solving with members of the community they have previously struggled to understand.

For municipal leaders, the focus of Leading Now can include the following:

- Avoiding unnecessary siloing of functions or perspectives, and cultivating more honest and organic communication, collaboration, and accountability between roles
- Strengthening goodwill between municipalities and their constituents; improving how constituent feedback is heard and municipal messaging happens; and building a more positive culture of constituent engagement and service
- Recruiting and retaining leaders and staff members from underrepresented backgrounds, and building a culture of belonging that is both sincere and rigorous, for the sake of team diversity and inclusion as well as community relations

The structure of the program is tailored to the needs and availability of

participants.

Six half-day (three-hour) sessions will be spread out across the year, scheduled with regard for busier municipal seasons, and centrally located in Massachusetts. (Participating municipalities are encouraged to host.)

Onboarding conversations will be held with each municipal team to find out what challenges they are facing and what they hope to work through together in the program.

The MMA will cover half of the cost of the entire program, so each municipal team will be charged a participation fee of between \$2,500 and \$3,000 — for leadership development valued at many times as much.

The first three sessions are tentatively scheduled for Friday, Sept. 25; Friday, Oct. 16; and Friday, Nov. 13. Dates, however, are subject to change after consultation with participating teams.

The [application form](#) is intentionally very brief. Applications are due by 5 p.m. on Friday, July 31.

For questions, contact MMA Chief Equity Officer Jillian Harvey at jharvey@mma.org.

- [Leading Now flyer \(PDF\)](#)

\$1.25M to help communities address opioid crisis

The Healey-Driscoll administration on May 5 announced \$1.25 million in matching grants to 18 municipalities and community-based organizations in areas disproportionately impacted by the overdose crisis.

The latest round of funding is part of the Mosaic Opioid Recovery Partnership, an initiative designed to help cities and towns expand prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery efforts in ways that reflect the needs of their communities. Massachusetts is using statewide opioid settlement funds to support this work, ensuring resources reach communities most affected by the crisis.

“The Mosaic Municipal Matching Grant program emphasizes community, collaboration, and meeting individuals where they are,” said Health and Human Services Secretary Kiame Mahaniah. “By encouraging cities and towns to work together, pool resources, and prioritize the involvement of persons with lived and living experience, these grants are designed to support efforts and initiatives that are community-led and culturally responsive.”

The Mosaic program was developed in 2024 between the Massachusetts Department of Public Health’s Bureau of Substance Addiction Services and [RIZE Massachusetts](#) to increase access to funding for smaller community-based organizations and municipalities.

An initial round of one-year matching grants totaling nearly \$1.5 million was awarded in 2025.

Communities had the option to apply for



funding directly, partner with a nonprofit organization, or collaborate and pool funding with other municipalities.

The one-year grants, which range from \$5,000 to \$150,000, will fund initiatives focusing on at least one of the following areas: prevention, harm reduction, access to care, recovery, trauma, grief, and family supports.

Respective municipalities will earmark a matching portion of their previously distributed opioid settlement funds to the proposed initiative. RIZE will provide grantees with technical assistance and learning opportunities tailored to their specific needs to strengthen their organizations and develop sustainability.

New to this round of the grant program, municipalities could choose between two project tracks based on their current stage of opioid abatement spending. The first track supports municipalities in early stages of planning, including designing, implementing, and evaluating abatement strategies that are responsive to the needs of their communities. The second track will support those municipalities that have already established strategies and are working to start, expand, or continue their efforts.

“This program continues to adapt to the needs of communities as well as to the needs of those municipalities and organizations that are engaged in abatement

efforts,” said Deirdre Calvert, director of DPH’s Bureau of Substance Addiction Services. “Our ability to meet individuals and communities where they are is strengthened by our efforts to provide tailored support to those who are developing and expanding programs and initiatives to serve those communities most impacted.”

RIZE will conduct one additional round of Municipal Matching Grant awards in 2027, awarding a total of \$4 million in matching grants over the program’s three years.

Grant awardees are the cities of Gloucester, Haverhill, Lynn, New Bedford and Salem, the towns of Leicester and Ware, the AIDS Support Group of Cape Cod, Behavioral Health Innovators, the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, the Boston Public Health Commission, Community Legal Aid Inc, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, North Suffolk Community Services, Riverbend, Rural Recovery Resources, the SAFE Coalition, and United Communities Corp.

The Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund was established in 2020 to receive and administer funds from certain legal settlements relating to allegations brought against companies in connection with the opioid crisis. Over the next 18 years, Massachusetts anticipates receiving \$1 billion through the settlements and is using it for substance use prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery. Of this funding, 40% is allocated to municipalities, and 60% is allocated to the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund. ●

Drive Electric Massachusetts Symposium is June 10

Municipal and fleet electrification will be one of the focus areas this year at the annual Drive Electric Massachusetts Symposium, to be held on June 10, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at the AC Hotel in Worcester.

Leaders from across the state will gather for a conversation focused on advancing transportation electrification.

Topics will include:

- State of EV Programs: Overview
- Panel discussion: Expanding EV Charging Infrastructure
- Panel discussion: Programs for Fleets

Organizations participating in

presentations and panels include:

- Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources
- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
- Massachusetts Clean Energy Center
- Massachusetts Department of Transportation
- Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Coordinating Council
- Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission
- National Grid
- Energy New England

- Autel
- CALSTART
- Insight Distributed Energy
- Eversource
- Boston Water and Sewer Commission

The event is free, but advance registration is required, as space is limited.

[Online registration](#) is available. Lunch will be provided.

[Click here for more event details.](#)

All attendees are invited to a meeting of the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Coordinating Council following the symposium, at 1 p.m. ●

Statutory speed limit signage program opens

By Violet Gehr

Communities may apply for free, static speed limit signage for their roadways through a new program administered by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Traffic Safety Section, in coordination with the Office of Transportation Planning.

The Speed Limit Signage Program is a result of [recent amendments](#) to the federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, which now allows MassDOT to provide signage for statutory speed limits. Previously, MassDOT was only permitted

to provide regulatory speed limit signs.

Regulatory speed limits are based on speed studies and governed by MassDOT's Speed Zoning Procedures. Adoption of regulatory speed limits is optional.

Statutory speed limits, the focus of this program, are established by legislation where there are no regulatory speeds.

The Speed Limit Signage Program will supply speed limit signs, statutory placards, and posts for mounting the signage.

The program has \$1 million in funding for the current federal fiscal year.

MassDOT said it will review requests and approve requests based on funding availability and demand.

Signage requests are due by June 12 and must be submitted through an [online survey form](#).

MassDOT held a Zoom webinar on May 20 and 21 to review the program details, clarify eligibility requirements, and answer questions from local officials. (The [slide deck can be viewed here](#).)

Questions may be directed to Leah Pickett at leah.i.pickett@dot.ma.us. ●

MassDEP recognizes local drinking water systems

In recognition of National Drinking Water Week, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection announced on May 5 that 42 public water systems, four certified operators, two towns, and two child care advocates received awards for public water service in 2025.

Awards were given based on demonstrated outstanding water service, an absence of violations or compliance issues, and support for the overall public water supply.

The awards were announced at a ceremony in Shirley.

Awards categories included Non-Transient Non-Community Systems, Small Community Systems, Medium and Large Community Systems, Consecutive Systems, Water Conservation Awards, Energy Conservation Award, and the STAR L Award for lead reduction actions within a system.

The towns of Orleans and Essex received Energy Conservation awards for using Gap Energy Grant funds to complete projects that lower both energy usage and financial costs.

The Amherst Water Division received the Star L award for demonstrated commitment to public health via participation in a Water-Smart pilot program to identify potential lead sources and take actions to improve drinking water quality.

The MassDEP also awarded regional recognitions and distinguished operator awards within each of the department's four regions.

The list of award recipients is available on [mass.gov](#). ●

Management Association to hold half-day boot camp on June 11

The Massachusetts Municipal Management Association will hold a half-day boot camp on June 11 at the Marlborough Public Library.

The free event will focus on navigating the town manager recruitment process, and leading people when you don't have all of the answers.

Millbury Town Manager Karyn Clark and John Petrin, a senior associate with Community Paradigm Associates, will discuss the town manager application and recruitment process. Clark recently accepted the town administrator position in Clinton, and Petrin has worked with dozens of select boards, overseeing the manager search process.



Karyn Clark



Ryan McLane

Carlisle Town Administrator Ryan McLane and Westford Town Manager Kristen Las will share their experiences with leading staff after transitioning into the manager role. They'll address the learning curve many

new managers experience, especially around unfamiliar personnel issues.

Local government staff are invited to attend.

The meeting will run from 9:30 a.m. to noon, and lunch will be provided. Online registration is available on [www.mma.org](#).

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

Women Leading Government to meet on June 25

Women Leading Government will hold a half-day meeting on June 25 at UMass Amherst featuring Allison Iantosca, a professional certified coach and business owner.



Allison Iantosca

Iantosca's interactive presentation will focus on "What Makes a Great Leader," which is also the title of her podcast.

The cost is \$25, including lunch.

Women Leading Government events are open to all staff in appointed positions in local government.

More information and online registration are available on [www.mma.org](#).

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

MMA webinar will cover consistent service delivery

On June 23, the MMA will host a webinar titled “You Can’t Always Have It Your Way: Delivering Consistent Constituent Services.”



Jen Breaker



Amanda Smith



Hillary Waite

The webinar will explore:

- The differences between customers and constituents
- How to improve public understanding of the “product” they receive as taxpayers
- Practical strategies for providing consistent, compassionate service
- Equity in public service
- Ensuring clear, confident

communication across municipal teams

Panelists will discuss ways to empower team members at every level to communicate confidently, answer questions clearly, and streamline the experience for communities.

Speakers will be:

- Hillary Waite, sewer superintendent in Rockland

- Jen Breaker, interim human resources director in Malden
- Salem Mayor Dominick Pangallo
- Julio Mota, constituent services director in Salem

Dedham Communications Director Amanda Smith will moderate the session.

[Online registration is available](#) for the 75-minute webinar, which will begin at noon. Only MMA members may register. MMA members include elected officials and municipal employees from MMA member communities across the state. Media members are not permitted to attend.

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

MMA to host webinar on building a more cohesive municipal structure

The MMA will host a webinar on July 8 to explore the core components of organizational alignment and offer strategies for building a more cohesive municipal structure.

The webinar will be led by Great Barrington Town Manager Liz Hartsgrrove, who has two decades of experience in leadership, strategic planning, and community engagement in

numerous municipalities on Cape Cod and in the Berkshires.

Effective local government, Hartsgrrove says, is not only about delivering services, but also about intentionally aligning leadership, operations and community expectations to create meaningful public value that connects the vision to execution, and operations to impact. In the webinar, she will discuss how every interaction and service can contribute to a cohesive, trusted, and community-centered organization.



Liz Hartsgrrove

[Online registration is available](#) for the 75-minute webinar, which will begin at noon. Only MMA members may register. MMA members include elected officials and municipal employees from MMA member communities across the state. Media members are not permitted to attend.

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



LGAC focuses on local aid

During a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on May 12 in Boston, Sharon Select Board Member and MMA Vice President Kiana Baskin Baskin, right, emphasizes the importance of unrestricted aid for local services. “With strict limitations on revenue generation,” Baskin said, “we rely on our partners in state government to help provide the critical services and targeted investments that help to ensure that the everyday essential services to our residents are maintained and affordability for our residents is prioritized.” Seated next to her was MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine.

MMA Webinars

Aftermath of an override failure

On May 13, the MMA hosted the first webinar in a two-part series focused on the decisions and communication required after a failed Proposition 2½ override.

As outlined in [two MMA reports](#), communities across the Commonwealth are facing a systemic fiscal challenge, causing many to consider an override. The webinar detailed the difficult reality that follows an unsuccessful vote.

Athol Town Manager Shaun Suhoski began by acknowledging that this spring may be the toughest budget season he has endured in his career. To manage his town's \$1.75 million deficit, Suhoski has recommended a multi-year “do the least harm” plan, which still would reduce Athol's workforce by 8% and cut community services such as summer recreation programs.

Brian Maser, an attorney with KP Law, warned leaders to “have a plan as if the override vote will fail,” because — if it does — there's a short window of time to comply with obligations under the civil service (Ch. 31) and collective bargaining (Ch. 150) laws, including seniority-based layoffs, bumping rights, and mandated employee hearings.

While the aftermath of a failed override is painful, Suhoski and Maser acknowledged, leaders must prioritize transparency and collaboration to preserve the trust of employees and the community.

New local public health platform

On May 19, the MMA hosted a webinar with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to explore its new local public health data and workflow platform, called Metrik.

Representatives from the DPH's Office of Local and Regional Health — Aimee Petrosky, director of performance standards and data systems, and Rike Sterrett, assistant director of data systems — discussed how the new platform can benefit municipalities.

Metrik aims to:

- Improve access to data for better decision-making
- Provide local health departments with simple, modern tools to meet their real-world needs
- Enable more effective collaboration across municipalities.

Examples include: offering digital inspection tools to help health inspectors work more efficiently; creating a one-stop portal for business owners to apply for health permits; and providing data analysis tools to help epidemiologists recommend targeted prevention campaigns.

Shin-Yi Lao, commissioner in Newton's Health and Human Services Department, has been a member of Metrik's Local Public Health Advisory Team, which provided input throughout the development process.

“There isn't a one-size-fits-all solution that will work for every municipality,” Lao said.



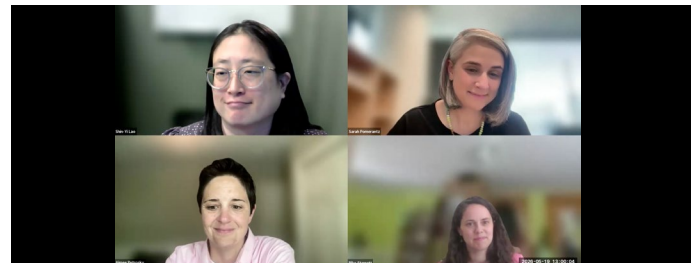
Panelists discuss municipal budget management strategies during a recent MMA webinar. Speakers included KP Law attorney Brian Maser, top left, MMA Legislative Director Dave Koffman, top right, and Athol Town Manager Shaun Suhoski.

Date: May 13 **Length:** 75 minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR ↗](#)

MMA Legislative Director Dave Koffman moderated 20 minutes of questions and answers, addressing inquiries regarding how budget cuts were decided in Athol, limitations that campaign finance laws impose on override advocacy, and pay rates when reinstating civil service employees.

– *Kristianna Lapierre*



Panelists discuss the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's new local public health data and workflow platform during a recent MMA webinar. Speakers included, clockwise from top left, Shin-Yi Lao, Newton health and human services commissioner; Sarah Pomerantz, Metrik project team senior change management lead; Rike Sterrett, assistant director of data systems for the Office of Local and Regional Health; and Aimee Petrosky, director of performance standards and data systems for the Office of Local and Regional Health.

Date: May 19 **Length:** 60 minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR ↗](#)

DPH is taking a user-centered design approach to building the platform, reaching out to more than 440 state and local stakeholders and more than 200 municipalities to inform metrics, features, and functionality.

Petrosky moderated 25 minutes of questions and answers, addressing inquiries regarding how Metrik will work with existing platforms, how municipalities can sign on as a pilot community, and how Metrik will work with housing inspections.

– *Kristianna Lapierre*

MMA Webinars

Libraries as hubs for civic engagement

An MMA webinar on May 26 with municipal leaders from three public libraries and a representative from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners explored the link between libraries and civic engagement.

“The public library is one of the last truly democratic spaces in America,” said Lawrence Public Library Director Janelle Abreu. “No membership fees, no income test, no political affiliation required. You walk in and it belongs to you.”

In Lawrence, she said, the public library offers voter registration drives, English for Speakers of Other Languages programs, naturalization ceremonies, and telehealth kiosks, where residents can connect with healthcare providers.

Greenfield Public Library Director Anna Bognolo emphasized the importance of a library’s work in responding to community needs.

“We find ourselves increasingly supporting residents who are facing a number of challenging circumstances, from generalized economic hardship to digital inequity, social isolation, language barriers, housing instability, and mental health and substance use challenges,” Bognolo said. “Libraries create accessible opportunities for people to learn, collaborate and address community needs together.”

Smadar Gekow, literacy coordinator at the Stoughton Public Library, highlighted the Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts program — the only statewide, volunteer tutoring program for adults in Massachusetts who are learning English.

Alysa Hayden, library advisory specialist at the MBLC, began the session by stating that public libraries have an average 300% return on investment to their communities.

Hayden moderated 15 minutes of questions and answers,



Panelists discuss local library initiatives that strengthen community ties and civic participation during a recent MMA webinar. Speakers included, clockwise from top left, Greenfield Library Director Anna Bognolo; Stoughton Literacy Coordinator Smadar Gekow; Alysa Hayden, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners library advisory specialist; and Lawrence Library Director Janelle Abreu.

Date: May 26

Length: 60 minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR ↗](#)

which addressed inquiries regarding the differences between a community center and a public library, libraries sharing buildings with other departments, and unique staffing structures.

– *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.

MMA/MMC webinar will cover refreshing municipal websites

Municipal leaders will share their experiences navigating a municipal website refresh process during an MMA webinar with the Massachusetts Municipal Communicators on June 30.

Panelists will review strategies, lessons learned, branding considerations and more to help prepare municipal leaders to update their municipal websites.

Panelists will include:

- Taylor Galusha, communications director, Lexington



Christina Metcalf

- Christina Metcalf, communications officer, Brookline



Taylor Galusha

- Tyler Cote, community engagement specialist, Watertown (moderator)

[Online registration is available](#) for the 75-minute webinar, which will begin at noon. Only MMA members may register. MMA members include elected officials and municipal employees from MMA member communities across the state. Media members are not permitted to attend.

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

MMA-Suffolk offers 3 sessions of finance, HR seminars

By Kate Evarts

The MMA and Suffolk University will be offering three Municipal Finance Management Seminar programs during the 2026-2027 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 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 the class schedule as follows:

- Fall 2026: Oct. 30, Nov. 6, Nov. 13, Nov. 20, Dec. 4; registration opens Aug. 5

- Winter 2027: Jan. 8, Jan. 15, Jan. 29, Feb. 5, Feb. 12; registration opens Oct. 21
- Spring 2027: March 5, March 12, March 19, March 26, April 2; registration opens Dec. 9

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

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

Registration for each session will be hosted on the [MMA’s event registration website](#). Registration is first-come, first-served. Students will be vetted to ensure that they’re a municipal employee and that there are no more than three participants per municipality.

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

Municipal Human Resources Seminar

The MMA and Suffolk University will host three sessions of the Municipal Human Resources Seminar during the 2026-2027 academic year.

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 HR 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. More than 175 participants have completed the seminar since its inception in 2024.

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

- Fall 2026: Sept. 25, Oct. 2, Oct. 9, Oct. 16, Oct. 23
- Winter 2027: Jan. 29, Feb. 5, Feb. 12, Feb. 19, Feb. 26
- Spring 2027: April 9, April 16, April 23, April 30, May 7

The [application for the fall seminar](#) is due by July 15. This is a competitive application process; applicants will be informed of their status by the end of August.

Applications for future seminars will be posted on the MMA-Suffolk [website](#).

More information

The MMA has partnered with Suffolk University since 2011 to offer programs designed exclusively for municipal employees to help them further their professional careers.

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



LGAC applauds proposed funding support

During a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on May 12 in Boston, Sandwich Assistant Town Manager Heather Harper thanks the Healey-Driscoll administration for proposals in its supplemental budget bill to provide targeted support to cities, towns and school districts, particularly for special education costs. The funding, she said, “would help to boost reimbursements to school districts for specialized services that are difficult to provide in-district, but make a dramatic difference in the lives of students.”

MMHR seminar focuses on labor relations, labor law

By Martin Davis

Employee accommodations, succession planning, and navigating discipline in unionized environments were the main topics of the Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources Labor Relations Seminar on May 7 in Devens.

The seminar opened with a labor law update from attorneys Michael Maccaro and Madison Harris-Parks of Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehane. They covered numerous recent decisions from state courts, the Joint Labor-Management Committee, and the Department of Labor Relations.

The attorneys walked through the facts of the cases, identified broader trends, and highlighted lessons learned and best practices for municipal human resources professionals to consider.

The seminar's keynote speaker, Rachel Shaw, owner of Rachel Shaw Inc., discussed discipline and mental-health-related accommodations, as well as ensuring compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act and state laws.

Shaw outlined the basics of the Disability Interactive Process, and provided statistics and trends regarding employee mental health and disabilities. She also focused on the intersection of disability and discipline, reminding attendees that the Disability Interactive Process, and, by extension, reasonable accommodations, and progressive discipline both aim for employees'



Rachel Shaw, owner of Rachel Shaw Inc., leads a training session on mental health issues and the intersection of discipline and disability during the Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources Labor Relations Seminar on May 7 in Devens.

performance standards to be met.

She said "discipline isn't about termination," so employers should use whatever tool helps someone be successful.

The afternoon featured a legislative update by MMA Legislative Director Dave Koffman followed by two concurrent workshops.

Joellen Cademartori, senior vice president at MGT, led a workshop on succession planning. She framed the session around the ongoing retirement wave in municipal government, its implications, and the need to be proactive.

Cademartori detailed the seven essential components of a succession plan, such as a workforce analysis, alternative staffing models, and knowledge transfers.

"Human resources is at the center of strategic planning, providing the data, advice, and tools that make the plan actionable," she said.

Cademartori highlighted the tools needed to help measure and evaluate an organization's workforce, including mapping exercises, workforce censuses, employee surveys, and the Institutional Knowledge Assessment Tool.

The other workshop, focused on navigating discipline, documentation, and just cause in unionized environments, was led by attorney Melissa Murray of Norris, Murray & Peloquin. She detailed the various stages of progressive discipline and its role in ensuring fairness, decency, and legal compliance. Murray stressed the importance of documentation in these processes.

"While it's a lot of work for everyone involved, documentation is the best thing you can do and is essential for both termination and promotion considerations," Murray said.

Regarding investigations, Murray noted that they should be prompt and thorough. She reminded attendees to be aware of emotional biases, which undermine objectivity. If possible, she suggested discussing situations with someone else to catch missing pieces or potential biases.

The workshop concluded with attendees applying what they learned to a series of hypothetical cases. ●

Municipal officials invited to MMLA program on procurement June 4

The Massachusetts Municipal Lawyers Association is hosting an educational program on June 4 in Worcester on routine and complex procurements from the perspectives of municipal procurement professionals and municipal attorneys.

"Routine Procurements to Complex Projects: Operational and Legal Perspectives" will provide a practical overview of core procurement requirements and common contract administration and compliance challenges.

The program will also address issues related to particular procurements, such as software, and complex capital projects that require more flexible

approaches, such as design-build delivery or other non-traditional procurement strategies.

The program is open to municipal officials involved in procurement.

The presenters are:

- Jillian Jagling, partner, West Group Law
- Mary Delaney, chief procurement officer, Fitchburg
- Heather White, principal, Petrini & Associates
- Elizabeth Lydon, senior associate, Mead, Talerman & Costa
- Kenneth Woodland, chief, Bureau of

Municipal Finance Law, Division of Local Services, Department of Revenue

The cost is \$80 for MMLA members, \$75 for MMLA members with five or fewer years of practice, and \$90 for nonmembers.

The educational program will be held from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner and the MMLA Annual Business Meeting.

Registration is available at the [MMLA website](#). In the Registration section, where it asks if you are an attorney, check "law student."

The event will be held at Assumption University. ●

State seeks applicants for Community Biodiversity

The Community Biodiversity Grants Program seeks proposals for projects that drive on-the-ground progress toward the state's [Biodiversity Conservation Goals](#).

The program, administered by the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game, will award grants of between \$20,000 and \$150,000 to support local efforts to protect and restore biodiversity and bring nature to every neighborhood.

The application deadline is June 24.

Eligible applicants include public and non-public entities, such as municipalities, state agencies, nonprofit organizations, tribal governments, museums, and academic institutions.

Examples of eligible projects include:

biodiversity monitoring, building pollinator gardens, community gardens, microforests and food forests, biodiversity-friendly improvements to the built environment, and participatory science, educational programs, and public art or natural history exhibits focused on biodiversity in Massachusetts.

Awards will be announced this fall 2026, and projects or phases of projects must be completed by June 30, 2027.

The [Community Biodiversity Grants Program application, and program information](#), is available online. ●



Proposals are sought for municipal projects that drive progress toward the state's Biodiversity Conservation Goals.

MMA webinar will discuss strategies after an override win

The MMA will host a webinar on June 10 to help municipal leaders navigate the important next steps following a successful Proposition 2½ override vote.

“Cultivating Transparency After a Yes Vote” is the second half of a webinar series to help communities deal with the aftermath of override votes and plan next steps and communicate fiscal decisions clearly. (The [first session](#) in the webinar series offered guidance for municipalities navigating tight budgets when an override isn't an option.)

The June 10 webinar panelists will



Jen Grigoraitis

discuss how municipalities can keep stakeholders informed, clearly explain budget decisions, and identify the specific local programs supported by the new funding. The webinar will also explore best practices for managing staff and resident expectations.

discuss how municipalities can keep stakeholders informed, clearly explain budget decisions, and identify the specific local programs supported by the new funding. The webinar will also explore best practices for managing staff and resident expectations.

Speakers will include Melrose Mayor Jen Grigoraitis and Arlington Deputy Town Manager and Finance Director Julie Wayman.

[Registration is now available](#) for the 75-minute webinar. Only MMA members may register. MMA members include elected officials and municipal employees from MMA member communities across the state. Media members are not permitted to attend.

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

MMA webinar to cover PACE Massachusetts program

On June 17, the MMA will host a webinar for municipal leaders covering the [Property Assessment Clean Energy \(PACE\)](#) Massachusetts program, which helps commercial and industrial property owners finance energy efficiency improvements for existing buildings or for qualifying new construction projects.

Properties eligible for financing include commercial buildings, industrial buildings, and multi-family buildings with five or more units.

To date, 84 communities have authorized PACE, which is administered by [MassDevelopment](#). Municipalities must opt in to PACE by a majority vote of the city or town council or select board.



Wendy O'Malley



Conor Glasheen

Representatives from MassDevelopment — Senior Vice President Wendy O'Malley and Assistant Vice President for Green Finance Conor Glasheen — will discuss the program and answer questions.

The session will be moderated by Laura Brennan, executive director of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission.

[Online registration is available](#) for the 75-minute webinar, which will begin at noon. Only MMA members may register. MMA members include elected officials and municipal employees from MMA member communities across the state. Media members are not permitted to attend.

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

State awards \$1.9 million for fire safety education

The Healey-Driscoll administration on April 28 announced \$1.9 million in grants to 229 local fire departments for fire safety education programming for school-aged children and older adults.

The grants come from two fire safety programs coordinated by the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services: the Student Awareness of Fire Education program, which brings fire-fighters to schools to provide life safety lessons to students, and the Senior SAFE program, which supports life safety education for older adults through senior centers, councils on aging, and home visits.

“The SAFE program has helped drive down child fire deaths for decades,

and we’re building on that success by reaching more families and older adults across Massachusetts,” said Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll in a prepared statement.

Massachusetts has markedly reduced child fire fatalities since the SAFE program launched in the mid-1990s.

The Senior SAFE program was developed in 2014 to reach older adults, who account for about half of fire deaths in Massachusetts and across the nation.

Fire departments in 215 cities and towns will receive a total of \$1.3 million in SAFE funding, while 226 departments will receive \$610,000 in Senior SAFE funding. A complete list of recipients and awards is [available online](#). ●



The Healey-Driscoll administration announced grants for fire safety education programming for school-aged children and older adults through the Student Awareness of Fire Education and Senior SAFE programs.

State awards \$14.9 million in loans for clean water projects

The Massachusetts Clean Water Trust’s Board of Trustees on May 6 approved \$14.9 million in low-interest loans and grants to municipalities through the Massachusetts State Revolving Funds.

The funds help communities build or replace water infrastructure that enhances

existing water resources, ensures drinking water safety, protects public health, and increases community resilience.

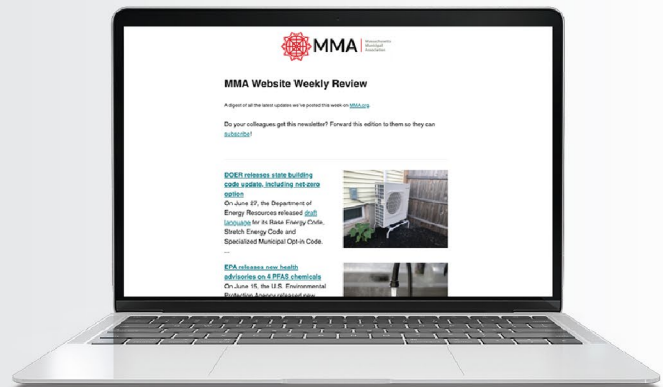
Drinking Water Projects grants of \$8.7 million and \$6.2 million were awarded to the Chelmsford Water District and the town of West Brookfield, respectively.

For more information, visit the [SRF programs webpage](#). Information on the state’s [Disadvantaged Community Loan Forgiveness Program](#) is also available online. ●

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- State & federal grant opportunities
- Member group meetings & webinars
- Connect 351 announcements
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MMHR to hold annual meeting on June 4

Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources will hold its annual meeting on June 4 in Boylston.

The agenda will include:

- A legislative update from MMA Legislative Director Dave Koffman
- A workshop, “Inclusive Managing: Understanding the Self and Modeling Best Practices,” led by MMA Chief Equity Officer Jillian Harvey
- MMHR’s annual business meeting

- Networking opportunities

During the business meeting, attendees will vote on updates to the MMHR bylaws, the association’s fiscal 2027 budget, and MMHR board members. Nominating Committee Chair Vanessa Hale will present the slate of candidates for election by the membership. Members were sent the proposed amendments to the bylaws in May.

Registration and a networking coffee will begin at 8:30 a.m., and the meeting

will begin at 9:15. Lunch will be served. The registration fee is \$45 for members and \$55 for nonmembers.

The meeting will be held at Cyprian Keyes Golf Club, located at 284 E Temple St. in Boylston.

The agenda and registration are available at www.mma.org.

Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis at mdavis@mma.org

Ipswich River communities receive funding for water projects

The Healey-Driscoll administration on May 7 awarded \$900,000 in grants to five communities to enhance public water supplies, improve drinking water availability, and remove harmful per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) from drinking water.

Now in its third year, the Ipswich Water Supply and PFAS grant program supports water management in the Ipswich River Basin to meet communities’ long-term water supply needs and protect aquatic ecosystems.

The grants, administered by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, help to



Five communities received grants through the Ipswich Water Supply and PFAS grant program to bolster water management in the Ipswich River Basin.

maintain and improve access to clean and safe drinking water for communities

in the Ipswich River Basin.

“These grants help us address the unique drinking water challenges of the Ipswich River Basin,” said MassDEP Commissioner Bonnie Heiple. “We are proud to support our public water suppliers as they work to protect and preserve this valuable resource.”

Grants ranging from \$70,000 to \$405,903 were awarded to Hamilton, Ipswich, Lynn, Peabody and Wenham. Details about the grant projects and program are [available online](#). ●



LGAC discusses doubled-up utility poles

During a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on May 12 in Boston, Lincoln Select Board member Jennifer Glass thanks the Healey-Driscoll administration for their proposed Municipal Empowerment Act provisions to expedite the removal of doubled-up utility poles. “Once you start thinking about this topic, you can’t drive around town in the same way,” she said, emphasizing the abundance of the safety hazards.

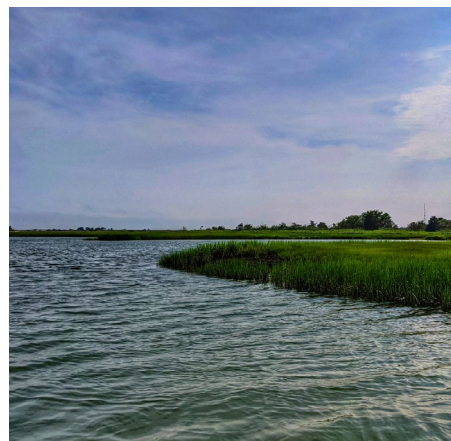
Herring River restoration project receives \$3 million from state

The Healey-Driscoll administration on May 12 announced a \$3 million award to the town of Wellfleet and the Friends of Herring River to support the Herring River Estuary Restoration Project in Wellfleet and Truro.

The funding, provided by the Department of Fish and Game’s Division of Ecological Restoration, will help to restore tidal flow to the estuary and improve habitat for fish and wildlife.

The Herring River Estuary Restoration project, one of the largest such projects ever undertaken in the North Atlantic coastal region, will restore up to 890 acres of degraded salt marsh and estuarine habitats to support fish and shellfish populations.

The funding will go to two organizations supporting the restoration. The town of Wellfleet will receive \$1.47 million



The town of Wellfleet and the Friends of Herring River have received a grant to support the Herring River Estuary Restoration Project.

to support construction, and Friends of the Herring River will receive \$1.6 million to support project coordination and other construction-related activities. ●

Car seat distribution program applications open

The Office of Grants and Research is accepting applications for the Child Passenger Safety Education and Assistance Program, which provides car seats for distribution to families in need.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis through Aug. 31 and will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis.

The program, funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, aims to reduce child passenger injuries and fatalities by equipping families with proper car seats and educating caregivers on their installation and use.

Massachusetts municipal agencies, state agencies, not-for-profit hospitals, and nonprofit organizations serving children and/or families that meet all of the requirements in the [Child Passenger Safety Education and Assistance Program Notice of Solicitation of Applications](#) are eligible to apply.

[Application materials](#) and guidelines, and more information, are available via the [program's website](#).

The Office of Grants and Research is the state administering agency for the program. ●



The Office of Grants and Research is accepting applications for the Child Passenger Safety Education and Assistance Program.

State awards \$15.6M for accessible transportation

The Healey-Driscoll administration on April 29 announced a total of \$15.6 million in funding for municipalities, councils on aging, regional transit authorities, and nonprofit organizations toward the purchase of fully accessible vans and minivans to enhance mobility for older adults and people with disabilities.

These grants, awarded through MassDOT's Community Transit Grant Program for fiscal 2026, will allow 27 organizations to purchase 131 vehicles. The awards aim to replace older and high-mileage models to maintain a state of good repair, along with awarding vans to expand fleets where need has increased.

In a prepared statement, Winchendon Senior Center Director Miranda Jennings said, "As demand for our Community Connector program continues to grow, this vehicle allows us to expand access in a sustainable way and better serve riders who have too often been left waiting or turned away. No one should have to miss a medical appointment, access to nutrition and social services, or even a town meeting, because they don't have access to an accessible ride."

A full list of award recipients and awards is [available online](#).



The Community Transit Grant Program helps organizations purchase fully accessible vans and minivans to enhance mobility for older adults and people with disabilities.

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LGAC lauds environmental bill

Marlborough City Council President Michael Ossing, left, and Newburyport City Councillor Afroz Khan discuss the importance of the Healey-Driscoll administration's environmental bond bill during a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on May 12 in Boston. "This bill has the opportunity to not only fund key programs," Ossing said, "but also to make meaningful policy changes that can assist cities and towns, and the state, in our shared goals to address climate change and reduce environmental pollution."

Preventive measures advised with tick risks on the rise

By Jennifer Ranz

As temperatures rise, so does the risk of tick exposure for municipal workers.

Warmer winters and longer periods of mild weather have extended the active season for ticks, which can now last from early spring through late fall. Even during winter months, ticks can remain active under insulating snow cover, further extending the period of potential activity.

Recent data confirm how quickly this risk is growing. [Emergency department visits](#) for tick bites in the Northeast are already at their highest levels in at least a decade, with activity rising earlier in the season than in previous years. In Massachusetts, tick-borne disease activity was already being reported statewide in the early months of the year.

The Commonwealth continues to rank among the states with the [highest rates](#) of tick-borne disease, making it

a workplace safety issue — and underscoring the importance of proactive prevention and awareness.

Elevated risk for municipal workers

Many municipal roles involve routine exposure to environments where ticks thrive. Public works crews, parks and recreation staff, facilities and grounds teams, and seasonal employees often work in wooded or brushy areas, tall grass, and leaf-littered areas. Day-to-day tasks such as mowing, brush clearing, park and trail maintenance, cemetery operations, and storm cleanup can place workers in direct contact with high-risk areas.

Tick risks are not limited to traditional outdoor roles, however. Employees across departments — such as conservation personnel, inspectors, engineers, and utility crews — may encounter ticks when working in roadside vegetation, drainage areas, and other undeveloped



Generally milder weather patterns have extended the active season for ticks, making tick awareness and prevention an important focus for municipal departments and employees.

spaces.

Public safety personnel and school staff may also encounter ticks during routine duties. Police, fire, animal control, public health, and emergency management staff can be exposed when responding

■ MIIA continued on 25

SafetyWorks Training Grant Program open for applications

The Massachusetts Department of Industrial Accidents' [SafetyWorks Training Grant Program](#), which can help cities, towns and municipal entities strengthen workplace safety programs, is accepting applications from June 1 through June 30.

Administered by the DIA's Office of Safety, the reimbursement-based program helps municipal employers fund workplace safety training focused on preventing or addressing injuries. Municipalities can apply for grants of up to \$25,000.

The SafetyWorks program supports a range of training needs, including active shooter guidance, confined space safety, defensive driving, lockout/tagout, slip, trip and fall prevention, and workplace de-escalation strategies. Many of these training areas address common municipal risk exposures and support broader

efforts to reduce injuries and related claims.

According to the [DIA](#), the fiscal 2025 SafetyWorks program awarded 160 grants totaling \$800,000.

Municipalities may apply for SafetyWorks grants either individually or as part of a multi-entity consortium (an approach DIA encourages because it allows communities to train employees from multiple towns together and make the most of available funding).

As part of the application, municipalities must identify a Massachusetts-based training provider and gather required documentation from them, including a Certificate of Good Standing from the [Department of Revenue](#) and [COMMBUYS](#) registration information. DIA representatives also emphasize the importance of providing detailed

information in the budget narrative portion of the application.

To learn more about SafetyWorks, MIIA and the DIA are holding a "[Safety is Not an Accident](#)" event on June 17 at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, where representatives from MIIA, DIA SafetyWorks, and the Department of Labor Standards will discuss available safety resources and provide opportunities to meet potential training providers.

MIIA encourages its members to leverage SafetyWorks as part of comprehensive workplace safety planning. The program complements MIIA's [Risk Management Grant Program](#), which opens for fiscal 2027 applications on July 1.

Questions about the SafetyWorks application process may be sent to the DIA Office of Safety at wpsgms@mass.gov. ●

-Jennifer Ranz

FY27 BUDGET

Continued from page 1

on their proportional share of the statewide population, with no municipality receiving more than 4% of the total new funding.

MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine said the Senate's bill reflects "an important focus on the partnership between state and local government through a critical program — Unrestricted General Government Aid — with investments that help to reinforce that partnership, at a time when we need it most."

- **Chapter 70:** With \$7.66 billion for K-12 public education aid, the Senate bill would continue implementation of the 2019 Student Opportunity Act to fulfill the sixth and final year of the funding schedule. Like the House, the Senate proposal would boost the per-pupil increase for minimum aid districts from the statutorily obligated \$30 per student to \$160 per student — \$10 more per student than was provided for the current year.
- **Special Education Circuit Breaker:** The Senate bill proposes \$652.7 million for the Special Education Circuit Breaker program. This amount would be paired with additional aid proposed in a fiscal 2026 "Fair Share" supplemental budget that is moving through the legislative process simultaneously. Both the House and Senate versions of the supplemental budget bill would complement the fiscal 2027 state budget to satisfy the state's funding obligation for this important program.
- **Charter schools:** The Senate budget would fund the charter school reimbursement account at \$200.4 million, intended to meet the state's statutory obligation to mitigate Chapter 70 losses to charter schools.
- **Rural school aid:** For eligible towns and regional school districts, the Senate bill would fund rural school aid at \$16 million — \$4 million more than fiscal 2026. The proposal would maintain current eligibility requirements. Additional funding for rural school aid is also proposed in the fiscal 2026 Fair Share supplemental budget bill.

- **Regional school transportation:** The Senate proposal would provide \$114.2 million for regional school transportation reimbursements, which, according to the administration, would represent 90% of anticipated eligible regional school transportation costs.

- **Out-of-district vocational transportation:** The Senate budget proposes \$1.4 million for out-of-district vocational transportation, which would fund 25% of anticipated costs. Additional funding for regional and out-of-district vocational transportation is proposed in the supplemental budget bill.

- **McKinney-Vento:** Reimbursements for the transportation of homeless students under the McKinney-Vento federal mandate would be funded at \$35.2 million, representing 58.2% of anticipated claims for fiscal 2027.

- **PILOT:** Payments in lieu of taxes would be funded at \$55.4 million, an increase of 1.6% over fiscal 2026, which is intended to hold communities harmless from updated valuation changes.

- **Universal school meals:** The Senate bill includes \$180 million to continue the universal school meals program, allowing all Massachusetts students to eat for free at school, regardless of household income.

Outside sections

The Senate budget bill's several outside sections include the following:

- **UGGA Commission:** The bill would establish a commission to review the distribution of Unrestricted General Government Aid, including current and historic distribution processes, local conditions including population and ability to generate revenue at the local level, and the feasibility of supplemental incentive payments for municipalities with policies that support or promote the Commonwealth's housing and energy goals. The commission would make recommendations to maximize the equity of the distribution of future UGGA increases, and its report and recommendations would be due by July 1, 2027.

- **Foundation Budget Review Commission:** The Senate recommends reconvening the Foundation Budget Review Commission to examine the current K-12 public education funding formula. The commission would assess new ways to address rising costs and the allocation of school resources statewide.

- **Massachusetts School Building Authority Commission:** The Senate bill would create a special commission to study and make recommendations regarding the capacity of Massachusetts School Building Authority to meet current and future school facility needs, and to ensure that the authority's grant funding formula allocates resources responsibly and equitably.

- **Local Permitting:** Several provisions focused on housing production would "streamline" local permitting processes. The provisions aim to simplify rules for homeowners, municipalities, and developers regarding "non-conforming" properties built under older codes, timelines for projects to proceed under existing zoning rules, and modifying the variance standard. ●



Mayors address transit

Phillip Eng, MBTA general manager and interim secretary of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, addresses mayors during the Massachusetts Mayors' Association's spring conference on May 14. Eng gave an overview of transportation systems in the Commonwealth and discussed future plans.

Around the Commonwealth

Springfield

Fire Department, school create training gear

The Springfield Fire Department has partnered with the carpentry division at the local Putnam Vocational Technical Academy to create training props that simulate hazards that firefighters can encounter in the course of performing their duties.

Deputy Chief Robert Duffy, a Putnam graduate, was looking for realistic equipment that would allow firefighters to practice navigating hazardous situations while wearing protective gear. He reached out to Putnam's carpentry division with the idea and some basic designs to see if students would be able to build something that met the department's needs.

"We always like to partner up with Putnam and give the students the opportunity to see the fruits of their labor and see how, when they build something, it's a valuable skill to have," said Springfield Fire Captain and Public Information Officer Drew Piemonte. "To be able to transform what we gave them on paper to build it into a usable training prop for our members is very beneficial to the department and to Putnam."

Putnam students created multiple props, including an entanglement hazard rigged with wires and cables to simulate hazards that can snag and restrict a firefighter's movement during a ceiling collapse. Another prop resembles a closet or bathroom, complete with simulated plumbing and studs, representing tight spaces where firefighters may have to break through walls to escape.

Students also developed a hose prop cart for training, which "makes it easier for us to deploy on the fireground," Piemonte said. The hose systems are uniform for all department apparatus, meaning that training with the hose prop from Putnam gives firefighters from different companies the ability to deploy hoses on site from any apparatus.

This also means that firefighters can train hose deployment without moving trucks around or worrying about rapidly



A Springfield firefighter passes through an entanglement prop built by Putnam Vocational Technical Academy carpentry students during a demonstration in May. (Photo courtesy city of Springfield)

recoiling and storing hoses if a call comes in.

"It increases our efficiency and gets our trucks back in service quicker," Piemonte said.

Buying similar equipment from a commercial producer would be "a significant cost," Piemonte said, with each prop retailing for thousands of dollars.

The Fire Department invited students who had participated in building the props to attend a training demonstration earlier this month alongside Springfield Mayor Domenic Sarno. Piemonte said the students enjoyed seeing how their work was used in training and helping Springfield firefighters hone their skills.

Piemonte noted that the training demonstrated career options for the students as well.

"Our message to them was that you don't have to be a firefighter," he said. "But you could be a carpenter for the city, or you could be a mechanic. There's an opportunity there."

The relationship between the Springfield Fire Department and Putnam extends beyond prop-building. Students in the school's auto division will intern with the department's repair division, learning to maintain and repair department apparatus, vehicles and equipment. Two of the department's current mechanics,

along with three other full-time employees, are Putnam graduates who previously interned with the Springfield Fire Department, Piemonte said.

Using available resources and partners like Putnam can be beneficial for both the department and the students working on the projects, he said. The students are able to realize, "Hey, I can make a difference here," by being a carpenter or a mechanic."

- Owen Page

Chelsea

City opens newest 'cool park'

Marking a culmination of years of work and community collaboration, on April 18 Chelsea held the official ribbon cutting for its newest "cool park."

Named for the late James "Bear" Burke, a former Department of Public Works employee and longtime city resident, the new park has a number of features to serve as a gathering space for the neighborhood and to address heat, including a splash pad, picnic tables covered by a shade structure, a play structure for children, a drinking water fountain, and a communal rain barrel for collecting storm water that can be used by residents to water gardens and trees. The space also has about 30 new trees that are expected to create a dense canopy.

Bear Park is just one of several city efforts to combat extreme heat in the interest of public health. Working with Boston University and GreenRoots, a local environmental justice nonprofit, the city gathered heat mapping data to show the hottest locations in Chelsea at street level. While the entire city is considered a heat island, the lowest income neighborhoods were determined to be the hottest and had the least amount of tree cover.

The city began addressing the heat issue one block at a time a few years ago with its "Cool Block" project. The block with Bear Park, at 212 Congress Ave., was chosen because it is one of the hottest in the city and the sidewalks already needed to be replaced, according to Housing

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Around the Commonwealth

COMMONWEALTH

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and Community Development Deputy Director Emily Granoff.

At one end of the block was an empty parking lot the city was in the process of acquiring, either for housing or open space. The city also investigated installing a white roof on a Boys & Girls Club building on the block — a project that didn't work in that location, but was installed on a local housing authority building instead.

"The park was really the very heavily desired thing by the community in that site," Granoff said.

The park is the result of the strong partnership between the city and GreenRoots, which worked extensively with the community and acquired grant funding to run a "tree keepers" program, which pays residents to water the new trees planted as part of the sidewalk replacement and canopy investment.

Granoff said the city plants many trees, but a sizable percentage don't survive because they're already in "a vulnerable state" when they're planted, "and it is hard for us to make sure that we are watering them enough and consistently enough."

"GreenRoots created a neighborhood group, paid them for their time, and I don't think a single one of those trees has died, which is a remarkable success rate," she said.

The city and GreenRoots worked with the community to determine what they needed in a park space, setting up a temporary "guerrilla" park in the space to bring out community members, talk with them and see what resonated.

Funding for the park came from a Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities grant through the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services, a grant through GreenRoots that came from an anonymous foundation, and some city funds. The anonymous grant helped cover costs associated with remediating the site, which was heavily contaminated with lead.

While building a new park can be expensive, even pocket parks can provide



Chelsea's Bear Park, the city's latest "cool park," features a splash pad and covered seating area.

many benefits for reducing heat island effects and expanding the available network of open space, Granoff said. Communities should be on the lookout for opportunities to partner with property owners, or build relationships with private buildings to educate them on heat reduction methods.

"Chelsea has, in my experience, been pretty uniquely focused on, 'Where is there land that is too small or too weirdly shaped or not zoned right to be housing? Let's make it open space,'" Granoff said. "Because our community just doesn't have enough of it. And because we knew this empty lot was going to be a park so long before we had the funding to build the park, we were able to work with GreenRoots to do some really intensive community engagement."

— Meredith Gabrilka

Franklin

Construction begins on long-anticipated senior housing

After a decade of hurdles, an affordable senior housing project in Franklin has reached a major milestone, thanks to a partnership among local, state and congressional leaders dedicated to producing more housing in the area.

In March, construction began on Franklin Ridge, a 60-apartment development aimed at allowing local seniors (age 62 and older) to downsize from larger homes and remain in town affordably, while freeing up housing for younger families seeking to call Franklin



A new housing project will create 60 affordable senior apartments in Franklin by late next year. (Illustration courtesy Trabucco Architects)

home.

Over the past 11 years, the project has overcome a series of "curve balls," including the COVID pandemic, financing challenges, inflation, and rising costs triggered by tariffs, said Franklin Town Administrator Jamie Hellen. Partnering with a local affordable housing developer, JNJUHL and Associates, the town hopes that the apartments will be finished by late 2027.

"For people in Franklin, this has been a huge priority," Hellen said. "This isn't something the town government is saying we need to do — although we do support that message — but I think politically, we've heard it loud and clear from a lot of residents that they don't want to move to a community further west, or even Florida, or whatever. They want to be close to where their kids and their grandkids are going to be."

Located on 6.5 acres near shops and town amenities, the three-story complex will have 54 one-bedroom rental apartments, and six two-bedroom units. The development will include community spaces and an on-site social services coordinator, and will be 100% electric-powered and feature solar panels.

The apartments will be available to income-eligible residents — at 60% or below of the area median income. The rents will be calculated based on the renters' income and the federal limits, developer Jon Juhl said. There will also be a 70% preference for local residents, the highest percentage allowed under state law.

The project received significant town buy-in over the past decade. The Franklin Municipal Affordable Housing

■ COMMONWEALTH continued on 23

Around the Commonwealth

COMMONWEALTH

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Trust provided the land for the project, which also received \$500,000 in seed money from the town and another \$360,000 in Community Preservation Act funds. The project also received state and federal funding, including an \$850,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and funding through the MassWorks Infrastructure Program.

Still, for every win the project achieved, it encountered another new challenge amid political and economic uncertainty, including the need to spend down federal appropriations before the White House could retract the funds, Hellen said.

Hellen said he worked to keep the name

Franklin Ridge in people's minds, relying on personal relationships, bringing advocacy letters to state officials at events, and regularly checking in with legislators, state housing officials, and congressional staffs about the project.

"I make jokes locally that all of our legislative delegation almost didn't really remember my name," he said. "They were just like, 'This is the Franklin Ridge guy.' And as fate would have it, the connections made a difference."

In 2024, the state awarded an additional \$8.5 million, including \$2.5 million from the Low Income Federal Tax Credit program, and \$6 million from other state Housing and Livable Communities subsidies. That money gave the project the leverage it needed to secure the remaining bank financing and put it on more secure ground, Hellen said. By

that point, the \$30 million project had received about \$13 million in public funding, not counting Franklin's staff time, permitting efforts or the land donation.

"A hundred different times in the last seven or eight years, I thought this thing was on death's door, and I thought, 'You know, I was in the death trap like Indiana Jones,'" Hellen said. "But yet, over and over, everybody who's been affiliated with this, from the federal and state and local level, have pulled through."

— 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.

State opens road safety grant program

The Office of Grants and Research on April 28 announced the opening of the Municipal Road Safety Grant Program, which provides funding to municipal law enforcement agencies to support traffic safety enforcement in an effort to reduce traffic crashes, injuries and fatalities, and associated economic impacts.

The deadline is June 5.

The program, funded through a grant from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, makes federal funds available for police departments to address local traffic safety issues, including vehicle, bike and pedestrian

safety enforcement, equipment, and traffic-safety programs.

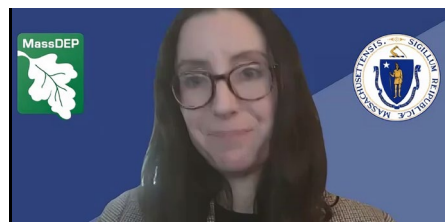
Only Massachusetts municipal law enforcement agencies are eligible to apply.

The [program website](#) has more information, including application materials and guidelines. ●



Mayors focus on health insurance

Sarah Iselin, right, president and chief executive officer of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, speaks during the Massachusetts Mayors' Association conference on May 14. Iselin was joined by MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine to discuss health insurance cost drivers in Massachusetts and strategies for mitigating them.



MMA focuses on clean water funds

Kaitlyn Connors, investment director for the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Water, speaks with members of the MMA Policy Committee on Energy and the Environment during a virtual meeting on May 13. Connors, along with Nate Keenan, department director of the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust, gave an overview of programs available to cities and towns, including the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, discussing the impacts of federal funding activity on the revolving funds' capacity and the state's plans to address those changes.

People



Brendan Sweeney

Brendan Sweeney became the new town manager in Ipswich on May 26.

For the past four years, Sweeney served as the assistant town administrator and finance director for the town of Boxford,

while also serving as an at-large city councillor in Beverly. Previously, he held several roles in the Executive Office for Administration and Finance, including fiscal policy analyst, assistant director for federal funds — municipal, and director of intergovernmental affairs. Previously, he served as assistant to the town manager in Reading.

He has a bachelor's degree in political science and business administration from Gordon College, a master's degree in public administration from Suffolk University, and completed the MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program.

In Ipswich, Sweeney replaced **Stephen Crane**, who left in May 2025 after more than two years in the role. **Thomas Younger** served as the interim town manager.

On April 26, Watertown City Manager **George Proakis** was inducted into



George Proakis

was one of 55 fellows inducted in the 2026 class.

The inductees were honored for their “for transformative leadership, innovation, and impact in resilience, equity, housing, transportation, and community development across the United States and globally.”

Proakis has been serving as Watertown's city manager since August 2022. Previously, he spent a dozen years in Somerville, serving as director of planning and zoning, and then as executive director of Somerville's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development. Earlier in his career, he served in the city of Lowell in several planning roles.

Business View Magazine recently named the town of Lee as the [2026 best-managed Massachusetts town with a population under 10,000](#). Calling Lee “the gateway to the Berkshires and the

the [American Institute of Certified Planners' College of Fellows](#), in recognition of his contributions as a professional planner in several Massachusetts communities. In a ceremony held in Detroit, Proakis

gateway to growth,” the magazine cited the town's ability to maintain its identity while embracing growth. “We're not trying to be everything to everyone,” Town Administrator **R. Christopher Brittain** told the magazine. “We're trying to be Lee — honoring our past, serving our residents, and planning thoughtfully for the future.”



Benjamin Swan

Benjamin Swan, a former longtime state representative, two-time mayoral candidate and civil rights leader who worked to improve the lives of residents in Springfield and beyond, died on May 25 at age 92. Swan

represented the city in the Legislature from 1994 to 2016, and had served as president of the Greater Springfield NAACP. In 2023, Springfield named an elementary school after him.

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

New select board members elected

The following are new select board members elected in annual town elections from April 25 through May 23.

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

Abington: Kenneth Coyle, William Cormier Jr., Daniel Eddy Jr.

Acton: Pamela Nourse

Acushnet: Ryan Rezendes

Adams: Kelly Rice

Alford: James Hall

Berlin: Carolyn MacDonald

Bolton: William Nickles

Boylston: Vincent Sasso

Brewster: Laurel Labdon

Brookline: Anthony Buono, Amanda Zimmerman

Carver: Jim Elliman

Charlton: Michael Kavorkian

Chatham: Randi Potash

Cheshire: Scott McWhirt

Chester: Jill Strong

Chilmark: Rebecca Haag

Cohasset: William Ashton, Gregory Watts

Cummington: Kyle Citro

Dalton: Jeannie Ingram

Dracut: Kristie Wohlander

Dunstable: David Tully III

East Brookfield: Amber Kowalczyk

Eastham: Hope Plavin

Erving: Jacquelyn Boyden

Essex: Dexter Lee-Viator

Falmouth: Elizabeth Klein

Georgetown: Edward Dobie

Gill: Jennifer Waldron

Grafton: Victoria Duckworth, Colleen McIntyre Roy

Granby: Jeffrey Lawson

Groton: Nick Degaitas

Hadley: Jason Kostek

Hanson: Franklin Milisi

Hardwick: Zachary Spencer

Hatfield: Julia Frisby

Hopedale: Carole Mullen

Hudson: Patrick Thayer

Hull: Susan Green

Huntington: Robert Drabiuk

■ **SELECT BOARD** *continued on 30*

MIIA

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to calls, conducting inspections, or assisting residents in outdoor settings. Additionally, teachers, paraprofessionals, coaches, and maintenance staff may spend time on playgrounds and athletic fields, where ticks can attach to clothing or equipment.

Tick awareness and prevention should be reinforced across municipal departments, particularly during periods when outdoor work and programming increase.

Tick species and risks

Massachusetts is home to several tick species, each capable of transmitting different diseases:

- Black-legged tick (deer tick): The most common species in the region, associated with Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, and other infections
- American dog tick: Known to spread illnesses such as Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tularemia
- Lone star tick: Increasingly prevalent in the Northeast and linked to ehrlichiosis and [alpha-gal syndrome](#)

Alpha-gal syndrome is of particular concern because it presents differently from more familiar tick-borne illnesses. In March, the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health designated AGS](#) as a reportable condition in Massachusetts. Triggered by a bite from a lone star tick, AGS can cause a delayed allergic reaction to red meat and other mammalian products, often several hours after consumption. This delayed onset can make diagnosis more difficult, and the effects may be long-term and require significant lifestyle adjustments.

Practical prevention measures

Reducing tick exposure requires a consistent, workplace-based approach. Municipal leaders can support their employees by promoting training, protective measures, and consistent workplace safety practices.

Best practices include:

- **Provide training and awareness:** [Educate employees](#) on where ticks live, how they attach, and the range of illnesses they can transmit, including emerging risks such as AGS. Be sure to include seasonal staff in all guidance.
- **Promote protective clothing and repellents:** Advise workers to wear

long-sleeved shirts and long pants, with pants tucked into socks when possible. Light-colored clothing can make ticks easier to spot. [EPA-registered repellents](#) containing DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus should be used on exposed skin and clothing. The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration [advises providing repellents](#) or treated gear where appropriate.

- **Adjust work practices where feasible:** Keep employees on cleared paths when possible to avoid unnecessary contact with dense brush, tall grass, and leaf litter.
- **Promote post-work checks:** Remind employees to conduct daily checks at the end of their workday, particularly behind the knees, under the arms, around the waist, along the hairline, and behind the ears. Encourage showering within two hours of outdoor work to help remove unattached ticks.
- **Encourage prompt reporting:** Establish clear expectations for reporting tick bites so departments can document incidents and support follow-up if needed.

If a tick is found attached, healthcare experts recommend removing it promptly using fine-tipped tweezers, grasping as close to the skin as possible and pulling upward with steady, even pressure. Afterwards, clean the area with soap and water or rubbing alcohol.

Employees should monitor for symptoms such as rash, fever, or fatigue and seek medical attention if symptoms develop.

Tick exposure is a growing concern for municipal operations, particularly during the warmer months, but with clear policies, consistent training, and practical preventive measures, municipalities can significantly reduce the risk to their workforce.

As awareness grows about emerging concerns such as AGS, taking steps to educate employees and reinforce safe work practices can help communities stay ahead of this evolving public health challenge. ●



Managers discuss healthy leadership

Managers interact in small groups to discuss their experiences and challenges during a seminar at the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association's spring conference on May 28 in Brewster. The seminar, which focused on the principles of leadership, growth and team health, was led by Chad Wright, founder of Forward Partners.

INCOME TAX

Continued from page 1

significantly reduce services, delay investments, or shift more pressure onto local property taxpayers,” Chapdelaine said. “This is not some abstract debate: this is about classroom resources; this is about ambulance response times; this is about whether communities can repair roads, hire teachers, support seniors, and keep libraries and parks open.”

Amesbury Mayor Cassandra Gove, president of the Massachusetts Municipal Association, said a significant reduction in state income tax revenues “deeply jeopardizes progress” in her city and across the state — threatening critical services and adding to the burden on local property taxpayers.

“This adds insult to injury at a time when communities are already facing inflationary pressures, rising construction costs, health insurance increases, workforce challenges, and so much more,” she said. “Municipal leaders are not asking for luxuries. We are asking for stability, predictability, and the ability to continue providing the services our residents depend on.

“My residents expect safe streets, strong

schools, functioning infrastructure, clean parks, reliable emergency response, and support for vulnerable populations. Those expectations are reasonable. But meeting them requires resources.”

Holyoke Mayor Joshua Garcia, president of the Massachusetts Mayors’ Association, said mayors and municipal officials “immediately understand” the potential implications when there’s discussion of a reduction of state revenues.

“It means uncertainty,” he said. “It means jeopardizing or reversing progress that residents can already see in their neighborhoods. And for gateway cities and communities with significant needs, the impacts can be even more severe.

“We cannot afford to pull resources away from education, transportation, public safety, and local government at a time when residents are asking us to do more, not less,” he continued.

“State funding is not ‘extra’ for communities like ours — it is foundational support that allows us to deliver core services and make long-term improvements as prudently as possible,” Garcia said.

“For residents,” he said, “this debate is ultimately about what kind of communities we want to live in. Do we want

communities with strong schools? Safe neighborhoods? Reliable emergency services? Maintained roads? A responsive local government?

“If we do, then we must strongly oppose this ballot question,” Garcia said.

The ballot question’s opponents include the Healey-Driscoll administration, legislative leaders, public employee unions, and the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, which cites fiscal irresponsibility and potential harm to public services.

Because the Legislature took no action on the initiative by an early May deadline, the next step in the process requires proponents to collect an additional 12,429 certified signatures from registered Massachusetts voters by June 17. Once local municipal election officials verify the signatures, the final certified papers must be filed with the Secretary of the Commonwealth’s Elections Division by July 1.

Following these steps, in order to qualify for the statewide ballot on Nov. 3, the initiative must also clear any remaining constitutional challenges or ballot language appeals overseen by the Office of the Attorney General and state courts. ●

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Continued from page 2

and allowing for the creation of regional boards of assessors to pool resources and reduce staffing strain.

Finally, the MEA would at long last put some teeth in the often-ignored requirement that utilities remove doubled-up poles in a timely manner. It would establish a civil penalty mechanism to ensure accountability for the safety and aesthetic hazards that have been left on our streets.

The House and Senate have a packed calendar between now and July 31, and even priority issues are at risk of getting squeezed out in the final hours of the session. We cannot let that happen.

I am asking every mayor, select board member, town manager, and city councillor to reach out to your legislative delegation this week. Let them know how much an extra 10 years on a building loan would help your capital plan. Tell them how much time your staff would save as a

result of modernized procurement rules.

The Municipal Empowerment Act is precisely the kind of state-local partnership Massachusetts needs to build

communities where people want to live, work and stay. Let’s make sure our lawmakers cross the finish line with us. ●



Mayors discuss leadership in uncertain times

Betsy Neptune, left, and Anthony Neptune of Neptune Coaching speak with mayors during the Massachusetts Mayors’ Association spring conference on May 14, where they led a session on leadership while navigating pressure and uncertain times.

Classified Advertisements

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Assistant DPW Director

Town of Saugus

Assistant DPW Director (engineering degree required). Salary: \$90,000 to \$120,000 annually. The starting salary will be based on the selected candidate's qualifications including relevant experience and education, and in accordance with municipal compensation policies. Benefits: The town of Saugus offers a competitive salary and a comprehensive benefits package, including health, dental, life and vision insurance, as well as participation in the town's retirement system. The town of Saugus seeks a full-time Assistant DPW Director to support daily operations, capital planning, budgeting, and infrastructure management across Public Works divisions. This role requires strong multitasking, problem-solving, and public engagement skills, and reports directly to the DPW Director. Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in civil engineering or a related field is a must; at least five years of supervisory/management experience; public works experience preferred. Municipal experience is a plus. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Please email a resume and a cover letter to Human Resource Manager, Shalini Malik at smalik@saugus-ma.gov. Applications will be retained for one year. The town of Saugus is an Equal Opportunity Employer and complies with all applicable federal anti-discrimination laws.

Conservation Agent

Towns of Douglas and Sutton

The towns of Sutton and Douglas seek a full time Conservation Agent. The agent will serve both communities under the terms of an intermunicipal agreement. The towns comprise just under 72 square miles of land supporting a population of almost 19,000 people. Both communities are growing faster than the state average and contain significant, interconnected protected resources. This is a salaried (FLSA exempt), benefitted position. The Agent will work from each Town Hall no less than 16 hours per week and will have the benefit of a town-owned vehicle for travel in and around the two communities. While the typical work week is four days, the Agent is expected to attend Conservation Commission meetings in person. The employee will be based, for legal purposes such as benefits and compensation, in the town of Douglas. Starting salary will be \$82,244. For a full job description, please visit www.douglas-ma.gov. Please send a cover letter and resume c/o Lisa Freeman, Office of the Selectmen, 29 Depot St., Douglas, MA 01516 no later than June 2 to be included in the first review of applications. This position will remain open until filled. The town of Sutton and Douglas are equal opportunity employers.

Director of Community Services

Town of Wellfleet

The town of Wellfleet seeks a qualified and passionate individual for the Director of Community Services position. This position is responsible for planning, development, management and administration of a townwide recreation, beach, and human services on a year-round basis, including the management of facilities and overall coordination

of events for participants of all ages including nutritional, education and social programs for the town's elder population. Under the administrative direction of the Town Administrator and the policy direction of the Council on Aging (COA) and Recreation Commission, this position oversees all aspects of the COA Director. This position requires a minimum of a master's degree preferably in recreation management, leisure, elder services, gerontology, business administration, public policy, public administration or a related field of knowledge; a minimum of five to seven years of prior work experience preferably in a municipal recreation or elder service setting; or any equivalent combination of education, training and experience which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job. This position requires a Class D Motor Vehicle Operator's license. CORI certification is required as a condition of employment. This position is covered under Wellfleet Employee Association Unit A Contract. Salary range expected to be in the \$120,000-plus range. Send a letter of interest, resume and completed town of Wellfleet application by electronic PDF submissions only to Human Resources Director at christine.ezersky@wellfleet-ma.gov. The town of Wellfleet is an EOE.

Part-Time Regional Public Health Nurse

South Shore Public Health Collaborative

The South Shore Public Health Collaborative seeks candidates for the part-time Regional Public Health Nurse role to work with towns of Cohasset, Hingham and Scituate. The South Shore Public Health Collaborative is a Shared Service Arrangement with the aim of improving the health and well-being of residents across the three towns. This position will be part of a collaborative response to manage public health nursing services necessary to support the health initiatives of these communities. This role is subject to grant funding. The position will be responsible for administering and implementing public health nursing functions

including, but not limited to, administering immunizations (i.e., flu and COVID-19 vaccines), conducting communicable disease investigations, assessing needs, planning and implementing interventions to support the health of residents, participating in public health clinics and educational programs, collaborating with other regional staff as well as participating in and directing population health focused emergency preparedness for the three participating municipal health departments. The ideal candidate will be a Registered Nurse and have a background in mental health. For more information and to submit an application, apply on the town of Cohasset's website: easypplly.co/a/2d22d48b-c8a8-42ec-abb6-8bd1e688ffed.

Registered Sanitarian

South Shore Public Health Collaborative

The South Shore Public Health Collaborative seeks candidates for the Regional Registered Sanitarian role to work with towns of Cohasset, Hingham and Scituate. The South Shore Public Health Collaborative is a Shared Service Arrangement with the aim of improving the health and well-being of residents across the three towns. This position will be part of a collaborative response to provide a wide range of inspectional services to these communities. This position plays a critical role in safeguarding public health through education, regulation, inspection, and enforcement activities across a wide range of facilities and environmental conditions. This role is subject to grant funding. The Regional Health Inspector will carry out a variety of Environmental, Community, and Public Health program responsibilities. They will be responsible for the performance of technical and inspectional work to promote and protect the public health of our residents through the enforcement of federal, state and local public health laws and regulations as well as providing public health education. This role is a hybrid opportunity, allowing for a

■ 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, 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.

Summer Beacon

Deadline: July 10
Publication: July 15

September Beacon

Deadline: August 27
Publication: September 1

Placing an ad

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

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

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

See www.mma.org for details.

Classified Advertisements

CLASSIFIEDS

Continued from page 27

flexible distribution of tasks across the office, field, and remote work, as needed. The role is 35 hours per week and the salary range is \$85,000 to \$93,000 dependent on candidate experience. For more information and to submit an application, visit the "Employment Opportunities" page for the town of Cohasset: easysapply.co/a/aa26846e-0337-4d69-883e-b9cd846bc32b.

Health Agent

Town of Abington

Public posting for Health Agent – Town of Abington. Full-time, 35 hours/week, Benefit Eligible. Town Hall Address: 500 Gliniewicz Way, Abington, MA 02351. Board of Health: Katie Van Nest; Email: katie.vannest@gmail.com. Town Manager: Michael A. Maresco; Email: mmaresco@abingtonma.gov Work Schedule: Monday through Thursday (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Friday (8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.) Health agent – open immediately. Enforces state sanitary and environmental codes; performs site inspections of building lots; evaluates soil tests and percolation tests to determine suitability for sewerage disposal systems; reviews plans for sewage disposal facilities; approves such plans and inspects installation and repair of septic systems; works with installers and engineers to ensure that sewage disposal systems conform to requirements and function properly; performs final septic inspections; Inspects restaurants, food handling and processing establishments, lodging establishments, tattoo parlors, nursing homes, group residences, child care facilities, public pools and beaches, places of assembly, schools, and other areas required by law for compliance with state and local laws, rules and regulations and investigates complaints and illness at such facilities; Works with local emergency planning coalition to develop planning guidelines regarding Public Health emergencies, appropriate vendors for hazardous waste disposal; and with healthcare providers and private businesses to build coalitions for coordination of policy development, community education, inspection and enforcement; Reviews and issues permits, applications and licenses, handles complaints from members of the public and investigates alleged nuisances and environmental hazards, initiates legal action and appears in court as necessary; reviews court filings for accuracy and completeness; Manages the solid waste contract, recycling and the compost site. The role requires sound judgment, the ability to shift priorities, supervise staff, and collaborate with departments. Registered Sanitarian, or related discipline. Certified Soil Evaluator, Certified Title V Inspector, Certified Food Service Inspector within one year of appointment. All applicants must be able to pass a criminal background/CORI check and a pre-employment physical including drug testing. Bachelor's degree in Environmental Health, Public Health, Environmental Science or other related field and three to five years of related education and experience. Must possess a valid Massachusetts driver's license in addition to any registration/licensure/certification requirements mandated by Massachusetts General Laws. Member of the Manager's Union, FY26 annual salary: \$78,023.40. Starting pay commensurate with education, licenses/certifications, and experience.

A complete job description is available by emailing Michael A. Maresco, Town Manager at mmaresco@abingtonma.gov or Katie Van Nest at katie.vannest@gmail.com. Interested eligible candidates should submit in pdf format a cover letter of interest, a resume and the Town of Abington's job application (www.abingtonma.gov/page/employment-opportunities) via email to mmaresco@abingtonma.gov or mail information to the Town Manager at Abington Town Hall, 500 Gliniewicz Way, Abington, MA 02351. Letter of interest, resume and applications are due no later than Monday, June 15 by 4 p.m. The town reserves the right to hold the deadline open to Monday, June 29, by 4 p.m., if a sufficient number of candidates have not applied. No late information will be accepted. If selected, references will be requested.

CAREERS AT MMA/MIIA

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. 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. The Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association provides property, liability, workers compensation, and group health insurance to cities and towns in Massachusetts. MIIA is a nonprofit organization and a membership service of Massachusetts Municipal Association. About the position: As Senior Risk Management Trainer, you will collaborate with the Risk Management and Programming Teams to deliver exceptional training experiences to members and peers. You will be responsible for creating, presenting, and revising training programs and materials for MIIA members and staff in a timely and consistent manner. Key responsibilities: Collaborate with the Senior Manager of Risk Management to set guidelines for the MIIA risk management training and program plan. Develop, implement, and evaluate MIIA's safety and health curriculum. Assist in developing and delivering training on other MIIA insurance coverages, including auto, property, general liability, professional liability, law enforcement, school board, and professional liability. Prepare training material for submittal to appropriate accreditation body for approval (i.e., Drinking Water Board, Municipal Police Training Institute and Office of Emergency Medical Services). 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 and oversight of resources and personnel as required, including learning management systems and scheduling, assistance, oversight of driver training program. 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. Experience with project design, implementation operations and evaluation. 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 starting salary range of \$87,500 to \$116,500, 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.

IT Technical Support Assistant MMA/MIIA

The Massachusetts Municipal Association is seeking a full-time IT Technical Support Assistant to support the Administration and Finance team. This is an excellent opportunity for someone who excels at problem solving for all things technology and has an interest in local government. About the MMA: The nonpartisan Massachusetts Municipal Association is the recognized voice of local government across the state, advancing cities and towns as centers of excellence in our economy and society. The MMA provides high-impact services to its member cities and towns statewide, including advocacy, policy research and analysis, multi-faceted education and training, multi-platform publications and nationally recognized municipal service programs. As a membership organization, the MMA works to advance the interests of all cities and towns, uniting local leaders to promote local government policies and programs that build strong communities. About the 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 subsidiary of MMA. About the position: Under the direction of the Assistant Director of Operations, the IT Technical Support Assistant will be the problem solver for technology and be the first line of defense for technology needs. This position will troubleshoot hardware, software, and network issues, ensuring our employees can work efficiently and without disruption. It will provide hands-on support for technology equipment as well

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Classified Advertisements

CLASSIFIEDS

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as assist with system installations, upgrades, and security updates. Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in computer science or a related field. A minimum of two years of professional experience in IT support, help desk, or a similar technical role. Must be comfortable working across and with multiple senior executives and stakeholders. Experience with macOS and Windows administration; knowledge of Microsoft Office (desktop), Google Workspace, Zoom Workplace, SharePoint, Salesforce, TeamViewer, Apple Remote Desktop, Okta Identity, and ThreatLocker. Knowledge of Freshservice or other ITSM systems. Jamf Pro or similar MDM experience. Strong customer service and troubleshooting skills and ability to take initiative. Ability to prioritize tasks in a fast-paced environment and remain calm under pressure. Work environment: Our offices are located in Boston's Government Center neighborhood. The position offers a salary range of \$60,840 to \$76,050, terrific benefits, and a great collaborative work culture. Our office utilizes a hybrid-work schedule; this position is required to be in the office three days a week. 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 email a PDF of your cover letter and resume to: hr@mma.org.

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

SERVICES

Municipal Energy Services

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

Executive Recruitment and Municipal Management

Groux-White Consulting LLC is a full-service municipal management consulting firm specializing in executive recruitment, interim management, form

of government studies, organizational effectiveness evaluations, strategic and financial planning and conflict resolution. Tom Groux and Rick White, One Pelham Road, Lexington, MA 02421; rickwhite58@verizon.net; 781-572-6332; www.grouxwhiteconsulting.com.

Human Capital Solutions

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

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; hrsconsulting@comcast.net; or visit www.hrsconsultinginc.com. WBE certified.

Tax Title Legal Services

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

Municipal Accounting and Consulting Services

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

Municipal Support Services

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

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

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

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.

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.

Executive Recruiting, Management and Governance Consulting Services

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

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Classified Advertisements

CLASSIFIEDS

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Labor Counsel Services/Municipal Human Resources Specialists

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

Special Counsel, Public Construction and Infrastructure Services

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

General Consultant, Recruiting and Special Studies

Municipal Resources Inc. has been providing management solutions to New England municipalities since 1989. MRI is able to provide expertise when and where it's needed. Our services include executive recruitments, assessment centers and promotional testing; public safety organizational studies; finance operations; interim staffing; internal investigations; efficiency and regionalization studies. MRI has an extensive group of experienced subject experts who are able to provide the technical and management expertise that can help communities deliver quality services and resolve complex problems with real-world solutions. Contact us at 866-501-0352 or info@mrigov.com.

Town Counsel Services

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

SELECT BOARD

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Kingston: Joseph Cunningham, Sheila Vaughn

Lenox: Jared Weber

Littleton: Kyle Bubp

Mansfield: Mark Corsillo

Marion: Carleton "Toby" Burr Jr.

Marshfield: Rick Smith

Mattapoissett: Frances-Feliz Kearns, Nicole Doyon Lynch, Judith Mooney

Merrimac: Matthew Passeri, Gwen Sabbagh

Middlefield: Sherri Venditti

Millbury: Michael Gilchrist

Millis: James McKay

Milton: Megan Nolan, Peter Obersheimer

Montague: Nathaniel Card Schiffbauer

Montgomery: David Miller

Nahant: Patty Karras

Nantucket: Bob DeCosta, Jill Vieth

Northborough: Jeff Ostiguy

North Brookfield: Peter Orsi

North Reading: Charles Tyler

Orleans: Mary Wright

Oxford: Philip Irving Davis Jr.

Paxton: Jeffrey Wentzell

Plainfield: Elizabeth Lambert

Plympton: Daniel Cadogan

Princeton: Peter Giumette

Provincetown: Dana Masterpolo

Raynham: Matthew Andrade

Rutland: Sheila Dibb

Sandwich: David Sullivan

Shrewsbury: Anand Sharma

Shutesbury: James Walton Jr.

Southampton: Douglas Hamel, Charles Kaniecki

Southborough: Andrew Pfaff, Sam Stivers

Spencer: Norman Letendre Jr.

Stow: Brian Patuto

Swampscott: Ted Dooley, Wayne Spritz

Templeton: April Cover

Tisbury: Constance Alexander

Topsfield: Gregory Cerino, Christopher Ruggles

Townsend: Sarah Logan

Truro: Mara Glatzel

Tyngsborough: Konstantinos Kalabokis, Nate Marino

Uxbridge: Timothy Robert Johnson

Wakefield: Ami Ruehrwein Wall*

Warren: Raymond Kopacko

Wayland: Christopher Reynolds

West Brookfield: Henry Brogna

Westford: Elizabeth Sawyer

West Newbury: Barry Fogel

Weston: Alfred Aydelott, Rebecca Mercuri, Anupam Sachdev

Westwood: Erin Sibley

Whately: Bradley Bean

Whitman: Dawn Byers, Christina Menten-Gorman

Williamstown: Nate Budington

* Wakefield's equivalent to a select board is called the Town Council.

New councillors

The following are newly elected town councillors in one of the several communities with a manager-council form of government that hold elections in the spring (also from April 25 through May 23):

Bridgewater: Michaela Spagone, Timothy Trocchio ●

Calendar

JUNE

4 Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources, annual meeting, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Cyprian Keyes Golf Club, Boylston. Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis

9 Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, board meeting, 9:15-10 a.m., hybrid, MMA office, Boston. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

9 MMA Board of Directors, 10-11:45 a.m., hybrid, MMA office, Boston. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Elanienne Coste

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

10 MMA webinar, transparency after successful override, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

11 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, mini boot camp, 9:15 a.m.-12 p.m., Marlborough Public Library, Marlborough. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

12 Massachusetts Select Board Association, newly elected training, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Devens Common Center, Devens. Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis

17 MMA webinar, financing energy efficiency projects, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

23 MMA webinar, constituent services, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

24 Massachusetts Mayors' Association, meeting, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Membership and Project Assistant Katherine Christy



The Beacon

Massachusetts Municipal Association

3 Center Plaza, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02108

25 Women Leading Government, meeting, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., UMass Amherst. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

30 Massachusetts Municipal Communicators, webinar, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

JULY

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

16 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, meeting, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Olde Scotland Links, Bridgewater. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

22 Massachusetts Mayors' Association, meeting, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Membership and Project Assistant Katherine Christy

AUGUST

20 Massachusetts Municipal Communicators, meeting, time TBD, Foxborough Community Center, Foxborough. Contact: MMA Membership and Project Assistant Katherine Christy

SEPTEMBER

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

8 MMA Board of Directors, hybrid meeting, 10-11:45 a.m., Shrewsbury Public Library, Shrewsbury. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Elanienne Coste

8 Local Government Advisory Commission, hybrid meeting, 1-2 p.m. Shrewsbury Public Library, Shrewsbury. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Elanienne Coste

10 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, meeting, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Devens Common Center, Devens. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

17-18 Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources, fall conference, Sea Crest Hotel, Falmouth. Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis

23 Massachusetts Mayors' Association, meeting, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Membership and Project Assistant Katherine Christy

25 Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, regional meeting, 8 a.m.-10 a.m., 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.

MMA contacts

Denise Baker can be reached at dbaker@mma.org

Katherine Christy can be reached at kchristy@mma.org.

Elanienne Coste can be reached at ecoste@mma.org

Martin Davis can be reached at mdavis@mma.org

Timmery Kuck can be reached at tkuck@mma.org

Kristianna Lapierre can be reached at klapierre@mma.org

For more information, visit www.mma.org.