

TOWN HALL 3 EAST MAIN ROAD PERU, MA 01235

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES: December 9, 2024, 6:00 P.M.**

Town Hall Meeting Room

Verne Leach, Chair Selectman  
Sam Haupt, Selectman  
Ed Munch, Selectman  
Terry Walker, Town Administrator  
Bruce Cullett, Police Chief

Public Attendees:

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

**Item 2: Roll Call:** Chairman Leach present, Selectman Haupt present, Selectman Munch present

**Item 3: State Recording status:** TA Walker, Selectman Leach under section E for personal reasons

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

**Item 5: Review and Approve BOS Meeting Minutes for 11/25/2024**

Selectman Leach motion to approve 11/25/2024 minutes pending changes, Selectman Munch second 3-0

**Item 6: Update of Departments:**

**Police Department:** nothing new to report

**Emergency Department:** EMD Cullett mentioned that Item 8 is on the agenda regarding the signatures on the grant contract to supplement cost of skid unit for UTV.

**Building Needs and Assessment Committee:** Bruce Cullett mentioned that the RFQ's for the Town Hall Feasibility study are due tomorrow, and the committee will meet Wednesday, December 11, 2024 to review and rank the top 3. The committee will bring their recommendation of the top three to the Board of Selectmen for review. If the BOS agree with the committee, they can sit with the selected designer and negotiate the cost. The cost is not part of the selection process.

**Town Administrator:** TA Walker informed the BOS that Assessor Susan Koziara is having necessary surgery on 12/20/2024 and will be on sick leave recuperating for 4 weeks. Susan should be back Martin Luther King week. After the first two weeks of recovering, Susan will be working from home on 2 projects. The first project is coding property records cards as owner occupied and unoccupied buildings, this is necessary for next revaluation. Secondly, Susan will be downloading and entering all deeds. Selectman Leach asked TA Walker to notify Treasurer Wendling that Susan Koziara will receive two weeks paid sick time and she will be working the remaining two weeks from home. The BOS agreed to Ms. Koziara's time off with pay.

TA Walker received an email from Leslie Blake-Davis-Supt of Schools. She mentioned that she will be attending meetings and will be reporting to the BOS. TA Walker was instructed to thank Leslie for attending the meetings and the BOS look forward to her feedback.

Selectman Haupt mentioned an email from Peggy White, BOH, regarding the necessary information to receive a grant for participating in Full Circle. Selectman Leach mentioned that TA Walker will be handling all information that will be sent to Berkshire Alliance for the reimbursement.

It was also noted that Valerie Bird, Board of Health Agent, is requesting a revolving account for the Board of Health which would be used for land court costs. The BOS mentioned that this needs to be placed on Annual Town Meeting warrant.

**Item 7: Discussion and possible vote on quotes for the Town Hall Heat to be serviced:** TA Walker has received one quote. Some discussion regarding paying prevailing wage that needs to be paid to all contractors. Selectman Munch recommended calling town council and getting the correct answer regarding prevailing wage. This was placed on hold.

**Item 8: Discussion and possible vote on Emergency management grant for a UTV:** Selectman Leach motion to approve contract, Selectman Haupt second, 3-0. Selectman Leach motion to appoint Chief Cullett as a signatory on the contract, Selectman Haupt second, 3-0.

**Item 9: Discussion on MIIA Inspections on town buildings:** TA Walker mentioned that she has emailed Jordan Meyer and Paul Bowley several times and neither has responded. TA Walker was instructed to call them. This was placed on hold.

**Item 10: Update on Town Hall Entrance:** The BOS agreed to remove the interior door in the entrance because the door lock keeps freezing up. The BOS are looking for ways to get heat to the outside door in the vestibule. Selectman Haupt and Mitch from Renatus are working on the keypad. Building Inspector Sears was asked if the inside door could be removed. Building Inspector Sears stated that the inside door could not be removed because it is a 5-foot vestibule for the fire alarm. Removing the inside door would be against code. Tim suggested leaving the ladies room door open to heat the vestibule.

**Item 11: Update on Communication to the Labor Board referring Community Center:** Selectman Leach mentioned that Selectman Haupt's letter was written very nicely. Selectman Haupt was instructed to send email, with all three selectman's names and state that the Board of Selectman agreed to the letter.

**Item 12: Public Input:** none

**Item 13: Review and approve Accounts payable, Treasury Warrant and Payroll Warrant:** V12-2025

**Item 14: Adjourn:** Selectman Leach made a motion to adjourn the 12/09/2024 BOS Meeting, Selectman Munch second, Vote 3-0. The 12/09/2024 BOS Meeting adjourned at 7:01 P.M.

**Articles used:**

V12-2025

11/25/2024 minutes

Communication Letter Community Center

Email from Leslie Blake-Davis

*Terry Walker*

*Recording Secretary*

Verne Leach, Chairman

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Sam Haupt, Selectman

*Sam Haupt*  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ed Munch, Selectman

*Ed Munch*  
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Date Approved: 12/3/24

Received February 10, 2025  
Kim Leach, Town Clerk

Draft Report to DOL – 12/9/2024

As you are aware, in response to a request from the Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards (Dept.), an air quality assessment was performed at Peru Town Hall on or about July 30, 2024. You were copied with that report.

While we understand the indoor air testing results were all within normal limits, the Town has taken a number of steps to mitigate any ongoing concerns regarding the air quality in Peru Town Hall. Some of these steps were outlined in our prior response to the Dept. including the removal of ceiling tiles and clean up of the lower-level storage area and crawl space together with the addition of a new flush steel entry door, sealing of the foundation office walls and covering the crawl space dirt floor with polyethylene. Dehumidification and exhaust systems have also been installed in the space that has been sealed off from the public and staff.

In line with the recommendations contained in the Department of Public Health October 2024 report, exterior improvements designed to eliminate water infiltration of the Peru Town Hall include, but are not limited to the removal of an existing wooden ramp at the front entry to the building with the installation of a new impermeable concrete slab with new building framing to extend the roof over the front entry area and when the weather permits, installation of a new gutter system.

Additionally, while not directly related to any moisture issue, the Town intends to investigate the combination exhaust flue – combustion air configuration in the AHU sheds keeping in mind these sheds are separate and apart from the Peru Town Hall itself.

In conclusion, the Town takes the safety and welfare of the public and staff seriously and will continue to monitor conditions in the building. Should you have any questions regarding the foregoing information, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sam Haupt  
Town of Peru Select Board



## CENTRAL BERKSHIRE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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December 4, 2024

Verne Leach  
Select Board Chair  
Town of Peru

Dear Verne Leach,

I am writing as the Superintendent of Central Berkshire Regional School District to reach out and let you know that I am interested and willing to attend scheduled upcoming meetings that would assist in answering questions about the budget, including Central Berkshire's fiscal priorities for the 2025-2026 school year. I believe that our success as a District in providing a high-quality education rest on the support we receive from our communities and I am grateful for the ongoing outreach.

The School Committee Meeting scheduled for **January 23, 2025, will be designated as a Preliminary State Budget Public Hearing** in response to requests from our towns to provide more information regarding the state's Chapter 70 formula and how it relates to each town's Required Local Contribution. We have arranged for a guest speaker, Tracy Novick, to present an information session focused on Chapter 70 and hopefully FY26 information based on the release of the Governor's budget. This meeting will begin at **6:00 pm at Nessacus Middle School** to allow adequate time for Ms. Novick to present a comprehensive picture of budgetary processes. Ms. Novick is a well-known expert in this field and holds the title of Field Director of School Finance at the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC). All Seven Member town Select boards and finance committees are invited to attend.

Please note that we will still hold our annual February Budget Hearing for our Seven Member Towns to specifically review **Central Berkshire's Tentative FY26 Budget on February 13, 2025.**

Additionally, Beth O'Connor, my executive administrative assistant, will send a schedule regarding these important budgetary dates to all 7 Town Select Boards and Town Finance Committees. This will include a rescheduling of the Public hearing focused on the proposed CBRSD Regional Agreement.

Thank you ahead of time for considering allocating time for my attendance at upcoming meetings, which would continue to foster a spirit of collaboration, collegiality, and cohesiveness. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Leslie Blake-Davis".

Leslie Blake-Davis  
Superintendent of Schools

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