

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Peru Community Center

3 East Main Rd. Peru MA

Monday, August 1, 2022 @ 6:00 PM

1. Call to order
2. Roll Call
3. State recording status
4. Pledge Allegiance to the Flag
5. Review and Approve BOS Meeting Minutes for 6/27/22, 7/11/22 and 7/25/22
6. Updates of Departments
7. Discussion and possible vote to approve Election Warrant for 2022 State Primary Election.
8. Discussion and possible vote to address "The VOTES Act".
9. Discussion and possible vote to select a contractor for town's Assessing Services.
10. Discussion and update regarding Peru 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration.
11. Public input
12. Review and Approve Accounts payable, Treasury Warrant, Payroll Warrant.
13. Adjourn

The list of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Board which may be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

Official posting: Peru Town website: [www.townofperuma.com](http://www.townofperuma.com)

Posted July 28, 2022 @ 4:15pm , *Kim Leach, Town Clerk*

TOWN HALL 3 EAST MAIN ROAD PERU, MA 01235

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES: August 1, 2022: 6:00 P.M.**

Peru Community Center

Verne Leach, Chair Selectman/ACO  
Doug Haskins, Selectman/Finance Committee  
James Welch, Town Administrator  
Terry Walker, Administrative Assistant  
Jesse Pelkey, Fire Chief  
Justin Russell, Highway Superintendent  
Tom Sears, Building Inspector

Public Attendees: N/A

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

**Item 2: Roll Call:** Chairman Leach present, Selectman Haskins present, Selectman Cullett absent.

**Item 3: State Recording status:** Selectman Leach for personal use

**Item 4: Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag:** Led by Selectman Leach

**Item 5: Review and Approve BOS Meeting Minutes for 6/27/2022, 7/11/2022, and 7/25/2022**

6/27/2022 Hold

7/11/2022 hold

Selectman Leach motion to approve 7/25/2022 minutes pending changes, Selectman Haskins second, 2-0

**Item 6: Update of Departments:**

Highway Superintendent Russell mentioned that he received a letter from MassDot and during FY23 State Route 143 will receive funding for roadway improvements. Through the passage of the 2021 Transportation Bond Bill, the Baker-Polito Administration authorized the establishment of the Municipal Pavement Program. This program will improve the condition of municipally owned state numbered routes. The funding will be used to improve the safety and accessibility for all modes of transportation. There will be a webinar on Tuesday, August 9<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. and Thursday, August 18<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and it is mandatory for a representative from Peru to attend the webinar. Russell mentioned that half of the material for the paving project has been delivered for the Massworks project that will begin the first week of September. A Loader has been rented and it is being put to good use. Selectman Haskins questioned if an engineer has been assigned to the Route 143 project. Superintendent Russell mentioned that all questions will be answered at the webinar.

Finance Committee Chairman Pelkey asked the Board of Selectman if the dues for the MMA could be paid out of the Selectmen's Expense account. The Selectman agreed to pay \$138.00 for MMA dues out of the Selectmen's Expense Account.

Fire Chief Pelkey mentioned he spoke to the Town Accountant and as soon as Town Treasurer signs the check for Fire Department vehicle, and he receives the check he will be going to Belmont without any reimbursements. Fire Chief Pelkey plans to go Thursday, August 4<sup>th</sup> to pick up the vehicle. Fire Chief Pelkey also presented the fee schedule and Fire Chief salaries in neighboring towns. This was not discussed because the fee schedule was not on the agenda, and it will be discussed on August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Fire Chief Pelkey spoke with Mass Fire Tech and Safety, and they will be coming on Monday, August 8<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. to check the fire extinguishers at the highway, town hall and fire dept. Highway Superintendent Russell mentioned that he is the contact person, and he needs advance notice. Russell will call Mass Fire Tech and Safety because he will not be at the Highway Garage on Monday morning.

Fire Chief Pelkey questioned why his disciplinary letter is going to be placed in his personnel file as a permanent record when he has never seen the personnel handbook. Fire Chief explained how other employees have done something similar and why hasn't a disciplinary letter been placed in other employee's permanent record. TA Welch explained the Board has adopted a Progressive Disciplinary Policy.

1. TA Welch had face to face meeting with Chief Pelkey to discuss the issue.
2. Written warning presented by Board of Selectmen by Chief Pelkey.
3. Suspension
4. Termination

TA Welch explained the procedure had been followed. Selectman Leach stated that Fire Chief Pelkey admitted he had acted out of spite and that is the problem. Selectman Leach reiterated that the Fire Chief knows right from wrong. Fire Chief Pelkey was told not to go to other towns for internal problems and to work this out with the Board of Selectmen in this town. Fire Chief Pelkey stated he is not trying to hide anything, but this issue was discussed before he was given the right to an executive session. Selectman Leach stated that it was brought up with the Police Chief updates and Fire Chief Pelkey was then given the right to an executive session.

Tim Sears, Building Inspector, discussed Upcode books for Building and Fire Department. A discussion about books or updates done electronically. One user between the building department and fire department would be less expensive. Fire codes are derived from building codes and the two departments work together. The Selectmen asked the Building Inspector and Fire Chief for a proposal with an explanation, and it will be placed on next week's agenda.

TA Welch mentioned that Patricia Talbot is not interested as serving as the COA Director at this time. Selectman Leach would like for the TA to contact the COA Director in Worthington to fill in as Peru's COA Director.

Fire Chief Pelkey had not signed the disciplinary letter when he and TA Welch met regarding disciplinary action and refused to sign it because he had never seen the disciplinary handbook. Selectman Leach said Fire Chief Pelkey's action was very disturbing. Fire Chief Pelkey mentioned that he reinstated Police Chief Cullett the next day after he was questioned by the board. TA Welch said it was the severity of his actions and the correct procedure is going through the steps with the Board of Selectman. Step 1 is signing the letter. Fire Chief reiterated that he had not seen disciplinary handbook and refused to sign the disciplinary letter. The Selectmen agreed to place the letter in Fire Chief Pelkey's personnel file and mention that Fire Chief Pelkey opted not to sign the disciplinary letter.

Selectman Leach has received complaints regarding the car that is parked at the Fire Station /Town Park with jagged metal and broken glass. Fire Chief was asked to move the car to the old Fire Station or 40 East Main Street since there aren't any kids around those locations. Fire Chief Pelkey stated that he will have car removed Tuesday. Chief Pelkey also mentioned that he will check with the state to see if he can burn the car. Selectman Haskins mentioned that even if the state says its legal, he is not in favor of a bon fire.

**Item 7: Discussion and possible vote to approve Election Warrant for 2022 State Primary Election.**

Selectman Leach motion to approve the 2022 State Primary Election Warrant, Selectman Haskins second, 2-0.

**Item 8: Discussion and possible vote to address "The VOTES Act":**

Selectman Leach motion to approve "The Votes Act", keeping the responsibility of elections on the Town Clerk and Police Chief, Selectman Haskins second, 2-0

**Item 9: Discussion and possible vote to select a contractor for Town's Assessing Services:** TA Welch contacted the towns of Heath, Colrain, Leyden and Shelburne and all 4 towns are happy with Patriots assessing services. Selectman Cullett is not present but is in favor of Patriots. Selectman Leach motion to hire Patriots Properties for the Town Assessing Services, Selectman Haskins second, 2-0.

**Item 10: Discussion and update regarding Peru's 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration:** Selectman Leach mentioned that Ozzy's bill has not been received. Invoice for Lion's Club dinner was submitted.

**Item 11: Public Input:**

**Item 12: Review and Approve Accounts Payable, Treasury Warrant, Payroll Warrant:** N/A

**Item 13: Adjourn:** Selectman Leach made motion to adjourn the 08/01/2022 BOS Meeting, Selectman Haskins second, Vote 2-0. The 08/01/2022 BOS Meeting adjourned at 7:29 P.M.

**Articles used:**

- Minutes 7/25/2022
- State Primary Warrant
- The VOTES Act Letter
- Assessor proposals for contractor
- Bill for town dinner
- Fire Chief Spreadsheet with inspection fees and fire chief salaries
- Fire Chief Disciplinary Letter

Respectfully Submitted,

*Terry Walker*  
*Administrative Assistant*

Verne Leach, Chairman

Doug Haskins, Selectman



Date Approved: 8-8-22

RECEIVED  
AUG 09 2022  
*Kim Leach*  
TOWN CLERK  
TOWN OF PERU