

The Best Academy in Town

Citizens Academies: How to Engage
Your Communities



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What is a Citizens Academy?

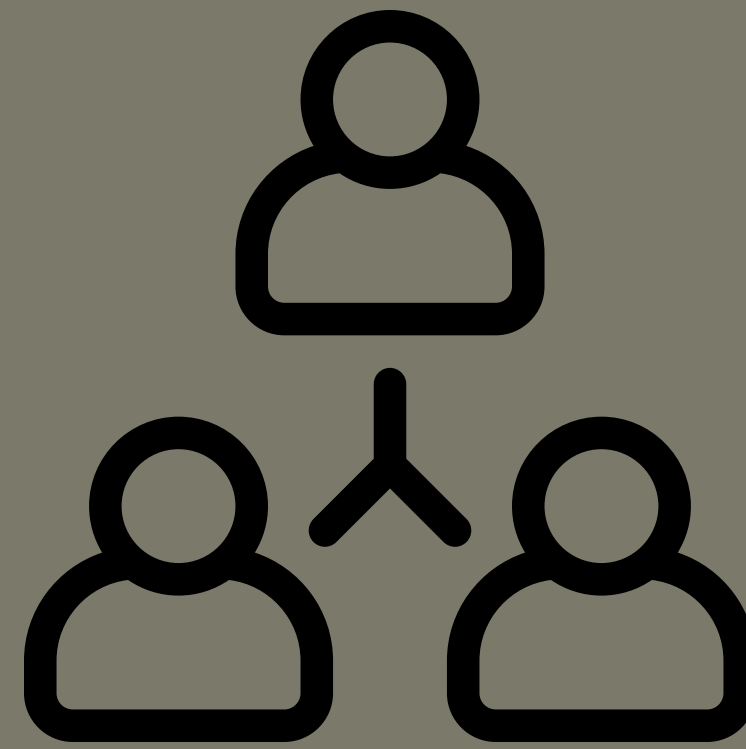
A program designed to educate and engage residents about how local government works. These programs are typically organized by cities or towns to provide citizens with a deeper understanding of municipal operations, services, and decision-making processes.



Government
Structure



Budgeting &
Finances



Municipal
Departments



Community
Participation

Purpose/Goals of Academy



Sharing knowledge about
local government



Board & Commission
Members



Run for office



Join the team
as an employee

How do you gain buy in?

1

Work with the Mayor's Office or Town Administrator's office to pitch this program for your community.

2

Show the success of Citizens Academies and the impact they make.

3

Talk with senior leaders/department heads on the importance of this program and what their role entails.

How to get an Academy off the ground

1

Support from the top down

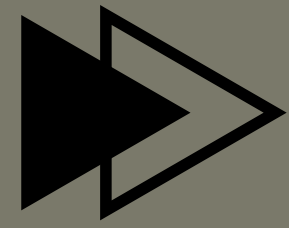
2

Make it *very easy* for the departments to participate

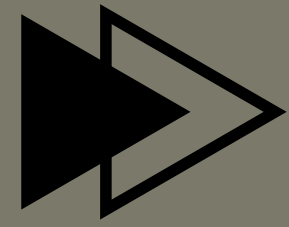
3

One person needs to lead the program

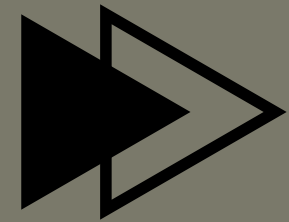
Launching an academy



Create an application form, determine the number of slots, eligibility requirements and the process to select applicants.



Notify selected participants and have them sign a participant agreement and photo release form (optional).



Share the session schedule (dates and locations) and welcome letter from your community.

Citizens Academy

Department Workbook

Completed workbook must be emailed to Jen by 6/10/2019

Overview of your department structure

- Org chart (you can use the chart from the budget presentation)
- This should include:
 - Divisions
 - Job titles and how many of each position

Overview of what your department is

- Is your funding from taxes, rates, program revenue, a combo?
- Is your department or service area mandated by law, completely discretionary, etc.?
- Are their governing documents that guide your work (i.e. MGL, Building Code, Town Manager Act, etc.?)

Overview of what your department does

- Include a 3-7 bullets about what your department does
- This is about the services offered by your department to the residents or to support the Town of Danvers
- You can bring in examples and show the actual work or activity during the academy – keep that in mind when drafting this

Recent / Current / Future projects

- 1-2 bullets on each category

Statistics

- Here is a chance to show off your department and the services it provides the community!
- Provide a few statics about your department. Examples:
 - We pave 10 miles of roads a year
 - We respond to 5,000 calls a year
 - We collect 100 tons of recycling a year
 - We process 6,000 payments to vendors a year

What is something interesting about your department?

- What might people not realize about your department or the employees who staff the department?
 - Did you know the water department not only provides water to Danvers, but to Middleton too?
 - The recreation department offers X number of programs to X number of participants
 - First light department in MA
 - First accredited police department in MA
 - 15 consecutive CAFR awards...

Activity

- You are encouraged to have a hands-on activity participants can do. Please list your ideas here:
 - K9 demonstration
 - Program development

Community Involvement

- Are there ways the community can be involved with your department? Examples:
 - Boards your department supports?
 - Events?
 - Volunteer opportunities?

Preparation

- Academy participants will be provide a binder on the first night. It will include copies of the PPT's; worksheets; reading material; other material provided by departments.
- You can include homework assignments, readings (short), or activities you would like them to complete ahead of time. If you plan on doing that list information here. Examples include:
 - Recreation may do a sheet asking people to fill in the names of various recreation facilities around town
 - Another example

Staff

- Who from your staff will participate in the presentations?
 - We encourage you to have all levels of staff participate! We ask department director to take a backseat on the presentation and let their team's shine!
 - Please list names, job title and emails
 - Please identify what each person will be responsible for

CITIZENS ACADEMY SESSION PLANNER

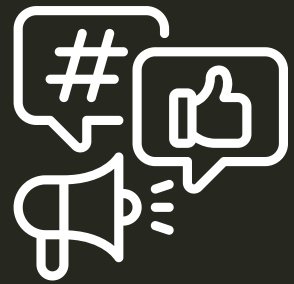
Please send your completed session planner back to Catherine at cvanbramer@cityofpittsfield.org.

SECTION 1	
Department(s)	Session Date
Session Location	Session Facilitators
Session Overview	
Session Goals/Highlights	
What the public may not know about the department?	

SECTION 3	
Media Needs	<i>(All media requests must be sent to Catherine at least one week prior to your session)</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Laptop <input type="checkbox"/> Projector <input type="checkbox"/> Wireless Pointer <input type="checkbox"/> Speakers <input type="checkbox"/> Screen/TV Microphone: <input type="checkbox"/> On Stand <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Held <input type="checkbox"/> For Podium Other (Please specify): _____
Staff Contact Information (for night of session)	
Contact	
Phone	
Email	

SECTION 2		
Session Schedule	<i>Please outline your session keeping in mind the 6-8pm timeline. Please include time for at least two 10 minute breaks for the class throughout the session.</i>	
	Time	Activity/Discussion

Marketing



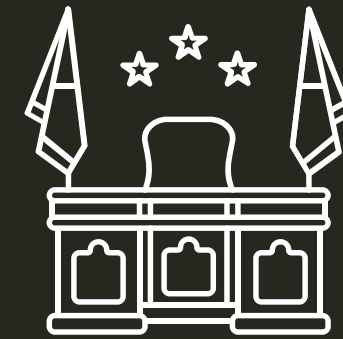
Social Media

Consistently sharing on socials



Website

Maintain website about Academy year round



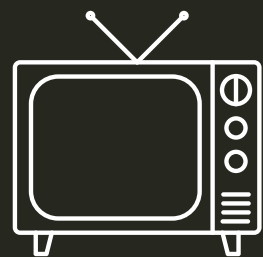
Elected Officials

Share with local elected officials who can help spread the word to their constituents



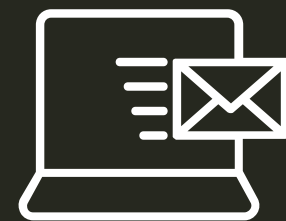
Posters

Distribute posters to local establishments and electronic billboards



Cable Access

Ads running during community information blocks



Newsletters/Press Releases

Communications that are sent out on a regular schedule



Community Organizations

Distribute applications to organizations that work directly with the community.



Past Graduates

Share with your networks of past of participants

FALL 2021
TOWN OF DANVERS


CITIZENS ACADEMY

BE LIKE LESLIE - ATTEND CITIZENS ACADEMY!

ABOUT THE ACADEMY

Sign Up NOW for the Fall 2021 Citizens Academy!

Citizens Academy is a 10-week deep dive into all aspects of Town government through a variety of classes and interactive activities. Academy begins September 9. Visit www.danversma.gov/citizensacademy for more information and to register.





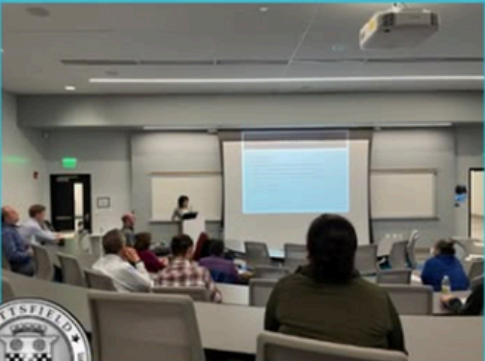
LESLIE KNOPE
CITIZENS ACADEMY GRADUATE*

*from some citizens academy, somewhere

City Hall - City of Pittsfield
Published by Catherine VanBramer
July 31, 2023



Applications are now being accepted for the City of Pittsfield's Citizens Academy, which will begin in late August.

The Citizens Academy, a 12-week program, is designed to help community members understand the operations of local government. Participants will gain awareness on the various functions of city departments within municipal government, tour designated locations, and engage in breakout activities. Attendees also will learn more about service opportunities availabl... See more

Join us for the 2023 Citizens Academy!

To learn how you can apply, visit www.cityofpittsfield.org

2024 City of Pittsfield Citizens Academy

Are you interested in learning about:

- *the day-to-day operations of city government?
- *joining a board or commission?
- *new ways to get involved in your community?


Then this is the program for you!

Details:

- 12 weekly sessions
- August 21-November 6, 2024
- Wednesdays, 6:00-8:00pm
- Sessions led by department heads
- No cost for participants

Consider applying for the Citizens Academy!

For more information, please contact the Mayor's Office at (413) 499-9322 or via email at cvanbramer@cityofpittsfield.org



FALL 2023
TOWN OF DANVERS



CITIZENS ACADEMY

LOOKING TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

ABOUT THE ACADEMY

Sign Up NOW for the Fall 2023 Citizens Academy!

Citizens Academy is a 10-week deep dive into all aspect of Town government through a variety of classes and interactive activities. Academy begins September 14. Visit www.danversma.gov/citizensacademy for more information and to register.

FALL 2022
TOWN OF DANVERS



CITIZENS ACADEMY

INTERESTED IN PLANNING?

ABOUT THE ACADEMY

Sign Up NOW for the Fall 2022 Citizens Academy!

Citizens Academy is a 11-week deep dive into all aspect of Town government through a variety of classes and interactive activities. Academy begins September 15. Visit www.danversma.gov/citizensacademy for more information and to register.

Schedule

- ▶ Multiple week program
- ▶ Evening sessions, 2-3 hours
- ▶ Some departments are combined while others have their own session



TOWN OF DANVERS CITIZENS ACADEMY

FALL 2023 SESSION

Class Schedule & Related Information

All classes conducted on Thursdays, 6:00 - 8:30 P.M.

1. September 14 Town Government Overview	Town Hall Toomey Room 1 Sylvan Street	Ample parking available in Elm Street lot adjacent to Town Hall
2. September 21 Finance & Budgeting	Town Hall Toomey Room 1 Sylvan Street	Ample parking available in Elm Street lot adjacent to Town Hall
3. September 28 Fire Department	Fire Headquarters 64 High Street	Limited parking on site; parking along Webb St., or in lot between McDonalds & Jimmy's Roast Beef
4. October 5 DPW	DPW Facility 95 Hobart Street	Staff will be on site to direct parking
5. October 12 Planning, Economic Development & Inspectional Services	Endicott Park Carriage House 57 Forest Street	Ample parking on site
6. October 19 Recreation & Library	Peabody Institute Library 15 Sylvan Street	Ample parking on site
7. October 26 Police Department	Police Station Training Room 120 Ash Street	Ample parking available on site. Enter through training room entrance.
8. November 2 Senior Center, Veterans & Public Health	Senior Center, 25 Stone Street	Ample parking available on site
9. November 9 IT & Electric	2 Burroughs Street rear of building	Rear lot @ 2 Burroughs St.
10. November 16 School Department	Danvers High School 60 Cabot Road	Ample parking on site. Enter through the main entrance.
11. November 21 (TUESDAY) GRADUATION!	Town Hall Toomey Room 1 Sylvan Street	Ample parking available in Elm Street lot adjacent to Town Hall



TOWN OF DANVERS
CITIZENS ACADEMY
 FALL 2024 SESSION



The Town of Danvers Citizens Academy is an eleven-week series of classes and activities designed to (1) give participants an up-close view of local government and (2) develop informed and civically minded future community leaders.

To be considered for the Fall 2023 class, please complete and return the application below by 12:00 PM on Friday, August 16. Notice of acceptance into the academy will be communicated to applicants by Thursday, August 29. For more information on the academy, please visit the Town's website: www.danversma.gov/citizensacademy.

Academy size generally limited to 24 participants.

Requirements for Participation:

- Must be a current resident of Danvers
- Must be 16 years of age by July 1, 2024
- Preference may be given to registered voters
- Must be willing to sign a liability waiver (we plan to have fun!)
- Consideration will be given to applicants who work but don't live in Danvers

Application:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____
 Mailing Address: _____
 Length of time you have lived in Danvers: _____
 Phone Number: _____ Email: _____
 Occupation: _____ Employer: _____



Please describe your past and present community/civic involvement [if any]:

Please share with us why you are interested in participating in the Citizens Academy:

Class dates are listed below. All sessions are from 6:00 – 8:30 PM. Attendance at most of the sessions is expected. If there are dates you know you **cannot** attend, please check those below:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, September 12 | <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, October 24 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, September 19 | <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, November 7 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, September 26 | <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, November 14 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, October 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, November 21 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, October 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday , December 3 – Graduation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, October 17 | |

We understand that family or emergency circumstances may require absence; however, missing excessive classes may result in dismissal.

Please Note: Classes will take place at various Town buildings. Once accepted into the academy, you will receive an orientation packet that includes the locations for each session. Please note that while all class locations are handicapped accessible, not all building tours are completely handicapped accessible, as tour may include areas not open to the public. Participants will be notified of handicap access and any other requirements prior to site tours.

How did you hear about the Citizens Academy?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Town website | <input type="checkbox"/> DCAT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer [from where? _____] | <input type="checkbox"/> Other [please explain: _____] |



Childcare

While you participate in the Town of Danvers Citizens Academy, you will have the option for your children ages 4-12 to participate in the Little Citizens Activity Program located at the Great Oak School. Danvers Recreation staff will lead a fun evening of age appropriate activities for your children. Activities may include: small group games, arts and crafts, board games, age appropriate G rated videos and much more. Water will be provided, but please make sure your child eats before the program as food will not be served. Registration is required and limited to those whose parents are participating in the Citizens Academy. Drop-ins are not allowed.

If you are interested in childcare, please check the box below. A minimum of 4 participants is required for the childcare program to run. Once the minimum level is met, a notification and registration paperwork will be provided. There is no fee for childcare.

I am interested in my child/children participating in the childcare program during the Citizens Academy.

Please list child/children name(s) and age(s) below:

Return this form by August 16, 2024, to
 Jen Breaker, Assistant Town Manager, 1 Sylvan Street, Danvers, MA 01923.
 Electronic submittals welcome: jbreaker@danversma.gov.
 All selected academy attendees will be notified no later than Thursday, September 29.



TOWN OF DANVERS
CITIZENS ACADEMY
 FALL 2024 SESSION



Dear Citizen Academy Cadets,

Congratulations and welcome to the Danvers Citizens Academy – Fall 2024 Session! On behalf of town officials and staff, I would like to extend a personal welcome to you. We look forward to meeting and introducing you to the ins and outs of government in action.

The Fall Session begins on Thursday, September 12, at 6:00 PM and will be held on Thursdays in September, October, and November from 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM. Sessions may be rescheduled due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances, as much notice as possible will be provided. The detailed class schedule is included with this correspondence, reflecting date, time and location. Please keep in mind that some locations will involve a site tour with walking so appropriate attire and shoes will be required.

A light dinner and refreshments will be provided during each session (not including Graduation). Please be sure to complete the personal information form included with this letter so that we are aware of any dietary restrictions. While we will try to accommodate a restriction, we cannot guarantee that specific diet restrictions will be able to be satisfied.

During the first night of the Academy, we will spend time at the beginning of class reviewing additional logistics and providing you with various materials for the academy. Please arrive on time so that the start of the session is not delayed. If you cannot make the first session, please let me know.

Finally, in an effort to keep Cadets and Town personnel as healthy as possible as we head into the colder months, we ask that if you are experiencing **any COVID, cold, or flu like symptoms** you stay home and rest.

Should you have any questions that arise before the first session, please do not hesitate to contact me. Again, congratulations and welcome! We look forward to seeing you on Thursday, September 12.

Sincerely,

Jen Breaker
 Assistant Town Manager



Application & Welcome

Budget



Materials



Childcare



Staff



Food



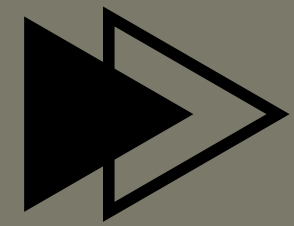
Transportation



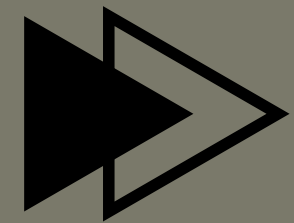
Graduation



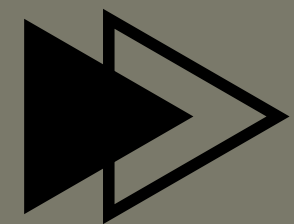
Outcomes



Increased participation

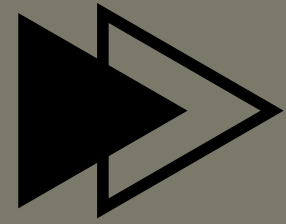


Increased engagement in local government

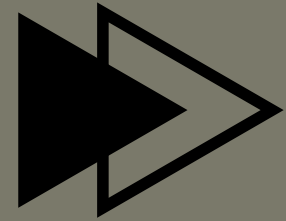


More informed residents

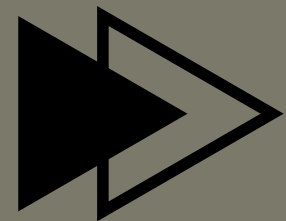
How to build on your academy?



Student Academies through the School Department



Email groups for past attendees



Alumni events



Questions?



Thank You

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Mark Ells

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Jen Breaker

jbbreaker@danversma.gov