

The Beacon

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January 2025

Connect 351 is just 2 weeks away

More than 1,100 local leaders from across the Commonwealth have already registered for the MMA's annual conference, [Connect 351](#), which will be held from Jan. 23 through 25 at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center in Boston's Seaport District.

Registrations are continuing at a record pace, and the online option will be available through Jan. 20. ([Registration takes just a few minutes.](#))

This year's event features a new name, a new look, a new location, and an expansion into [Thursday afternoon](#) — but the same high-quality programming as past years, and more networking opportunities than ever.

Recent program updates include the addition of U.S. Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey, [Gov. Maura Healey](#), and [Lt. Gov Kim Driscoll](#).

Conference highlights include:

- [Engaging and inspiring speakers](#)



Wellesley Select Board Member Lise Olney, right, connects with a fellow local leader during the MMA's annual conference last year in Boston.

- [Timely, educational workshops](#)
- [A lively Trade Show](#)
- [Member business meetings](#) and important policy discussions
- [Numerous networking opportunities](#)

Visit Connect351.org for complete conference information. The event's free mobile app will also help attendees

make the most of their experience.

Lincoln Select Board Member Jennifer Glass, an MMA Board member and frequent MMA conference attendee, said the event "is a wonderful way to see how each city and town is part of the larger fabric of the Commonwealth."

"Whether it's the motivational energy of a guest speaker, the wisdom of a

panel of your peers, or a chance conversation with a colleague," she said, "Connect 351 will leave you informed and energized!"

Speakers

Connect 351's inspiring speaker lineup includes the following:

- [Friday keynote Suneel Gupta](#), a

■ **CONNECT 351** *continued on 34*

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U.S. Sens. Warren, Markey to speak at Connect 351

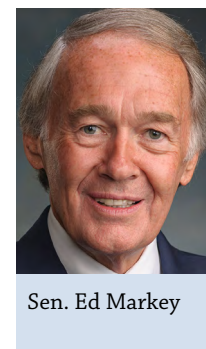
Massachusetts' two U.S. senators, Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey, will address local leaders from across the state during the MMA's annual conference, [Connect 351](#), on Saturday, Jan. 25.

Sens. Warren and Markey have consistently attended the MMA's annual conference to engage with municipal leaders, and have worked closely with the MMA and local officials throughout their time in Congress.

Warren and Markey will appear at Connect 351 shortly after the opening of the 119th Congress and the Jan. 20



Sen. Elizabeth Warren



Sen. Ed Markey

inauguration for the incoming Trump administration. They will speak during the MMA's Annual Business Meeting.

Both senators supported legislation that enhanced municipal spending flexibility with American Rescue

Plan Act funds, as well as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act and Inflation Reduction Act, key pieces of legislation that addressed climate change and the country's recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sen. Warren was elected to the Senate

■ **SENATORS** *continued on 22*

2024 MMA Board of Directors

The MMA Board of Directors holds regular meetings throughout the year, followed by a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission with the administration. Board members are chosen by: Massachusetts Mayors' Association, Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, Massachusetts Select Board Association, Association of Town Finance Committees.

Executive Committee

John McLaughlin,
MMA President and MMCA President
Councillor, Waltham

Jamie Hellen, MMA Vice President
Town Administrator, Franklin

Jill Hai, MMA Immediate Past President and
MSA Second Vice President
Select Board Member, Lexington

Ruthanne Fuller, MMA First Vice President
Mayor, Newton

Debra Roberts, MSA President
Select Board, Stoughton

Nicole LaChapelle, MMA President
Mayor, Easthampton

John Mangiaratti, MMMA First Vice President
Town Manager, Acton

Kevin Sullivan, ATFC First Vice President
Finance Committee, Hanson

Brendan Sweeney, MMCA First Vice President
Councillor, Beverly

Melinda Tarsi-Goldfien, ATFC President
Industrial and Development Committee, Pelham

Kristi Williams, MMMA President
Town Manager, Westborough

Adam Chapdelaine (non-voting)
MMA Executive Director

Ted Bettencourt, Mayor, Peabody

Lisa Blackmer, Councillor, North Adams

Paul Bockelman, Town Manager, Amherst

Denise Casey, Deputy Town Manager,
North Andover

Stephen Cavey, Select Board Member, Stoughton

Lisa Feltner, Councillor, Watertown

Claire Freda, Councillor, Leominster

Josh Garcia, Mayor, Holyoke

Jennifer Glass, Select Board Member, Lincoln

Christine Hoyt, Select Board Member, Adams

Afroz Khan, Councillor, Newburyport

Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator, Northfield

Breanna Lungo-Koehn, Mayor, Medford

Kevin Mizikar, Town Manager, Shrewsbury

Irwin Nesoff, Select Board Member, Hull

Mike Nicholson, Mayor, Gardner

Brad Riley, Councillor, Easthampton

Moises Rodrigues, Councillor, Brockton

Robert Sullivan, Mayor, Brockton

Michelle Wu, Mayor, Boston

Executive Director's Report

As challenges abound, let's use kindness as a tool

As I thought about what to write for my first column of 2025, I looked back on the books and articles I read and the podcasts I listened to over the past year to see what stood out to me. I found plenty of topics to choose from — AI, climate change, political polarization, socioeconomic inequity — all of which are important and interesting. What stood out, however, was a short but compelling podcast about kindness — specifically, kindness as a response to anger, hate and vitriol.

The podcast was an [interview with comedian Sarah Silverman](#) for a September episode of "ReThinking," by Adam Grant. It's a good listen, and I recommend it, but in short the interview outlines a series of times that Silverman was able to use kindness to diffuse otherwise upsetting situations and achieve a positive outcome. All of this made me think of local government and the challenges that lie ahead in 2025.

As you may have heard me say, I have walked many a mile in your shoes, and I know, perhaps too well, how much anger and vitriol can be directed at municipal officials. This type of behavior can happen in relatively good times, but will almost certainly be part of the landscape in the challenging year that lies ahead. Strained budgets, difficult debates about land use decisions, and many other



By Adam
Chapdelaine

divisive issues will be on the agenda at municipal meetings across the Commonwealth. What this means is that you, as elected and appointed municipal officials, will be the face of difficult decisions and, thereby, the receptacle for the varied reactions of the residents of your community.

We've all been there, right? We've presented a detailed and thoughtful plan for addressing a thorny issue that has been vetted by appropriate stakeholders and committees, but despite the preparatory work, we're met with opposition that at times blurs the line between personal and professional. This type of reaction makes dialogue very hard. Tempers can flare, and once that happens, it gets even harder to work toward compromise or resolution.

The lesson (or perhaps reminder) that I gleaned from the ReThinking podcast is that, so often, the angry reaction we receive from another person is not based on the issue at hand, but rather is an outlet for some other pain or upset that is occurring in that person's life. Understanding that can help us depersonalize the attack and channel a response that comes from a place of kindness and compassion. This doesn't mean that we have to roll over and give in to the pressure being exerted by this

■ EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR *continued on 21*

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

New session brings opportunities for cities, towns

By Dave Koffman

Aside from a new calendar year, Jan. 1 also kicked off a new legislative session, the 194th General Court of the Commonwealth. The day featured celebrations and ceremonies to swear in legislators and elect the leadership for each chamber.

House Speaker Ron Mariano and Senate President Karen Spilka, newly re-elected to their roles, reflected on the accomplishments of the recently concluded session while looking toward early priorities for the new session.

Highlights from 2024 include investments in the [fiscal 2025 state budget](#), a comprehensive [housing bond bill](#), and a [wage equity bill](#). A number of key bills that were still in negotiations at the end of the formal session were able to be finalized in the fall. These include a [clean energy bill](#), several health care-related bills, a [federal funds bill](#), and an [economic development bond bill](#) that included important investments as well as reforms to [Civil Service](#) and public health. During the final days of last session, laws were enacted to protect the pool of qualified [commercial driver's license drivers](#) and the [safety of students who ride school buses](#).

The year ahead

For the 194th General Court, early attention is expected to be focused on potential impacts related to the new federal administration, and both chambers have signaled interest in changes to the legislative rules and calendar, which are expected to be tackled in the coming months.

State revenue growth will again be a focal point for the first half of the year, with a



Karen Spilka



Ron Mariano

[cautious outlook](#) from key officials guiding the development of the fiscal 2026 state budget.

Budget writers will wrestle with a potential slowdown of general revenue growth, despite the continuing overperformance of the new surtax on annual incomes over \$1 million, which must be spent on education and transportation programs. This challenge is compounded by increased spending pressures and cost drivers, including in health care and the emergency shelter program, among others.

Gov. Maura Healey is scheduled to release her budget recommendation later this month, with the Legislature planning to finalize a bill by July.

MMA priorities

The MMA will continue to advocate for an adequate increase to local aid to support key municipal services. This funding will once again be critical to maintaining local infrastructure and supporting municipal budgets, especially in light of significant cost increases and the tight cap on local property tax revenue under Proposition 2½.

One area of focus for the MMA early in 2025 will be a permanent authorization

One area of focus for the MMA early in 2025 will be a permanent authorization for remote public meetings.

for remote public meetings, which would continue to allow a successful provision that was created out of necessity during the COVID pandemic.

The current authorization for remote public meetings is due to expire on March 31 of this year. A permanent codification over the next few months will be necessary to maintain this important flexibility for the thousands of public boards and commissions that operate in cities and towns in Massachusetts. Otherwise, previous open meeting law rules would return on April 1.

Language to make the remote public meetings option permanent was offered as standalone legislation, and was included in last session's [Municipal Empowerment Act](#), filed by Gov. Healey. This codification, among other key provisions included in the Empowerment Act, will be top MMA priorities again this session.

Other key areas of focus for the MMA will be investments in municipal infrastructure, transportation finance and funding, and bills that aim to ease unnecessary burdens on local government in Massachusetts.

The deadline for most bills to be filed by House and Senate members is expected to be Jan. 17. ●

MSA to host Annual Business Meeting on Jan. 25

During its annual business meeting on Jan. 25, the Massachusetts Select Board Association will discuss stress management for elected public servants.

The meeting will be held during the MMA's annual conference, [Connect 351](#), at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center, from 12 to 1:15 p.m.

MSA Interim President and Stoughton Select Board Member Debra Roberts will give opening remarks, followed by a report from the MSA Nominating Committee and a vote on the MSA



Matt Lehrman

Board of Directors slate for 2025.

Saturday's keynote speaker at [Connect 351](#), Matt Lehrman, co-founder of Social Prosperity Partners, will lead an interactive conversation on recognizing and managing the personal stress of civic leadership. The goal is to foster healthier leaders, promote

inclusive and resilient communities, and create the conditions for more effective governance.

All Select Board members in Massachusetts are considered members of the MSA and are invited to attend the meeting, provided they are registered for [Connect 351](#). Attendance at the meeting is limited to MSA members. Boxed lunches will be provided.

Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Anneke Craig at acraig@mma.org

Governor signs CDL licensure bill

By Adrienne Núñez

Gov. Maura Healey on Jan. 2 signed legislation intended to protect the pool of qualified candidates for commercial driver's licenses and provide relief to hundreds of CDL holders who were recently deemed disqualified.

The law is expected to have a positive impact at the local level, where many of these individuals hold municipal jobs with CDL licenses as a condition of employment.

Under the terms of the law, many individuals who have experienced up to two disqualifying events prior to Sept. 30, 2005, would still be able to hold a commercial driver's license. The law also requires the Registry of Motor Vehicles to draft regulations to establish guidelines and conditions under which a lifetime disqualification may be reduced to 10 years.

Healey filed the legislation in November in response to disqualification notices sent earlier in the year to nearly 500 individual CDL holders in Massachusetts. The bill was passed by the Legislature in the final hours of the session on Dec. 31, and took effect as soon as it was signed by the governor.

The Registry of Motor Vehicles had notified the affected drivers that they would



Gov. Maura Healey has signed legislation that aims to provide relief to hundreds of drivers who were recently disqualified from driving commercial vehicles.

no longer be allowed to hold a CDL in Massachusetts due to disqualifying events, such as drug- or alcohol-related driving offenses, that occurred two decades or more ago. Soon afterward, the registry instituted a process allowing a brief extension and appeal process for those receiving cancellation notices.

Cities, towns and school districts rely on CDL drivers to ensure the provision of essential services, particularly in areas such as public works and public school transportation, and need to maintain the drivers they have.

The [MMA supported](#) the legislation, saying it would better align Massachusetts with federal standards and help to address the demand for CDL drivers. The MMA argued that timely passage of the bill would protect the livelihood of many of the CDL drivers who received disqualification notices, some of whom are key municipal staff members. The changes would help maintain the high standards for roadway safety, while ensuring that periods of disqualification are proportional to the nature and age of the offense.

Massachusetts CDL requirements are more stringent than the national standard. Individuals convicted of certain infractions are disqualified from holding a CDL for at least one year, and individuals who receive two convictions of such violations are disqualified for life.

Current law allows the RMV to draft regulations to reduce lifetime disqualifications, but the new law requires such rules to be drafted by July 1, 2025.

Drivers with convictions only occurring after Sept. 30, 2005, are not impacted by the new law and continue to be subject to all mandated disqualification periods.

Visit the [Registry of Motor Vehicle website](#) for more information. ●

State accepting comments on draft ADU regulations

As a follow up to the [\\$5.16 billion housing bond bill](#) that was signed into law in August, the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities in early December released [draft regulations](#) relative to accessory dwelling units.

The law, known as the Affordable Homes Act, allows ADUs as-of-right in all single-family zoning districts across the state.

While the law prohibits municipalities from requiring owner-occupancy or certain parking requirements, the draft regulations are intended to provide additional clarity on ADU rules, standards

and limitations. Municipalities are not required to bring their local ordinances in line with the new state regulations, which are due to take effect on Feb. 2, 2025, but local ADU ordinances that do not comply with the final regulations will not be enforceable.

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities has launched an [online informational portal on ADUs](#), and has held two [webinars](#) on the draft regulations. The office will host a [public hearing](#), with options for in-person or remote participation, on Jan. 10, and will be [accepting comments](#) on the draft



The state has released draft regulations covering accessory dwelling units.

regulations through Jan. 10 at 11:59 p.m.

- **Ali DiMatteo**

Management Association to hold half-day boot camp on Feb. 27

The Massachusetts Municipal Management Association will hold a Finance 101 "boot camp" on Feb. 27 at Grand View Farm in Burlington.

The free event will focus on finance for

those new to the management profession, with substantive presentations as well as an opportunity for attendees to network.

The meeting will run from 9 a.m. to

noon. Lunch will be provided.

[Click here to register online.](#)

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

Legislature OK's bill to allow video for bus safety

By Adrienne Núñez

In the final hours of the session on Dec. 31, the Legislature passed a bill giving communities the option to use video monitoring systems for school bus traffic violations.

Cities and towns would be able to use cameras on school buses to record motor vehicles that fail to stop for a school bus.

The bill is intended to improve compliance with school bus safety laws and better protect students who ride buses. Such legislation was a priority for the MMA and was included in the MMA's Legislative Package for 2025-26.

School bus "stop-arm" video enforcement has gained support after recent studies showed evidence of numerous violations. In May 2024, [Peabody Public Schools released data](#) documenting 3,412 vehicles failing to stop for school buses between September 2023 and May 2024 — or roughly 2.3 illegal passes per day.

The bill defines a school bus violation detection monitoring system as a camera system that monitors and detects a motor vehicle overtaking or passing a school bus when the bus is stopped and displaying front and rear alternating



The Legislature passed a bill on Dec. 31 to allow communities to use video to monitor school bus traffic violations.

flashing red signal lamps, when the bus is stopped to pick up or drop off students.

Buses equipped with such devices would be required to display signage indicating their use.

The system would record video and produce still images of the rear of a motor vehicle, with the license plate — with violations determined by at least one recording of the vehicle immediately before the violation and while illegally passing the stopped school bus.

Recordings and photographs would be reviewed by local law enforcement officers or their approved technicians to determine whether a violation occurred.

If it is determined that a violation occurred, the officer would issue a citation to the vehicle's registered owner.

Any penalty for a violation would not be considered a criminal conviction and would not be considered a moving violation, but it would be noted on the registered owner's or operator's driving record.

Recordings that do not identify violations would be required to be destroyed after 30 days. All recordings that identify a violation would be required to be destroyed within one year of final disposition of proceedings related to enforcement of the violation.

The Legislature also approved a bill that would allow automated enforcement of bus lane violations for MBTA and regional transit authority buses using designated bus lanes.

The pair of bills reflect heightened awareness of various traffic safety considerations and an increase in state and federal initiatives to reduce fatalities and injuries on roadways.

Gov. Maura Healey has 10 days to approve or veto the bills. ●

\$25M in Rural Roadway Funding available to communities

By Adrienne Núñez

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation has announced that \$25 million for the [Rural Roadway Funding Program](#) has been apportioned and released to cities and towns.

The Rural Roadway Funding Program, established by a transportation bond bill in 2023, distributes supplemental aid to the Chapter 90 program based on a formula that favors rural communities, with apportionments based 20% on road miles, 20% on population, and 60%

on whether a community is considered rural. Under the program, rural communities are defined as having a population of less than 10,000 and a population density of fewer than 500 people per square mile.

The fiscal 2025 transportation bond bill included a re-authorization of \$25 million for the program. Although the MassDOT Capital Improvement Plan called for releasing the funding at \$5 million per year over a period of five years, MassDOT has released the full \$25 million to municipalities.

Apportionment announcements have been emailed to municipalities and funding has been added to each community's Chapter 90 account balance. New apportionment figures are expected to be posted to the Rural Roadway Funding Program webpage.

The fiscal 2025 state budget included \$45 million in additional supplemental funding for local road and bridge initiatives. This aid is funded through income surtax revenue that is required to be invested in transportation and education programs. ●

Women Leading Government to hold Annual Conference on March 6

Women Leading Government will hold its fifth Annual Conference on March 6 at Lake Pearl in Wrentham.

The full-day event is designed for women in appointed positions in local government who are interested in

advancing their careers and building their management and leadership skills.

The cost is \$60, including lunch and a light breakfast.

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

in local government. Online registration will be available shortly on www.mma.org.

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

MMA announces legislative package for new session

Over this past fall, the MMA's five policy committees met to discuss and vote on recommendations to the Board of Directors for a package of municipal bills to file for the two-year legislative session that began on Jan. 1.

The MMA Board approved the recommendations during its meeting on Nov. 12.

This summary includes bills that policy committees have recommended to be refiled, as well as new legislative items. Bills dealing with [Civil Service reform](#) and [school bus safety enforcement](#) had initially been included in the Legislative Package for the upcoming session, but versions of the bills were subsequently enacted during the closing months of the 2023-24 session.

Each bill filed for the new session will be assigned to a legislative committee sometime after the session convenes. Public hearings for many bills will be held in the spring and early summer of 2025.

The MMA legislative package represents just a small portion of the hundreds of bills affecting local government that are expected to be filed in the new session. MMA policy committees and MMA staff will be evaluating these bills, preparing testimony, and working with other groups on a range of bills over the two-year session.

The following are the MMA bills, listed by policy committee:

Fiscal Policy Committee

Municipal and public safety building authority (re-file): This bill would establish a new independent state authority, the Massachusetts municipal and public safety building authority, which would assist municipalities with the construction of or improvements to public safety or municipal buildings and facilities.

Local-option meals tax (re-file): This bill would increase the local-option sales tax on meals from 0.75% to 1.5% upon approval by vote of the local legislative body. Receipts from the tax would continue to be for the municipal general fund.

Local-option excise on alcohol for substance abuse prevention and public health programs (re-file): This bill would allow cities and towns to adopt a sales tax of up to 2% on the retail sale of alcoholic beverages, including sales in bars, restaurants, package stores



The MMA's legislative package for 2025-26 session includes bills that the MMA's policy committees have recommended to be refiled, as well as new items.

and other non-pouring establishments. Approval would be by vote of the local legislative body. The revenue would be dedicated to local substance abuse and other public health programs.

Transparency and accountability in charter school finance (new): This bill would cap the basic "foundation" assessment on individual cities, towns and regional school districts used to finance charter school tuition payments at the statewide average required local contribution amount calculated under Chapter 70. This proposal would not change how tuition is calculated; any tuition amount above the cap payable to a charter school would be funded through state appropriation.

Senior property tax exemption, local option (new): This bill would allow cities and towns to grant an additional property tax exemption to qualifying seniors, at local option, based on the state's senior circuit breaker income tax credit. Criteria for exemption would include owning and living in the subject home, having durational residency, and qualifying based on certain other income and asset levels. The amount of the exemption would be determined locally and provided for within the residential class.

Policy Committee on Energy and the Environment

Sustainable water resource funds (re-file): This bill would clarify and strengthen the authority of cities and towns to establish water, stormwater, and wastewater utility fees to support the cost of expanded or upgraded water infrastructure, protect public health, and meet federal Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act requirements and other state and federal environmental requirements.

Extended producer responsibility for paint (re-file): This bill would require producers of paint to submit a plan for a post-consumer paint collection and stewardship program and would direct the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to promulgate regulations related to enforcement procedures and to post plan information on its website.

Protecting water systems through the labeling of flushable wipes (re-file): This bill would require manufacturers of disposable products — such as diaper wipes, toilet wipes, household cleaning wipes, personal care wipes and facial wipes — to label products as non-flushable if they do not meet performance standards for flushing. The bill would also set standards for required labeling, require manufacturers to test products and verify that they meet performance standards, set penalties for violations, and allow the attorney general to enforce the law.

Municipal Fossil-Fuel-Free Building Demonstration Program Expansion (new): This bill would expand the Municipal Fossil-Fuel-Free Building Demonstration Program beyond the existing cap of 10 municipalities. The program could promote fossil-fuel-free infrastructure development via local option, while enabling the initial communities to participate, navigate more stringent development requirements, and establish best practices.

Policy Committee on Municipal and Regional Administration

Permanent option for remote public meetings (re-file): This bill would create a permanent option for remote meetings and participation. Members of public bodies participating remotely would be considered present when determining a quorum, and would participate as full members. Meetings of public bodies held remotely or in hybrid format would be required to make provisions to ensure public access and that any party entitled or required to participate by law, local ordinance or bylaw may do so through remote means as well. The executive body of a municipality would be required to adopt standards and guidelines for remote participation prior to any remote meeting being held.

■ LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE *continued on 7*

LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE

Continued from page 6

Local-option increase of civil penalty

(re-file): This bill would allow a municipality to increase, at local option, the cap for civil penalties under Chapter 40, Section 21D, from up to \$300 to up to \$500 to account for cost-of-living increases since this law was last updated.

Shared services and regionalization bonus points

(re-file): This bill would direct the Division of Local Services to work with all state agencies to assign bonus points to rural communities that, as part of an application process for a discretionary grant or incentive program, indicate that they intend to share services or regionalize with another community in order to be eligible for the grant. For the purposes of this bill, rural communities are municipalities with a population density of fewer than 500 persons per square mile.

Legal notices (re-file; update): This bill would give municipalities more options to satisfy the publication requirement for legal notices, including, but not limited to, publication on its own website, and/or the website of a local, regional or statewide online newspaper that does not maintain a print publication.

Procurement parity and technical corrections to public construction law

(re-file): This bill would increase the procurement cap under the Uniform Procurement Act (Ch. 30B) from \$50,000 to \$100,000, to bring all municipal purchases (not including property) in line with changes made in 2022. It would also close the RFP loophole by allowing RFP or qualifications-based selection for purchases made between \$10,000 and \$100,000.

Payment of veterans' benefits

(re-file): This bill would streamline the state's system for financing benefits paid to veterans consistent with sound direct payment practices adopted by other state agencies. A single state appropriation for payment of 100% of benefits directly to veterans would simplify the financing and administration of this program with the Department of Veterans' Services. This change would reform the current law, which requires cities and towns to separately try to predict and finance the needs of the Commonwealth's veterans and adjust during the course of the year.

Extending the right of first refusal

timeline (re-file): This bill would extend the right of first refusal timeline under Chapter 61A of the General Laws to give cities and towns more time to determine whether they are able to purchase the agricultural or horticultural land from the landowner before sale.

Municipal control of liquor licenses

(re-file): This bill would give municipal legislative bodies the authority to create a process to set the number of liquor licenses available each year. The licensing board or other local body responsible for issuing licenses would still control the granting of such licenses. This proposal would eliminate the need to go to the Legislature with a home rule petition to gain more liquor licenses.

Alternative delivery of infrastructure projects

(re-file): This bill would provide an alternative to traditional project delivery systems, in order to allow for greater private sector participation in the financing and delivery of projects, offering efficiency and innovation.

Policy Committee on Personnel and Labor Relations

Membership on State Retiree Benefits Trust Fund Board of Trustees

(re-file): This bill would add a municipal seat and a "schools" seat to the State Retiree Benefits Trust Fund's Board of Trustees. Municipalities and regional school districts would have the option to invest in the SRBTF to meet other post-employment benefit (OPEB) liabilities. This proposal would ensure that municipal and regional school district perspectives are properly recognized on the board.

Municipal unemployment insurance reforms

(re-file): This bill would make teachers and professional and nonprofessional educational employees who work on behalf of a school system, but are paid through municipal budgets, ineligible to collect unemployment insurance benefits when school is not in session, by extending them a "reasonable assurance" of employment. The bill would also reduce unemployment benefits by an amount equal to 65% of a retiree's weekly pension for retirees collecting both unemployment benefits and a pension from the same public or private employer.

Structure of the Commonwealth Employment Relations Board

(re-file): This bill would modify the membership of the Commonwealth Employment

Relations Board to require that the three members include a management representative, a labor representative and a neutral party. Currently, the only stipulation for membership is that no more than two members can be from the same political party. Party affiliation, however, is not an adequate proxy for an individual's leanings toward management or labor.

Addition of Curing Period for Wage Act Payouts

(new): This bill would amend the Wage Act to allow a 15-day period to cure claims of unpaid wages following a demand letter by an employee before such complaints may be brought. Since the 2022 Supreme Judicial Court decision in *Reuter v. City of Methuen*, all Wage Act violations risk treble (3x) damages, regardless of whether the employer remedies the violation prior to the filing of a suit.

Policy Committee on Public Works, Transportation and Public Utilities

Municipal authority in public rights of way

(re-file): This bill would give municipalities increased authority over utilities that operate in public rights of way. When utilities delay in relocating poles and wires, municipalities would have the authority to move them and to charge utilities for non-performance. The bill would also give municipalities the ability to assess fees and levy taxes on utilities that operate in public rights of way, and would give municipalities the ability to pass bylaws or ordinances related to the licensing and permitting of utilities in the right of way.

Assisting municipal and district rate-payers

(re-file): This bill would establish a mechanism through which the state must identify and enumerate any costs, benefits and financial impacts of rules and regulations proposed by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs before they take effect. The bill would require a more detailed cost-benefit analysis than is currently required by the rule-making process.

Chapter 90 Bond Authorization

(re-file; update): This bill would fund the Chapter 90 local road and bridge maintenance program for at least \$350 million per year for two years (fiscal 2026 and 2027), with timely disbursement to ensure that money is available by April 1.

■ LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE *continued on 21*

Members to consider 4 resolutions at Connect 351

Local leaders from across Massachusetts will consider four resolutions during the MMA's Annual Business Meeting on Jan. 25 in Boston.

Resolution topics are PFAS remediation, modernization of local government, transportation needs, and the state-local fiscal partnership.

The MMA's [Annual Business Meeting](#) is a key component of the [Connect 351](#) conference being held in Boston on Jan. 23-25. Resolutions adopted by the membership at the meeting will help guide the advocacy work of the MMA in the year ahead.

The PFAS resolution identifies the harms that the "forever chemicals" pose for communities across Massachusetts, and establishes positions to address its contamination, fund remediation, and protect public health.

The local government modernization resolution articulates positions to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of local government services, including in the areas of local decision making, procurement, public meetings, infrastructure, and the municipal workforce.

The transportation resolution advocates



Local leaders listen to a presentation during the MMA Annual Business Meeting last year.

for support of a multimodal transportation network and infrastructure in the Commonwealth.

The fiscal resolution seeks to ensure a strong partnership between cities and towns and the state in fiscal 2026. It identifies municipal needs in areas such as unrestricted aid; education and charter school finance; capital needs such as road maintenance; municipal and school facilities; water and wastewater systems; climate resilience; and local-option flexibility for local revenues.

The proposed resolutions were posted on the MMA website in late November, and member feedback on the [proposed resolutions](#) was welcomed using an online form

through Dec. 27.

Voting at the business meeting

Voting at the Annual Business Meeting is open to all municipal members of the MMA through voting delegates as defined by the MMA's bylaws.

Individuals eligible to vote at the meeting are:

- In the case of a city, its chief executive or a councillor designated in writing by the chief executive, or
- In the case of a town, the chair of the select board or town council, or another select board member or councillor designated in writing by the chair, or the manager designated in writing by such chair.

In early January, the MMA will be sending a letter about voting procedures to chief municipal officials in each community.

Those who will be voting on behalf of their community should visit the credentials table outside of the business meeting between 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Only one voting card will be issued per member community. ●

Proposed Resolution Supporting a Local-State-Federal Partnership to Address PFAS Contamination, Fund Remediation, and Protect Public Health

Whereas, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a family of chemicals (used widely due to their water-resistant, stain-resistant, heat-resistant, and non-stick properties) that persist in the environment and have been found in water, air, soil, fish and a variety of food products, and in the blood of people and animals in Massachusetts and across the world; and

Whereas, scientific studies indicate that some negative health effects ranging from reproductive and hormonal effects to increased risk of certain cancers may occur after exposure to PFAS chemicals, and that certain people have higher exposures to PFAS due to their occupations or where they live; and

Whereas, there is nearly no known safe level of exposure to several heavily researched PFAS in drinking water, including perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA); perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS); perfluorohexane sulfonic acid (PFHxS); perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA); hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid (HFPO-DA, or GenX Chemicals); perfluorobutanesulfonic acid (PFBS); perfluoroheptanoic acid (PFHpA); and perfluorodecanoic acid (PFDA); and

Whereas, local governments and water systems in the Commonwealth have been held responsible for cleaning up PFAS contamination which they

passively received from environmental polluters and the manufacturing and use of these chemicals in various industries; and

Whereas, more than 500,000 private well owners and users in Massachusetts depend on wells for drinking water daily and face uncertainty regarding potential personal liability for contamination, costs of clean up and acquiring alternative water supplies, or a reduction in property value due to PFAS pollution; and

Whereas, existing state regulatory requirements to remove PFAS from public drinking water supplies from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) — and more stringent, upcoming federal regulatory requirements from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) — will require significant upfront and future financial investments from municipalities and water districts to comply; and

Whereas, a 2024 analysis by Black & Veatch and Corona Environmental revealed the U.S. EPA's National Primary Drinking Water Regulation for just six PFAS chemicals will likely require up to \$48.3 billion of capital investment in the next five years nationwide and has an estimated national cost of up to \$3.5 billion annually, the latter estimate twice as

high as that put forward by the Agency; and

Whereas, ongoing and upcoming lawsuits and settlements with the manufacturers and producers of PFAS chemicals will not be sufficient to cover the costs of long-term remediation of widespread, continuing contamination; and

Whereas, existing state and federal grants and loans to assist municipal governments and public water systems are insufficient given the ubiquity of pollution across the Commonwealth; and

Whereas, existing and further regulations on PFAS chemicals, while absolutely necessary to protect public health and the environment (a mission shared by local governments, water systems, and their dedicated staff), will become unfunded mandates without further state and federal support; and

Whereas, municipalities have many other costly, unaddressed water infrastructure needs beyond managing PFAS contamination, which will also be essential to address in conjunction with required work on emerging contaminants such as PFAS;

Therefore, it is hereby resolved that the members of the Massachusetts Municipal Association

■ RESOLUTIONS *continued on 23*

NLC publishes book recognizing 100th anniversary

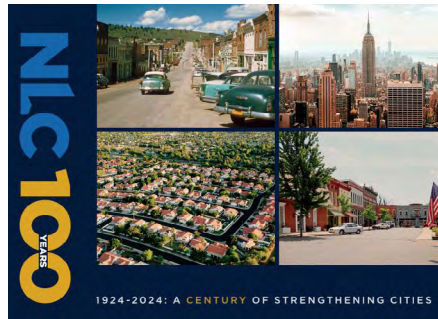
By Owen Page

The National League of Cities celebrated its 100th anniversary throughout 2024, recognizing a century of municipal advocacy, education, and innovation at the national level.

As part of its celebration, the NLC organized a national roadshow, visiting more than 130 cities throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. The roadshow kicked off in February 2024 in Lawrence, Kansas, and made its way to Massachusetts in May, with stops in Cambridge, Mansfield, New Bedford and Revere. MMA President and Waltham City Councillor John McLaughlin and MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine were on hand in Cambridge to welcome the roadshow.

The NLC invited municipalities to join the centennial celebration by issuing a proclamation in May during National Cities, Towns and Villages Month, signing the Recycle Right Pledge, and taking part in the Youth Create! Challenge.

The NLC recently published a book, “1924-2024: A Century of Strengthening Cities,” to chronicle the organization’s origins and history across each decade. The book was distributed to attendees at the NLC’s City Summit in Tampa, Florida, this past November. “A Century of Strengthening Cities”



The National League of Cities distributed its new book, “NLC 100 Years, 1924-2024: A Century of Strengthening Cities,” to attendees of the NLC’s annual City Summit in Tampa, Florida, in November.

highlights how municipalities and the country have grown and changed over the past century.

Former MMA Executive Director Geoff Beckwith wrote an introduction, in which he discusses the critical role that municipal governance has played in the nation’s development, as well as the NLC’s role in aiding that progress.

“Local governments,” writes Beckwith, “are nothing less than the bedrock of American democracy, providing 341 million residents with the most accountable, responsive, inclusive, ethical, and transparent government on the planet.”

Beckwith also provides a sense of scale

for what municipalities do, referencing data like miles of roads and pipes built and maintained, number of schools operated, and the municipal workforce employed.

“Municipal governments are magnets that draw us toward each other,” he writes, “creating shared experiences to let us know that we belong, and that our neighbors belong, too. These connections make us resilient, [and] allow us to navigate change and uncertainty with greater confidence and ability ... even when we disagree on how to achieve our lofty aspirations.”

“Without strong municipalities,” he writes, “these achievements would have been slower and smaller, and America would be less than it is today. That is why NLC and our state leagues have been so vital to our nation’s progress.”

The full text of Beckwith’s article is available [on the MMA website](#).

The NLC was founded in 1924 at the University of Kansas by representatives of 10 state leagues, and has grown to represent nearly 20,000 municipalities and 49 state municipal leagues.

The NLC’s book, “1924-2024: A Century of Strengthening Cities,” is available to all guests who visit the NLC’s office in Washington, D.C. ●

EOEEA accepting comments on Article 97 open space regulations

By Josie Ahlberg

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs is accepting comments through Jan. 22 on draft regulations relating to Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution.

Article 97 establishes the right to a clean environment, including natural, scenic, historical and aesthetic qualities. It also declares the conservation of natural resources as a “public purpose” and provides that land or easements subject to Article 97 shall not be used for other purposes or disposed of without a two-thirds roll call vote of each branch of the Legislature.

In November of 2022, the Legislature

enacted a new section in state law that codified the requirements and process that a municipality must follow when it proposes to dispose of or change the use of property subject to Article 97.

The law, known as the Public Lands Preservation Act, codified the EOEEA’s long-standing “no net loss” policy, which requires a municipality or other public entity to offset a change of use of protected open space by providing comparable replacement land.

The EOEEA is soliciting feedback on the regulatory proposal required by the 2022 law. The update (301 CMR 52: Disposition or Change in Use of Article 97 Interests) seeks to provide further procedures and requirements for

proposals to change the use or dispose of land or interests in land subject to Article 97.

Visit the [comment opportunity webpage](#) for more details, including a copy of the proposed regulations.

Written comments must be submitted by 5 p.m. on Jan. 22 to Michael.gendron2@mass.gov with 301 CMR 52 in the subject line.

For more information about Article 97, see the [Conservation chapter of the Massachusetts Select Board Handbook](#). ●

MMA Trade Show to highlight municipal solutions

By Karen LaPointe

Trade Show exhibitors are looking forward to meeting local officials during [Connect 351](#), the MMA's annual conference being held in Boston in just a couple weeks.

The MMA's annual Trade Show will feature 250 exhibitors — including 50 first-timers — offering the latest products and services for the cities and towns of Massachusetts. The [Trade Show](#) offers opportunities to connect with companies, associations and government agencies in a lively exhibit hall.

A new [EV Alley](#) will give attendees the opportunity to meet with exhibitors representing the full spectrum of electric vehicle options for the communities, including municipally oriented electric vehicles. An EV Alley ribbon cutting, with special guests, will be held at 4 p.m. on

Thursday.

The exhibit hall, at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center in Boston's Seaport district, will also feature MIIA's state-of-the-art driving simulator, which offers a safe environment for drivers to experience and react to a variety of conditions typical to emergency response situations.

The Trade Show will also feature a series of six educational [Learning Labs](#) on Friday, Jan. 24. These 30-minute sessions provide opportunities to hear from experts on a variety of topics.

The Trade Show will be open on Thursday, Jan. 23, from 2 to 5:30 p.m., and on Friday, Jan. 24, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Trade Show will not be open on Saturday, Jan. 25, the third day of Connect 351. There will be a welcome reception on the Trade Show floor on



The MMA Trade Show provides the opportunity to speak with exhibitors and learn more about municipal products and services.

Thursday from 4 to 5:30 p.m.

Trade Show and Learning Lab details are available on [Connect351.org](#).

The following is the list of Connect 351 exhibitors as of Jan. 7:

AARP Massachusetts	CAI Technologies	Dig Safe	Guardian Energy	Massachusetts Clean Water
Abacus Health Solutions	Cannabis Control	D.M.H. Electric	Management Solutions	Trust
AI Engineers	Commission	East Coast Renewable	GZA GeoEnvironmental	Massachusetts Correctional
Airbnb	Capital Strategic Solutions	Energy	Haley Ward	Industries
AllOne Health EAP	Cascade Cart Solutions	Edmunds GovTech	Harrington Heep	Massachusetts Councils on
All State Flagging	Casella	Energy Source	Harvard Pilgrim Health Care,	Aging
Alta Equipment Company	CBIZ	Enterprise Fleet	a PointHealth company	Massachusetts Cultural
Altus Dental Insurance	CHA Consulting	Management	HDR City Point Partners	Council
Company	Christmas Decor by Curb	Eric A. Kinsherp CPA	Health New England	Massachusetts Department
Anderson Motors	Infusion	Esri	HilltopSecurities	of Agricultural Resources
Apex Companies	CIMS Cemetery Software	Eversource	Horsley Witten Group	Massachusetts Department
Aquarion Water Company	Citylogix	Executive Office of Housing	Howard Stein Hudson	of Energy Resources
Auctions International	CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen LLP)	and Livable Communities	Hoyle, Tanner & Associates	Massachusetts Department
Axis Communications	ClearGov	F.R. Mahony & Associates	Hub International NE	of Energy Resources,
Azora Software LLC	CMRK	FlashVote	ICC Community	Green Communities
Bartholomew & Company	C.N. Wood	Fulcrum Energy Solutions	Development	Massachusetts Department
BELFOR Property	The Collins Center	Fuss & O'Neill	ICON Architecture	of Environmental
Restoration	Colonial Life – Kimberly	GameTime Park &	indus	Protection – Drinking
BETA Group	Cunningham	Playground Equipment /	Inovis Energy	Water Program
BL Companies	Commonwealth Electrical	MRC	InstaTrac	Massachusetts Department
Blue Cross Blue Shield of	Technologies	Gannett Fleming	John Turner Consulting	of Environmental
Massachusetts Inc. and	Commonwealth Print and	TranSystems	Keep Massachusetts	Protection – Waste
Blue Cross and Blue Shield	Mail Services	GEI Consultants	Beautiful	Reduction Branch
of Massachusetts HMO	Comprehensive	Genlyte Solutions	KFDA	Massachusetts Department
Blue Inc.	Environmental	GHD	Kimley-Horn and Associates	of Labor Standards
Boston Mutual Life	CompTIA	Global Partners	Kleinfelder	Massachusetts Department
Insurance	Constellation	GOGov	KP Law	of Public Utilities Damage
Brennan Consulting	Cook & Company Insurance	Good Energy	LifePlus Insurance Agency	Prevention Program
Bridgewater State University	Services	GovDeals	LiRo-Hill	Massachusetts Department
College of Graduate	CRANES	GovSense	Local Infrastructure Hub	of Revenue – Division of
Studies	CyberTrust Massachusetts	GovWell	Locke Lord	Local Services
Brody Hardoon Perkins &	Davey Resource Group	Greater Boston Police	Massachusetts Association	Massachusetts Department
Kesten	DebtBook	Council	of Assessing Officers	of Transportation
Brown Legal	Deckard Technologies	Green International Affiliates	Massachusetts Board of	Massachusetts Division of
BSC Group	Delta Dental of	Group Insurance	Library Commissioners	Standards
BT2 Energy	Massachusetts	Commission	Massachusetts Broadband	
BusPatrol America LLC	DesignLights Consortium		Institute	

■ **TRADE SHOW** *continued on 11*

EV Alley will debut at Connect 351

By Katie McCue

A new, innovative EV Alley will debut during the MMA's annual Trade Show at [Connect 351](#), giving attendees the opportunity to meet with exhibitors representing the full spectrum of electric vehicle options for the communities — manufacturers, charging infrastructure suppliers, installers, consultants, energy experts and more.

EV Alley will feature municipally oriented electric vehicles on the Trade Show floor, including an electric school bus, a police cruiser and a public works truck. MMA members will have the opportunity to ask questions and gather information about innovative ways to bring electric vehicles to their community.

“For many years, municipal leaders have attended our Trade Show to see and learn



A new EV Alley at the MMA's Trade Show on Jan. 23 and 24 will feature municipally oriented electric vehicles, including an electric school bus, a police cruiser and a public works truck.

about tools and technologies that can enhance the delivery of local government services while also managing budgetary constraints,” said MMA Executive Director

Adam Chapdelaine. “EV Alley is the latest iteration of this long-standing commitment by the MMA, and will serve as an exciting and timely addition to the Trade Show floor. We look forward to seeing you there.”

Connect 351 attendees can visit EV Alley in the 100 aisle of the [Trade Show](#) on Thursday, Jan. 23, from 2 to 5:30 p.m., and on Friday, Jan. 24, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Attendees are invited to join an EV Alley ribbon cutting, with special guests, at 4 p.m. on Thursday, at the beginning of the Welcome Reception.

For questions about EV Alley, contact MMA Deputy Executive Director Katie McCue at 617-426-7272 or kmccue@mma.org.

TRADE SHOW

Continued from page 10

Massachusetts Education & Government Association (MEGA)	Mass General Brigham Health Plan	OneLocal Bank	Ricoh Document Scanners	UMass Transportation Center
Massachusetts Federation of Building Officials	MassINC	OpenGov	Rockland Trust Investment Management Group	Unibank Fiscal Advisory Services
Massachusetts Highway Association	Mead, Talerman & Costa	Operational Services Division	Roselli, Clark & Associates	USDA Rural Development
Massachusetts Housing Partnership	M.E. O'Brien & Sons	Oracle NetSuite for Government	Santander Bank N.A.	VADAR Systems
Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA)	Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Pare Corporation	Schaefer Plastics North America	VC3
Massachusetts Maritime Academy	Metropolitan Telephone Company	ParkMobile	Schneider Geospatial	VEOLIA
Massachusetts Municipal Association	MGT	PEER Consultants	Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts	Verizon
Massachusetts Municipal Lawyers Association	MHEC	Pennoni	Senscio Systems	The Vertex Companies
Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General	MIIA – Wellness Activities	Petrie Davis & Perritano	Sertex Broadband Solutions	VHB
Massachusetts School Building Authority	Mirick	Planet Aid	ServiceMaster Restore	vialytics
Massachusetts State Lottery	MMDT Federated Hermes	PMA Companies	Siemens	Waquoit Bay Reserve Foundation (DCR) Coastal Training and Engagement Program
Massachusetts State Treasury – Unclaimed Property	MoveEV	PolicyMind	Solect Energy	Wellesley DPW
Massachusetts Veterans' Services Officers Association	MSPCA – Angell	Power of Recovery	Spatial Data Logic	Wellpoint
MassDevelopment	Municipibid	PowerOptions	Springbrook Software	Westfield Gas & Electric/WHIP City Fiber
	Municipal Police Institute	Praesidium Benefits	Sternberg Lighting/Omnilite	Weston & Sampson
	Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehane	Precision Concrete Cutting	Stonybrook Water Company	Woodard & Curran
	My Town Alert / Red Dot Alert	Public Agency Retirement Services (PARS)	StressCrete Group	Workday
	Napoli Shkolnik	Quebec Government Office	STV Incorporated	WrightPierce
	National Grid	Radarsign	Suffolk University Sawyer Business School	Zobrio / QDS
	NEWWA/MWWA	RCAP Solutions	Tighe & Bond	ZOLL Medical Corporation
	Nitsch Engineering	Readyly AI	TOSS Corporation	
	Nuvera Fuel Cells	Recordsforce	TRANE	
	Office of the Inspector General	REDNOSE	TRIDENT Environmental Group	
	Office of the State Auditor	REON Technology	Tyler Technologies	
		Registry of Motor Vehicles	U.S. BENCOR/MidAmerica	
		Republic Services	UKG	
		Resource Lighting & Energy		
		RetroFit Technologies		
		Rexel Energy Solutions		

Companies, nonprofits and government agencies interested in exhibiting can find [Trade Show details on the MMA](#)

[website](#). If you know of a company or nonprofit that would benefit from exhibiting at the MMA Trade Show, contact

Karen LaPointe at 617-426-7272, ext. 154, or klapointe@mma.org.

MMA to host 7th ‘Inspiring Climate Action’ webinar

The MMA will host the seventh and final session of its “Inspiring Climate Action” webinar series on Jan. 29.

Aladdine Joroff and Jonathan Schrag, two deputy climate chiefs from the Office of Climate Innovation and Resilience, will discuss the work ahead for the Commonwealth and what’s next for its cities and towns.

Joroff and Schrag will provide an update on the development of a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan, part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Climate Pollution Reduction Grant program. The plan will analyze the costs and benefits of measures to reduce climate pollution in order to prioritize decarbonization actions that deliver the greatest community benefits and most efficiently use state and federal investments.



Aladdine Joroff



Jonathan Schrag

The discussion will highlight opportunities for engagement in the development of the climate action plan and provide an update on federal tax credits available to municipalities for clean energy investments.

[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.

This webinar will end the MMA’s “Inspiring Climate Action” webinar series, which has explored how climate change impacts municipalities and addresses how municipal officials and staff can take action. The series began in March 2024 with a “[fireside chat](#)” between Massachusetts Climate Chief Melissa Hoffer and MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine.

For more information, contact MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre at klapierre@mma.org. ●

Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant applications due March 7

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection is accepting applications for the Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Program.

The program supports public water systems and municipal water departments in efforts to purchase land or interests in land for three purposes:

- To protect existing public water

supplies

- To protect planned drinking water supplies
- To recharge groundwater

The maximum reimbursement available is 60% of approved project costs, up to \$350,000.

An online information session will be

held on Jan. 13 at 1 p.m. To register, email Vanessa.Farny@mass.gov by Jan. 10.

The grant application deadline is March 7 at 3 p.m.

For more information, email Vanessa.Farny@mass.gov or visit the [DWSP grant program](#) website. ●

DOER opens program to promote on-street EV charging

The Department of Energy Resources is accepting applications for the On-Street EV Charging Program, which provides grants and technical assistance to promote curbside EV charging infrastructure in communities.

The program, overseen by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Coalition and Commonwealth Electrical Technologies and funded through the American Rescue Plan Act, has a focus on low-income disadvantaged communities. The program will run through December 2026.

Commonwealth Electrical Technologies and its vendor have developed two pathways for municipalities to choose from:

- **Planning Support and Feasibility:** Feasibility studies will provide recommendations for on-street



The On-Street EV Charging Program provides grants and technical assistance to promote curbside EV charging infrastructure in communities.

charging locations and technologies, identify critical stakeholders, develop a project timeline, and provide a cost estimate. Up to 25 municipalities will be selected to receive funding

for planning and feasibility studies; all planning services will need to be completed by September 2025.

- **Project Implementation:** Up to 15 municipalities will receive both implementation and project assistance for on-street charging projects. These municipalities will receive funding for installation of on-street charging equipment at up to three locations with four to 10 Level 2 charging ports per site. All services must be completed by November 2026.

Any Massachusetts municipality may submit an application by Feb. 14.

For more information and the application form, visit the [On-Street Charging Solutions Program website](#). ●

MMA Webinars

Fostering collaboration

The MMA's Virtual Municipal Leadership Academy held a professional development webinar, "Creating a Culture of Collaboration: Helping Teams With Problem-Solving," on Dec. 17.

Betsy Neptune of [Neptune Coaching](#) discussed the importance of collaboration in the workplace.

"You can't expect people to make decisions until they feel part of the team and feel ownership over the work," she said.

The webinar was designed for municipal leaders, managers and department heads, who learned how to create an environment where all staff feel heard, empowered and equipped to develop innovative solutions to the challenges they face.

Neptune advises managers to clearly define the goals, purpose, and roles for specific projects, and align them with everyone's strengths.

She also encourages teams to engage in group decision-making processes. She said managers should invite participation from staff to discuss concerns during listening sessions, draft a proposal based on the feedback received, present that solution back to the staff, and then present the final decision.

Neptune moderated 25 minutes of questions and answers, addressing inquiries about working collaboratively with external

Managing misinformation

Massachusetts Municipal Communicators held its second webinar on Dec. 10, offering strategies for identifying misinformation and disinformation, as well as methods to mitigate falsehoods.

Jeremy Warnick, director of media relations and content strategy for the city of Cambridge, shared some key indicators of misinformation, including emotional manipulation, a lack of credible sources, sensationalized headlines, and contradictions.

Warnick gave examples of social media posts with misinformation that circulated in Cambridge and in Lowell. City officials were able to detect the misinformation quickly and — with the help of pre-existing "strong media relationships" — prevent news stories from amplifying it further.

Norfolk Assistant Town Administrator Kate O'Brien discussed strategies for managing misinformation in a small town, using Norfolk's experience with the conversion of a closed prison into a temporary emergency shelter as a case study.

Reflecting on lessons learned, she advised attendees to have a centralized message, use community structures, reach out to neighboring communities for guidance, and keep staff informed along the way. When there was an information gap, she said, the town learned to avoid trying to fill it if that responsibility was better suited for someone else, such as a state agency.

Warnick shared strategies to control the spread of



Betsy Neptune of Neptune Coaching discusses the importance of collaboration in the workplace during a professional development webinar held as part of the MMA's Virtual Municipal Leadership Academy.

Date: Dec. 17

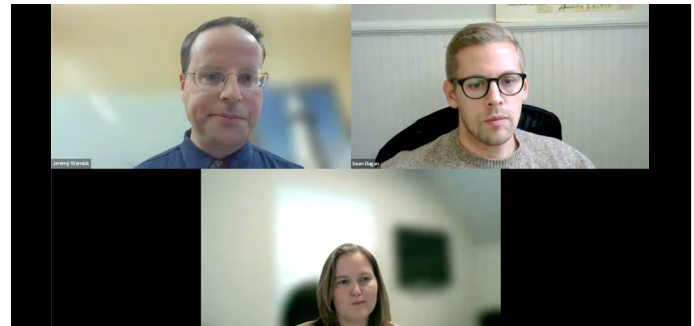
Length: 75 minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR ↗](#)

departments and staff, employees who are not responsive to suggestions and feedback, and adjusting to a new role as a manager.

The webinar can be purchased in the MMA's On-Demand library, a link to which can be found on the main [MMA webinars page](#).

— *Kristianna Lapierre*



Jeremy Warnick, director of media relations and content strategy for the city of Cambridge, top left, Easton Assistant Town Administrator Sean Dugan, top right, and Norfolk Assistant Town Administrator Katelyn O'Brien offer strategies for identifying misinformation and disinformation during a webinar held by the MMA and Massachusetts Municipal Communicators.

Date: Dec. 10

Length: 75 minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR ↗](#)

misinformation, including social media monitoring, acting quickly, and demonstrating empathetic transparency.

Easton Assistant Town Administrator Sean Dugan moderated 15 minutes of questions and answers, addressing inquiries about crisis communication plans, thresholds for determining when misinformation requires a response, and social media monitoring.

— *Kristianna Lapierre*

MMA Webinars

Community arts, culture

By Anneke Craig

A Massachusetts Select Board Association webinar with the Mass Cultural Council on Dec. 11 discussed how select boards can support arts and culture initiatives and advance economic development in their communities.

“Select boards play a huge role, and a key role, in the work of supporting arts and culture in municipalities,” said MCC Community Initiative Program Manager Lisa Simmons. “And for that, we thank you.”

Simmons said select board members make appointments to local cultural councils, support funding through municipal budget line items, promote the visibility of cultural programming, and help connect the local cultural sector to town departments and resources.

Carolyn Cole, special projects manager for advancement at the MCC, gave an overview of the economic impact of the cultural sector.

“Arts and culture are essential for economic prosperity, innovation, creativity, and health,” she said.

In 2022, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis found that the cultural sector generated \$28.6 billion in spending and economic activity in Massachusetts — more than the construction or transportation industries. Arts and culture initiatives also enhance tourism and create new jobs.

Sommers Smith, a community initiative program officer at the MCC, discussed the funding and local partnership programs offered through the Mass Cultural Council. Opportunities in early 2025 include the [Creative Experiences](#) grant and [operating grants](#) for municipal cultural organizations with at least one full-time staff member.

In a conversation with Cheyenne Cohn-Postell, an MCC community initiative program officer, Orleans Select Board Member Andrea Shaw Read and Carlisle Select Board Member Kate Reid discussed their experiences supporting local arts and culture projects.

Shaw Read said Orleans “didn’t really fit the urban model of a cultural district.” So, in partnership with volunteers from the local cultural council, the Select Board focused on making improvements to walkability and way-finding between cultural and recreational sites in town. Those changes helped to open more



During a recent webinar, Mass Cultural Council officials and municipal leaders discuss how select boards can support arts and culture initiatives and advance economic development. Pictured, clockwise from top left, are: MCC Community Initiative Program Manager Lisa Simmons; Cheyenne Cohn-Postell, an MCC community initiative program officer; Thomas DiSiervo, director of recreation, culture and community events in Orleans; and Orleans Select Board Member Andrea Shaw Read.

Date: Dec. 11 **Length:** 75 minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR](#) ↗

opportunities for programming throughout the year — even during Cape Cod’s off-season.

“As a Select Board ... we have to pay attention to our commitment to year-round vibrancy and year-round residents,” Shaw Read said.

MCC staff unveiled the [Rural Municipalities Toolkit](#), a compilation of arts and culture sector resources specifically for small communities. The toolkit was organized in partnership with the Executive Office of Economic Development – Rural Affairs.

Simmons reminded local leaders that their towns “have incredible stories to tell, especially because of the impact and history that Massachusetts has.”

“We in the cultural sector are really excited to help you lift up those stories and bring those voices to the forefront,” she said. ●

Webinar Topic Submission Form launched

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.

MassTrails grant program accepting applications for 2025

The application period is open through Feb. 3 for the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s 2025 MassTrails grant program.

[MassTrails](#) provides grants to communities, public entities, Native nations and nonprofits to plan, design, create and maintain the state’s network of trails, trail systems, and trail experiences.

The award maximum is generally \$100,000 for recreational trail projects and up to \$500,000 for shared-use path projects demonstrating critical network connections of regional or statewide significance.

Eligible grant activities include project development, design, engineering, permitting, construction and maintenance

of recreational trails, shared-use pathways, and the amenities that support trails.

These are reimbursement grants, requiring documentation of expenditures. Grants recipients must pay at least 20% of the total project cost. ●

MMA to host webinar on transportation grants on Jan. 13

The MMA will host a webinar on Jan. 13 covering transportation-related grants available to communities across Massachusetts.

Kristen Rebelo, community grants administrator at the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, will provide an overview of several competitive grant programs administered by MassDOT, and will discuss the Chapter 90 municipal road and bridge maintenance program, which provides formula funding to all communities.

Rebelo will provide an introduction to MassDOT's "[Grant Central](#)" community grants portal, a hub of information and resources about available MassDOT grants, including Chapter 90, Complete



Kristen Rebelo



Eli Velluti-Fry

Eli Velluti-Fry from the Department of Conservation and Recreation will give an overview of the MassTrails Grant program. The competitive grants support recreational trail and shared-use pathway projects across the state.

[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.

For more information, contact MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre at klapierre@mma.org. ●

Streets, Local Bottleneck Reduction Program, Municipal Pavement, Municipal Small Bridge, and Shared Streets and Spaces.

MassTrails Director Amanda Lewis and MassTrails Grants Program Manager

MMCA to hold Annual Business Meeting on Jan. 25

Housing and Livable Communities Secretary Ed Augustus will be the featured speaker during the Annual Business Meeting of the Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association on Saturday, Jan. 25, during [Connect 351](#) in Boston.

The meeting will run from noon to 1:15 p.m., beginning with a networking lunch. The MMCA will also hold its annual election of officers.



Ed Augustus

[Augustus joined the Healey-Driscoll administration](#) in June 2023, becoming the state's first housing secretary in more than 30 years. His professional experience includes nearly nine years as the city manager in Worcester.

[Connect 351](#), the MMA's annual conference, will be held Jan. 23-25 at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center and the Omni Boston Hotel at the Seaport.

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

Meeting space wanted

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

With more than 60 member group meetings each year, the MMA uses several different types of function spaces around the state. The use of municipally owned meeting rooms greatly improves the organization's ability to sponsor affordable educational events in a variety of places.

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



Managers discuss ethics

Sandwich Assistant Town Manager Heather Harper, left, Holliston Town Administrator Travis Ahern, center, and Needham Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick discuss professional ethics during a Massachusetts Municipal Management Association meeting on Dec. 13 in Sturbridge. All three serve on the MMMA's Ethics Committee, and they provided a program on the practical application of the Code of Ethics, offering guidance about following the tenets of the code and navigating challenging situations.



CONNECT 351

JANUARY 23-25, 2025

Boston Convention & Exhibition Center
and Omni Boston Hotel at the Seaport

New name, new look, new location, new programming. Same great event!

NETWORKING

Our dynamic, high-energy conference provides countless opportunities to discuss the challenges you face and learn what other local leaders are doing to move their communities forward.

- Receptions on Thursday, Friday and Saturday
- A lively [Trade Show](#) for meeting with exhibitors and colleagues
- Events for Women Leading Government, WEMO and other groups
- A Friday evening dinner
- Hallway conversations and numerous seating areas where you can engage with colleagues whenever you'd like



WORKSHOPS

Our [workshops](#) cover the latest developments affecting local government.

Topics:

- Artificial Intelligence: Practical Applications
- Bringing Balance, Productivity and Human Sustainability to the Workplace
- Building Trust in Local Government Through Communications
- Capital Planning for Resiliency
- Connecting With Younger Generations Through Internships
- Cybersecurity
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Federal Funds
- Fiscal Outlook
- Housing
- Joint Labor-Management Committee
- Labor Law Update
- Municipal Law Update
- Navigating Politically Contentious Legal Matters
- Proposition 2½ Overrides
- Succession Planning
- What's Driving the Cost of Public Education
- Workplace Behavior Challenges

Visit Connect351.org for complete details.

TRADE SHOW

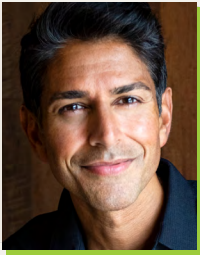
Our [Trade Show](#) is a great opportunity to find out what's new in the municipal marketplace! More than 250 exhibitors will be showcasing the latest in products and services tailored to Massachusetts cities and towns. The Trade Show also features a series of six Learning Lab workshops.





Join more than 1,000 local leaders at this inspiring, can't-miss event devoted to learning, problem solving and idea sharing!

SPEAKERS



FRIDAY KEYNOTE

"Momentum: Boosting Resilience, Fulfillment and Performance"
Author and entrepreneur
[Suneel Gupta](#)



WEMO LEADERSHIP LUNCHEON

Health and Human Services Secretary
[Kate Walsh](#)



SATURDAY KEYNOTE

"From Conflict to Conversation"
Facilitator and podcast host
[Matt Lehrman](#)

“It’s in the name – you get to connect with all of your colleagues from around the Commonwealth. It’s a great spiritual event.”

– Jamie Hellen, Town Administrator, Franklin



HEADSHOT STATION

Attendees can get free professional headshots taken at the Trade Show.



Visit Connect351.org for complete information.

Make the most of your Connect 351 experience with our official app. Find out how to get it in this issue of The Beacon.

REGISTER TODAY! 



Going to Connect 351? There's an app for that

Attendees of Connect 351 later this month can use the event's free mobile app to make the most of their MMA conference experience.

Now in its seventh iteration, this year's app will be provided by a new vendor and is expected to provide a better user experience.

The app, available for all smartphones and tablet devices, is the primary resource for planning and navigating [Connect 351](#). Users will find schedule details, workshop listings, speaker profiles, exhibitor information, an interactive Trade Show floor plan, helpful

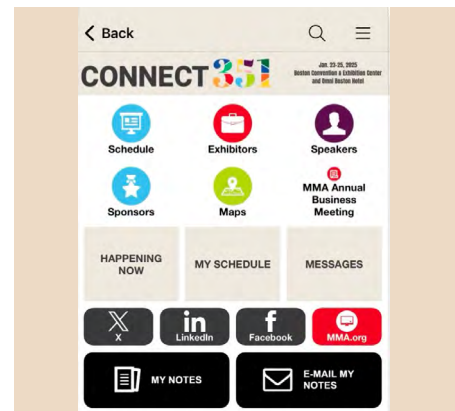
maps, and much more.

Attendees can use the app to personalize their meeting schedule, network with other attendees, and receive up-to-the-minute updates and alerts.

A guide to accessing the app will be emailed to registrants during the week before Connect 351. [Advance registration for Connect 351](#) is advised, so attendees have time to explore the app and take advantage of its many features.

Assistance will be available at Connect 351 to answer any questions and to help on-site registrants.

—Meredith Gabriliska



The new Connect 351 app

MMA booth is an opportunity to network, discuss policy issues

Local officials will be able to talk about the important issues facing cities and towns with MMA staff and representatives from MMA member groups at the MMA's Trade Show booth during the Connect 351 on Jan. 23 and 24.

MMA Legislative Division staff will be available to discuss a variety of policy issues, as well as the MMA's policy committees, the business meeting resolutions, legislation for the coming year, and other priorities.

The MMA booth will also have information about MMA programs and events and member group information.

Details will be available about the MMA-Suffolk University Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management Program for 2025-2026,

and the MMA-Suffolk Municipal Finance Management Seminar.

Representatives and board members from Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources will be present to answer questions, share information on upcoming programs and events in 2025, and network.

The MMA's new chief equity officer, Jillian Harvey, will spend time at the booth to talk about upcoming DEI initiatives and answer questions about her work.

Check [Connect351.org](#) or the conference's mobile app for the full MMA Trade



The MMA's Trade Show booth at Connect 351 offers opportunities to meet with fellow attendees. Pictured at last year's MMA conference, l-r, are retired town manager Jeff Nutting, MMA Vice President and Franklin Town Administrator Jamie Hellen, Medfield Town Administrator Kristine Trierweiler, and Marblehead Town Administrator Thatcher Kezer.

Show booth schedule.

—Daniel Yi

All-America City Award applications due Feb. 27

The National Civic League is accepting applications for its 2025 All-America City Award.

The award program honors communities that harness the power of civic engagement, collaboration, inclusivity and innovation to effectively tackle local challenges. Since 1949, the National Civic League has recognized more than 500 communities, including 19 from Massachusetts.

The deadline for optional letters of intent to apply is Dec. 30. Final applications are due by Feb. 27.

Through its 2025 theme, "Strengthening Environmental Sustainability Through



Inclusive Community Engagement," the league is seeking communities that demonstrate a commitment to environmental sustainability through meaningful community engagement initiatives, such as conservation projects, renewable energy initiatives, waste reduction efforts, or green infrastructure

developments.

In March, the [National Civic League](#) will announce the finalists, who will have an opportunity to convene in Denver from June 27 to 29 to showcase their community's achievements at the All-America City Award event.

The full application fee is \$250 for communities, though communities that submit a letter of intent by Dec. 30 can receive a \$100 discount.

For more information and the application, visit the [All-America City Award website](#). ●

MMA seeks members for its five policy committees

Local officials are invited to fill a limited number of positions available on the MMA's five policy committees for 2025.

More than 100 local officials from communities across Massachusetts serve on MMA policy committees, which advise the MMA Board of Directors, MMA staff and MMA members on legislative, regulatory and public policy issues.

- [Online application form](#)
- **Deadline:** Jan. 27

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

Each committee has a regular schedule of meetings, usually one per month. Additionally, committee members may be asked to read legislative summaries, bill text, and/or position papers to prepare for meetings.

Each committee is assigned an MMA staff member to assist with its research, consideration of issues, and administrative functions.

Each committee has 23 members, including mayors, select board members, councillors, city and town managers/administrators, and finance committee members, plus four presidential appointees and four technical appointees.

The MMA president names the chair and members of the committee, subject to approval by the MMA Board of Directors.

Those with the interest and time to serve on a policy committee are asked to [fill out the application form on the MMA website](#) by Jan. 27. The form provides space to list areas of interest and expertise so that a good match can be made between volunteers and the work of the committees.

About the policy committees

- **Fiscal Policy Committee:** This committee considers all municipal finance issues. Legislation that has a fiscal impact is referred to this committee from other committees as well. This committee also develops a policy framework for local government financing in the future.



The MMA is seeking local officials for spots available on its five policy committees.

- **Policy Committee on Energy and the Environment:** This committee formulates policy in the following areas: water quality, water supply, air quality, solid waste and recycling, hazardous waste, wetlands, coastal areas, wastewater treatment, renewable energy and energy conservation.
- **Policy Committee on Municipal and Regional Administration:** This committee considers issues that relate to the organization, structure, efficiency, and productivity of local and regional government and the relationships between the two levels of government. Issues include housing and zoning, procurement, economic development, regulation of marijuana, open meeting law and public records law, public health and safety, and

licensing.

- **Policy Committee on Personnel and Labor Relations:** This committee considers issues dealing with municipalities as employers, including the following areas: collective bargaining, civil service, employee benefits, health care and insurance, and pension/OPEB reform.

- **Policy Committee on Public Works, Transportation and Public Utilities:** This committee considers issues that relate to regional transportation, transportation planning, the relationship between local governments and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, public rights of way, and local control in joint state-local public works programs.

The MMA is the one voice that advocates for direct aid and support for core municipal and public education services provided by every community in Massachusetts. The MMA's advocacy efforts are focused on a single goal: Building strong communities in Massachusetts.

For more information, contact Daniel Yi at dyi@mma.org or visit www.mma.org/advocacy. ●



Please share local photos

The Soldier's Monument and The First Church of Monson shine in the sun on a bright day in Monson. Do you have photos that exemplify your community or your local government at work? (They could be photos of municipal facilities, community gatherings, natural resources, downtowns, etc.) Please email the photos, as an attachment, to photos@mma.org for possible use in The Beacon, the Weekly Review or mma.org. (Photos must be free of copyright restrictions; jpeg format and high resolution are preferred.) The photo here was shared by Gaylin Bingle, administrative assistant in Monson.

MMA and Suffolk to host information sessions

By Kate Evarts

The MMA and Suffolk University will hold a Zoom information session on March 12 about upcoming offerings of the Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program.

To register for the session, visit www.mma.org or [click here](#). The one-hour session will begin at 10 a.m.

The graduate-level academic program provides a solid grounding in municipal management, and covers topics such as human resources management, budgeting and financial management, and strategic leadership.

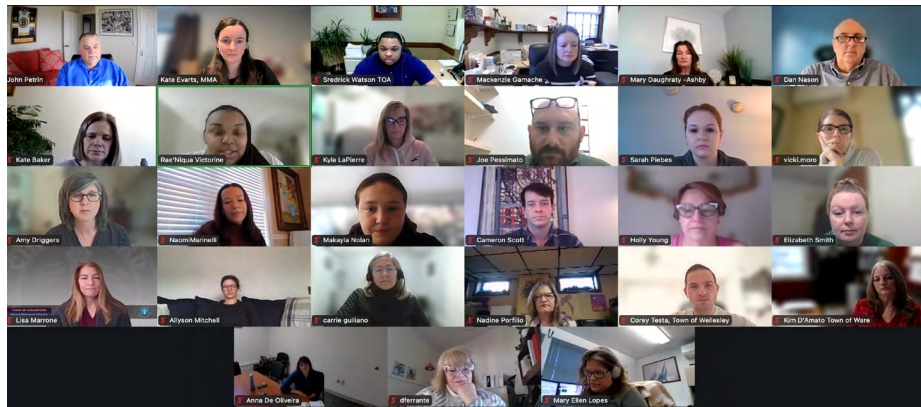
The program is held over the course of 25 Fridays from September through May. The 2025-2026 certificate programs will be hosted in Barnstable and Winchester; the program is held in person (40%) and on Zoom (60%).

The certificate program application will be available on the [MMA website](#) on Feb. 1, and the deadline to apply is April 30. Applicants will be notified of their status by mid-May.

Municipal Fellowship

The MMA and Suffolk University will also hold a Zoom information session about their Municipal Fellowship Program, on Feb. 6 at 10 a.m. To register, visit www.mma.org or [click here](#).

Municipal professionals interested in pursuing a [Master of Public Administration](#) degree at Suffolk



Students gather online on Jan. 3 for an orientation for the 16th session of the MMA-Suffolk Municipal Finance Management Seminar, with 27 students participating this winter.

University are encouraged to apply for the fellowship program, which offers a scholarship of up to \$28,000, while the recipient's municipality commits to continuing their salary and position while they attend the program part-time.

Fellowship applicants must be accepted for admission to Suffolk's Master of Public Administration program and must receive the support of the chief municipal official in their municipality. Additional consideration will be given to graduates of the MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program.

Those interested in the Municipal Fellowship should check off, on [Suffolk's application](#), that they are a municipal

employee interested in the fellowship, and apply to Suffolk by May 1. The fellowship selection committee will interview qualified applicants and award up to two fellowships in June.

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. ●

Gateway city projects receive nearly \$1.9M in tax credits

The Executive Office of Economic Development announced on Jan. 3 that projects in Brockton and Taunton were approved for participation in the Massachusetts Economic Assistance Coordinating Council's [Economic Development Incentive Program](#).

The recipients, CMZ USA LLC in Brockton and Nye Lubricants Co. in Taunton, will receive \$1.89 million in state tax credits for projects that are expected to create 125 new jobs, retain 40 jobs, and leverage approximately \$14.5 million in private investments.

The Incentive Program is aimed at

job creation and stimulating business growth. Eligible participants may be granted state tax credits along with local property tax incentives in exchange for committing to job creation and retention in coordination with private investment in the project.

The council also approved two projects to receive tax credits of \$10,000 each through the [Vacant Storefront Program](#): Northampton's Toasted and Westfield's Comfort Bagel.

Municipalities can apply for a Certified Vacant Storefront District designation to be applied to a defined commercial/

downtown area. With the designation, businesses within the district may secure local matching funds to apply to the Coordinating Council for tax credits for leasing and occupying a vacant storefront.

The council designated Springfield's Mason Square area as a Certified Vacant Storefront District, and the city has committed \$500,000 to help small businesses in the district.

Visit the [Economic Assistance Coordinating Commission website](#) for more information.

MMHR virtual holiday meeting covers onboarding

By Anneke Craig

Employee onboarding was the focus of the annual Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources virtual holiday meeting on Dec. 5.

The program featured a workshop led by Betsy Neptune of Neptune Coaching: “Beyond Benefits: Advancing the Employee Onboarding Process in Municipal Workplaces.”

Neptune discussed strategies for streamlining the onboarding process, supporting new hires and connecting them with their departments, and establishing a healthy and welcoming workplace culture.

“Onboarding is related to our processes, but it’s also related to our culture and patterns of behavior,” Neptune said.

For municipalities seeking to streamline their onboarding process, Neptune said that communication is key — even before hiring begins. She encouraged municipal HR professionals to work with department heads to define the “shared



During the annual holiday meeting of Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources on Dec. 5, Betsy Neptune of Neptune Coaching presents the workshop “Beyond Benefits: Advancing the Employee Onboarding Process in Municipal Workplaces.”

expectations” that both staff and managers agree to observe in service of the department’s larger mission. Clearly defined expectations around communication, participation, and behavior help to integrate new hires and set them up for success.

The meeting also featured a networking

event and a legislative update from MMA Legislative Director Dave Koffman.

Koffman discussed important [civil service reforms](#) that were included in a recently signed economic development package, including a new “hybrid pathway” option for communities through which departments can make up to 50% of entry-level police and fire appointments outside of the traditional Civil Service exam process. The reforms include provisions that create flexibility for communities in providing residency requirements, and, for communities departing from civil service, allow existing home rule petitions filed between Jan. 4, 2023, and July 31, 2024, to not require further legislative action.

“We’re really happy to get a good compromise done, with a lot of stakeholders ... to help provide more management discretion than there’s been in decades,” Koffman said.

• [View webinar](#)

MSA to host webinar with Moderators Association on Feb. 25

The Massachusetts Select Board Association will hold a [webinar](#) with the Massachusetts Moderators Association, “An Insider’s Look at Town Meeting,” on Feb. 25 from 12 to 1:15 p.m.

Veteran Town Moderators Mark DiSalvo, Carmin Reiss, Alan Foulds, and John Arnold will discuss both open and representative town meetings.

The conversation will cover:

- Building strong relationships between select boards and moderators



Carmin Reiss



John Arnold

- How to manage discord at (and before) town meeting

- Increasing resident engagement and participation
- Using technology in town meetings

Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in a question-and-answer session. The webinar is geared toward select board members and is applicable to rural and urban communities of all sizes and locations.

Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Anneke Craig at acraig@mma.org

LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE

Continued from page 7

Green Lights for Municipal Emergency Management Vehicles (new):

This bill would allow municipal

emergency management vehicles and departments of public works vehicles to mount or display flashing, rotating or oscillating green lights to promote visibility and roadside safety and regulate use. ●

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Continued from page 2

person. But perhaps, by lowering the metaphorical volume, we can get closer to the heart of the matter and, at the very least, leave the encounter with an

agreement to disagree.

This is admittedly easier said than done, especially since none of us is immune to feeling the pressures and stresses of the 21st century. That said, I am confident that if we give it a try, we are

likely to find ourselves in a place where we are feeling better about our ability to address the challenges that lie before us. So, let’s try adding kindness to our municipal toolkit in 2025 and beyond! ●

MMA webinar will discuss fire mutual aid

The MMA will hold a free webinar on Jan. 16 covering the importance of fire department mutual aid in Massachusetts.

Mutual aid efforts were required across the state during a challenging fall season with many wildfire events. The fall fires have abated, but fire officials remain concerned about future wildfires and other potential disasters.

Peter Burke and Michael Kelleher, past and current presidents of the Fire Chiefs Association of Massachusetts, respectively, will describe mutual aid and why it is necessary.



Jon Davine



Michael Kelleher



Peter Burke

Dave Celino, chief fire warden with the Department of Conservation and Recreation, will discuss examples of past local disasters, wildfires, structural fires, and instances requiring emergency medical services, noting that mutual aid responsibilities extend to everyday events.

Glenn Rooney, general counsel for the Department of Fire Services, will give an overview of state laws regarding mutual aid.

Panelists will also outline the various types of mutual aid systems and structures in place to ensure that communities have the help they need.

State Fire Marshal Jon Davine will moderate the webinar, which is intended for chief municipal officials. Fire chiefs have been invited to a separate webinar.

The webinar will be held from noon to 1:15 p.m. [Registration is available online.](#)

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

Trade Show to feature 6 Learning Lab workshops

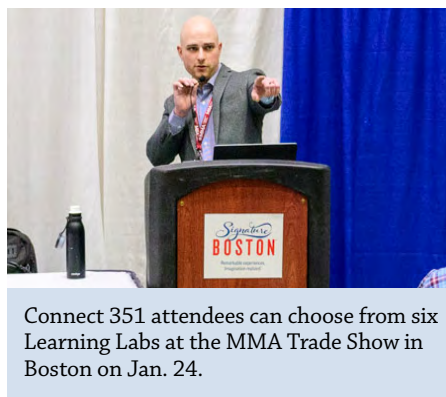
One highlight of the MMA's annual [Trade Show](#) is the series of educational Learning Labs that will be held on Friday, Jan. 24.

These 30-minute sessions provide opportunities to hear from experts on a variety of topics.

The following are the six Learning Labs for 2025:

11:30 a.m.-noon

- Cost-Effective, Turnkey, Electric Vehicle Charging Solutions for Municipalities — Presented by Constellation Energy
- National League of Cities: Developing Competitive Infrastructure Grant Applications and Managing Federal Grants — Presented by Local Infrastructure Hub



Connect 351 attendees can choose from six Learning Labs at the MMA Trade Show in Boston on Jan. 24.

12:10-12:40 p.m.

- Pursuing Equitable State-Owned Land Reimbursements for Municipalities — Presented by Office of the State Auditor
- Preparing for the Next Emergency

Now — Presented by Massachusetts Office of the Inspector General

12:50-1:20 p.m.

- Exploring Public Sector Digital Service Transformation With Citizen-Centric CIAM — Presented by Portage Cyber Tech
- Building Officials' Impact on Public Safety and the Municipality — Presented by Massachusetts Federation of Building Officials

Visit Connect351.org for complete information about the [Learning Labs](#).

For more questions about the Trade Show, contact Karen LaPointe at 617-426-7272, ext. 154, or klapointe@mma.org.

SENATORS

Continued from page 1

in 2012 and was re-elected in 2018 and 2024. She serves as vice-chair of the Senate Democratic Caucus and has focused on economic opportunity, consumer protection, and health care during her time in the Senate. A former professor at Harvard Law School, Warren had served as a special advisor for the

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau under President Obama and chaired the Congressional Oversight Panel that administered the implementation of the Economic Emergency Stabilization Act.

Sen. Markey has served the Commonwealth in public office since 1973, first as a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, then as a U.S. representative from 1976 to

2013 before being elected to the Senate in 2013. He has since been re-elected in 2014 and 2020.

During his time in public office, Markey has focused on environmental protection and energy, transportation, infrastructure, public safety, and education. He has been one of the foremost Congressional leaders on the issue of climate change. ●

RESOLUTIONS

Continued from page 8

support the following essential policy positions to support a local-state-federal partnership to address PFAS contamination, fund remediation, and protect public health:

In the Area of Polluter Responsibility:

Local, state, and federal governments and their agencies should call for the discontinuation of the manufacturing and use of PFAS chemicals in all feasible applications and help to support and spur development of well-tested, safer alternatives to address PFAS pollution at the source;

Local, state, and federal governments and their agencies should utilize all available policy mechanisms and enforcement opportunities to hold polluters accountable, rather than municipal governments and their water systems, for the degradation of natural resources;

The state and federal governments and their agencies should provide statutory liability protection for municipalities amid developing regulatory efforts, including, but not limited to, the potential for the U.S. EPA to designate certain PFAS as hazardous substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), given any enforcement discretion policy exempting municipalities could be revoked in the future; and

In The Area of Municipal Aid:

The state's fiscal 2026 capital plan should include additional funding, not limited to loans, for water infrastructure projects including basic drinking water capital and water contamination mitigation;

The state and federal governments and their agencies should further support the development of new financial opportunities for municipal governments and public water districts as water infrastructure project design, construction, and operating costs rise — and demand for such projects increases

— ahead of the enforcement deadline of the National Primary Drinking Water Regulation for six PFAS chemicals;

The state should partner with and provide retroactive support, financial and otherwise, for communities who undertook significant remediation and treatment costs prior to the finalization of stricter national standards who must now readjust their designs, treatments, and strategies to the more stringent requirements;

The Governor and the Legislature should pursue federal funds and future state bonding authorizations for water and related environmental infrastructure so that communities can leverage these funds to address critical local needs;

The Governor and the Legislature should approve a multi-year environmental bond bill to fund municipal drinking water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure improvements to not only address PFAS, but also the approximate \$15.2 billion needed for Massachusetts to maintain compliance with existing Safe Drinking Water Act Regulations over the next 20 years; and

In The Area of State and Municipal Policy:

The Legislature should grant explicit authority to cities and towns to establish drinking water, stormwater and sewer infrastructure banks to build, repair, and maintain water-related infrastructure systems to support these necessary investments related to PFAS and other timely projects;

The Legislature should pass legislation requiring the Executive Branch and the Legislature to provide a fiscal note as part of any proposal in order to clearly explain the benefits and costs imposed on municipal government and local taxpayers as a result of further regulations beyond the federal standards for PFAS;

The Legislature should support and the Governor should enact legislation to carry forward the recommendations of the PFAS Interagency Task Force, including but not limited to creating a PFAS

Remediation Trust Fund to support municipal governments in efforts to test and clean up PFAS contamination; prohibiting the sale of consumer products with intentionally added PFAS; further regulating industrial entities who continue to be responsible for PFAS pollution in Massachusetts waterways; providing safer firefighting foams to local fire departments; and funding the collection of Aqueous Film-Forming Foam;

The state should provide for education and training of local boards of health responsible for the regulation of private wells, as well as support the development of a framework and accompanying funding structure to test and decontaminate private water sources that is not burdensome to local governments;

The state should assist local governments and their residents and customers as they consider options for remediation, ongoing treatment, the provision of safer drinking water alternatives, and overall resiliency, including potential establishment, expansion, and connection of municipal service areas and regional water authorities;

The state should provide routine oversight of MassDEP-certified laboratories that perform PFAS testing to ensure they have sufficient capacity to support municipal water utilities with true, accurate data and maintain that such data and test results are comparable to other laboratories; and

The state should conduct a robust public education and outreach campaign to raise awareness of PFAS contamination and assist municipalities in these shared efforts to build a common understanding of the threats PFAS poses to public health and the environment, the actions being taken to address PFAS pollution, and maintain public trust and confidence in public drinking water supplies as public awareness grows.

It is further resolved that a copy of this resolution shall be provided to the Governor, the Members of the Massachusetts General Court, and the Members of the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation.

Proposed Resolution Supporting the Modernization and Efficiency of Local Government

Whereas, the social and economic well-being of residents depends on the ability of their local government to provide efficient and high-quality public services; and

Whereas, local governments must be dynamic and have flexibility to access products and workers they need to best serve residents of the Commonwealth; and

Whereas, adequate staffing resources for essential municipal services is critical to the function of emergency resource deployment and the protection and well-being of citizens; and

Whereas, an efficient and standardized procurement process is essential for municipalities to competitively purchase services and products they need to provide vital services; and

Whereas, flexibilities in borrowing and spending

enable municipalities to more effectively budget larger purchases and emergency-related spending in order to provide predictability for residents while ensuring the safety and well-being of the community; and

Whereas, liquor licenses are essential to the development and revitalization of downtown areas, and local officials best understand the needs and limits of their municipality when it comes to liquor license numbers; and

Whereas, cities and towns are highly reliant on the tightly capped property tax to fund local budgets, which severely limits the ability of local officials to respond to new challenges and opportunities, or meet the needs of the public through necessary investments; and

Whereas, technology capabilities and use have

enabled more effective and economical means of communication between local government and residents, as well as other interested parties and service providers; and

Whereas, cities and towns must be empowered with responsibility, authority and decision-making power to ensure the functions and delivery of essential local government services are done in economically and practically sustainable ways; and

Whereas, the Legislature regularly considers comprehensive bills making needed reforms and creating efficiencies across local government, including the Municipal Relief Act, the Municipal Modernization Act, and 2024's Municipal Empowerment Act;

Therefore, it is hereby resolved that the members

■ **RESOLUTIONS** *continued on 24*

RESOLUTIONS

Continued from page 23

of the Massachusetts Municipal Association support the following essential policy positions to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of local government services:

In the Area of Local Authority and Decision-Making:

Cities and towns should be granted new local-option flexibility to adopt local taxes and other revenues to help pay for municipal and school services and the construction and maintenance of local capital projects, including affordable housing;

The Legislature should amend Chapter 138 of the General Laws to allow municipalities to determine the number of liquor licenses it issues;

Cities and towns should be given authority to adequately enforce their ordinances and bylaws as well as the public right of way, including increasing fines for noncriminal violations and increased penalties to expedite the removal of double poles; and

In the Area of the Modernization of Public Meetings:

The Legislature should allow for a permanent option for remote meetings and participation, allowing municipalities the necessary flexibilities, not mandates, to make determinations for their public meetings while considering capacity, public interest, available technology, staff and space;

The Legislature should support legislation to allow for remote participation for representative town

meetings and caucuses, allowing municipalities that are already successfully utilizing the temporary authorization to continue with remote participation while allowing others to do so as well; and

In the Area of Municipal Procurement and Spending Efficiencies:

The Legislature should increase the cap on municipal purchases that fall under Chapter 30B up to \$100,000, bringing all municipal purchases in line with changes made last session through the School Operational Efficiency Act;

The Legislature should support the reduction of unnecessary and costly publishing requirements;

The Legislature should support streamlining purchasing processes, including:

Allowing both the procurement of goods and services in cooperative purchasing agreements;

Allowing the procurement of electric school buses and charging infrastructure as a single procurement process;

Exempting snow hauling from the procurement process, bringing it in line with snow plowing requirements;

The Legislature should support borrowing and spending flexibilities when needed, including providing municipalities the ability to amortize emergency-related deficit spending for catastrophic and natural disasters; and

In the Area of Municipal Infrastructure:

The Governor and the Legislature should work with cities and towns to ensure that municipal buildings

critical to the delivery of essential public services are safe and modernized, and enact a state funding mechanism and program to provide the resources needed to implement these improvements across the state; and

In the Area of Addressing Needs Across the Municipal Workforce:

The Legislature should grant explicit authority to cities and towns to establish a process by which municipalities and executive departments may apply to the Executive Office for Administration and Finance for a “critical shortage” exemption from certain post-retirement limitations on employment for specific and critical job titles or classes;

The state should work with cities and towns to encourage greater recruitment in critical municipal workforce areas through workforce development and training programs to help build a robust talent pipeline;

The Legislature should establish an OPEB Commission to identify opportunities to address unfunded liabilities from non-pension employee benefits to protect local taxpayers, support retirees, and ensure that cities and towns can provide the municipal services that citizens deserve; and

The Legislature should make necessary reforms to the Civil Service in the Commonwealth, which is cumbersome, slow, and does not meet the needs of a 21st century personnel management system.

It is further resolved that a copy of this resolution shall be provided to the Governor and the Members of the Massachusetts General Court.

Proposed Resolution Supporting a Local-State-Federal Partnership Toward a Robust Multimodal Transportation System Across the Commonwealth that Supports Thriving Communities in the Age of Climate Change

Whereas, a safe, reliable, and connected transportation network is essential for the well-being of every municipality and its residents; and

Whereas, a multimodal transportation infrastructure in a state of good repair is key to safely moving people and goods throughout the state and region, and supporting a thriving economy with opportunity for success in every corner of the Commonwealth; and

Whereas, essential infrastructure facilitating multimodal transportation is under the care of municipalities including sidewalks, paths, and approximately 90% of Massachusetts’ roadways; and

Whereas, cities and towns have limited ability to generate revenues and limited borrowing capacity to support the maintenance of essential transportation infrastructure under their care while facing significant inflation of transportation costs that diminishes purchasing power; and

Whereas, the Chapter 90 road and bridge program is an essential support to municipalities to help ensure that local bridges and 30,000 of the Commonwealth’s 33,000 miles of roads are maintained in a state of good repair; and

Whereas, the Rural Roadway Funding Program is a much-appreciated program to support communities most limited in their local purchasing power; and

Whereas, the increasing frequency of extreme weather events due to climate change threatens existing transportation infrastructure and requires additional regular maintenance and costly efforts to boost resilience; and

Whereas, the Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2050 (2050 CECP) outlines bold actions intended to reduce the effects of climate change, including the goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, which relies on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector; and

Whereas, cities and towns are critical partners to achieve the Commonwealth’s climate goals through adoption of low- and zero-emission vehicles, installment of public charging stations, and supporting mode-shift; and

Whereas, the Commonwealth’s public transit infrastructure, service area, and reliability are in urgent need of improvement and investment, and

Whereas, traffic congestion has increased and expanded across the Commonwealth beyond the Boston area and beyond rush hour; and

Whereas, fatalities and serious injuries on Massachusetts’ roadways have risen and traffic safety is a priority;

Therefore, it is hereby resolved that the members of the Massachusetts Municipal Association support the following essential policy positions to ensure a strong local, state and federal partnership to nurture a safe, reliable, resilient, and connected multimodal transportation network across the Commonwealth:

The MMA will continue to take a leadership role in advocating for multi-faceted solutions, and educating the public about the critical needs of the Commonwealth’s local and state transportation systems, including the promotion of a stable, broad-based revenue structure that is adequate to support and maintain our roads, bridges, highways, bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, and transit systems in a manner that shares resources fairly with the cities and towns of Massachusetts; and

■ **RESOLUTIONS** *continued on 25*

RESOLUTIONS

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In the area of funding critical multimodal transportation infrastructure:

To help municipalities keep pace with transportation infrastructure deterioration, the Governor and the Legislature should enact a multi-year transportation bond bill that provides a minimum of \$350 million annually for the Chapter 90 program, indexed to grow to match construction inflation, on or before March 1, 2025, to maximize project completion during the construction season;

The Governor and the Legislature should provide regular supplemental road funding via the Rural Roadway Funding Program, including a \$25 million authorization in fiscal 2026, while increasing the investment in this program to \$50 million annually, indexed to grow with inflation, in future years;

The Governor and the Legislature should provide reliable supplemental funding for the Chapter 90 program and support other transportation initiatives through the voter-approved surtax via the state budget, including a minimum of \$150 million in additional annual aid supporting the construction and preventative maintenance of municipal roadways to help keep pace with roadway deterioration;

The state should continue to fund targeted grant programs that support municipalities in financing specific road and bridge project needs, including but not limited to the Complete Streets Program, the Municipal Small Bridge Program, the MassWorks Program, and programs to fund culvert replacement

and repairs, municipal congestion relief, and funding for locally owned state-numbered roads;

The MMA supports deliberation on needed transportation revenue generation, including but not limited to congestion pricing, increased TNC fees, local and regional revenue options, gas-tax replacement, and other regionally equitable potential practices to support transportation system improvements; and

In the area of the environment and public works operations:

State and federal agencies and lawmakers should continue to support efforts to make the Commonwealth's transportation assets resilient to impactful weather events, with a focus to ensure connectivity in the event of a weather emergency;

The state should implement and fund the recommendations of the culvert and small bridge working group to streamline environmental permitting, revise engineering standards, and expand grant programs and other financial resources and technical assistance for cities and towns;

The MMA supports the promotion of innovative and important congestion solutions, including but not limited to equitable congestion pricing, priority bus lanes, managed bus lanes, public private partnerships, and encouraging the use of public transportation;

The MMA supports creative funding and policy to promote the development and expansion of multimodal transportation networks within and between communities across the Commonwealth, including but not limited to safe bicycle infrastructure,

multi-use paths, and public transit options;

The MMA supports the reduction of transportation-related carbon emissions and encourages the Commonwealth to expand financial resources and technical assistance for cities and towns to help implement associated policies and practices across all departments in municipal government and fostering similar changes for the public;

To adequately staff and resource municipal departments of public works and associated private sector partners now and into the clean energy future, the state should provide adequate support and financial resources to DPWs to maintain essential equipment inventories; and support for workforce development in key sectors: public works, engineering, planning and design, commercial driver's licensing (CDLs), and zero-emission vehicle and charging infrastructure maintenance;

The MMA supports a local option for municipalities to utilize automated enforcement technology to reduce traffic violations that are known to contribute to crashes, increased deaths and injuries, and specifically impact our most vulnerable users, including children using school transportation; and

The MMA supports the promotion of reasonable safety initiatives that will help save lives and reduce injuries of municipal employees and vulnerable road users.

It is further resolved that a copy of this resolution shall be provided to the Governor, the Members of the Massachusetts General Court, and the Members of the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation.

Proposed Resolution Supporting an Enduring Fiscal Partnership Between Cities and Towns and the Commonwealth in Fiscal 2026 and Beyond

Whereas, the well-being and success of the residents and businesses of the Commonwealth depends on the fiscal health of cities and towns and the ability of local government to provide efficient and progressive public services and adequately invest in reliable and resilient public infrastructure; and

Whereas, cities and towns are highly reliant on the tightly capped property tax to fund local budgets and capital programs, and this heavy reliance on the property tax severely limits the ability of cities and towns to respond to new challenges and opportunities, as well as adequately support necessary essential services for the public; and

Whereas, adequate and sustained state support for local public schools is essential for student success and the health of the Massachusetts economy; and

Whereas, the state's charter school finance statute imposes significant financial and program challenges for public school districts, particularly in regions where there is a large concentration of charter schools; and

Whereas, state law limits the allowable growth in municipal revenues to a level that is far below the region's rate of inflation, exacerbated by significant non-discretionary cost drivers, which continue to

grow at an unprecedented magnitude during the Proposition 2½ era; and

Whereas, to ensure that municipalities have the fiscal capacity to deliver the high-quality municipal and school services that are essential to support local economies and families in every corner of the Commonwealth, cities and towns desperately need an adequate share of state revenues, an effective and fair municipal tax system, necessary tools to plan for and fund long-term liabilities, state support for investments in the municipal workforce and capital investments, and full funding for any new or existing state mandates;

Therefore, it is hereby resolved that the members of the Massachusetts Municipal Association support the following essential policy positions to ensure a strong partnership between cities and towns and the Commonwealth in fiscal 2026 and beyond:

In the Area of Municipal and School Aid:

In fiscal 2026, unrestricted municipal aid should grow by at least the same rate as the growth in state tax collections, and be distributed without earmarks, conditions, or restrictions to all cities and towns, so that local officials and residents can adequately fund public safety, public works, and all basic municipal

and school services while avoiding an overreliance on the property tax;

State Lottery proceeds, and the revenue from expanded gaming that is statutorily dedicated to pay for municipal services, should be used to support the Commonwealth's commitment to unrestricted municipal aid;

Chapter 70 school aid should be increased in fiscal 2026 consistent with the Commonwealth's constitutional obligation to ensure adequate funding in all schools, at a minimum following the updated spending standard and original phase-in schedule adopted in the 2019 Student Opportunity Act, with each city, town, and school district receiving a minimum increase of \$104 per student;

The Governor and the Legislature should review the calculation of the required local contribution under Chapter 70, including the "target local share," and adopt changes to mitigate reliance on the property tax to fund local schools, in particular ensuring that a municipality's increase in Unrestricted General Government Aid is greater than the increase in required local contribution, and should review and address fiscal challenges facing rural schools;

The Governor and the Legislature should amend

■ **RESOLUTIONS** continued on 26

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charter school finance law, to bring transparency and accountability to the law by limiting charter school tuition assessments placed on local government and providing a means for direct state appropriation of additional tuition payments to charter schools, funded in the state budget;

Pending passage of charter school finance reform legislation, the full amount of the schedule in the Student Opportunity Act to fund charter school mitigation payments should be appropriated for fiscal 2026 and so that each district is reimbursed in full according to the schedule in the Student Opportunity Act;

Full funding of the Commonwealth's commitments to the Special Education Circuit Breaker Program, as provided by state law, should be appropriated, adhering to the Student Opportunity Act;

Pending a comprehensive review of the way payments in lieu of taxes for state-owned land impact municipalities differently, the full amount of the Commonwealth's obligations to the program for payments in lieu of taxes for state-owned land, including a hold-harmless provision, should be included in the fiscal 2026 budget;

Full funding of the Commonwealth's obligations to reimburse the costs of regional school transportation, regular school transportation, out-of-district vocational transportation, and the transportation of homeless students under the McKinney-Vento unfunded mandate, should be included in the fiscal 2026 budget;

The Governor and the Legislature should fund supplemental education and transportation initiatives through the voter-approved surtax, including at least \$125 million in aid supporting the construction and maintenance of municipal roadways;

Full funding of the Commonwealth's obligations and commitments to Chapter 40S "smart growth" reimbursements, regional and municipal libraries, anti-gang grants, innovation and regionalization grants, and other effective municipal and school aid programs should be included in the fiscal 2026 budget;

The Governor and the Legislature should hold municipalities harmless related to the emergency shelter crisis, through full funding for, but not limited to, education, supplies, transportation, case management, and impacts to local room excise occupancy taxes; and

In the Area of Capital Budgeting:

The Governor and the Legislature should work together early in 2025 to ensure enactment of a multi-year transportation bond bill that provides at least \$350 million annually for Chapter 90 local road projects, indexed to grow to match construction

inflation, with a notice of allocations for fiscal 2026 by March 1, 2025, with separate authorizations for the Municipal Pavement Program, Municipal Small Bridge Program, Complete Streets Program, as well as municipal grants for infrastructure focused on the enhancement of mass transit, funding that increases access to mass transit and commuter rail stations, grants to municipalities and regional transit authorities to support fleet electrification, and a supplemental municipal road formula program for rural communities;

The Governor and the Legislature should strengthen the Massachusetts School Building Authority and Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners grants by adjusting reimbursements to reflect the actual costs of construction;

The state's fiscal 2026 capital plan should include funding for MassWorks, HousingWorks, and all grant programs through the Community One Stop for Growth to help pay for important local infrastructure projects, including housing, economic development, and road safety programs;

The state's fiscal 2026 capital plan should include additional funding, not limited to loans, for water infrastructure projects, including basic drinking water capital and water contamination mitigation (PFAS), wastewater capital and Combined Sewer Overflow mitigation, and stormwater management;

The Governor and the Legislature should support programs in the fiscal 2026 state budget and capital plan to help cities and towns assess and respond to challenges related to climate change, including the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program, Coastal Resilience Grant Program, Green Communities Program, Green School Works, Disaster Relief and Resiliency Fund and others;

The Governor and the Legislature should continue to make the installation of high-speed internet access in unserved and under-served cities and towns a high priority;

The Governor and the Legislature should pursue federal funds and future state bonding authorizations for water, sewer, environmental, broadband, housing, and transportation infrastructure so that communities can leverage these funds to address critical local needs;

The Governor and the Legislature should work with cities and towns to ensure that municipal information technology systems are modernized and resilient from cyberattacks, and enact a state funding mechanism and program to provide the resources needed to implement these investments across the state;

The Governor and the Legislature should work with cities and towns to ensure that municipal buildings critical to the delivery of essential public services are safe and modern, and enact a state funding mechanism and program to provide the resources

needed to implement these improvements across the state; and

In the Area of Local Taxing Authority and Other Revenues:

Cities and towns should be granted new local-option flexibility to adopt local taxes and other revenues to help pay for municipal and school services and the construction and maintenance of local capital projects;

Cities and towns should be granted new local-option flexibility to adopt local PILOT agreements with nonprofit organizations;

Cities and towns should be granted increased local-option flexibility to implement targeted property tax relief programs, including for seniors and low-income homeowners, and to adjust the relative property tax burden for residential and commercial and industrial properties; and

In the Area of Long-Term Liabilities and Sustainability:

In order to allow cities and towns to manage current costs and ensure fiscal sustainability over the long term, the Legislature, the Governor, and state agencies should determine, report and review the actuarial liability of post-employment benefits for public employees and undertake a comprehensive reform of the laws and practices related to post-employment benefits for public employees, with an immediate focus on Other Post-Employment Benefit (OPEB) liabilities related to health insurance for retired public employees. Reform should include ways to manage liabilities and finance benefits, and should not impose any new unfunded mandates or preempt any existing decision-making authority that cities and towns currently use to manage their OPEB liability;

The Governor and the Legislature should determine and report the long-term cost to cities and towns as part of the evaluation of all legislative proposals to amend public employee benefit programs, and no legislation to expand benefits should be acted upon until this cost analysis is complete and made public; and

In the Area of Timely Notice of Local Aid for Good Planning and Implementation:

To ensure orderly and efficient financial planning at the local level and implementation of balanced and adequate local operating and capital budgets, the Governor and the Legislature should reach early agreement on unrestricted municipal aid and Chapter 70 school aid and local contribution amounts so that a consensus local aid resolution can be approved and reliable Cherry Sheets can be released by March 1;

It is further resolved that a copy of these resolutions shall be provided to the Governor and Members of the Massachusetts General Court. ●

State allocates \$11M in Shannon anti-gang grants

The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security on Dec. 16 announced the allocation of nearly \$11.2 million to 15 sites through the Shannon Community Safety Initiative for fiscal 2025 grants aimed at reducing gang and youth violence.

Funds were allocated to Boston and Brookline, Brockton, Fall River, Fitchburg and Gardner, Haverhill and Methuen, Holyoke and Chicopee, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, the Metropolitan Mayors Coalition, New Bedford, Pittsfield, Springfield, Taunton, and Worcester.

Additionally, local action research partners associated with the Shannon grant sites received approximately \$800,000 to enhance these efforts.

The [Shannon Community Safety Initiative](#), established in 2006 and named for the late Sen. Charles Shannon, is a multi-pronged approach to help address a community's gang and youth violence problem. The initiative targets five specific areas: social intervention, suppression, opportunity provision, organizational change, and community mobilization.

Shannon grants are open to

multi-disciplinary groups working to address high levels of gang violence in their geographic area. Multiple municipalities may apply together as a regional collaborative group.

For fiscal 2025, the Legislature also allocated a portion of the available program funding to bolster public housing violence prevention initiatives.

The Racism-based Violence Injury and Prevention Lab at Boston College also received \$75,000 to assess how early life trauma impacts individuals incarcerated in Massachusetts for violent offenses. ●

MassDEP awards \$4M in grants for recycling, waste reduction

The Healey-Driscoll administration on Dec. 17 announced \$4 million in grants to 285 municipalities and regional solid waste districts to help maximize their recycling, composting and waste reduction programs.

Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper said the funding, through the [Sustainable Materials Recovery Program](#), will help municipalities "implement innovative programs and policies."

The Sustainable Materials Recovery Program, administered by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, provides funding for recycling, composting, reuse, and source reduction activities that will reduce the amount of waste disposed of in landfills and incinerators. Waste prevention and recycling reduce greenhouse gas emissions by capturing the embodied energy in everyday products and packaging waste and converting it into new products. More than \$60 million has been awarded through the program since 2010.

This year, 278 communities qualified for the [Recycling Dividends Program](#) and will receive funding totaling more than \$3 million. The program recognizes municipalities that have implemented proven policies and programs to maximize materials reuse and recycling, as well as waste reduction. Communities receiving funding must reinvest in their own municipal recycling efforts.

Under Recycling Dividends, 12 municipalities are being awarded grants of



The Healey-Driscoll administration has announced \$4 million in grants for maximizing recycling, composting and waste reduction programs.

more than \$50,000: Attleboro, Boston, Brockton, Cambridge, Fall River, Lowell, New Bedford, Newton, Quincy, Springfield, Taunton and Worcester.

MassDEP Commissioner Bonnie Heiple said the Recycling Dividends Program "helps communities leverage the benefits of increased reuse, recycling, composting, and waste reduction initiatives for a healthier economy and environment."

Additional grant funds are being awarded to support start-up incentives for [Pay-As-You-Throw](#) programs, containers to direct mattresses to recycling facilities, wheeled carts for curbside collection of food waste, equipment for the collection of mercury-bearing items, and regional small-scale initiatives.

The MassDEP also is awarding five large-scale grants for municipal projects that will expand the scope or effectiveness of reuse, recycling, composting, or household hazardous waste programs. These include a grant for \$250,000 to the city of Lawrence to establish a

permanent household hazardous waste facility for use by residents of Lawrence and neighboring Methuen. The town of Winchester will receive nearly \$150,000 to install an aerobic digester to manage the town's residential food waste. Three additional large-scale grants were awarded to the town of Brookline and the cities of New Bedford and Newton for waste reduction and reuse projects, totaling more than \$250,000.

Other grant awards include:

- \$6,000 was awarded to each of 16 municipalities to help create a Reuse Swap Shop to facilitate reuse of durable household goods at their drop-off facilities.
- \$5,000 was awarded to each of 13 communities to help purchase a Universal Waste Shed for their drop-off facilities for the collection of mercury-bearing items.
- Nearly \$130,000 was awarded to municipalities for wheeled-cart grants for the curbside collection of food waste.
- One municipality received funding to start a Pay-As-You-Throw waste reduction program, in which residents purchase pre-printed bags, stickers, or tags for trash disposal to pay directly for waste generated. MassDEP said Pay-As-You-Throw is a proven waste reduction strategy that continues to be a priority.

The full list of Sustainable Materials Recovery Program awards is [available online](#). ●

Make sure buildings are ready for cold snaps

By Jennifer Ranz

As New England braces for a few more months of winter, cold snaps remain a persistent challenge for local leaders responsible for maintaining schools and other municipal buildings.

Even during milder winters, sudden temperature drops can lead to frozen pipes, HVAC malfunctions, and other costly disruptions.

“At some point every winter, often during a long weekend break, there is bound to be a temperature drop where maintenance staff must go into emergency mode as they respond to urgent needs,” said Stephen Batchelder, MIIA’s vice president of claims operations and risk management. “When these storms or weather patterns occur, normal operations are challenged, and everyday heat settings aren’t enough.”

Schools are especially vulnerable, particularly over weekends and holiday



Municipalities can take a number of steps to prevent frozen pipes and other emergencies in their buildings during the frigid winter months.

breaks, and during times of heavy activity, such as basketball tournaments and other sporting events. Frequent door openings in gyms and atriums can cause indoor temperatures to drop rapidly, putting pipes and sprinkler systems at risk. Unit ventilators (“univents”) in school classrooms are a common source of heating and ventilation disruptions,

as they can accumulate debris that prevents them from closing properly, leading to compromised functionality.

Freeze-ups and pipe bursts can turn into costly water damage claims, Batchelder said, with extraction, drying, and mold prevention often making up at least half the cost of remediation.

Winter maintenance checklist

To avoid additional expenses and loss of use, it’s crucial to have a winter maintenance protocol in place that can be deployed quickly, Batchelder said. Planning ahead helps to minimize damage, reduce building closures, and protect infrastructure during inevitable cold snaps.

Best practices for maintaining continuity of operations during winter include:

- **Inspect and maintain HVAC systems:** Get heating systems, including boilers and furnaces,

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Boosting workplace wellness: Connect 351 workshop preview

By: Jennifer Ranz

Studies show that happy employees are [13% more productive](#), experience [37% less absenteeism](#) and have higher retention rates. For municipal leaders, building a culture and climate of health and well-being in the workplace has a direct impact on employee performance and engagement.

To support these goals, Trish Hart of [Hart Mind Body Solutions](#), a health and wellness coach who leads training courses for MIIA, will conduct an interactive workshop during [Connect 351](#) focused on workplace stress



Trish Hart

management.

The session, “Bringing Balance, Productivity, and Human Sustainability to the Workforce,” will be held on Saturday, Jan. 25, at 1:30 p.m. It will focus on how balancing mental, physical and emotional health can enhance workplace performance and team dynamics.

Hart will explore the science behind stress and productivity, highlighting how chronic stress impacts the nervous system and workplace outcomes.

“When leaders are regulated and balanced, they create a ripple effect throughout their teams, improving morale, communication, and overall performance,” Hart said.

Participants will gain actionable insights on recognizing signs of

stress, setting boundaries, and organizing time effectively. Hart will also share practical strategies, such as mindfulness techniques and breathing exercises, to help attendees tap into their “relaxation response” and maintain peak performance, even in high-pressure situations.

As part of [MIIA’s Well Aware program](#), Hart leads wellness courses for municipal employees around the Commonwealth focused on topics including better sleep strategies, stress management and navigating self-care, creating good habits, and mindfulness. Hart earned her master’s degree in business administration from Boston University and previously worked as an auditor and consultant for Deloitte before transitioning to the wellness field. ●

With Plymouth ARISE, town confronts opioid crisis

By Jennifer Kavanaugh

As municipalities consider how best to spend opioid remediation funds, Plymouth's addiction program has served as a model for other communities and has attracted the attention of local, state and federal officials for its work in addressing the crisis.

In early 2024, the town established [Plymouth ARISE](#), a coordinated response to the crisis intended to reduce stigma around addiction and enhance services for residents. Over the past year, Plymouth has undertaken community outreach and engagement efforts, started a grant program, and helped other communities navigate the process for handling settlement funds negotiated through state agreements with opioid manufacturers and distributors.

By late 2024, Plymouth had spent \$275,000 of the roughly \$4 million it expects to receive over the next 10 to 15 years through the National Opioid Settlement and the Massachusetts State Subdivision Abatement Agreement. While infusing much-needed money into communities, the settlements have created policy and planning challenges for municipalities, given the complexity of the funding schedules and the uncertainty over how best to use the money in addressing a complicated public health epidemic.

Given all of the potential options, Plymouth ARISE (which stands for Plymouth Addiction Response and Improvement Strategies Effort) maintains a community-driven approach to its work, according to Emily Wilson, Plymouth's assistant health and human services commissioner.

"As we talked about that deep pain and loss and grief that led up to the tragedies that created, essentially, this settlement, and the reason for these settlements," Wilson said, "we wanted to develop a trauma-informed response that was restorative, and that reflected what people were denied during the collective trauma that they experienced with the opioid epidemic."

The process started with reorganizing several town departments under a new Health and Human Services Department,



Sen. Elizabeth Warren, center, meets with Plymouth officials and grant recipients of the Plymouth ARISE program during an October visit to the town. (Photo courtesy Michelle Bratti/town of Plymouth)

following Town Manager Derek Brindisi's arrival in 2022. The new department covers services for public health, veterans, seniors, the library, recreation, and animal control. Brindisi, who previously served as Worcester's public health director, said Plymouth's new department aims to bridge gaps in services and provide a more holistic response to interconnected needs.

"Historically, we have always had a department that focuses on infrastructure and departments that focus on public safety," Brindisi said. "But, what we didn't have was a department that focused on people. Whether tackling the opioid crisis, homelessness, veterans' affairs, or other challenges, these efforts are fundamentally tied to health and human services."

The new department made a presentation to the Select Board and, in January 2024, held two community meetings to solicit ideas for investing the settlement funds. Health and Human Services Commissioner Michelle Bratti and Wilson said they were moved by the personal stories of people affected by addiction, and by the good work already being done by local organizations.

"When we're looking at why these dollars came to begin with, it really was a resounding cry to say, 'enough,'" Bratti said. "We have an epidemic. People are dying, people are — if they're not dying, they're not living. How do we lift these human beings up to ensure that they don't fall into these traps of addiction?"

Plymouth ARISE launched a competitive grant program, and in May it awarded

roughly \$50,000 each to five organizations: [Bay State Community Services](#), [Brockton Area Multi-Services](#), [High Point Treatment Center](#), the [Plymouth Public Schools](#), and [To The Moon and Back](#). Wilson said the grant recipients are using the money to address different needs related to the crisis.

In June, Plymouth held a ceremony honoring the grant recipients, featuring

keynote speaker Julia Newhall, the state's director of opioid abatement strategy and implementation, and Everett Handford, regional director for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and staff from Sen. Elizabeth Warren's office. In October, Warren met with Plymouth ARISE officials and grant recipients to discuss the crisis and discuss ways to enhance their efforts.

Plymouth has also helped other communities address challenges around the settlement funding and its irregular payment schedules. Bratti and Wilson advise municipal leaders to listen to their communities, think creatively about solutions, and get the buy-in of a range of municipal leaders. They also urge smaller communities to consider using some of the funds to hire support.

Plymouth ARISE is now working with the local drug court and exploring workforce development options to help keep people on the recovery track. The program is planning additional community forums and a spring summit, and it has applied for a Mosaic Opioid Recovery Partnership Municipal Matching Grant from the [RISE Massachusetts Foundation](#). Officials haven't yet decided whether to hold a second grant round, instead waiting to evaluate the data on year one, Bratti said.

"We want hard, data-driven information to propel us forward as we move through this process," Bratti said.

For more information about Plymouth ARISE, please contact Michelle Bratti at mbratti@plymouth-ma.gov, or Emily Wilson at ewilson@plymouth-ma.gov. ●

Around the Commonwealth

Gloucester

New online gallery features city art collection

Building on its status as a living art museum and artist destination, the city of Gloucester recently unveiled an online art gallery to catalog and celebrate its collection of artwork spanning four centuries.

Gloucester launched its [free online art gallery](#) in November through Artwork Archive, a digital inventory and archiving platform. Working with the Gloucester Committee for the Arts, city staff created the virtual gallery to give both locals and art lovers greater access to its artwork, an extensive collection that includes antique oil paintings, Works Progress Administration murals, and the famous “Man at the Wheel” statue that’s synonymous with the city’s seafaring heritage.

Mayor Greg Verga, whose art-filled office at City Hall includes a treasured seascape painting by his daughter Julia and a WPA mural by Charles Allan Winter, has made it a mission to expand access to the city’s arts since taking office January 2022 — both through the online gallery and the way the city manages and displays its physical collection in its buildings and public spaces.

“That’s my hope, that people do look at [the art] and realize that, A, it is beautiful, and B, that a lot of work goes into it, and C, you as a resident, own it,” said Verga, a musician who plays guitar and bass. “You own it now, and your kids and grandkids are going to own it, and it’s our job to keep a record of it and to maintain it.”

The project reflects Gloucester’s history as both an art collector and muse. Home of Rocky Neck Art Colony, one of the country’s oldest working arts colonies, Gloucester has two cultural districts, and its picturesque coastline and “magical light” have inspired artists including Edward Hopper, Winslow Homer, Fitz Henry Lane, and poet T.S. Eliot. Over the years, artists and collectors have donated pieces to Gloucester.

“So often, Gloucester’s just associated



Gloucester’s extensive art collection includes “Town Hall Light Show” by Kari Ganoung Ruiz and the “Man at the Wheel” sculpture by Leonard Craske. (Photos courtesy Kate Shamon Rushford/city of Gloucester)

with the iconic Man at the Wheel,” said Kate Shamon Rushford, Gloucester’s arts, culture and events coordinator. “And there’s so much more, so that’s why this is all so nice to be able to see things that are maybe behind closed doors, or within City Hall.”

Gloucester’s gallery platform, [Artwork Archive](#), is also used by Salem for [its online gallery](#). Gloucester used \$25,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funds for the cataloguing, and the service charges a small monthly fee for hosting the archive, said Shamon Rushford, who maintains and updates the gallery.

For the online gallery, Gloucester resident Anna Chirico documented and photographed more than 300 works of art over the summer, Shamon Rushford said. The city already had information for many of the pieces, she said, though Chirico undertook additional research and digitized information from paper documents.

Depending on the information available for each piece, the gallery displays the titles of the works, the artists, subject matters, dates of creation, dimensions, materials used, and the current location, as well as lengthier descriptions and histories for some pieces.

Officials said the online gallery will help them manage and preserve the physical collection more effectively, by knowing locations, materials, and cleaning and maintenance needs. The project also brought attention to hidden artworks

(including rolled-up paintings stored underneath the stage in the City Hall auditorium), and Gloucester has been hanging more of the physical pieces in more heavily visited public areas.

“I think it puts the pressure on those of us in authority to care for them, as opposed to, it’s just wrapped in cardboard, hidden somewhere,” Verga said.

The city is still receiving donated pieces, and the new online gallery has prompted additional background information from the public to add to the website, said Shamon Rushford, who views the gallery as “a work in progress.”

— Jennifer Kavanaugh

Salem

Staff participate in inaugural ASL classes

On Nov. 15, city staff in Salem graduated from the city’s first American Sign Language class for employees. Salem Mayor Dominick Pangallo announced the graduation through social media.

The interest in developing an American Sign Language class came out of all-staff meetings, Pangallo said, as staff had indicated in a survey that they would be interested in taking ASL classes.

Pangallo said the ASL classes are “a way for us to help meet our accessibility goals, to be able to serve the public and connect with all of our community

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Around the Commonwealth

COMMONWEALTH

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Salem Mayor Dominick Pangallo, standing, third from left, poses with the first graduates of Salem's American Sign Language course for city employees. Salem also offers Spanish language courses for interested city staff.

members.”

Salem also offers Spanish language classes to city employees, a program that has been popular among staff since its inception. Pangallo, who previously served as chief of staff for then-Mayor (and current lieutenant governor) Kim Driscoll, said that he tried to enroll in the classes a number of times, but found that they were already at capacity due to their popularity.

The impetus for the language classes “came about because we do have such a high percentage of Spanish-speaking community members,” Pangallo said. Having more staff who can speak Spanish increases Salem’s ability to provide services to all residents.

Offering language classes, Pangallo said, also gives staff “opportunities for professional development, personal growth, and a chance to socialize with colleagues that they might not have seen.”

The language instructors are “experts, professionally trained to be able to instruct students in Spanish or ASL,” Pangallo said.

The city hired local instructors for Spanish classes in an effort to include the Spanish dialects predominantly spoken in Salem. For ASL classes, the city looked regionally to find interpreters who specialize in instruction. All instructors are paid a stipend for their services.

The Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing offers interpretation services to municipalities, but wait times for service can be

impractical due to a national shortage of ASL interpreters. On-demand ASL interpretation services are also available through third-party vendors, but many municipalities do not have contracts in place for these services.

Salem is already exploring additional employee education programs inspired by feedback from staff. Pangallo said the city is working to develop a GIS training program for staff in the near future.

The response, Pangallo said, has been overwhelmingly positive, from both staff and residents. Through the classes, city staff have become more self-sufficient and confident in their own abilities.

“Employees who have or need access to that information can do it on their own,” Pangallo said. “Employees are self-empowered, instead of having to rely on a small number of people with those skills, and we’re not having to tie up resources or time.

“It’s very powerful to be able to communicate and connect with community members when they come to the counter or door,” he said, “and you’re able to reply, even if to say, ‘I don’t speak much Spanish, but I’m able to connect with someone who does.’”

— Owen Page

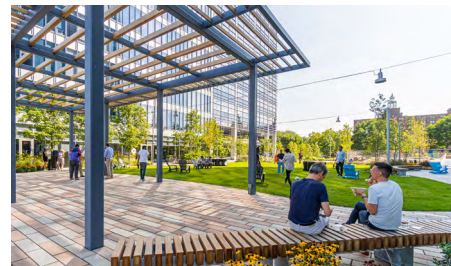
Somerville

City develops framework for creating public spaces

As a part of the city’s effort to create more public open space, Somerville has released a Civic Space Design Guide, a framework for developers and the city to follow when collaborating on creating space that is not only open to residents and visitors, but is welcoming in its design and accessibility.

“Somerville is leading by example with this guide, which represents our commitment to innovation in public space and community building,” said Mayor Katjana Ballantyne in a statement. “The Civic Space Design Guide ... elevates how development can contribute to our city.”

“We’re creating spaces that are welcoming to everyone,” she said, “and



Boynton Yards Park in Somerville, which opened last November, offers a welcoming space for residents, workers and visitors. (Photo courtesy city of Somerville/DLJ/Legatt McCall Group)

enhancing the quality of life for all who live, work and visit Somerville.”

The guide works alongside the city’s zoning ordinance, which requires certain development projects to design and build new open spaces for public use that can be either city- or developer-owned. The developer-owned spaces, referred to as civic spaces or POPS in the guide, have been around since the 1960s, but are not always serving the neighborhood in which they are situated. They are often not accessible or seen as public spaces by the public, due to design features that are seen as unwelcoming or due to a lack of signage.

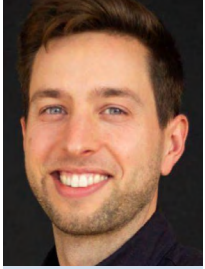
Somerville is the most densely populated city in New England, with 81,000 residents in 4 square miles. City officials say that residents consistently express that public open space is a community resource that should be protected and expanded.

“The Civic Space Design Guide, and the zoning ordinance, address these points by requiring developers to work with the city and residents to make open spaces that serve everyone, Somerville residents and their tenants, in a welcoming and active way,” said Luisa Oliveira, director of the Division of Public Space and Urban Forestry. “More open space is only valuable if it is truly public so all people can play, gather and be in nature.”

The Division of Public Space and Urban Forestry provides tools for implementation and enforcement to make sure these public spaces are truly public, and

■ COMMONWEALTH continued on 41

People



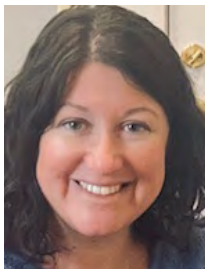
Christopher Dunne

Christopher Dunne became the new town administrator in Deerfield on Dec. 1, after serving in an interim capacity since September.

Dunne started working in Deerfield in December 2023, as

the planning and economic development coordinator. He previously served for nearly two years as the town administrator in Blandford. Earlier in his career, he worked as a senior planner and project manager for Highland Planning LLC and spent six years as a legislative staffer in numerous offices. He has a bachelor's degree in political economy from Bennington College, and a master's degree in public administration from UMass Boston.

Dunne is filling the role left vacant by the retirement of **Kayce Warren**, who served the town for more than a quarter century, and had been town administrator since 2016.



Kate Hodges

Kate Hodges will become the new town manager in Dracut on Jan. 13.

Since April 2022, Hodges has been serving as the town administrator in Lancaster. Previously, she worked for seven

years in Concord, serving as assistant town manager from 2015 through 2018, and then as deputy town manager. She also worked for seven years as the director of parks, recreation and community education in Littleton, and for nearly four years as director of parks and recreation for the town of Coventry, Connecticut.

She has a bachelor's degree in sociology/women's studies from UMass Amherst, and a master's degree in public administration from Framingham State University. In 2022, she earned a certificate from the International City/County

Management Association's Leadership Academy, and she is a Massachusetts certified public purchasing official.

In Dracut, Hodges fills the role left open in September by the retirement of **Ann Vandal**, who served for more than four years, and had worked for the town for more than two decades. **Alison Manugian**, the town's community development director, has been serving as the acting town manager.



Michelle Wu

The National League of Cities, which celebrated its 100th anniversary on Dec. 12, honored Boston Mayor **Michelle Wu** and Cambridge City Councillor **Sumbul Siddiqui** among leaders across the country with its Centennial Under 40 Impact Award.



Sumbul Siddiqui

The award acknowledges contributions to public service, governance and community development, and recognizes leaders who are "shaping the future of local

governance, demonstrating excellence through impactful initiatives, and fostering positive change in their communities."

Wu is the first woman and person of color to be elected as mayor of Boston. Before taking office in November 2021, she served for nearly eight years on the Boston City Council.

Siddiqui joined the Cambridge City Council in January 2018, and was chosen two years later by her fellow councillors to be mayor, a role that is held by an active councillor. Her four-year mayoral tenure made her the state's first Muslim mayor.

David "D.J." Beauregard Jr. was elected mayor of Methuen in a special



David "D.J." Beauregard Jr.

election on Dec. 10, after having served as the city's acting mayor for the past few months.

Beauregard, a city councillor since January 2020, became acting mayor following Mayor **Neil Perry's** death on Sept. 21.

Before taking office, Beauregard was director of strategic initiatives for Notre Dame Cristo Rey High School in Methuen.

On Dec. 19, the City Council appointed **Francisco Surillo** to fill



Francisco Surillo

Beauregard's at-large seat. Surillo, who was a runner-up in the most recent at-large council race, is the business and economic development director in Lawrence. He also serves as chair of the Methuen Housing Authority Board of Directors, and is an at-large commissioner for the Merrimack Valley Commission. Previously, he served as chair of the Greater Lawrence Technical School District Committee, and served on the Governor's Latino Advisory Commission.

Both Beauregard and Surillo will serve terms through 2025.

Former Taunton Councillor **Christopher Coute** returned to the City Council on Nov. 27, filling a seat recently vacated by **Kelly Dooner**, who was elected to the Senate in November representing the 3rd Bristol and Plymouth District. Coute previously served for four years as a councillor.

On Dec. 2, **Carrie Palazzo** was appointed as the District 6 councillor on the Weymouth Town Council. A former School Committee member, Palazzo was selected to fill the seat vacated by

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People

PEOPLE

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John Abbott during the summer, and will serve out his term through 2025.

Elizabeth Argo won a special election to the Yarmouth Select Board on Dec. 7, filling a seat left vacant by the Aug. 13 death of **Michael Stone**, who had served for 11 years on the board.

Holliston Town Administrator **Travis Ahern** will become the next executive director of the Cannabis Control Commission on March 3.



Travis Ahern

Ahern has been the administrator in Holliston since July 2020. Previously, he served for two years as director of policy and finance for the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority Advisory Board, where he had also worked as a finance and policy analyst from 2013 to 2015. He has also served as the finance director in Danvers and as a financial analyst and acting assistant treasurer in Weston. Earlier in his career, he worked as a portfolio associate/

auditor for State Street Bank. He has a master's degree in public administration from Northeastern University and a bachelor's degree in political science and public policy from Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

Debbie Hilton-Creek, the CCC's chief people officer, has been serving as the commission's acting executive director.

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

MIIA

Continued from page 28

professionally inspected. Replace air filters, test equipment, and clear ventilation points (including univents) to maintain airflow. These steps ensure that systems function optimally, even during off-hours.

- **Monitor and insulate pipes:** Prevent freeze-ups by insulating pipes in unheated areas such as basements and crawl spaces. Seal cracks that let cold air in, apply heating cables to high-risk pipes, and keep water moving by allowing faucets to drip during extreme cold. Use thermography to check vulnerable areas, such as school gym atriums, and ensure that insulation surrounding pipes and sprinkler systems is adequate.
- **Maintain building exteriors:** Prevent ice dams by clearing gutters and ensuring that roof drainage

systems are free of debris. Inspect seals around windows and doors to block drafts and maintain interior warmth.

- **Monitor indoor temperatures:** Keep indoor temperatures at or above 65°F, even when a building is unoccupied. During prolonged cold snaps, disable night setbacks to maintain consistent temperatures. Install smart thermostats to help monitor and control temperature remotely.
- **Make a backup plan:** Test backup generators and stock up on fuel supplies. Place emergency heaters in critical areas like plumbing rooms to maintain warmth during outages.
- **Train staff on protocols:** Develop a winter preparedness plan and train staff on cold-weather procedures, including draining pipes and addressing HVAC issues. Ensure that snow removal is planned to keep entrances and HVAC intakes clear.

- **Share and communicate:** As other departments monitor weather forecasts for potential school delays or closures, or the need for roadway salting or plowing, be sure to share details with building maintenance crews so they can prepare and plan as well.

Batchelder said the key to managing adverse weather events and cold snaps is to get ahead of them when they are predicted.

"If you're increasing indoor temperatures in the middle of a cold snap, you're too late," Batchelder said. "Get ahead of the forecast and ensure that maintenance staff is well-informed on best practices. This can help prevent freeze-ups and all the costs and disruption that go with them."

MIIA members can access the preventative tools, such as thermography cameras and moisture meters, through its [Risk Management grant program](#). ●

\$729,000 in grants awarded for body-worn cameras

The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security on Dec. 6 announced the award of \$729,000 in fiscal 2025 Law Enforcement Body-Worn Camera grants.

According to the executive office, the grant program seeks to enhance public safety, strengthen relations between community and police, increase accountability for police actions, deter

detrimental or inappropriate behavior by both police and the public, and provide digital/audio recordings that can be used as evidence as well as training materials.

Grants ranging from \$12,300 to \$174,700 were awarded to police departments in Abington, Ashby, Ayer, Billerica, Brewster, East Longmeadow, Eastham, Northborough, Tolland, and

West Brookfield.

All Massachusetts police departments are eligible for this program; departments with fewer than 50 sworn officers can collaborate to submit a joint application for grant funding.

For more information on the Law Enforcement Body-Worn Camera Program, visit the [Office of Grants and Research website](#). ●

CONNECT 351

Continued from page 1

bestselling author and entrepreneur who studies how leaders succeed and fail, will explore the connection between well-being and performance in his keynote, “Momentum: Boosting Resilience, Fulfillment and Performance.”

- [Gov. Maura Healey](#) will speak during the general session on Friday, just days after she files her state budget plan for fiscal 2026.
- [Saturday keynote Matt Lehrman](#), co-founder of Social Prosperity Partners, will help local leaders refine their approach with his keynote, “From Conflict to Conservation.”
- Health and Human Services Secretary [Kate Walsh](#) will deliver the keynote for the Women Elected Municipal Officials Leadership Luncheon on Friday, Jan. 24.
- U.S. Sens. Warren and Markey will address members during the [MMA’s Annual Business Meeting](#) on Saturday, just days after the opening of the 119th Congress.
- Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll will also speak during the MMA’s Annual Business Meeting.
- Opal Mauldin-Jones, the city manager in Lancaster, Texas, will engage in conversation with Needham Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick during a Women Leading Government session on Thursday.

Keynote speakers Suneel Gupta and Matt Lehrman preview their talks in video messages created especially for the MMA, which can be found on [Connect351.org](#).

Workshops

Connect 351 will feature [18 timely and informative workshops](#) during three time slots on Friday and Saturday afternoons, covering critical topics like artificial intelligence, communications, succession planning, cybersecurity, municipal law, housing, DEI, and more. A number of these workshops are MIIA Rewards-eligible. Visit [Connect351.org](#) for full workshop details.

Trade Show

A lively [Trade Show](#) will feature 250 exhibitors showcasing the latest in

products, services and solutions for Massachusetts municipalities. This year’s Trade Show will be open on Thursday afternoon from 2 to 5:30 — a great opportunity to meet with exhibitors when the Trade Show floor will be less crowded than it is at peak times. A welcome reception will be held on the Trade Show floor from 4 to 5:30 p.m.

A new [EV Alley](#) will give attendees the opportunity to meet with exhibitors representing the full spectrum of electric vehicle options for the communities, including municipally oriented electric vehicles. An EV Alley ribbon cutting, with special guests, will be held at 4 p.m. on Thursday.

The Trade Show will also be open on Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., with six [Learning Lab](#) sessions on the show floor from 11:30 a.m. to 1:20 p.m.

The Trade Show will not be open on Saturday.

Networking

Connect 351 features numerous opportunities to meet your colleagues, share ideas, and expand your network.

Networking events include general receptions on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, affiliate group meetings, and an [MMA-Suffolk programs](#) reception. In addition, there are always hallway conversations and numerous seating areas where members can engage with colleagues whenever they’d like.

Additional programming

- Representatives from the Healey-Driscoll administration will host a session on Friday, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., to discuss opportunities to engage with and participate in the Commonwealth’s 250th anniversary celebration activities in 2025.
- “Speed Coaching for Municipal Officials,” on Thursday, 2-2:45 p.m., will provide career guidance and professional counsel to attendees interested in advancing their careers.
- Attendees can get free, professional photos taken at the Headshot Station, which will be open on Thursday from 2 to 5:30 p.m. and on Friday from 8 to 9:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Registration

[Online registration](#) for Connect 351, available through Jan. 20, requires a

member’s unique username and password. Registration is not available by mail or over the phone.

The early registration rate is \$265 for MMA members and Partner Program members. Partners must be in good standing as of Dec. 30, 2024, to be eligible for registration and attendance. New MMA Partner Program applications will not be accepted until after Connect 351, and renewal applications will not be accepted during Connect 351.

Nonmember government entities are welcome to attend Connect 351, at a cost of \$330.

Registration is also open for the Women Elected Municipal Officials Leadership Luncheon at a cost of \$55, and the Friday evening dinner, at a cost of \$65.

Attendees can register on-site during Connect 351 at a rate of \$300 for MMA and Partner Program members, and \$365 for nonmember government entities.

The MMA accepts credit cards for all Connect 351 transactions and is able to invoice your municipality after the meeting as well.

Those who need assistance with registration can email connect351@mma.org.

Accommodations and parking

Rooms in the MMA’s discounted room blocks at area hotels are now sold out, but attendees may still book rooms at regular rates at the following area hotels:

- [Omni Boston Hotel](#) (1-800-THE-OMNI)
- [The Westin Seaport](#) (617-532-4600)
- [Element Boston Seaport District](#) (617-530-1700)
- [Aloft Boston Seaport District](#) (617-530-1600)

Other options include the [Renaissance Boston Waterfront Hotel](#) (606 Congress St.) and the [Seaport Hotel Boston](#) (1 Seaport Lane).

The sites for Connect 351 — the [Boston Convention & Exhibition Center](#) (415 Summer St.) and the [Omni Boston Hotel at the Seaport](#) — are located in Boston’s fastest growing and newest neighborhood. Both are just minutes away from Boston’s major highways, and

■ **CONNECT 351** *continued on 35*

MOD awards \$4.9M for municipal ADA grants

In December, the Massachusetts Office on Disability awarded \$4.9 million to 59 Massachusetts municipalities through the [Municipal ADA Improvement Grant](#) program for fiscal 2025.

Grants are available as Planning Grants, for ADA self-evaluation and transition plans, and Project Grants for specific capital projects.

The grants awarded for fiscal 2025 include 25 Planning Grants and 34 Project Grants, including funds to improve access to Winthrop's public library, Ware's

Town Hall, Andover's Ballardvale Park, and Danvers' Holten Richmond Middle School.

The Massachusetts Office on Disability reports that the fiscal 2025 cycle received the most applications in the program's nine-year history, with 140 applications — 36 for planning grants and 104 for project grants — and a total requested amount of nearly \$15.3 million. The budget was increased from \$4 million to \$5 million for fiscal 2025 to accommodate the growing number of applications.

MOD Executive Director Mary Mahon McCauley said the grants help communities "further realize the intent set forth by the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act — an accessible, inclusive world where people with disabilities can equally benefit from all the community has to offer."

The fiscal 2026 application will open on May 1, 2025.

• [Download the list of FY25 grant awardees](#)

CONNECT 351

Continued from page 34

steps away from the MBTA's Silver Line World Trade Center stop.

In addition to hotel parking, there are several parking garages located within

minutes of the BCEC and the Omni ([view full list of options](#)).

Complimentary coat check will be available on the exhibit level of the BCEC, near registration, courtesy of the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association, the MMA's nonprofit

insurance service.

For Connect 351 questions, visit Connect351.org or email connect351@mma.org. For Trade Show and Partnership Program information, contact Karen LaPointe at 800-882-1498, ext. 154, or 2025TS@mma.org. ●

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

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

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

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MMA

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Association

Visit mma.org/weekly to get on the list today!

Classified Advertisements

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Principal Clerk

Town of Saugus

Applications are being accepted for a full-time Principal Clerk to support the Treasurer/Collector's Office within the town of Saugus. The individual must possess a thorough knowledge of the office-related computer software including but not limited to Microsoft applications; must possess knowledge of general accounting principles; must possess the ability to analyze data; must be able to work independently and with others; must be able to work well with the public and appropriately resolve consumer concerns; must be able to take direction from superiors. Minimum qualifications include an associate's or bachelor's in accounting, finance or related field preferred or at least two to five years of financial municipal experience in an office setting. Prior experience working with MUNIS is a plus. The anticipated salary range is \$25.83 to \$29.77 per hour, with excellent benefits and is part of the municipal pension system. View the full job description on our website at www.saugus-ma.gov/human-resources/pages/town-employment. Application will be reviewed as submitted and accepted until the position is filled. Please email applications/resumes to: smalik@saugus-ma.gov.

Administrative Assistant

Town of Saugus

Applications are being accepted for a full-time Administrative Assistant Floater within the town of Saugus. This floater position is under the general supervision of the Town Manager. This is a clerical position for the town where we will cross train for various departments over meal breaks, vacation schedules and the like. This position will include moderate work methods, problem solving and project work. This position will be responsible for clerical work, including direct customer services and requires the application of moderate independent judgment. This individual will be composing and typing routine correspondence; organizing and maintaining file systems; answering telephone calls and responding to department emails. This position will also be trained on our payroll and billing system, MUNIS, for processing of Departments payroll and accounts payable. Minimum qualifications include an associate's degree, bachelor's degree preferred. Prior municipality experience and MUNIS experience is a plus. The anticipated starting salary is \$25.38 per hour, with excellent benefits and is part of the municipal pension system. View the full job description on our website at www.saugus-ma.gov/human-resources/pages/town-employment. Application will be reviewed as submitted and accepted until the position is filled. Please email applications/resumes to: smalik@saugus-ma.gov.

SCADA Specialist

Upper Blackstone Clean Water

The SCADA Specialist supports the process control network to ensure function and integrity of the systems. This includes the system servers and workstations, A-B Programmable Logic Controllers and FTViewSE, Human Machine Interfaces and Operator Interface Terminals, Local Area Network/

Wide Area Network, workstations, printers, and related IT infrastructure to ensure secure and uninterrupted operations. Typical assignments for the SCADA Specialist are working on the SCADA network, Power Monitoring network, HVAC network, and CCTV/Card access network. Identifying network communication and connectivity issues. Works with advance control network data communications, client/server functions and characteristics and current hardware/software architecture. Makes minor programming changes in the PLC, OITs and HMI. Communicates frequently with team members and other units across the plant about processes, equipment, or potential problems. Visit the [Upper Blackstone Clean Water website](#) for more information.

Town Planner

Town of Freetown

Planner provides professional management, oversight, and administration of town planning and community development functions, including supervision of infrastructure, capital, and transportation projects, grant writing and implementation, professional advice and administration to the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission, related boards and commissions. Bachelor's degree in planning, community development or public administration. Ability to communicate effectively to employees and, public verbally and in writing; use software, including word, spreadsheets, databases, GIS software; ability to read plans; organizational and supervisory skills are required Certification as a Planner by the American Institute for Certified Planners preferred. Valid driver's license required.

Human Resources Director

City of Everett

The HR Director is directly responsible for the overall administration, coordination and evaluation of the human resource function, included but not limited to the oversight of recruitment, onboarding, compliance, employee relations, policy and procedures and

overall management of all HR functions. For more information, visit: [Human Resources Director - Everett, MA - Official Website](#).

Highway Superintendent

Town of Brookfield

Brookfield is seeking an experienced full-time Highway Superintendent. Full job description at: www.brookfieldma.us/home/news/help-wanted-full-time-highway-superintendent. Salary: \$80,000-85,000, depending on experience. Send letter of interest & resume to townadministrator@brookfieldma.us. Resumes accepted until position filled. Requirements: valid CDL B (A preferred) with standard transmission endorsement, valid Lift/Hoisting License with 2A & 4E & 4G endorsements, valid Massachusetts driver's license & satisfactory driving record, valid Massachusetts Medical Certificate preferred: Five to seven years' progressively responsible experience in municipal highway systems administration & management; or any equivalent combination of education, training & experience which provides required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job. Welding, mechanic, and fabricating knowledge/experience.

Grants Coordinator

City of Westfield

The city of Westfield is hiring a full time Grants Coordinator. This position plans, organizes, and monitors the city's Community Development Block grant program. Bachelor's degree in finance, accounting, public administration, business management or related field. An associate's degree and two years of directly related paid job experience, or a combination of education and related experience may be considered. Please visit www.cityofwestfield.org for job description and information on how to apply.

Senior Center Director

Town of Sudbury

The town of Sudbury seeks a Senior Center Director

■ CLASSIFIEDS *continued on 37*

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 in The Beacon or on the website.

Member rates

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

Nonmember rates

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

Beacon deadlines and publication dates

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

February Beacon

Deadline: January 27
Publication: February 3

March Beacon

Deadline: February 25
Publication: March 3

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 36

with superior leadership skills to work in our new Fairbank Community Center. The Director is appointed by and works under the management direction of the Town Manager. The successful candidate will possess excellent administration, management, interpersonal, and organizational skills. Knowledge of federal, state, regional and local agencies and organizations within the elder services network is essential. The Director works closely with the Sudbury Council on Aging to identify the needs of the Sudbury older population and to develop relevant broad policies related to those needs. Minimum qualifications: bachelor's degree and three years responsible experience in human services and elder services management, or equivalent combination of education and experience. Candidates must meet minimum requirements contained in job description posted on the town's website at sudbury.ma.us/opportunities/. Starting salary range: \$91,647 to \$102,854 DOQ; full range to \$116,038. Letters of interest/resume may be sent to Asst. Town Manager at bilodeaum@sudbury.ma.us until Tuesday, Jan. 14 at noon. Resumes reviewed as received. Position open until filled. AA/EOE

Municipal Services Director

Town of Salem, NH

The town of Salem, NH is seeking qualified applications for the position of Director of Municipal Services. This is a full-time, exempt, non-affiliated position requiring a high degree of general and specific public works knowledge, self-motivation, and ability to work within a complex town environment with big-community infrastructure. The Director of Municipal Services is responsible for planning and directing all the functions and activities of the Municipal Services Department, performing supervisory and complex administrative work in planning and directing all the functions and activities of the Public Works Dept. DPW divisions include Highway; Facilities; Fleet Maintenance; Parks and Forestry; Cemetery, including crematory operations; Water; Engineering; Facility Maintenance; Safety; and DPW Administration. The salary range for this position is \$140,000-\$150,000 per year, dependent upon qualifications and experience. Qualified candidates are required to submit a cover letter, current resume, three professional references, complete and email the town of Salem, NH's employment application documents to: jobs@salemnh.gov.

Town Administrator

Town of Shutesbury

The town of Shutesbury (pop. 1,721) seeks a highly motivated and organized individual with effective communication and management skills to serve as its next Town Administrator. Shutesbury is a small rural community that is led by a three-member Selectboard and Open Town Meeting form of government. The Town Administrator is responsible for the oversight and management of the town's daily operations. The Administrator works with a wide variety of boards and committees concerning the development, implementation and administration of policies, goals, regulatory and statutory requirements related to the administration and operation of the town. Candidates should have strong competence in municipal finance and budgeting, project management, human resource

administration, and familiarity with Massachusetts municipal law, intergovernmental and community relations. Bachelor's degree preferred, master's degree in public administration advantageous. Candidates should have five years of increasingly responsible experience in an administrative and or management position with experience in supervision, preferably in a municipal setting. The [Job Description](#) is posted on the town of Shutesbury website at Job Openings (www.shutesbury.org/jobs). A starting salary up to \$85,000 is commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Public Works Supervisor

Town of Lancaster

The town of Lancaster Department of Public Works has an opening for Public Works Supervisor in the Highway/Cemetery division. Applicants must possess a valid Massachusetts driver's license, Class B CDL with air brake endorsement, Massachusetts Hoisting Engineer license with a minimum endorsement of 2A, 4E and 4G. The starting pay rate is \$29.23 - \$31.94 hr. depending on qualifications, experience, and licenses. Applications may be picked up at the Department of Public Works office, 392 Mill St. Extension Lancaster, MA, Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. or can be downloaded from the town's website: www.ci.lancaster.ma.us.

Council on Aging Executive Director

Town of Clinton

The town of Clinton's Council on Aging seeks a full-time Executive Director. Under the administrative direction of the Town Administrator, in consultation with the Council on Aging board, this position is responsible for managing operations that provide services & programs for Clinton residents ages 60+, & those who provide care for them. View full position description at clintonma.gov/jobs. To apply, send a cover letter & resume, or inquiries to employment@clintonma.gov. Open until filled. Preference given to submissions received on or before Jan. 10. EOE/AA

Fire Chief

Town of Granby

The town of Granby is seeking a collaborative and innovative individual to lead the Granby Fire Department, consisting of full-time, call force, and EMS staff. Working in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 48, Section 42, the Fire Chief is appointed by the Selectboard and reports to the Town Administrator. The Fire Chief plans, directs, and coordinates activities of the Department including, but not limited to: fire prevention and suppression, hazardous material response and mitigation, and ALS emergency medical services. The Fire Chief will have knowledge of professional firefighting and be an experienced incident commander. The Fire Chief will also have excellent organizational skills and be proficient and professional in all aspects of communication. Additionally, the Fire Chief will be responsible for developing and administering the annual department budget to be approved at Town Meeting. Minimum requirements of the position include a bachelor's degree in fire science, fire protection engineering, public administration, business administration, or a closely related discipline; more than ten years of progressive experience as a member of a fire department providing fire and EMS services with a minimum of five years of experience at a supervisory or command rank; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience. Fire Chief

accreditation by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Fire Commission is highly desirable. The qualified candidate will have a history of demonstrated leadership and foster and maintain a positive labor-management climate. The preferred candidate will have experience in municipal-based fire and EMS services. A valid driver's license, 24-Haz-Mat, EMT-Basic certification, Firefighter I/II or equivalent, and Fire Prevention Officer certification are required. The candidate must have completed ICS 100 and 200 at the time of application with the ability to complete ICS 300 and 400 within one year of appointment. Residency within a five mile radius of the Public Safety Complex is required within one year of appointment. Candidates may visit www.granby-ma.gov for a complete job description. Salary is \$103,500 to be negotiated commensurate with experience. Submit cover letter, resume, and relevant certifications by noon Friday, Jan. 17 to: Fire Chief Search c/o Selectboard Office, 10-B West State St., Granby, MA 01033.

Personnel Director

City of Lawrence

Under the direction of the Chief Administrative and Finance Officer, oversees all labor relations and human resource issues involving city employees. Bachelor's degree in human resource management, public administration, or related field plus five to seven years of personnel administration experience and union relations, preferably in the public sector, or any equivalent combination of education and experience. PHR/SPHR certification desirable, juris doctor and admission to the Massachusetts Bar preferred. Bilingual. Individual must embrace diversity and multiculturalism in the workplace to create an inclusive environment. Learn more at: www.cityoflawrence.com/Jobs.aspxUniqueId=98&From=All&CommunityJobs=False&JobID=Personnel-Director-465.

Director of Public Health

City of Easthampton

The city of Easthampton is looking for the right candidate to join our team as the Director of Public Health. The Director's role is professional, administrative, and technical in managing and overseeing the city's public health department and its staff members, including community social work, inspectional services, public health nursing, and substance prevention outreach. They promote the city's public health programs and interpret, implement, and enforce public health laws and regulations in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations. Salary: \$70,000 - \$90,000. 35 hours per week, Monday through Thursday. To see the full position posting and apply, please visit: ma-easthampton.civicplus.com/Jobs.aspx?UniqueId=98&From=All&CommunityJobs=False&JobID=Director-of-Public-Health-138.

Chief of Police

City of Easthampton

The city of Easthampton is seeking applications for the position of Chief of Police. The right candidate will have a history of exceptional integrity and demonstrated leadership, effective management capacity, and excellent interpersonal skills. The successful candidate will not only guide the dedicated members of the Easthampton Police department but also prioritize building trust, fostering strong

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community relationships, and enhancing public safety through inclusive and collaborative practices. This is a unique opportunity to lead a team committed to serving and protecting the Easthampton community with transparency, compassion, and respect. To see full position posting and apply, please visit our [website](#).

Finance Director Town of Chatham

The town of Chatham is seeking an organized, highly qualified, and analytical superstar to become the Finance Administrator in our Accounting division. A bachelor's degree along with three to four years of relevant experience or equivalent combination is required. This benefits- and pension- eligible position is 40 hours per week. Starting salary of \$70,470.40 - \$73,320.00. Is this job the perfect fit for you? Find out by visiting our website (www.chatham-ma.gov) for more information. Send cover letter and resume to jobs@chatham-ma.gov attention Megan Downey, Human Resources. Deadline for first review of candidates is Jan. 9. ADA/EO/AEE

Benefits Counselor/Records Access Officer

Haverhill Retirement System

The Benefits Counselor/Records Access Officer Reports to the Retirement Administrator. Counsels members on their retirement benefits and works with PERAC on submission of retirements for review and approval. Oversees the website and member/retiree self-service portal and aids the Administrator in the overall operations of the Haverhill Retirement System. This position requires the handling of confidential information. Salary is \$80,000- \$90,000/year, visit the retirement link www.cityofhaverhill.com/departments/haverhill_retirement_system/index.php for comprehensive details on the position. The Haverhill Retirement System is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

IT Director

City of Gloucester

The city of Gloucester is accepting applications for the position of IT Director. This position directs and manages Operations of the Department, executive planning, strategy, systems design, and technical development. Creates documentation for policies and procedures in order to ensure adherence to standard operating procedures. Identifies and obtains funding sources. Monitors, researches, and conducts cybersecurity assessments. Performs other duties as required. A full job description can be found at gloucester-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10269/IT-Director-2024. This is a full time, in person 35 hour per week management position with benefits. Salary range is \$118,885.54-\$147,819.22 depending upon experience. Candidates should submit a resume and application to jobs@gloucester-ma.gov by Jan. 14.

School District Legal Counsel

Everett Public Schools

The Legal Counsel is a full-time, exempt, confidential in-house position and serves as the Legal Counsel for Everett Public Schools, reporting to the Superintendent. The Legal Counsel must become familiar with EPS policies/practices and school law requirements. The Legal Counsel will advise the Superintendent and staff on legal issues. Legal Counsel will represent EPS before federal, state, and

local courts, administrative agencies, and legislative bodies. Legal Counsel will use judgment and initiative to conduct legal research, interpret laws, render legal opinions, and provide representation and technical legal expertise on behalf of the EPS. To apply, visit: everett.tedk12.com/hire/ViewJob.aspx?JobID=1251.

Executive Assistant

Town of Harwich

The town of Harwich, an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, has an opening for full-time Executive Assistant - Treasurer/Collector. The Executive Assistant - Treasurer/Collector is responsible for financial, clerical, payroll and tax payment services to the Treasurer/Collector department. Provides customer service to taxpayers and acts as human resources for employees, maintains confidential information, prepares a variety of correspondence, schedules and coordinates appointments. Work includes processing payment from taxpayers in person, by mail and online, receiving departmental turnovers from all town departments, verify totals and make deposits to the bank, print and distribute all payroll and vendor checks and direct deposit advice, order supplies as needed and process postage for all outgoing town mail. Qualifications and education: a candidate for this position should have an associates' degree or equivalent and three to five years experience in an office setting processing payroll and receiving payments, managing filing systems and other financial documentation. An equivalent and relevant combination of education and experience may be considered in lieu of the years of experience. Above average use of Microsoft Office products is desirable. Hours: This is a full-time, 35 hours per week position. Salary: \$28.10-34.84/hour. Salary notes: This is a benefited position with dental, health, PTO and retirement. How to apply: submit town employment application, resume and cover letter to the Assistant Town Administrator, 732 Main St., Harwich, MA 02645 or angelique.mcgibbon@harwich-ma.gov. Applications are available on the town of Harwich website at www.harwich-ma.gov/home/pages/employment.

Interim Town Clerk

Town of West Brookfield

The town of West Brookfield is seeking a qualified individual to serve as the Interim Town Clerk. This is a full-time, temporary position (until May 2025 town elections), and will assist with the day-to-day administrative duties and responsibilities of the Town Clerk's office. The Interim Town Clerk will ensure the efficient operation of municipal records management, elections, and various town functions. The position offers a competitive annual salary of \$33,908.93. Applicants must be a resident of West Brookfield. wbrookfield.com/board-openings-job-opportunities/. Interested applicants should submit an application, resume and cover letter outlining their qualifications and experience to Beth Gobeille, bgobeille@wbrookfield.com.

Payroll/Benefits Administrator

Town of Hadley

Summary: Position is responsible for administration of the town payroll, employee and retiree benefits and the processing worker's compensation and accident claims in compliance with applicable local, state and/or federal laws and regulations. Requirements: One-plus years of municipal and/or school payroll. One to three years of relevant HR and benefit

experience. Municipal: One year (Preferred). For full job description visit hadleyma.gov. Apply online at www.hadleyma.org/human-resources/webforms/submit-application-0 or submit documents via email to hr@hadleyma.gov. Job type: full-time. Pay: \$23.08 - \$30.01 per hour. Hours: 37.5 per week. Benefits: dental, health, life, and vision insurance, EAP, FSA, Paid time off. Schedule: Monday to Friday. Work location: In-person

Wastewater Treatment Operator

Town of Merrimac

The town of Merrimac is looking to hire a full time (40 hours/wk) Wastewater Treatment Operator. The position will include overtime and on-call responsibilities. The rate of pay is \$ 28.45-32.53/hr depending on licenses. Full description available on the town's website: www.townofmerrimac.com/employment-opportunities. Send completed resumes and application to Chris Perkins at cperkins@townofmerrimac.com.

City Treasurer

City of Easthampton

The city of Easthampton is seeking the right candidate for the position of City Treasurer. This position performs professional, administrative, technical, and supervisory work in managing the city's Treasury department and its staff. It manages the receipt, custody, disbursement, and investment of city funds, as well as the borrowing of money, projections for financial projects, and preparation of financial reporting. Salary: \$70,000 - \$91,000 annually. Schedule: 35 hours per Week, Monday - Thursday. To see the full position posting and apply, please visit our website at: ma-easthampton.civicplus.com/Jobs.aspx.

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 has an interest in working with safety and risk management professionals and developing as a professional risk trainer. About MMA: The nonpartisan Massachusetts Municipal Association provides an array of services to its member cities and towns statewide, including advocacy, education and training, research and analysis, and publications and information programs. As the voice of local government in Massachusetts, the MMA works to advance the interests of all cities and towns. About MIIA: The Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association provides property, liability, workers compensation, and group health insurance to cities and towns in Massachusetts. MIIA is a nonprofit organization and a subsidiary of Massachusetts Municipal Association. About the position: The Senior Risk Management Trainer is responsible for working with the Risk Management and Programming Teams to provide members and peers with an exceptional training experience. They create, present, and revise training and all supporting materials for MIIA members and staff in a timely and consistent manner.

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Training: They will work with the Senior Manager of Risk Management to establish and update the vision; responsible for providing onsite and virtual training for members; create training descriptions and course flyers; facilitate online training, track member evaluations and report attendance for system update; review training requests; provide monthly training updates and annual review to management; locate and inspect training sites; responsible for following training protocols; and develop new outside training resources per quarter. Course Materials: They will analyze member loss data to determine training needs; create training materials to support high loss and topical areas; review materials to risk management team; create and update technical documentation; provide guidance for incident review/remediation; work as the liaison with the risk management team, outside consultants, and members; and perform outside inspections. They will become knowledgeable on MIIA's cyber risk management program and explore educational opportunities. 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. Ability to work in a team setting and independently. Experience in creating and implementing training curriculum. Preference for an individual who is a current OSHA outreach trainer. Work environment: Our offices are located in Boston's Government Center neighborhood. The position offers a highly competitive salary, terrific benefits, and a great collaborative work culture. Our office utilizes 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.

Enrollment and Eligibility Representative MMA/MIIA

The Massachusetts Municipal Association and the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association are seeking an Enrollment and Eligibility Representative to join the MIIA Health Benefits Trust Team. 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. 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 MIIA Health Benefits Trust: The Trust provides insurance coverage for the employees and retirees of 180 cities, towns, and other municipal entities in Massachusetts. The Trust is the largest municipal joint purchasing association in New England and one of the largest

and most successful in the nation. About the position: Under the general direction of the Health Benefits Trust Operations Manager, this position works to enroll members into the Trust. The Enrollment and Eligibility Representative is responsible for reviewing enrollment applications for completeness and eligibility; entering enrollment data into the Health Trust database; working with our insurance partner to ensure proper enrollment of members; researching and resolving health claims problems on behalf of members; and responding to questions and inquiries regarding eligibility and enrollment. Qualifications: A college degree or courses is preferred but not required. Knowledge normally acquired through the completion of course work and an ability to quickly come up to speed on health insurance, health care claims, benefits, the enrollment environment and knowledge of laws, rules, and regulations related to health insurance for Massachusetts' municipalities. Work environment: Our offices are located in Boston's Government Center neighborhood. The position offers a very competitive salary, terrific benefits, and a great collaborative work culture. It is a mostly remote position with a handful of in office days throughout the year. If you are ready to devote yourself to work on behalf of our member cities and towns, then this position may be for you. Timeline: The successful applicant will be available to start in Fall 2024. Applications will be considered on an ongoing basis until the position is filled. How to apply: Please send a PDF of your cover letter and resume to hr@mma.org.

Driver Training Instructor - EVOC and Simulator MMA/MIIA

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

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

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

SERVICES

Municipal Energy Services

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

Town Counsel Services

Harrington Heep LLP provides Town and Special Counsel services to help build and implement local programs that serve community needs. We have the expertise you require, based on decades of real-world experience. We take the time to understand your situation. We inquire, listen, and respond. We provide options that will work for you. We are committed to the values of democracy, to preservation and enhancement of natural resources and the built

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environment, and to excellence and care in support of municipal objectives. We offer competitive rates, personal service, diligent attention to our clients' needs, and good humor. Please contact us at contact@harringtonheep.com or 617-489-1600.

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

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

Municipal Accounting and Consulting Services

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

Public Management Consultants

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

Organizational Development and Conflict Resolution

The Mediation Group is New England's one-stop shopping for conflict resolution and organizational development. With 30-plus years of experience, our multi-disciplinary team provides individuals and organizations with support to move forward constructively and improve functionality. Our services include: facilitation, mediation, training and coaching, leadership development, cultural competency, independent workplace investigations, stakeholder assessments, public engagement and process design. For more information, visit www.themediationgroup.org, email info@themediationgroup.org or call 617-277-9232.

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

Executive Recruitment and Municipal Management

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

General Consultant, Recruiting and Special Studies

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

Special Counsel, Public Construction and Infrastructure Services

Petrini & Associates, P.C. (P&A) is a recognized statewide leader in representing public owners in public construction and infrastructure disputes and litigation. P&A has decades of experience, having represented public owners in numerous bid protests, delay claims, differing site conditions, disputes between design professionals and project owners, and a broad variety of other construction disputes. Since its founding in 2004, P&A has represented over 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.

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.

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.

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.

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,

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

Tax Title Legal Services

KP | Law has been providing a full range of legal services to municipal treasurers and collectors for more than 30 years. Our experienced tax title attorneys draft collection letters and payment agreements; prepare all instruments relative to tax takings and tax sales; draft pleadings for Land Court foreclosures; and provide full representation of municipalities in Land Court actions. We also provide assistance with disposition or reuse of tax parcels. The breadth of our experience, volume, use of experienced paralegals, state-of-the-art computer and informational services, and close proximity to the Land Court enables us to provide prompt, cost-effective services. For additional

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

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.

RFPs

Modular Classroom/Office Trailers Nauset Public Schools

Nauset Public Schools is looking for a buyer of their modular classroom/office units. The modular units are being used at the High School Building project in Eastham, MA, and will be available in June 2025. The modulars consist of 24,000 square feet, with 27 classrooms, several bathrooms, and office spaces. The units are trailer-based, and assembled side-by-side to produce a semi-permanent and functional learning and working environment. For more information, contact Bob Capurso, Facility Director, capurso@nausetschools.org.

COMMONWEALTH

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will help the city reach its larger public space goals.

The city's SomerVision 2040 goals include adding more than 100 acres of open space across the city. With real estate costs to contend with (the city faces a cost of \$17.4 million per acre in SomerVision 2040), the city recognizes that working with private developers is key to creating new open spaces to reach its goal. Oliveira noted that the city has increased open space by 6.7 acres since January of 2022, and 1.8 of those acres was funded by private development.

"In the most densely populated city in the northeast, every square foot of open space matters," Oliveira said.

The new guide outlines the city's open space goals, describing the types of spaces the city aspires to create, which include safe and accessible infrastructure and clear signage, increasing the urban tree canopy and the use of plant materials that are consistent with the 2020 Native Species Ordinance and the Somerville Pollinator Action Plan, creating "performative landscapes" that promote ecological resiliency and are responsive to climate change, and protecting public access in perpetuity.

Oliveira said the city released the guide to explain the intention and process to

developers, designers and the public, but "our developer partners have been collaborating with us on these spaces for years," in places like Boynton Yards Park, Union Square Station Plaza, Lou Ann David Park and Martha Perry Lowe Park.

"The parks that have been built since the requirements were put in place are of better quality and more well designed, for residents and workplace tenants of the buildings," she said. "It's a win-win."

The guide can be found on the [SomerVoice page](#), along with a map of POPS in the city.

— *Meredith Gabriliska*

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.



Managers celebrate the holidays

Attendees at the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association's monthly meeting on Dec. 13 in Sturbridge gather in their festive holiday sweaters for an annual holiday photo. Pictured, standing, l-r, are: MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine, Maynard Town Administrator Greg Johnson, Lexington Deputy Town Manager Kelly Axtell, Lexington Town Manager Steve Bartha, Sharon Town Administrator Fred Turkington, Sharon Assistant Town Administrator Lauren Barnes, Spencer Town Administrator Jeff Bridges and retired town administrator John Petrin. Kneeling are East Bridgewater Town Administrator Charlie Seelig, left, and Holliston Town Administrator Travis Ahern.

Calendar



The Beacon

Massachusetts Municipal Association

3 Center Plaza, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02108

JANUARY

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

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

23-25 **Connect 351**, MMA's annual conference, Boston Convention & Exhibition Center and Omni Boston Hotel. Visit connect351.org or contact MMA Conference and Meeting Planner Timmery Kuck.

29 **MMA webinar**, Inspiring Climate Action, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

FEBRUARY

5 **Association of Town Finance Committees**, board meeting, 3:30 - 5 p.m., virtual. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

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

11 **MMA Board of Directors**, virtual meeting, 10-11:45 a.m. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Courtney Butler

11 **Local Government Advisory Commission**, virtual meeting, 1-2 p.m. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Courtney Butler

25 **Massachusetts Select Board Association, webinar with Massachusetts Moderators Association**, virtual, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Anneke Craig

For more information, visit www.mma.org.

27 **Massachusetts Municipal Management Association**, mini boot camp, 10 a.m.-noon, Grand View Farm, Burlington. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

MARCH

6 **Women Leading Government**, conference, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Lake Pearl, Wrentham. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

12 **Massachusetts Select Board Association**, spring program webinar, 12-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Anneke Craig

13 **Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources**, spring program webinar, 12-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Anneke Craig

20 **Massachusetts Municipal Management Association**, professional development conference, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Devens Common Center, Devens. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

21 **Women Elected Municipal Officials**, leadership conference, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Lake Pearl, Wrentham. Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Anneke Craig

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

27 **Association of Town Finance Committees**, regional meeting, 5-7 p.m., Hadley Council on Aging, Hadley. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

27 **Association of Town Finance Committees**, regional meeting, 5-7 p.m., Reading Public Library, Reading. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

APRIL

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

8 **MMA Board of Directors**, hybrid meeting, 10-11:45 a.m. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Courtney Butler

8 **Local Government Advisory Commission**, hybrid meeting, 1-2 p.m. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Courtney Butler

10 **Massachusetts Municipal Management Association and Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources**, joint meeting, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Lake Pearl, Wrentham. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker and MMA Member Program Coordinator Anneke Craig

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

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

MMA contacts

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