

TOWN HALL 3 EAST MAIN ROAD PERU, MA 01235

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES: November 17, 2025 @ 6:00 P.M.

Town Hall Meeting Room

Verne Leach, Chair Selectman
Edward Munch, Selectman
Samuel Haupt, Selectman
Terry Walker, Recording Secretary
Bruce Cullett, Police Chief
Jonathon Mejias, Assessor
Shana LeCours, Assessor

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 recording, Selectman Leach recording for personal reasons under Exemption E

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

Item 5: Review and Approve BOS Meeting Minutes for 11/10/2025: Selectman Leach motion to accept 11/10/2025 as written, Selectman Munch second, 2-0.

Item 6: 6:15 p.m. Tax Classification Hearing: A Tax Classification Hearing was held at 6:15 p.m. with the Assessors and the Board of Selectmen to set a tax rate. Selectman Leach motion to set one tax rate and that a split rate was not favorable, Selectman Munch second, 3-0. The total assessment of all taxable properties in the Town of Peru for FY2026 is \$146,587,777. This is an increase of \$11,115,117 which represents an 8.2% increase over last year's taxable value. Selectman Munch thanked the Assessors for a job well done. Selectmen Leach mentioned that the Assessors had done a good job. Assessor Mejias mentioned that the tax bills should be going out in the next two to three weeks.

Item 7: Discussion and possible vote on reviewing and posting the job description for the Primary Assessor Position: Selectman Leach motion to approve the revised job description for the Primary Assessor position and post to the website, Selectman Munch second, 3-0. Selectman Leach motion to approve the short version of the Help Wanted job description for the Primary Assessor position pending changes, Selectman Munch second, 3-0.

Item 8: Adjourn: Selectman Leach made a motion to adjourn the 11/17/2025 BOS Meeting, Selectman Munch second, Vote 3-0. The 11/17/2025 BOS Meeting adjourned at 6:23 P.M.

Articles used:

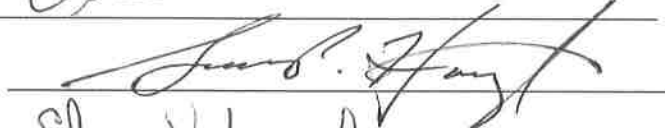
11/10/2025 minutes
Tax Classification posting
Job description for Primary Assessor

Terry Walker
Recording Secretary

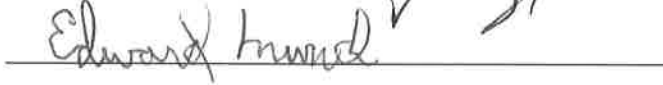
Verne Leach, Chairman



Samuel Haupt, Selectman



Edward Munch, Selectman



Date Approved: 11/24/25

Received 11-24-2025
Kim Leach , Town Clerk



Town of Peru

Tax Classification Presentation

NOVEMBER 17, 2025 at 6:15 p.m.

MINIMUM RESIDENTIAL FACTOR

The Classification Act of 1978 allows for a shift of the tax rate which would place more of the tax burden on the Commercial, Industrial and Personal Property classes (known as CIP) from the Residential classes within certain limits. Peru can shift up to 150% from the residential to the commercial, industrial and personal property accounts.

The Board of Selectmen, at a public hearing, annually vote on the issue of selecting a residential factor which will determine the percentages of the tax burden for each class of property for the fiscal year. If a factor of 1 is chosen, it will result in a uniform allocation among all classes. If a factor of less than one is chosen, the burden will be greater on CIP (Commercial, Industrial and Personal Property) parcels.

The total assessment of all taxable properties in the Town of Peru for FY2026 is \$146,587,777. This is an increase of \$11,115,117 which represents an 8.2% increase over last year's taxable value.

Residential properties continue to represent a majority of the total value in town (83.5%) with commercial/industrial and personal property making up the remainder.

If a residential factor of 1 is chosen, the estimated tax rate for FY2026 would be \$17.23/thousand which is an increase of \$1.28 from last [8.2%] years' rate of \$15.95. With this rate, the average tax bill for a single-family residence in Peru would be \$5021.53

HISTORICAL TAX RATES

FY2010	\$15.33
FY2011	\$15.07
FY2012	\$15.40
FY2013	\$16.30
FY2014	\$17.30
FY2015	\$18.36
FY2016	\$20.15
FY2017	\$17.58
FY2018	\$18.70
FY2019	\$18.48
FY2020	\$18.76
FY2021	\$19.21
FY2022	\$18.32
FY2023	\$17.50
FY2024	\$16.51
FY2025	\$15.95
FY2026	\$17.23
FY2027	TBD

Should the Selectmen choose to adopt a split rate, there are many options to choose from. For example:

If the maximum CIP shift factor of 1.5 is chosen, the estimated residential tax rate would be **\$15.53** and the Commercial, Industrial and Personal Property rate would be **\$25.84**.

The Selectmen may also vote to adopt the following:

Residential Exemption: This option applies an exemption up to 20% on principal residences only. Only a few cities/towns in Massachusetts have adopted this exemption. This allows a community to shift the burden away from certain lower valued properties to higher valued homes, apartment buildings and second homeowners. It reallocates the tax burden only within the residential class and does not increase the total tax revenue.

Small Commercial Exemption: This option applies an exemption of up to 10% on commercial properties that meet certain criteria set by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. A recent report provided by the Division of Unemployment Assistance identifies ten employers in Peru with less than 10 employees, however, only two may qualify for this exemption with one owning a mixed-use parcel.

Open Space Discount: Peru has no such land designated as open space.

Lastly, the Board of Assessors hereby informs the Board of Selectmen that the town's excess levy capacity for FY25 is approximately \$271766.57

Town of Peru

Primary Assessor Job Description

GENERAL SUMMARY:

The Town of Peru, MA is in search of a Primary Assessor to serve as the Town's main point of contact for Assessing services. Peru, is a town of approximately 815 residents, is 26 sq. miles in size and is located in Central Berkshire County. Peru has 804 parcels of property including 347 single family homes. Real and Personal property taxes amounted to \$1,345,670 for FY22.

The Primary Assessor serves under the administrative direction of the Board of Selectmen via the Town Administrator and oversees the Town's Assessing Department operations. This position is responsible for overseeing highly complex duties that require considerable judgment in placing valuations on real and personal property. The Principal Assessor is responsible for maintaining accurate systems and reporting information in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws and applicable Town By-laws.

This position serves as the primary staff member responsible for comprehensive administrative and technical duties, office administration, and excellent customer service. The Primary Assessor is responsible for the direct oversight of employees assigned to the Town of Peru by the Contracted Company providing Assessing Services to the Town.

This position is a part-time non-benefitted position that may require attendance at Board of Selectmen meetings up to 2 times per month as needed. It would be expected that the Primary Assessor would be available for office hours on a weekly basis (average of 12 hours per week) with a salary of \$18,000 to \$22,000 per year. Attendance at the Annual Town Meeting in June is required.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

The essential functions or duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

- Responsible for overseeing all real and personal property assessment and valuation functions. Responsible for the commitment of real estate and personal property taxes, motor vehicle and boat excise taxes, and betterment assessments to the Tax Collector.
- Responsible for managing the day-to-day administrative and technical operations of the Assessing Department, utilizing knowledge of Massachusetts General Laws pertaining to assessing practices.
- Responsible for overseeing the classification of all properties; compiles data for preparation of required forms to determine tax liability of the various classes of property.

- Conducts research and evaluates conditions and trends related to real property values and estimates of market value changes.
- Assists Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator and others in projecting future revenues in support of budgeting process.
- Oversees the preparation of and may be required to present a variety of spreadsheets reflecting Assessing Data for the Town of Peru.
- May be required to complete building permit reviews and examine a variety of deeds, maps, and building plans to obtain required information to evaluate all taxable property.
- Responsible for preparing and maintaining a variety of files and records related to assessing and appraising activities including charts, maps, abatement documents and other files and documents.
- Responds to a variety of inquiries, requests, and complaints from property owners and others related to assessment policies, procedures, tax abatements, exemptions, and related issues.
- Assists the Board of Selectmen to provide advice on matters relating to the classification process.
- Coordinates the ongoing cyclical inspection programs for real estate and personal property in accordance with Department of Revenue standards.
- Administers processing of all real estate and personal property value changes due to cyclical inspections, building permits, condo conversions and plans and subdivisions.
- Assists taxpayers and the general public with technical information related to assessing of real estate and personal property and the overall functions of the Assessing Department.
- Serves as direct liaison to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) regarding assessing matters.
- Contacts DOR directly on legal and other issues relating to assessing.
- Independently researches abatement and exemption applications and makes recommendations to ensure timely notification of taxpayers and other Town departments, as required.
- May be required to represent the Town of Peru before the Appellate Tax Board with regard to appeals that have been filed with that Board.
- Oversees and maintains the Town's overlay account.
- Ensures that processes and reports conform to regulatory standards and deadlines as established by Massachusetts General Laws.
- Prepares the tax recapitulation sheet to determine and set the annual tax rate, prepares information for the Board of Selectmen for the annual tax classification hearing.
- Oversees the submission of all required forms to the DOR through their Gateway Program.
- Prepares the annual budget for the Assessing Department and prepares and maintains spreadsheets of office expenditures relating to the budgetary line items.
- Prepares official meeting notices, schedules official business for the public meetings, creates information packets, prepares and oversees the minutes of meetings and related correspondence, maintains and monitors the Assessors calendar to ensure compliance with legally required deadlines, and maintains related files accordingly.
- Maintains effective working relationships with other Town departments and boards, the Department of Revenue and other state and local agencies and the general public.

- Responsible for achieving and maintaining designation(s) from the Massachusetts Association of Assessing Officers (MAAO) and responsible for attending professional meetings to stay abreast of changes in the assessing field.
- May attend user group meetings for Vision and MUNIS. Performs other similar or related duties as required, or as situation dictates.

PREPARATION, SKILL, KNOWLEDGE & ABILITIES:

- Education and Experience bachelor's degree in business administration, real estate or other related field and seven years or more of progressively responsible experience in the valuation of property for tax purposes, including five years of supervisory experience, or any equivalent combination of education and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities for this position preferred.
- Knowledge, Ability and Skill Duties require comprehensive technical knowledge of assessing practices as regulated by Massachusetts General Laws, financial record keeping and automated office administration.
- Experience with specialized assessing software such as Patriot AssessPRO, and the DOR Gateway program is desired.
- Ability to obtain the Massachusetts Accredited Assessor designation (MAA).
- General knowledge of building, construction and zoning codes, surveying, mapping and deeds.
- Requires the ability to exercise the judgment, decisiveness and creativity required for problem resolution and for handling a variety of other situations that may arise.
- Ability to recognize and analyze factors which influence the values of properties.
- Ability to establish and maintain a variety of records to assemble and organize data and prepare various technical and financial reports.
- Ability to lead, monitor and supervisor a group of employees to achieve goals that contribute to the growth of the employees, the department, and the organization.
- A track record of positive field work experience, especially as pertains to commercial valuation is desired.
- May be required to perform field inspections and measure and inspect properties. Must possess a valid motor vehicle driver's license.

WORKING CONDITIONS, EXPECTATIONS, AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

Most work is performed under typical office conditions and requires the ability maintain regular office hours during the business week, to use a computer and other standard office equipment requiring eye-hand coordination and finger dexterity.

This position is a part-time non-benefitted position that may require attendance at Board of

Selectmen meetings up to 2 times a month or as needed. It would be expected that the Primary Assessor would be available for office hours on a weekly basis to assist residents as the need arises. Attendance at the Annual Town Meeting in June is required.

Some work is performed in the field and requires the ability to assess property in various terrains and requires stooping, crouching, reaching, standing, walking, pushing, pulling, lifting, grasping, talking, hearing/listening, seeing/observing, and may include light physical labor, including lifting objects up to 10 pounds.

The Town of Peru is an Equal Opportunity Employer that recruits and hires qualified candidates without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, disability or veteran status. Minorities are encouraged to apply.

Please send a letter of interest and resume to:

townadmin@townofperuma.com

Terry Walker

Town Administrator

3 E Main Rd.

Peru, MA 02135

PRIMARY ASSESSOR WANTED

TOWN OF PERU

The Town of Peru is seeking a qualified Primary Assessor with experience in property appraisal, knowledge of MASS General Laws, strong computer and communication skills. Key responsibilities include property valuation, data entry and customer service.

Typical responsibilities and requirements:

- Experience: 3-5 years of experience in real estate appraisal, assessment administration, or a related field.
- Education: A high school diploma is required, though a bachelor's degree in business, finance or related field is preferred.
- Massachusetts Accredited Assessor (MAA) This certification is required
- Computer Skills: Proficiency in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel), and familiarity with State Computer programs.
- Legal Knowledge: A thorough working knowledge of the Massachusetts General Laws relating to municipal finance and property assessment is essential.
- Communication: Excellent written and verbal communication skills are necessary for interacting with the public and other departments.
- Other: A valid driver's license and the ability to read deeds and plans are required.
- Compensation: 12-hour work week (in-house and field work) with a yearly salary of \$18,000-\$22,000.

Board of Selectmen-Town of Peru

November 12, 2025

For more information, please refer to the Town's website or contact Town Administrator at townadmin@townofperuma.com