

TOWN HALL 3 EAST MAIN ROAD PERU, MA 01235

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN/FINANCE COMMITTEE JOINT MEETING MINUTES:**

**April 14, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.**

Town Hall Meeting Room

Verne Leach, Chair Selectman  
Samuel Haupt, Selectman/Fin Com  
Edward Munch, Selectman  
Terry Walker, Town Administrator  
Bruce Cullett, Finance Committee Chairman  
Justin Russell, Highway Superintendent  
Paul Hickling, Finance Committee  
Doug Haskins, Finance Committee  
Branden Mascolo, Finance Committee  
Logan Brooks, Assistant Fire Chief

Public Attendees: Heather Brooks

**Item 1: Call to order:** 6:00 P.M.

**Item 2: Roll Call:** Finance Committee Chairman Cullett called the joint meeting to order.

**Roll Call** Finance Committee: Fin Com Chairman Cullett present, Fin Com member Hickling present, Fin Com member Haupt present, Fin Com member Haskins present, Fin Com member Mascolo present  
Selectman Leach present, Selectman Munch present

**Item 3: Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag:** Led by Selectman Leach

**Item 4: State recording status:** Selectman Leach recording for personal reasons under Exemption E

**Item 5: Review and Approve Fin Com Meeting Minutes for 4/1/2026:** Fin Com member Haupt motion to approve 4/1/2026 minutes pending changes, Fin Com member Hickling second, 5-0

**Item 6: Review, discuss and possible vote on FY27 Budget line items:**

Legal	\$9,000	level fund		
Town Administrator	hold			
Selectmen's salary	\$11,719.49	3%		
Selectmen's Exp	\$2,500.00	level fund		
Recording Secretary	\$5,150.00	level fund		
Continuing Ed	\$3,000.00	level fund		
IT Placed on Hold	\$22,450.00		\$5,000.00	Free Cash Laptops
Website	\$1,500.00			
Accountant Services	\$35,100	level fund		
Town Auditor			\$22,000.00	Free Cash
Assessor Salaries	\$29,323.05	3%		
Assessor Expense	\$1,000.00	level fund		
Assessor Services	\$25,000.00	level fund		

Tax Map	\$2,600.00	level fund	
Assessor Computer	\$2,400.00	level fund	
Assessor Utility Appr	\$4,500.00	increase	
Treasurer Salary	\$16,068.00	3%	
Treasurer Exp	\$1,500.00	level	
Bank Charges	\$100.00	level	
Treas Tax Title	\$6,000.00	level	
Tax Collector Sal	\$16,068.00	3%	
Town Clerk Sal	\$16,068.00	3%	
Town Clerk Exp	\$2,595.00	increase	
Asst TC Salary	hold		
Election & BOR	\$8,340.00	increase	State primary and State Election
Con. Com	\$500.00	level	
BRPC	\$746.26	3% increase	
Board of Appeals	\$100.00	level fund	
Officers Mileage	\$1,500.00	level fund	
USPS	\$5,000.00	increase in postage	
Office Supplies	\$2,000.00	level fund	
Police Dept Exp	\$8,539.00	4% increase	
Police Off Wages	\$29,380.75	3% increase	
Cruiser Maint	\$3,850.00	level fund	
Police Chief Salary	\$82,400.00	3% increase	
Emergency Manage.	\$1,000.00	level fund	
Police Cont ed	\$3,000.00	level fund	
Vol Fire Dept exp	\$25,000.00	level fund	
Fire Chief Sal	hold		
Fire Build Maint.	\$2,000.00	level fund	
Fire Dept insurance	\$6,000.00	level fund	
Hinsdale Ambulance	\$3,000.00	level fund	
Insp of Animals	1,037.46	3% increase	
Animal Control Sal	\$2,088.19	3% increase	
Animal Control Exp	\$1,000.00	level fund	
CBRSD oper/trans	\$1,083,751.00	6% increase	
CBRSD capital	\$156,297.00	3% decrease	
Vocational Tuition	\$203,031.00	Smith, Taconic and McCann	
Voke Transp	\$74,887.20	Dufour and Washington Van	
Library	\$23,256.00	level fund	
Road Supt Sal	\$81,954.52	3% increase	
Highway Emp Sal	\$120,000.00	increase	
Temp Summer Help	\$8,000.00	level fund	
Uniforms	\$3,800.00	level fund	
Maint Hard Roads	\$28,000.00	level fund	
Maint gravel Roads	\$25,000.00	level fund	
Road Mach Maint.	\$30,000.00	\$5,000.00 increase	
Gas & Fuel	\$33,000.00	level fund	
Highway & Bridges	\$20,000.00	level fund	
Highway Build Maint.	\$3,000.00	New appropriation	
Hogweed	\$1,500.00	level fund	
Tree Removal	\$25,000.00	level fund	
Snow Roads Public	\$95,500.00	increase	
Health Dept			

Compactor Sal	\$9,446.25	3% increase	
COA exp	\$1,000.00	level fund	
Elderly Outreach	\$650.00	level fund	
Council on Aging Sal	hold		Fin Com unanimously vote from Formula Grant
Cemetery Sexton Sal	\$772.50	3% increase	
Cemetery Exp	\$500.00	level fund	
Vet. Agent Sal	\$546.02	3% increase	
Veterans Serv	\$6,000.00	level fund	
Town Build Maint.	\$15,000.00	\$3,000.00 increase	
Utilities Electric	\$15,000.00	level fund	
Utilities Heating	\$19,000.00	\$2,000.00 increase	
Utilities Telephone	\$1,800.00	level fund	
Town Build Sal	\$6,180.00	3% increase	
Town Hall Cleaning	\$4,900.00	level fund	
Partridge Field	\$\$1,500.00	level fund	
Town Insurance	\$43,553.00	3% decrease	
Town Report	\$2,000.00	level fund	
BCRS Assess	\$69,990.00	\$3,190.00 increase	5%

Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee unanimously voted to approve all line items discussed.  
Bruce Cullett recused from voting on Police Budget Line Items.

FREE CASH CERTIFICATION \$227,423.00

**FREE CASH WISH LIST:**

Sandblasting Plows	\$10,609.25
Snow Roads Deficit	\$48,529.03
Blower for tractor	\$7,500.00
Audit	\$22,000.00
Drains for Highway Garage	\$4,500.00
IT-Replace lap tops	\$5,000.00
Future Equipment	\$50,000.00
Reduce Tax Rate	\$50,000.00
Reserve Fund	\$10,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$208,138.28</b>

Balance in FREE CASH \$19,284.72

**Fire Department:**

Assistant Fire Chief, Logan Brooks explained that the fire department budget was level funded. Fin Com member Hickling would like to see an itemized budget and the fire department planning ahead for large purchases. The BOS and Fin Com were concerned because the Fire Department budget has a zero balance halfway through the year. TA Walker mentioned three invoices from McKesson total \$651.92 and the balance in the FD expense account is \$541.31. If these invoices are paid, the fire chief must request a reserve fund transfer from the Finance Committee. Selectman Haupt mentioned that the Fire Association would take care of these invoices. Logan agreed that itemizing the budget for next year will be improved. Fin Com Chairman Cullett mentioned that Logan should consider purchasing radios. Fin Com member Haupt does not have an issue with fire chief but recommends a 3% increase. Fin Com member Haskins asked if Dan Cawthron was doing his job as Fire Chief. Selectman Munch felt that the fire chief should attend a Selectboard meeting to review his performance.

**Town Administrator:**

Terry Walker, Town Administrator, presented a letter supporting increasing her hours from 25 per week to 29 per week. She provided time sheets and a spread sheet with the average hours worked for the last year averaging 35 per week. Fin Com member Hickling commended Terry’s work on grants, and that she gets results. Fin Com member Hickling recommended the increase. Selectman Munch felt that TA Walker should get both the adjusted 4 hours and a 3% increase. Fin Com Chairman Cullett mentioned that this increase in hours is a vote of the BOS. Fin Com Chairman Cullett also felt that this position should be full time because of the endless hours of work. Fin Com member Haskins felt that TA Walker goes above and beyond and an increase of \$5,200.00 per year is not out of line. Fin Com member Mascolo suggested an assistant. TA Salary was placed on hold.

**Assessor:** Jonathon Mejias, Lead Assessor, requested an additional 3 hours per week, increasing the salary by \$5,200.00. Selectman Leach mentioned since Jonathon requested additional hours the full BOS will make that decision. Fin Com Member Haupt felt that Jonathon has two assistants, and he is not in favor of increasing Jonathon’s hours. He feels that extra hours should be delegated to Jonathon’s Assistants. Head Assessor Salary was placed on hold.

**COA Director:**

At the April 1,2026 Fin Com meeting, Bonny DiTomasso’s salary was recalculated. Her salary was increased to \$5,200.00 and the salary would be funded entirely by Formula Grant. This would not be a town appropriation and a unanimous vote by the Fin Com. Since the hours will be increased by 3 hours, Selectman Leach mentioned that additional hours need to be voted for by the entire Selectboard. COA Salary was placed on hold.

**Assistant Town Clerk:**

Since the hours will be increased by ½ hour, Selectman Leach mentioned that additional hours for the Assistant Town Clerk needs to be a vote by the entire Selectboard. Assistant Town Clerk Salary placed on hold.

**Item 7: Review, discuss and possible vote on any FY26 requests to Transfer Funds: None**

**Item 8: Public Input: N//A**

**Next joint meeting with Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee, Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.**

**Item 9: Adjourn:** Fin Com Chairman Cullett motion to adjourn the 4/14/2026 Fin Com meeting, Fin Com member Haskins second 5-0 The 4/14/2026 Fin Com meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

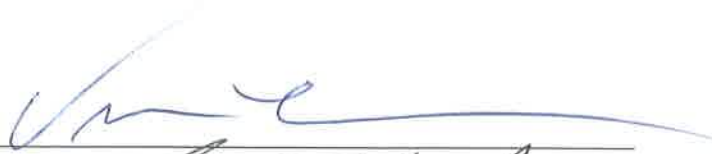
Selectman Leach motion to adjourn the 4/14/2026 joint meeting, Selectman Munch second, 3-0. The 4/14/2026 meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

**Articles used:**

- 4/1/2026 minutes
- FY27 Budget Worksheet
- Town of Washington email transportation budget
- Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School letter 2026/2027 student tuition
- Town Administrator Terry Walker email and spreadsheet
- IT budget (Revolution)

*Terry Walker*  
*Recording Secretary*

Verne Leach, Chairman



Samuel Haupt, Selectman



Edward Munch, Selectman



Date Approved: 4/28/26

Bruce Cullett, Chairman Fin Com



Paul Hickling, Fin Com

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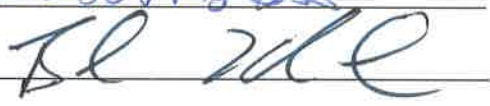
Samuel Haupt, Fin Com

N/A

Doug Haskins, Fin Com



Branden Mascolo, Fin Com



Date approved: 4/28/26

Received 5/28/2026  
Kim Leach, Town Clerk