

Town of Peru Finance Committee Meeting

Town Hall Meeting Room/Gymnasium

Peru Town Hall

3 East Main Road

Peru, MA 01235

Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

6:00 p.m.

1. Call to order
2. State Recording Status
3. Roll Call
4. Pledge of Allegiance
5. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes for February 19, 2025
6. Presentation of proposed FY 26 Highway Department Budget by Superintendent Justin Russell.
7. Presentation of proposed FY 26 Fire Department Budget by Chief Dan Cawthron.
8. Presentation of proposed FY 26 Tax Collector/Treasurer Budget by Tax Collector/Treasurer Caryn Wendling.
9. Discussion, Deliberation, and possible vote on Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Line Items and Departmental Requests.
10. Public Input
11. 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

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

Finance Committee Meeting

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

Wednesday, March 5, 2025 @ 6:00 P.M.

In Attendance: Terry Walker-Recording Secretary, Kim Wetherell, Dan Cawthron-Fire Chief, Justin Russell-Highway Superintendent, Peggy White-Board of Health, Valerie Bird-Board of Health Agent, Bonny DiTomasso-COA Director

1. Call to order: Fin Com Chairman Cullett called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. State Recording Status: n/a
3. Roll Call Finance Committee:
 - a. Paul Hickling-Present
 - b. Bruce Cullett-Present
 - c. Sam Haupt-present
 - d. Doug Haskins-absent
 - e. Robin Wadsworth-present
4. Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Fin Com Chairman Cullett
5. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes for February 19, 2025: Sam Haupt approve pending changes, Chairman Cullett second, 3-0, Robin Wadsworth abstained.
6. Presentation of proposed FY26 Highway Department Budget by Superintendent Justin Russell:

Payroll Wages overall increase of 3%

Uniforms increase from \$3,700-\$3,800

All other accounts level funded

Wish List:

 - 10-foot plow \$5,200
 - Replace 28-year-old Mack truck with a 2025 Freightliner- \$165,400 for cab and chassis plus body and setup for plow and wing \$143,995. Paul Hickling asked if Justin would trade in the Mack. Justin felt that the Mack truck should be kept to haul gravel and as a back up truck. The dealership indicated the trade in value is only \$1,500.00

Fin Com Chair Cullett stated that free cash had been certified and is \$258,066.

7. Presentation of proposed FY26 Fire Department Budget by Chief Dan Cawthron: Dan's request was to level fund all accounts with an increase in his salary from \$2,600.50 to \$6,000. Robin mentioned that the Fire Chief in Windsor's salary is \$7,500. Dan mentioned that he is the lowest paid Fire Chief in the county.

Wish List:

- \$33,000 for 10 new Kenwood portable radios to replace outdated portable radios that will not meet State's new 800 program.
- \$31,800 for 6 new Kenwood mobile radios for the vehicles to replace outdated radios that do not meet State's new 800 program.
- \$30,708 for 6 pair of boots, 6 pair of bunker pants and 6 bunker coats to replace outdated gear.

Chairman Cullett asked Fire Chief Cawthron how much of his FY25 budget could be used for his wish list. Bruce mentioned that only 2% of the Fire Dept expense account has been used and we are in March. Dan was asked to come back with a revised budget for the Fire Department expenses.

8. Presentation of proposed FY26 Tax Collector/Treasurer Budget by Tax Collector/Treasurer Caryn Wendling: Tabled until next meeting as Treasurer was not present.
9. Discussion, Deliberation and possible vote on Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Line Items and Departmental Requests:

Peggy White, Board of Health, mentioned that the Health Department will be increased for a few reasons: Health Department Agent will increase her hours from 4 hours per month to 6 hours per month. The increase in hours for Valerie Bird, Health Department Agent, is to work with the Building Inspector to overlap better collaboration of Mass Building codes, sanitary inspection of seasonal campers. Valerie will also act as Zoning enforcement officer. Part of the increase is for certified mailings. Peggy mentioned that the revolving account for the Board of Health would be used for jousting court fees. Chariman Cullett mentioned that the town has an account set up to pay for legal fees. Chariman Cullett also questioned Peggy White and Valerie Bird what the increase of Valerie's increased hours is based on. Valerie is not sure how the formula was created but she will work with the Building Inspector on Monday evenings. Health Agent Bird questioned why Building Inspector, Tim Sears, is not part of the Berkshire County Full Circle for building permits. Valerie also mentioned that the Building Inspector has a program for Permitees that is different than all other towns. Sam Haupt, Fin Com, wants to be certain all income from the Board of Health is being recorded. Robin Wadsworth, Fin Com questioned with a Revolving Account for the Board of Health could the funds be used to pay inspectors. Peggy White mentioned that it would be only used for court hearings. Sam Haupt, Fin Com felt that court filings, certified mailings and drafting demands could be paid from the Revolving Account. Sam Haupt, Fin Com, asked Terry Walker, TA to contact the accountants to get a better understanding of funds being paid out of a Revolving Account.

Sam Haupt, Fin Com, asked Terry Walker, TA, to enter all the highway budget into the spreadsheet except wages accounts, since all budgets' items were level funded. Also, there is a possibility that the highway department snowplow could be purchased from Snow Roads.

Bonny DiTomasso, COA Director mentioned that she would like to continue to assist the elderly so they could remain in their homes. Bonny asked if anyone had questions about the budget COA budget that she submitted.

Fire Chief, Dan Cawthron was asked to review his budget and bring changes back to the Finance Committee. There was some concern with Fire Department Expense budget having a balance of \$24,427.55 and only 2.28% of the budget spent. Also the Fire Department wish list needs backup with vendor quotes.

Chairman Cullett will ask Library Director to attend the next Fin Com meeting. Also all departments with substantial budgets need to come in person to present their budgets.

Sam Haupt, Fin Com, mentioned that the Town Clerk is not willing to attend the fin com meeting to present her budget. Paul Hickling felt that an increase in Town Clerk budget is a chance for the town clerk to advocate for herself.

Robin Wasdworth, Fin Com, felt that the Town Clerk is in line with other towns, and she didn't have a problem with a raise for the Town Clerk.

Robin however; has a problem with a raise for Susan Koziara, Head Assessor in Peru. Robin mentioned that Sue's salary is not comparable to what she does in Windsor and Cheshire. Robin felt that Sue should not compare her salary to Robin's salary because Robin does all the assessing work in other towns. Robin mentioned that Peru pays Patriots and in Windsor and Cheshire she does all the work and the other two Assessors only sign off on documents. Robin is aware of what goes on in Peru and her job is much more complex than what Sue does in Peru. Robin wants to know what Patriots does for Peru and feels wonders why she would expect a raise when she is not open to the public.

Health Insurance will be increased by 16%. The town portion is 80/20.

Fin Com Chairman Cullett motion to accept highway budget except wage accounts, Fin Com Hickling second, 4-0

- 10. Public Input**- Kim Wetherell questioned the Stabilization account and Chairman Cullett mentioned that a 2/3 vote is needed to utilize funds from the Stabilization Account which has around \$300,000. Kim asked about the Future Equipment Account- last ATM \$100,000 was transferred into the Future Equipment Account. Kim asked if Terry Walker was writing the Fire Department Grants. Chairman Cullett mentioned that Terry was writing the grants for the Fire Department. Kim wanted an explanation on why BRPC increased in services and wasn't the \$16,000 already provided by the Town of Peru. Kim was under the impression that the town pays for BRPC under the Health Alliance. It was mentioned that part of the budget increase is to pay Valerie Bird, the Health Department Agent, she currently works 3 hours per month and her hours will be increased to 6 hours per month. Kim Wetherell, School Committee member, mentioned that school budget will be finalized tomorrow evening and the budget will include 4 additional students in Peru.

11. Adjournment:

Fin Com Chairman Cullett motion to adjourn meeting 7:36 at p.m. Paul Hickling second, unanimous vote to adjourn 3/5/2025, vote 4-0

Articles used:

Finance Committee minutes from 2/19/2025
Highway budget request
Fire Department Budget request
Board of Health

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 A 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

Account Number	Account name	FY25 Budget	FY26 Budget request	
40100	Superintendent Sal	\$77,250.00	\$79,567.50	3%
40103	Highway Wages	\$110,210.00	\$113,516.00	3%
40103.05	Temp. Help	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00	
40105	Uniforms	\$3,700.00	\$3,800.00	
40200	Hard Surface Rds	\$28,000.00	\$28,000.00	
40204	Gravel Rds	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	
40206	Machinery Maint.	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	
40208	Fuel	\$33,000.00	\$33,000.00	
40210	H&B Rds	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	
40214	Tree Removal	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	
40423	Snow Rds Public	\$90,000.00	\$90,000.00	
40424	Snow Rds Private	\$500	\$500	

Submitted by: _____

Date: _____

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

BART Truck Equipment, LLC

Quote

358 River Street • West Springfield, MA 01089
Phone: (413) 737-2766 • Fax (413) 737-8475
Sales@BartTruckLLC.com • www.BartTruckLLC.com

Order Number: DC79035
Order Date: 3/4/2025

Salesperson: CNTR
Customer Number: 02-PERU

Sold To:
TOWN OF PERU
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
3 EAST MAIN ROAD STE 101
Hinsdale, MA 01235
Confirm To:
RONALD RADWICH (413) 665-8224

Ship To:
TOWN OF PERU
HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
3 EAST MAIN ROAD STE 101
Hinsdale, MA 01235

Customer P.O.	Ship VIA	F.O.B.	Terms
			NET 10 DAYS

Item Code	Unit	Ordered	Shipped	Back Order	Price	Amount
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QUOTE TO FURNISH ONLY ONE (1) NEW WESTERN 10' PRO PLUS HD SNOW PLOW W/
NIGHTHAWK HALOGEN LIGHTS. (PLOW ONLY)

\$5,200.00

FOR 9' PRO PLUS HD, DEDUCT \$200.00

FOR LED LIGHTS, ADD: \$400.00 (ONLY IF TRUCK IS WIRED FOR LED'S)

Net Order:	0.00
Less Discount:	0.00
Freight:	0.00
Sales Tax:	0.00
Order Total:	0.00



ATG Patriot LLC
An Advantage Truck Group Company

Town of Peru
3 East Main Road
Peru, MA 01235

March 3rd, 2025

Attn: Justin Russell - Highway Department

Re: Quotation for Model Year 2025 Freightliner 108SD Chassis / 47,120 GVW

Per our conversation, I've put together the following budgetary proposal for your review. This vehicle has been priced in accordance with the Greater Boston Police Council/Metropolitan Area Planning Council's State Procurement Contract: **GBPC 2024 Trucks**

Total Budget 2025 Freightliner 108SD and Extended Coverage \$165,400.00

After reviewing the enclosed information, if you have any questions or we can be of further assistance please contact Advantage Truck Group.

Respectfully,

Jason Page

Jason Page
Municipal Sales
Advantage Truck Group-Westfield
910 Southampton Rd.
Westfield, MA 01085
(413)-588-4976
jpage@advantagetruckne.com

DATE
3/04/2025

Quote #:25013

JOB # :

ZWACK INC.
RTE 22
STEPHENTOWN
NY 12168
TELEPHONE 518-733-5135
FAX 518-733-6135

QUOTATION

CUSTOMER

:TOWN OF PERU
:HWY DEPT MAIN RD BOX 479
:PERU
:MA ZIP :01235

DELIVERY / /

CUSTOMER TEL. 413-655-8224-EXT-0000

QTY	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
1	EVEREST SDS10SS3039 STAINLESS ALL SEASON BODY SCREEN PACKAGE, POLY SPINNER, LADDER, SPREAD APRON, BODY LADDER, SUMMER FLOOR INSERT, OWSK9-CT -RR REVERSIABLE PLOW, W144 WING, ACC54/HCC72 WING SYS, PT PLOW HITCH, APREAD APRON, BODY LADDER, AIR GATE, PIONEER EDD1500 ASP TARP, HOT SHIFT WET SPLINE PTO, REXROTH HYDRAULIC SYS, CS660 CONTROLLER, REAR POLY FENDERS, WING,SPINNER,WORK LED LIGHTS, BODY ALARM, LED/DOT BODY WARNING LIGH T SYS, DEL CAB AIR CONTROLS, HEATED LED PLOW LIGHTS, 24 TOP PINTLE HITCH, PPG 9001 FRAME & UNDER BODY PAINT, COMPLETE INSTALLATION,	143,995.00 143,995.00

TOTAL -----
\$143,995.00

Done By : _____

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.ma.com

Account Number	Account name	FY25 Budget	FY26 Budget request
	FD & LP	25,000	25,000
	Salary	21600.50	61000
	Maintenance	2000	2,000
	insurance	6,000	6,000
	A		

Submitted by: Danny Cawthon

Date: 3-4-25

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

\$33,000 for 10 new kenwood portable radios to replace out dated portable radios that will not meet states new 800 program

\$31,800 for 6 new kenwood mobile radios for the vehicles to replace out dated radios in vehicles that will not meet states new 800 program

\$30,708 6 new pairs of boots 6 new pairs bunker pants 6 new bunker coats to replace members out dated bunker gear

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

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townadmin@townofperuma.com

Account Number	Account name	FY25 Budget	FY26 Budget request
40503	Health Dept Expenses	16,000	21397
	BRPC	9702	16172
	Nursing	2310	2310
	Water Testing	400	425
	Postage	0	100
	Full Circle		1390
Create line item	Ch 44 S 53E 1/2		1000

Submitted by: _____

Date: _____

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

Thank you,
 Peru Board of Selectmen

Agreement

By and Between

The Town of Peru

And

The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
(as fiscal host for the Berkshire Public Health Alliance)

THIS AGREEMENT made as of the 1st day of July, 2025, is by and between the Town of Peru and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, acting as fiscal host for the Berkshire Public Health Alliance, hereinafter called the COMMISSION.

WHEREAS, the TOWN OF PERU has entered into an Intermunicipal Agreement with other municipalities and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to create the Berkshire Public Health Alliance to improve the delivery of public health services;

WHEREAS, the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission has been designated as the Host Agency for the Berkshire Public Health Alliance;

WHEREAS, professional services are sought to assist the TOWN OF PERU in providing public health services.

NOW, THEREFORE THE PARTIES HERETO DO AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

1. **ENGAGEMENT OF COMMISSION:** The TOWN OF PERU hereby engages the COMMISSION to perform the services set forth herein and the COMMISSION hereby accepts the engagement.
2. **SCOPE OF SERVICES:** The COMMISSION shall perform the necessary services as described in Attachment A.
3. **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TOWN OF PERU:** The TOWN OF PERU shall assume responsibility for assisting the COMMISSION insofar as possible for the purpose of efficiency and furnishing the COMMISSION with information needed to satisfactorily complete the services. The TOWN OF PERU shall appoint the Alliance and/or any individuals working for the Alliance as health agents for the Board of Health prior to any services being performed.
4. **REPORTING:** The COMMISSION will submit written reports to the TOWN OF PERU on the status of professional services as specified in Attachment A, or at other times as required.
5. **TIME OF PERFORMANCE:** The services of the COMMISSION are to commence on or about July 1, 2025, and shall be undertaken and completed in sequence as to assure their expeditious completion. All services required hereunder shall be completed no later than June 30, 2026.
6. **COMPENSATION:** The TOWN OF PERU will pay the COMMISSION \$12,862.00 for work as specified in Attachment A based on a mutually agreed upon invoice procedure.
7. **TERMINATION:** The TOWN OF PERU or COMMISSION may withdraw from this agreement for cause upon 15 days written notice. In case of withdrawal, all finished and unfinished material shall

become the property of the TOWN OF PERU. In the event of termination by the TOWN OF PERU, the COMMISSION will be compensated for services provided to the date of termination.

8. **AMENDMENTS:** This agreement may be amended as agreed to in writing by the signatories hereto.
9. **NON-DISCRIMINATION:** The COMMISSION shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, or national origin.
10. **INDEMNIFICATION:** To the extent permitted by law, the TOWN OF PERU shall indemnify and hold the COMMISSION free from damages or liability resulting from the design, construction, operation or maintenance of the project, and from any subsequent future damage resulting from acts of nature, negligence, vandalism or other causes.
11. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** The COMMISSION shall adhere to the mandates of the Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Statute.
12. **GOVERNING LAW:** This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
13. **COPYRIGHT:** No material prepared in whole or in part under this agreement shall be subject to copyright in the United States of America or in any other country. All material produced under the terms of this agreement is public property and cannot be copyrighted by either the COMMISSION or the TOWN OF PERU.
14. **SEVERABILITY:** If any provision of this Agreement is held invalid, the remainder of the agreement shall not be affected thereby, and all other parts of this agreement shall nevertheless be in full force and effect.
15. **ASSIGNMENT:** This Agreement may not be assigned by either party.

IN WITNESS thereof, the TOWN OF PERU and the COMMISSION have executed this agreement as of the date above written.

TOWN OF PERU:

By: _____

Date: _____

Town of Peru

COMMISSION:

By: _____

Date: _____

Thomas Matuszko, Executive Director

Attachment A

Scope of Services

Under the direction and control of the Peru Board of Health, the Berkshire Public Health Alliance, c/o the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission as Fiscal Host, shall perform public health inspectional services as follows:

- **Septic Systems:** Witnessing of Soil Evaluation/Perc Tests and Title 5 Inspections (see note below), reports, inspections and witnessing as necessary for new construction, repairs and transfers of property. Review plans for Disposal Works Construction Permits
- **Wells:** Review site plans for new/decommissioning of wells/private water supplies.
- **Retail Food Establishments:** Conduct inspections services, including review of permit applications and all required inspections.
- **Housing:** Conduct housing inspections/complaints and follow up. Abandoned or other long-standing housing cases addressed as time allows. Orders to correct and re-inspections, as needed. Quote does not include court time. Court time will be billed at a separate hourly rate of \$75/hr.
- **Public Health Nuisance Complaints:** Inspection and follow-up nuisance complaints that are a risk to public health. These services include orders to correct and re-inspections as needed.
- **Recreational Camps for Children, Pools, Beaches, Family Campgrounds:** Review applications, conduct inspections and re-inspections and submit annual reporting to State (as required).
- **Communication to BOH:** Reporting to the Board of Health throughout the month, as needed, and monthly or quarterly reports to the BOH. Attendance at up to 12 Board of Health meetings annually. Filing state mandated reports, as required.
- **Online Permitting:** Provide technical support for online permitting.
- **Office hours:** Staff the Peru BOH office a total of 6.0 hours a month
- **Other:** All other work normally in the scope of a public health agent's responsibilities.

All services provided to be by fully qualified and certified public health professionals.

SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE TOWN OF PERU:

This quote assumes the Town of Peru will provide administrative/clerical assistance, including:

- **Interact with the Public:** Provide permit applications to individuals or businesses as requested and answer basic questions. Answer phone calls/emails from the public regarding public health matters and leave messages for the Alliance inspector if unable to answer the question and a return call or email is needed. Provide file information requests.
- **Applications/Payments:** Accept completed paperwork and payments. Process and track payments. Review paperwork/applications for completeness.
- **Notification of Alliance Inspector:** Notify Alliance inspector of permit applications/plans received by the office.
- **Annual Renewals:** Mail permit renewals and permits as directed by the inspector/BOH. Process applications and payments through Full Circle and issue permits as directed by the BOH.
- **Mallings:** Mail Order to Correct and T5 Non-Compliance Letters by both first class and certified mail.
- **Board of Health Meeting:** Draft and post meeting agenda, draft meeting minutes, compile packets for BOH meetings.
- **Filing:** Implement filing system as suggested, and file completed paperwork.

This contract does not cover housing court time in Pittsfield. If court time in Pittsfield becomes necessary, inspector will provide technical assistance to the town or BOH, as needed, or is available for an additional \$75 hourly rate.

ATTACHMENT B

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Payment on this contract shall be made as follows:

Public Health Inspectional Services

This AGREEMENT shall be in effect from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. The ALLIANCE will bill the Town of Peru \$3215.50 on a quarterly basis, for a total of \$12,862.00 annually from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026. The first quarterly payment shall be due on July 1 or upon execution of this contract. Subsequent payments shall be due on October 1, January 1, and April 1. Payments shall be due within 30 days of invoicing.