

TOWN HALL 3 EAST MAIN ROAD PERU, MA 01235

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES: October 27, 2025, 6:00 P.M.**

Town Hall Meeting Room

Verne Leach, Chair Selectman  
Samuel Haupt, Selectman  
Edward Munch, Selectman  
Terry Walker, Recording Secretary  
Shana Lecours, Assessor  
Jonathon Mejias, Assessor

Public Attendees: Coralee Pelkey

**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 recording, Selectman Leach recording for personal reasons under exemption E, Assessor Jonathon Mejias recording

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

**Item 5: Review and Approve BOS Meeting Minutes for 10/20/2025:** Selectman Leach motion to approve 10/20/2025 minutes pending changes, Selectman Munch second, 3-0.

**Item 6: Update from Departments:**

**Highway Department:**

Superintendent Russell mentioned that the guardrails on Route 143 will be installed within the next few weeks. The guardrails will be funded with the remaining \$300,000 from the MassWorks grant.

On Wednesday, Foresight completed an assessment of the culverts and once the estimate is received the town can apply for an engineering grant.

**Council on Aging:**

COA Director, Bonny DiTomasso, mentioned that she and Town Administrator, Terry Walker had attended the 51st Annual Elder Services meeting in Pittsfield, MA at the Pittsfield Country Club. Executive Director Christopher McLaughlin recognized efforts of the Peru COA and participation at the meetings.

COA Director Bonny DiTomasso also attended a COA meeting in Hinsdale on BRTA transportation for Peru residents. The newspaper stated that BRTA transportation was free to seniors and Bonny mentioned that Peru seniors must pay \$30.00 each way. Bonny will be investigating the issues regarding transportation cost to Peru seniors.

**Maintenance:**

- Ed Munch mentioned that before the town hall septic line is fixed in mid-November, the gas line needs to be located.

- Ed mentioned that the sealant applied to the walls in the meeting room is working and he will be painting the walls within the month. Ed also mentioned that he fixed the assessor's door and the baseboards from the meeting room are at his house being power washed.

**Transfer Station:**

Ed Munch mentioned that the inspection was completed at the transfer station and the report stated that everything is good.

**Town Administrator:**

TA Walker mentioned that there is \$250,000 equipment grant available through MassWorks which can be used to purchase equipment for the highway department. The grant is due on January 6, 2026.

**Assessors:**

- Jonathon Mejias and Shana Lecours arrived at 7:00 p.m. Jonathon mentioned that he is recording the meeting.
- Selectman Munch mentioned that they do not have a lead assessor and Jonathon and Shana will be running the office.

Jonathon mentioned that he was caught off guard and the tax rate needs to be set, and he feels that he is qualified to take over as the head assessor for the following reasons:

- He mentioned that the LA4 was submitted tonight and he has contacted Linda Bradley and Paula King from DLS to assist with the transition.
- Jonathon questioned if the BOS wanted him to work more hours. Selectman Munch asked Jonathon how much knowledge and training is needed as a head assessor.
- Jonathon mentioned that he has worked for the City of Greenfield and the City of Pittsfield in the assessor's offices. He worked as an assessor in both Greenfield and Pittsfield completing all clerical work for the Board of assessors. Jonathon feels he is qualified to be the head assessor and he has references/supervisors in Greenfield and Pittsfield that would verify his abilities in the assessors' offices.
- Selectman Haupt asked Jonathon if he had helped with Appellate Tax Board hearings. Jonathon stated that he had helped prepare material for the ATB hearings.
- Jonathon stated that he was supervised by DLS in Greenfield and Pittsfield.
- Jonathon mentioned that he is knowledgeable on how abatements and commitments are processed.
- Shana Lecours felt it was not necessary for the lead assessor to have completed the 101 course because the Department of Local Services trains and supports new assessors.
  - Shana Lecours is Jonathon's senior; she does not have a problem with Jonathon becoming the lead assessor. She stated that she is good where she is and does not want to apply for the lead assessor position.
- Selectman Leach encouraged Jonathon and Shana to utilize DLS Bureau of Assessment for assistance.
- Selectman Haupt mentioned that Jonathon needs to understand the position needs to be posted and he will need to apply for the position like anyone else. Selectman Haupt mentioned that he is an attorney and during a hearing the ATB supports the taxpayer. Jonathon stated that during an ATB hearing it is not about your personal feelings -you must focus on the assessed value. Selectman Haupt asked Jonathon if he had worked on the issues with charitable organizations. Jonathon said he was aware of the process but didn't know the specifics. Selectman Haupt asked Jonathon if there are any ATB cases pending. Jonathon said he was unaware of any pending ATB cases in Peru.
- Selectman Munch asked Jonathon if he could work his main job and work as the head assessor. Jonathon stated that he is scheduled to be laid off by the end of the year and is looking for a job. Selectman Munch made it clear that he may be working a lot of hours that he won't get paid for.
- TA Walker presented the Selectboard and the Board of Assessors with the following items from Susan Koziara and wanted this to be reflected in the BOS minutes:

- Assessor's Lap Top computer, thumb drive and all keys to the assessor's office door, filing cabinets and mailbox were given to Shana Lecours and Jonathon Mejias. TA Walker gave Susan Koziara's front door key to Chairman Leach.
- The BOS agreed that if Jonathon works more hours, until a lead assessor is hired, he should get paid for his time. Selectman Haupt instructed Jonathon to keep a time sheet time for extra hours worked.
- Selectman Leach asked Jonathon and Shana when the classification hearing can be set. Jonathon stated that he is not sure about the date of the classification hearing.
- Selectman Munch instructed Jonathon and Shana to discuss any problems with the Board of Selectmen. Selectman Munch mentioned that TA Walker is also a good contact person for the assessors and felt that everyone must work together as a group.

**Item 7: Review and possible vote to approve and release the Meeting Minutes from the Executive Session held on 9/22/2025:**

Selectman Haupt motion to approve the Executive Session minutes from 9/22/2025, Selectman Munch second, 2-0  
Selectman Leach recused himself.

**Item 8: Susan Koziara resignation letter from the Board of Assessors:**

The BOS did not agree with Susan Koziars's letter of resignation. Selectman Haupt had hoped Sue would come to the BOS with issues because she was an asset to the town and did a great job. Selectman Leach stated that he did not laugh at Susan during the executive session meeting as she stated. Selectman Munch felt that the BOS had supported her with issues in the past. Selectman Leach motion to accept Susan Koziara's letter of resignation, Selectman Munch second, 3-0.

Board agreed to advertise the position on the town website and have Treasurer Wendling advertise on MMA website. Selectman Leach would like to the job description "a 101 course is required to apply for head assessor position".

**Item 9: Discussion and possible vote on migrating the Town Website from Drupal 7 to Municipal Web Central**

**Platform:** Selectman Leach mentioned that the present website will not be hosted in the future and the town website needs to be migrated to Municipal Web Central. Civic Plus will not raise the cost until FY27 and the appropriation for FY26-\$3,000 will be accepted for this year. The cost for FY27 will be \$4,800. Selectman Leach motion to migrate the town website from Drupal 7 to Municipal Web Central Platform, Selectman Haupt second, 3-0. Selectman Leach agreed to assist with the set up.

**Item 10: Discussion and possible vote on policies for the Highway Department employees, Waste Fill and Roadside**

**wood:** Superintendent Russell distributed the Highway Department Policy from 2018 with some revisions. This was placed on hold until the next BOS meeting

**Waste Fill-** This will be added to the Highway tab on the town website. Selectman Leach mentioned that it looks fine but needs a date.

**Roadside wood:** residents need to ask Justin for the firewood and the firewood needs to be removed the same day. Selectman Leach mentioned that this policy needs a date.

The BOS agreed that the following policies should be discussed at the next meeting:

- Transfer Station Policy
- Finalize Highway Department policy
- Metal Dumpster
- Legal Council

**Item 11: Discussion and possible vote on more efficient Transfer Station Stickers:**

Selectman Leach suggested punch cards because transfer station stickers cost the town around \$2,000 per year. The Board agreed to continue with stickers and the stickers could be paid for with recycling dividends checks. Selectman Munch suggested increasing the cost of stickers to \$75.00 per household. Selectman Munch motion to continue to use stickers that do not expire, Selectman Haupt second. 3-0.

**Item 12: Public Input:** Coralee Pelkey will be starting an outreach program for the Holiday Season. She will be accepting cash, gift cards or checks that will be distributed to the needy. This Saturday a container will be placed at the Transfer station for donations. Checks may be written to the Peru Congregational Church, attn Coralee Pelkey-Treasurer, 37 North Road, Peru, MA 01235.

**Item 13: Review and Approve accounts payable, Treasury Warrants, Payroll Warrants: V09-2026**

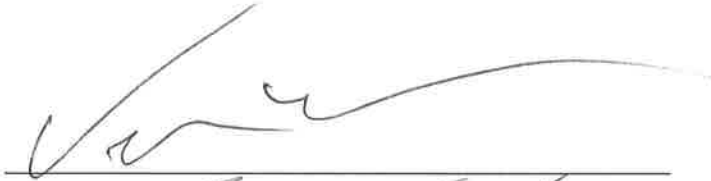
**Item 14: Adjourn:** Selectman Leach made a motion to adjourn the 10/27/2025 BOS Meeting, Selectman Munch second, Vote 3-0. The 10/27/2025 BOS Meeting adjourned at 7:13 P.M.

**Articles used:**

- Minutes- 10/20/2025
- Executive Session minutes – 9/22/2025
- Warrant- V09-2026
- Susan Koziara letter of resignation
- Email from CivicPlus town website host
- Highway policy
- Roadside wood policy
- Waste Fill policy

*Terry Walker*  
*Recording Secretary*

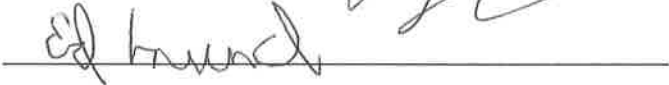
Verne Leach, Chairman



Samuel Haupt, Selectman



Edward Munch, Selectman



Date Approved: 11/10/25

Received 11-10-2025  
Kim Leach Town Clerk

October 22, 2025

Town of Peru

Board of Selectmen

3 East Main Road – Suite 102

Peru, MA. 01235

Dear Selectmen,

On August 11, 2025, I asked to meet with the Selectmen regarding two issues in the Assessor's office. I brought to your attention an ongoing problem with another employee in the Assessor's office. I told you of incidents that happened in our office and how I was treated, and you did nothing about it but to tell us to "be respectful". In fact, Selectman Leach disrespected me by laughing when I was speaking, and I told him it was not a laughing matter.

On August 25, 2025, another incident occurred with that same employee that you were notified of by the Town Administrator and you did nothing about that one either.

Therefore, as of today, October 22, 2025, I resign as Assessor for the Town of Peru. I can no longer work under these circumstances when continual problems arise with a fellow employee in my office and they are brought to your attention, and you feel no reprimand, correctional action or anything, for that matter, is warranted. It is unfortunate because I enjoyed my time working for the Town of Peru and the townspeople but can no longer work in such an unhealthy environment that is not professionally managed.

I expect this letter of resignation to be made part of the public record of the Selectmen's minutes.

Sincerely,

Susan Koziara

cc Town Administrator

File

## Town Administrator

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**From:** Corey Abbate <corey.abbate@civicplus.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 14, 2025 1:59 PM  
**To:** Town Administrator  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Peru, MA & CivicPlus Municipal Websites - Initial Discussion Overview  
**Attachments:** Marketing - Municipal Websites - Brochure - Central Starter - March 2025.pdf

Howdy Terry,

Thanks again for chatting with me briefly over the phone today. As requested, I have detailed the topic of our discussion for Monday below. Please let me know if you have any additional questions ahead of our meeting next week ● I would also recommend completing this scoping form if you have the time: [scoping survey](#)

Currently the Town of Peru's website is hosted by CivicPlus on the Drupal 7 Platform. Earlier this year, the Drupal 7 platform began its End of Life service and CivicPlus has been connecting with our clients to migrate them from Drupal 7 to our proprietary CMS called Municipal Web Central.

During our initial discussion, we will review the Drupal 7 EOL, discuss options for your new website design, and review the implementation/migration timeline. If we have time, I will also provide a brief demonstration of the new website platform, showcasing the dashboard & modules that your team will be able to use to better engage with your community.

Currently, a renewal hold was placed on the Town of Peru's website and your town has NOT been invoiced for this current service year (July 1, 2025 thru June 30 2026). The total expected for renewal prior to this migration was \$3518.86. There will be an increase in your annual cost as part of this migration, and I will be able to share further details on your pricing when we connect next week.

For the migration of your website, CivicPlus has waived the cost of our [Standard Templated designs](#), Content Migration, and Group Training (3 seats). You will also be migrated to our Web Central Starter package (I have included a fact sheet for your review).

**Thanks,**

**Corey Abbate, CPRP** (he/him/his)

Account Manager II • CivicPlus

P: 785-370-7796

[civicplus.com](#) – [Book a meeting with me](#)

*Town of Peru  
Massachusetts*



**Town of Peru Highway Department  
Policy and Procedures**

**Trial Period**

The first three months of your employment will constitute a trial or probationary period. Upon completion of this period, your performance will be reviewed by the Board of Selectmen. A satisfactory review may mean that you will become a permanent employee.

**Employee Rating and Promotion**

Following the trial period and evaluation, and every year thereafter on July 1<sup>st</sup> of the new Fiscal Year, a raise may be given at the discretion of the Board of Selectmen.

**Working Hours**

The work week shall begin at 12:00am on Sunday and end at 11:59pm the following Saturday. Normal working hours shall be 6:00am to 2:30pm Monday through Friday. These hours are subject to change during snow and ice season or for any other reason.

**Pay Day and Payroll Deductions**

Pay day will be Friday. Employees shall be paid every two weeks for work performed during the preceding two weeks. Under State and Federal Laws, the Town of Peru is required to withhold a portion of your weekly earnings to pay your mandatory Deferred Compensation/Berkshire County Retirement, Federal and State Income Taxes, and Medicare taxed. By January 31<sup>st</sup> of each year, you will receive a statement (W-2) of your total earnings and taxes withheld for the preceding year.

**Absence from Work and Tardiness**

It is necessary that employees report to work regularly and on time. Tardiness and absence from work interferes with efficiency of operations. If you must be absent from work or late, you are required to advise the Board of Selectmen as early as possible, unless there is an emergency. Chronic absenteeism will not be excused unless there is a valid reason. Repeated absence or tardiness will be grounds for disciplinary action, including the possibility of dismissal.

**Vacation**

Vacation must be used by June 30<sup>th</sup> of that Fiscal Year unless other arrangements have been made:

After 6 months - 1 week  
After 2 years- 2 weeks  
After 5 years- 3 weeks

- Vacation with pay shall be credited on July 1<sup>st</sup> at the beginning of the Fiscal Year
- Employees must give two weeks notice for vacation time unless approved by the Highway Superintendent
- Vacation time will not be carried over to the next Fiscal Year
- Vacation must be used by June 30<sup>th</sup> of that Fiscal Year

**Wages and Benefits**

**Full-time employees:** Employees who normally work 40hrs/week. Full-time employees qualify for benefits such as vacation time, paid holidays, personal days, sick leave and insurance benefits.

**Part-time employees:** Employees who work on a temporary/part-time basis for the Highway Department. Part-time employees do not qualify for benefits. Part-time employees are temporary employees and are hired on an "as needed" basis according to the workload.

**Holidays**

All full-time employees shall be entitled to the following paid holiday:

New Year's Day  
Martin Luther King Day  
President's Day  
Patriots Day  
Memorial Day  
Juneteenth

Fourth of July  
Labor Day  
Columbus Day  
Veteran's Day  
Thanksgiving  
Floating Holiday-Day after Thanksgiving  
Christmas Day

If employees are required to work on holidays, they shall receive 1.5 times their regular pay rate plus the paid holiday time. Holiday compensation shall be paid for each of the above-mentioned holidays to all employees who:

- Have completed their trial period
- Have worked during the week in which the holiday occurs, unless that week is a week of their vacation.
- Have worked the scheduled day before and after the holiday. The failure to work on their assigned days will result in the employee forfeiting the holiday pay.

### **Pay Scale**

Starting pay for all new employees shall be based on their qualifications. There shall be a 90-day probationary period for all new employees.

### **Personal Days**

Three personal days shall be granted to each full-time employee after one year of employment. Personal days may not be taken in conjunction with holiday time or vacation time. Personal days require at least one week notice in advance and approved by the Board of Selectmen or Highway Superintendent. Emergency situations will be granted immediately.

### **Sick Time**

Four sick days will be granted to each full-time employee after one year of employment.

### **Employee Lunch Period**

Each employee shall be granted an unpaid lunch period of 30 minutes during the workday. Times may vary according to the work schedule.

### **Coffee Break**

A 15-minute break shall be granted for each 4 hours worked. Therefore, one 15-minute break will be granted each morning. If the workday extends beyond 2:30pm an additional 15-minute break may be allowed depending on the length of the day.

### **Insurance**

The Town of Peru will pay 80 percent of the cost of health and life insurance (as of the date of this document). The Town reserves the right to increase or decrease the Town share.

### **Death in the Immediate Family**

Every employee who has completed their trial period shall receive a leave of absence not to exceed five working days in the event of a death in their immediate family. Employees eligible shall receive their regular straight time pay for actual time lost from normal the normal work week provided that the employee attends the funeral the deceased relative. Immediate family shall include the spouse, child, parent, sister, and brother. Paid funeral leave may not be taken before the date of death or after the date of the funeral. Time lost from work due to the death in the family shall not be included in the employee's total working hours when computing overtime pay. One day funeral leave shall be granted for the death of a grand-parent, mother-in-law, and father-in-law.

### **Maintenance and Care of Equipment**

Employees will be working with expensive equipment either owned or rented by the Town. It is important to take care of and maintain the equipment. Careless treatment or neglect of equipment may result in unnecessary expenses for the Town. Employees will be held responsible for damage done to equipment by carelessness or negligence and in certain circumstances to be determined by the Selectmen, will be expected to reimburse the Town for such damages. The Selectmen may also take disciplinary action which may result in dismissal.

### **Town Equipment**

No town equipment shall be used for personal use.

### **Clothing**

Employees are required to wear steel-toed work boots. Uniforms are provided after the completion of the probationary period. An additional \$400 dollar boot/foul weather clothing allowance will be granted after the completion of the probationary period.

### **Stealing**

Stealing any property belonging to the Town of Peru, a fellow coworker, or any supplies will not be tolerated. Any employee who steals or attempts to steal such property will be subject to immediate discharge and prosecution as may be permitted by law. (Please refer to the Town of Peru Disciplinary Policy)

### **Narcotics and Barbiturates**

Since there are many State and Federal laws regulating the distribution and use of narcotics and barbiturates, the Town of Peru has established strict proceedings concerning them. Any such employee who reports to work using these drugs or used such

drugs during working hours will be subject to disciplinary actions, including the possibility of dismissal. (Please refer to the Town of Peru Disciplinary Policy)

**Alcohol**

Any employee who reports to work under the influence of alcohol or uses alcohol during the working hours or keeps alcohol on the property shall be subject to disciplinary action including the possibility of dismissal. (Please refer to the Town of Peru Disciplinary Policy)

**Standards of Conduct**

Certain conduct is of such serious nature that immediate dismissal may be warranted without warning or discipline. Certain conduct may be grounds for a written warning and possible disciplinary action. The specific conduct described in this manual does not include all the grounds for disciplinary action or discharge. These are illustrations of the type of conduct which should be avoided. (Please refer to the Town of Peru Disciplinary Policy)

**Examples of such conduct:**

- Discourteous treatment of the public or fellow employees.
- Deliberate damage to equipment or property.
- Failure or refusal to properly perform assigned duties
- Insubordinate, antagonistic attitude, misconduct, or threat of violence
- Frequent absenteeism without permission
- Use of or possession of alcohol or drugs during working hours

Any violation of any of these policies and procedures will result in disciplinary action according to the Town of Peru's Personnel and Disciplinary Policy

By signing and dating below, the employee acknowledges they have read and understand their job description and Town of Peru's Policy and Procedure. The employee also acknowledges that they have received a copy of this document. This coupled with your hire letter shall be the basis for your terms of employment.

**Employee Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Revised: 10/14/25**

**Town of Peru Written Policy for Disposal of  
Firewood generated through maintenance within the Town Right of  
Way**

**When the Town of Peru Highway Department cuts or remove trees to maintain Town Right of Ways, the Firewood generated will be offered first to the Private Property Owner.**

**If the Property Owner refuses the offer of taking the firewood, then the wood will be removed from the site by the Highway Department**

**Preference will be given to Senior Citizens or Elderly (60 years or older) or Veterans. Firewood will be offered on a first come first serve basis. Any Citizen can contact the Highway Department to be put on a list. The Highway Department will maintain a list of citizens interested in the Firewood**

**If no Senior Citizens or Veterans contact the Highway Department for the Surplus Wood, then it will be offered to any other Citizen on a first Come First Serve basis.**

## **Town of Peru Written Policy for Disposal of**

### **Fill Material generated through maintenance within the Town Right of Ways**

**When the Town of Peru Highway Department generates fill material to maintain Town Right of Ways, the Fill material generated will be offered first to the Private Property Abutter.**

**If the Property Abutter refuses the offer of taking the fill material, then the fill material will be removed from the site by the Highway Department**

**Preference will be given to Senior Citizens or Elderly (60 years or older) or Veterans. Fill material will be offered on a first come first serve basis. Any Citizen can contact the Highway Department to be put on a list. The Highway Department will maintain a list of citizens interested in the Fill material**

**If no Senior Citizens or Veterans contact the Highway Department for the fill material, then it will be offered to any other Citizen on a first Come First Serve basis. Email or submit written request to Highway Department.**