

# ***Town of Peru Finance Committee Meeting***

*Town Hall Meeting Room/Gymnasium*

*Peru Town Hall*

*3 East Main Road*

*Peru, MA 01235*

## ***Meeting Agenda***

Wednesday, February 19, 2025

6:00 p.m.

1. Call to order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
4. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes for December 2, 2024
5. Discussion and Deliberation of Process for Reviewing and Approving Fiscal Year 26 Budget.
6. Discussion, Deliberation and Review of FY 26 proposed budget for Council on Aging with Bonny DiTomasso.
7. Discussion, Deliberation and Review of Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Line Items and Departmental Requests.
8. Discuss proposed schedule for Finance Committee meetings in March and April and set schedule for Departmental Budget Presentations.
9. Public Input
10. Adjournment

This Agenda includes matters reasonably anticipated by the Finance Committee which may be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

Official Posting at Town of Peru Website: [www.townofperuma.com](http://www.townofperuma.com)

Town of Peru Finance Committee, Approved by Bruce Cullett, Chair

Posted February 12, 2025 @ 5:00pm  
Kim Leach, Town Clerk

## Finance Committee Meeting

Town Hall Meeting Room/Gymnasium, 3 East Main Rd. Peru, MA

Wednesday, February 19, 2025, 6:00 P.M.

Public Attendees: Bonny DiTomasso, Terry Walker, Recording Secretary

1. Call to order: Fin Com Chairman Cullett called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Chairman Cullett
3. Roll Call Finance Committee:
  - a. Paul Hickling-Present
  - b. Chairman Bruce Cullett-Present
  - c. Sam Haupt-Present
  - d. Doug Haskins-Present
  - e. Robin Wadsworth-Absent

Chairman Cullett stated that recording status was inadvertently left off agenda. He asked if anyone was recording-no one recording.
4. Review and approval of Meeting Minutes for December 2, 2024: Fin Com member Haskins motion to accept December 2, 2024, minutes, Chairman Cullett second, 3-0. Selectman Haput abstained because he was not in attendance.
5. Discussion and Deliberation of Process for Reviewing and Approving Fiscal Year 26 Budget: Chairman Cullett mentioned that joint meetings with the Board of Selectman will be planned to review what type of progress being made. Fin Com member Haupt mentioned that all departments need to submit a FY26 budget as soon as possible. Chairman Cullett would like to have larger departments meet in person to present their budgets. Fin Com member Hickling likes the idea of setting definite dates for Finance Committee meetings. Bonny DiTomasso anticipated an increase in school tuition since Peru has 4 additional students for next year. Chairman Cullett mentioned that there will be a 16% increase in Health Insurance for next year.

6. Discussion, Deliberation and Review of FY26 proposed budget for Council on Aging with Bonny DiTomasso: Bonny DiTomasso was appointed COA director at last night's BOS meeting. Bonny mentioned that the salary for a COA director is \$1,236, COA Expense Account is \$1,000 and Elderly Outreach is \$600.00. She explained that she is also a Shine Counselor which is basically helping Seniors with Medicare and Medicaid and she does this free of charge. Bonny plans to make a difference as a COA director by going to people's homes and advocating for the elderly. Bonny is requesting an increase in the COA salary from \$1,236 to \$3,000. She plans to allocate at least 6 hours per month with the current salary, maintain office hours at town hall and also going to people's homes. Bonny mentioned she has a good relationship with most people in Peru and she will distribute Farmer's Market Coupons instead to adding to TA Walker's duties. The proposed increase in salary would allow for approximately 12 hours per month instead of 6. Chairman Cullett thanked Bonny for all her work and her availability. COA Director Salary-Fin Com could not agree on an increase. **Placed on hold**  
COA Expense \$1,000.00 unanimous vote,  
Elderly Outreach \$600.00 unanimous vote.

7. Discussion, Deliberation and Review of Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Line Items and Departmental Requests:

Susan Koziara, Head Assessor, presented her FY26 budget.

- Assessor's Expense: Sue wanted to increase the Assessor's Expense account to cover training and mileage costs. Chairman Cullett explained that the town has a Continuing Ed account for training and seminars. The Assessor's Expense account will be level funded.
- Assessor #2 and Assessor #3 salary 3% increase.
- Head Assessor Salary: Sue explained that her salary is very low at \$30.90 per hour compared to Windsor Assessor's salary of \$43.13 per hour, and Adams Assessor Salary at \$42.03 per hour. Sue is asking for \$35.00 per hour plus \$1,250 that is paid to Patriots Properties to measure and list property. Sue is willing to measure, list and complete all the data entry.
- Fin Com Member Haskins asked if the Town could get out of paying Patriots for the measure and list of property. Chairman Cullett asked why the two other Assessors have different salaries. The difference is due to the length of service according to Susan Koziara, Head Assessor. Sue mentioned that she works in Dalton as an Assessor and

makes \$36.00 per hour. Fin Com Haskins is in favor of the budget requests from the Assessors. This budget was placed **on hold** because of the missing amount for the Assessor's Services Contract. Chairman Cullett recommended that an RFP be sent to multiple companies for Assessing Services.

Cemetery Commission proposed budget for FY26 \$500.00, Fin Com member Haskins motion to approve, Chairman Cullett second, 4-0.

Parks and Rec level funded from FY25, unanimous yes vote to fund at \$1,500.00

### **Terry Walker-Town Administrator salary**

Terry presented a budget to increase the TA salary by \$5,000 and bring the salary comparable to neighboring towns. Middlefield is searching for a TA, 20 hours per week/some remote hours with a salary of \$40,000. Washington is searching for a TA, 19 hours and a salary of \$40,000. Terry works 25-35 hours per week and feels her salary should be comparable to the surrounding towns. She has also been awarded over a million dollars in grants and a \$750,000 grant pending. Fin Com member Haupt mentioned how valuable Terry was to the town and agreed to increase her salary. Chairman Cullett motion to accept the \$5,000 budget increase for Town Administrator, Fin Com member Haskins second, 4-0.

### **Terry Walker-Recording Secretary Salary**

Terry mentioned that if the Board of Selectmen continues to meet every other week for FY26, the salary could be reduced from \$5,000 to \$2,600. Fin Com member Haupt stated that the salary should stay at \$5,000. Fin Com members agreed.

EMD Cullett, recused himself as the Finance Committee Chairman **and** presented a Fy26 budget for Emergency Management Expenses: Since the town does not have to pay Berkshire Sheriff's Department for 911 Services in FY26, Bruce would like to propose a budget of \$1,200 for Emergency Management Expenses. Bruce explained that the EMPG \$2,500 grant was used for a skid unit on the UTV Bob Cat that was purchased through a Woodlands Partnership grant. The remaining ARPA funds were used to purchase a trailer to house the UTV. All departments' police, fire and highway have access to the new UTV to utilize as needed. Fin Com member Haskins motion to approve new budget request, Fin Com member Hickling second, 3-0 Chairman Cullett abstained.

- Fin Com Haupt hesitates on Council on Aging Director salary increase and wants to revisit. Sam also wants to know how the COA director will allocate time. Chairman Cullett mentioned that he makes referrals to Bonny frequently and feels that the town is missing out on a lot without a COA Director. Bruce explained that he has used other COA Directors in neighboring towns before Bonny was appointed. He feels that Bonny could find herself very busy. This COA Director Salary request was placed **on hold**.
- Chairman Cullett briefly discussed a revolving account for the Building Inspector and Board of Health. Related to covering costs of Permiteyes online permitting. Although, increasing the salary may be more appropriate. The Building Inspector and Board of Health are working together looking for building violations.
- Fin Com member Hickling asked Terry Walker, to contact Robin Wadsworth and ask if she is interested in attending Finance Committee meetings. Hickling mentioned that she has not responded to his emails in the past 6 months. The board agreed that they need to know whether Robin wants to remain on the Finance Committee.

**8. Discuss proposed schedule for Finance Committee meetings in March and April and set schedule for Departmental Budget Presentations:** Chairman Cullett asked Terry Walker, Recording Secretary, to notify the Highway Department and Fire Department that their budgets will be reviewed on March 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Scheduled meetings:**

March 5<sup>th</sup>

March 19<sup>th</sup> Fin Com member Haskins will be available by phone

April 2<sup>nd</sup>

April 16<sup>th</sup>

**9. Public Input:** None

**10. Adjournment:**

Fin Com member Haupt motion to adjourn meeting at 7:19 p.m. Fin Com member Haskins second, unanimous vote to adjourn 2/19/2025 meeting at 7:19 p.m.

Articles used:

- Finance Committee minutes from 12/2/2024
- Sign in sheet
- Assessor's FY26 Budget
- Cemetery Commission FY26 Budget
- Town Administrator FY26 Budget
- Recording Secretary FY26 Budget
- Emergency Management FY26 Budget
- COA FY26 Budget

Respectively submitted,

*Terry L. Walker*  
*Recording Secretary*

Douglas Haskins, Fin Com Member \_\_\_\_\_  
Samuel Haupt, Fin Com Member \_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Hickling, Fin Com Chairman \_\_\_\_\_  
Robin Wadsworth, Fin Com Member \_\_\_\_\_  
Bruce Cullett, Fin Com Member \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 3/19/25

RECEIVED  
MAR 19 2025  
*Kim Leach*  
TOWN CLERK  
TOWN OF PERU

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Town of Peru Department Heads  
 FROM: Board of Selectmen  
 SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2026 Yearly Budget  
 DATE: 16-Dec-24

Please submit your Preliminary Budget for FY26 no later than February 11, 2025 using the format shown below. Please submit electronically to: [townadmin@townofperuma.com](mailto:townadmin@townofperuma.com)

Account Number	Account name	FY25 Budget	FY26 Budget request
10141	Assessors salaries	25631.73	29630.63
10141.01	Assessors Expense	1000	1200
10141.04	Tax Map Maintenance	1600	1600
10141.12	Assessors Annual	2400	2400
	Computer support		
10141.25	Assessors Utility	3500	3500
	Appraisal		
10141.25	Assessment Services	25000	to be determined

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ Susan Koziara

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 10-Feb-25

Should your department require a major purchase in FY26, please submit separately along with description, justification and estimated cost.

Thank you,  
 Peru Board of Selectmen

February 10, 2025

To : Board of Selectmen

Finance Committee

I am attaching our requested budget for FY 26.

Please note: The salaries for all three assessors has increased.

Assessor # 1 for FY 2025 was \$3775.13 – included a 3% increase to \$3888.38

Assessor # 2 for FY 2025 was \$2575.00 – included a 3% increase to \$2652.25

Lead Assessor – For FY 25 was \$19281.60

After reviewing the MAAO salary survey for hourly wages for Assessors throughout Massachusetts (and especially Berkshire County), I am asking for an hourly rate of \$35.00 for 12 hours/week for a total of \$420.00/week and a yearly salary of \$21,840. I have also included the amount we normally pay our consultant Patriot Properties for inspecting our building permits and doing the input into our database, which is \$1250.00 per year. This total would then be \$ 23,090.00 for the Lead Assessor, which is more comparable and in line with what other towns are paying their assessors. The total Assessors salary line would then be \$29,630.63.

The Assessor's Expense account has also increased \$200 due to having enough money for mileage to and from Assessor's annual school, meetings and memberships.

Other line items, except Assessment Services, remains the same. Since we are in a revaluation year, that item has not been determined as of this date.

Community	Position Title	Parcel Count	Weekly Hours Worked	Annual Salary	Hourly Calc	\$/parcel Calc
Peru	Assessor	746				
Windsor	Assistant Assessor	890	12	\$ 18,720.00	\$ 30.60	\$ 25.09
Gill	Assistant to the Board of Assessors	912	12	\$ 26,916.00	\$ 43.13	\$ 30.24
Erving	Principal Assessor	915	30	\$ 38,922.00	\$ 24.95	\$ 42.68
Pelesham	Assistant Assessor	1,098	25	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 34.62	\$ 49.18
Brimfield	Principal Assessor	1,300	24	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 28.04	\$ 31.88
Barnardston	Assistant Assessor	1,322	32	\$ 71,647.68	\$ 43.06	\$ 55.11
Celrain	Director of Assessing	1,500	30	\$ 40,711.00	\$ 26.10	\$ 30.80
Nahant	Town Assessor	1,500	28	\$ 44,000.00	\$ 30.22	\$ 29.33
Hardwick	Principal Assessor	1,524	37	\$ 89,000.00	\$ 46.26	\$ 59.33
Brookfield	Principal Assessor	1,570	34	\$ 62,473.00	\$ 35.34	\$ 40.89
New Marlborough	Assistant Assessor	1,940	36	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 32.05	\$ 38.22
Sandisfield	Principal Assessor	2,000	20	\$ 25,309.00	\$ 24.34	\$ 13.05
Cardis	Principal Assessor	2,088	25	\$ 32,000.00	\$ 24.82	\$ 16.00
West Newbury	Chief Assessor	2,100	40	\$ 129,000.00	\$ 62.02	\$ 61.78
Belton	Assistant Assessor	2,185	40	\$ 93,000.00	\$ 44.71	\$ 44.29
Chilmark	Assistant Assessor	2,233	32	\$ 53,531.00	\$ 32.17	\$ 24.50
Northfield	Assistant Assessor	2,255	38.5	\$ 116,241.00	\$ 58.06	\$ 52.06
Hampden	Principal Assessor	2,461	33	\$ 48,291.00	\$ 28.14	\$ 21.42
Holland	Principal Assessor	2,464	35	\$ 76,744.00	\$ 42.17	\$ 31.18
Hopedale	Principal Assessor	2,565	28	\$ 57,379.00	\$ 39.41	\$ 23.29
Groveland	Assessing Manager	2,673	37.5	\$ 77,337.00	\$ 39.68	\$ 30.15
Lee	Assistant Assessor/Board of Assessor	2,700	32	\$ 82,490.00	\$ 49.57	\$ 30.86
Manchester By The Sea	Principal Assessor	2,700	35	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 32.97	\$ 22.22
Dover	Town Assessor	2,780	40	\$ 100,252.00	\$ 48.22	\$ 37.15
Shirley	Principal Assessor	2,866	35	\$ 115,547.00	\$ 63.49	\$ 42.80
Roxchester	Director of Assessing	2,939	37.5	\$ 79,788.00	\$ 40.92	\$ 28.70
Mendon	Principal Assessor	2,953	40	\$ 85,470.00	\$ 41.09	\$ 29.82
Rewley	Principal Assessor	3,000	40	\$ 84,196.00	\$ 40.48	\$ 28.65
Sheffield	Principal Assessor	3,100	37.5	\$ 109,688.00	\$ 56.26	\$ 37.15
Georgetown	Director of Assessing	3,283	35	\$ 67,000.00	\$ 36.51	\$ 22.33
Boxford	Director of Assessment	3,353	40	\$ 98,383.00	\$ 47.30	\$ 31.74
Cohasset	Principal Assessor	3,403	34	\$ 99,083.00	\$ 56.04	\$ 30.18
Plainville	Principal Assessor	3,406	35	\$ 103,200.00	\$ 56.70	\$ 30.78
Upton	Town Assessor	3,440	40	\$ 96,000.00	\$ 52.75	\$ 28.21
Mills	Principal Assessor	3,700	40	\$ 78,000.00	\$ 37.50	\$ 22.90
Southborough	Principal Assessor	3,800	35	\$ 83,600.00	\$ 45.93	\$ 24.30
Adams	Principal Assessor	3,841	40	\$ 118,515.00	\$ 56.98	\$ 32.03
Middleton	Chief Assessor	4,045	40	\$ 119,000.00	\$ 57.21	\$ 31.32
Littleton	Chief Assessor	4,087	37.5	\$ 76,500.00	\$ 42.03	\$ 19.92
Westminster	Administrative Assessor	4,150	40	\$ 113,100.00	\$ 58.00	\$ 27.96
Norfolk	Chief Assessor	4,200	40	\$ 109,000.00	\$ 52.40	\$ 26.67
Templeton	Deputy Assessor	4,264	35	\$ 57,541.00	\$ 31.62	\$ 13.87
Douglas	Principal Assessor	4,300	40	\$ 94,000.00	\$ 45.19	\$ 22.38
Weston	Principal Assessor	4,325	38	\$ 63,242.00	\$ 32.01	\$ 15.04
Hanson	Assistant Appraiser	4,352	34	\$ 84,000.00	\$ 47.51	\$ 19.53
Freetown	Assistant Assessor	4,404	37.5	\$ 142,948.00	\$ 73.31	\$ 33.05
Sturbridge	Principal Assessor	4,466	30	\$ 94,000.00	\$ 51.65	\$ 21.60
Ware	Interim Principal Assessor	4,500	35	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 28.85	\$ 10.22
Wellfleet	Assessor	4,520	40	\$ 101,064.00	\$ 55.53	\$ 22.63
Southwick	Director of Assessment	4,661	35	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 28.85	\$ 13.33
Mattapoisett	Administrator of Assessing	4,700	40	\$ 88,000.00	\$ 48.35	\$ 19.56
Great Barrington	Principal Assessor	4,738	35	\$ 69,897.00	\$ 33.60	\$ 15.46
Rutland	Town Assessor	4,762	37.5	\$ 82,500.00	\$ 45.33	\$ 17.70
Carver	Principal Assessor	4,800	40	\$ 92,000.00	\$ 47.18	\$ 19.57
Sutton	Principal Assessor	4,900	35	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 38.46	\$ 16.88
Acushnet	Town Assessor	3,049	37.5	\$ 82,944.00	\$ 45.57	\$ 17.42
	Principal Assessor	2,977	35	\$ 86,571.00	\$ 44.40	\$ 18.04
	Principal Assessor		35	\$ 64,515.00	\$ 35.45	\$ 13.17
	AVERAGE		34	\$ 77,729	\$ 42.65	\$ 28.37
	MEDIAN		35	\$ 81,245	\$ 42.61	\$ 28.09

CONTRACT AMOUNT: \$25,000

STEP	%	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL	COMPLETED	PREVIOUSLY	CURRENT	
				%	\$	INVOICED	DUE
A	10	Project Start-Up, / Insurance	\$2,500.00	100	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$0.00
B	5	Measure, list all Building Permits with data entry	\$1,250.00	100	\$1,250.00	\$1,250.00	\$0.00
C	15	New Personal Property, FOL, Data Entry	\$3,750.00	100	\$3,750.00	\$0.00	\$3,750.00
D	50	Sales Analysis, I & E Review, Calculation Table Adjustments	\$12,500.00	75	\$9,375.00	\$0.00	\$9,375.00
E	20	Table Adjustments, FY2025 Interim Year Reports, Docs and Assist with Growth	\$5,000.00	75	\$3,750.00	\$0.00	\$3,750.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>\$25,000.00</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>\$20,625.00</b>	<b>\$3,750.00</b>	
						<b>DUE THIS PERIOD</b>	<b>\$16,875.00</b>





TO: BOS and Fin Com

FROM: Terry Walker, Town Administrator

DATE: February 11, 2025

RE: FY26 Budget

I am presenting a budget increase of \$5,000.00 to bring my salary comparable to small neighboring towns.

The Town of Middlefield is searching for a Town Administrator- 20 hours per week/ some remote hours and a salary of \$40,000.

The Town of Washington is searching for a Town Administrator - 19 hours per week hours and a salary of \$40,000.

I have been awarded a MassWorks grant of \$1,000,000.00, 2 Woodland Initiative grants for \$40,000, I have a fire truck grant pending for \$750,000 and Fire Department radio grant pending for \$10,000. I was able to recoup the Green Communities Grant for \$120,000. With these funds, weatherization in the town hall and mini splits are being installed in the town hall and highway garage. I am also working with Austin Design in hopes of being awarded a grant to build a new town hall.

I really enjoy working in Peru and I would really appreciate a salary comparable to surrounding towns.

Thank you,



Terry Walker

Town Administrator



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Town of Peru Department Heads  
 FROM: Board of Selectmen  
 SUBJECT Fiscal Year 2026 Yearly Budget  
 DATE: 16-Dec-24

Please submit your Preliminary Budget for FY26 no later than February 11, 2025 using the format shown below. Please submit electronically to:

[townadmin@townofperu.com](mailto:townadmin@townofperu.com)

Account Number	Account name	FY25 Budget	FY26 Budget request
50303.00	Council on Aging Director Salary	\$1236.00	\$3,000.00
50300.00	Council on Aging Expense	\$1000.00	\$1000.00
50302.00	Elderly Outreach	\$650.00	\$650.00

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ Bonny DiTomasso

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 2/11/2025

Should your department require a major purchase in FY26, please submit separately along with desk justification and estimated cost.

Thank you,  
 Peru Board of Selectmen