

TOWN HALL 3 EAST MAIN ROAD PERU, MA 01235

SELECT BOARD / FINANCE COMMITTEE JOINT MEETING MINUTES:
MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.

Town Hall Meeting Room

Verne Leach, Chair Selectman
Samuel Haupt, Selectman
Edward Munch, Selectman
Terry Walker, Recording Secretary
Justin Russell, Highway Superintendent
Bruce Cullett, Police Chief/Finance Committee Chairman
Brandon Mascolo, Finance Committee
Doug Haskins, Finance Committee/Parks and Rec
Paul Hickling, Finance Committee
George Greule, Parks and Rec

Public Attendees: Greg Boino, Michael Henault, Rebecca Sawyer, Aaron Robb- CBRSD, Justin Kaczowski, Selectman Savoy

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

Item 2: Selectboard 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 1/5/2026. Selectman Leach motion to approve minutes pending changes, Selectman Munch second, 3-0

Item 6: Update from Departments:

Police Department:

Chief Cullett mentioned that due to the incident in Hinsdale he was asked to provide mutual aid to the Town of Hinsdale. Last Wednesday night, at the Hinsdale BOS meeting, Chief Cullett was asked to fill in as the acting Chief in Hinsdale since Hinsdale's Chief is on administrative leave. Chief Cullett mentioned that a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is being drawn up. KP Law is preparing the MOU with the details and requirements in both towns for the Peru BOS meeting on Tuesday, January 20th.

Highway Department:

- Superintendent Rusell mentioned that he and TA Walker submitted 2 grants through Grant Central. One grant was written for a new \$250,000 plow truck and if awarded the town would need to fund the balance which is around \$5,000. The second grant was for engineering and permitted for a small bridge grant for \$150,000. Justin mentioned that the MassDOT bridge report stated that the substructure deteriorated, dropping from six to four in two years.

- Justin mentioned that a dog at 77 August Smith Road ran out as Rick was plowing. Rick got out of the truck to make sure the dog was ok. The owners notified Rick that the dog was vicious and he should not get out of the plow truck. Justin asked Dog Officer, Verne Leach, to check on the dog.
- Justin mentioned that the Fire Department moved the army truck and now Superior Propane can pick up the old propane tanks. Justin asked TA Walker to notify Superior Propane that the tanks are accessible for pickup.

Maintenance:

Ed Munch mentioned that he and the electrician are in the middle of a major electrical project to provide outlets for the new office cubicles.

Town Administrator:

TA Walker mentioned that the town will be notified in early Spring if the \$250,000 plow truck grant and \$150,000 small bridge grants are awarded. She mentioned there will be ample time to place the balance of the plow truck on ATM warrant.

Treasurer Wendling asked TA Walker how Jonathon Mejias, Primary Assessor, would be paid. The BOS agreed that Jonathon would be paid Susan Koziars's salary which was 12 hours per week @ \$35.00 per hour.

Item 7: Discussion with Superintendent Michael Henault from Central Berkshire Regional School District:

Michael Henault, Superintendent at Central Berkshire Regional School, met with the BOS mentioning he understands the budgeting constraints in small towns and that many residents are on fixed incomes. Supt. Henault drafted a letter stating the need for Chapter 70 funds and how this affects small towns. He invited the BOS to attend the Finance Committee meeting on January 22nd. He mentioned that the final budget should be available by February 12th. Supt Henault urged open communication between the town and school and that everyone needs to work together. Supt Henault is willing to attend another BOS meeting to discuss the school budget. Selectman Munch mentioned the ongoing issue with Peru paying tuition for students not living in town. Supt. Henault stated that the town must notify the school of residency fraud, the parents will be notified, and each student will be investigated. Supt. Henault reiterated that the BOS needs to send the name of the student, and he will make sure they live in town.

Greg Boino mentioned the 6-year capital plan for Peru and Hinsdale.

1. Trim around the building \$50,000 (Kittridge)
2. Gym floor at Kittridge water running in on the gym floor- doors are higher than gym floor. \$75,000.
3. 3 roofs in 5-6 years for Washington School, Kittridge and the middle school. Supt. Henault mentioned that the roof at Kittridge is not an emergency.
4. Parking Lot at Nessacus - not in the 6-year plan- just spot maintenance.

Supt. Henault will send TA Walker a draft letter to review and send to the governor regarding Chapter 70 funds. The BOS agreed to sign and send the letter to Governor Healey.

Item 8: Discussion with Savoy Selectman Justin Kaczowski about Town Web Design, LLC, Company as a possible choice for Peru's website:

Justin Kaczowski Selectman in Savoy, mentioned that they solicited several website companies for Savoy. He mentioned that Town Web was the most economical website. Savoy needed a simple website that was user friendly, Web Design was affordable and easy to use. Justin mentioned that after a year of using Web Design everyone is very happy with it. Selectman Munch asked if Web Design could look at our town's website and give a demo. Bruce Cullett mentioned that Web Design had already looked at CivicPlus and the quote from Web Design for the Town of Peru was \$1,500.00 annually for 4 years. Also, Web Design could be up and running in 8-12 weeks. Bruce mentioned that the Town of Cheshire uses Web Design. TA Walker was asked to get an opinion from the TA in Cheshire, and the BOS will make a decision once TA Walker gets an opinion from the TA in Cheshire.

Bruce Cullett motion to adjourn Finance Committee meeting at 6:55 p.m., Brandon Mascolo second, 5-0

Item 9: Discussion and possible vote on Job Description for Town of Peru Assessor: The BOS made a few changes and asked TA Walker to revise and bring back to the BOS. placed on hold

Item 10: Discussion and possible vote on a letter to State Legislators about Proposition 2 ½ and Local Aid: Selectman Haupt motion to sign and send letter to the state legislatures, Selectman Leach second, 3.0.

Item 11: Public Input:

- George Greule had concerns about removing the basketball hoops from the gymnasium/meeting room at town hall. He mentioned that the public should have a place in town where they can exercise and play basketball. George wanted to know why the basketball hoops are being taken down.
- Selectman Munch, speaking for the BOS, mentioned that they are making offices in the gymnasium/meeting room because the employees lack office space. Selectman Munch mentioned that he had removed the cages off the windows because this is no longer a gymnasium.
- Doug Haskins asked the BOS when they voted to use the gymnasium for office space and why the Parks and Rec was not invited to the meeting.
- Selectman Leach mentioned that no one had used the gymnasium for quite a few years and the town needed more office space.
- Doug Haskins Parks and Rec felt that the gymnasium/meeting room should be open to the public for activities, especially in the winter. He mentioned that his grandson practices basketball in the gymnasium/ meeting room and by removing the basketball hoops they are taking away from the kids in town.
- Fin Com member Paul Hickling was concerned about the basketballs hitting the cubicles and who would be monitoring the activities if items were damaged or items taken.
- Selectman Haupt mentioned that George Gruele and Doug Haskins' concerns would be taken under advisement.
- Selectman Leach will put on a BOS agenda in the future.

Item 12: Adjourn: Selectman Leach made a motion to adjourn 1/12/2026 BOS Meeting, Selectman Haupt second, Vote 3-0. The 1/12/2026 BOS Meeting adjourned at 7:08 P.M.

Articles used:

1/5/2026 minutes
Web Design packet
Assessor job description
Letter to legislators

Terry Walker
Recording Secretary

Verne Leach, BOS Chairman

Samuel Haupt, Selectman

Edward Munch, Selectman

Date Approved: 1-20-2026



Bruce Cullett, Chairman Finance Committee _____

Paul Hickling, Fin Com _____

Doug Haskins, Fin Com _____

Brandon Mascolo, Fin Com _____

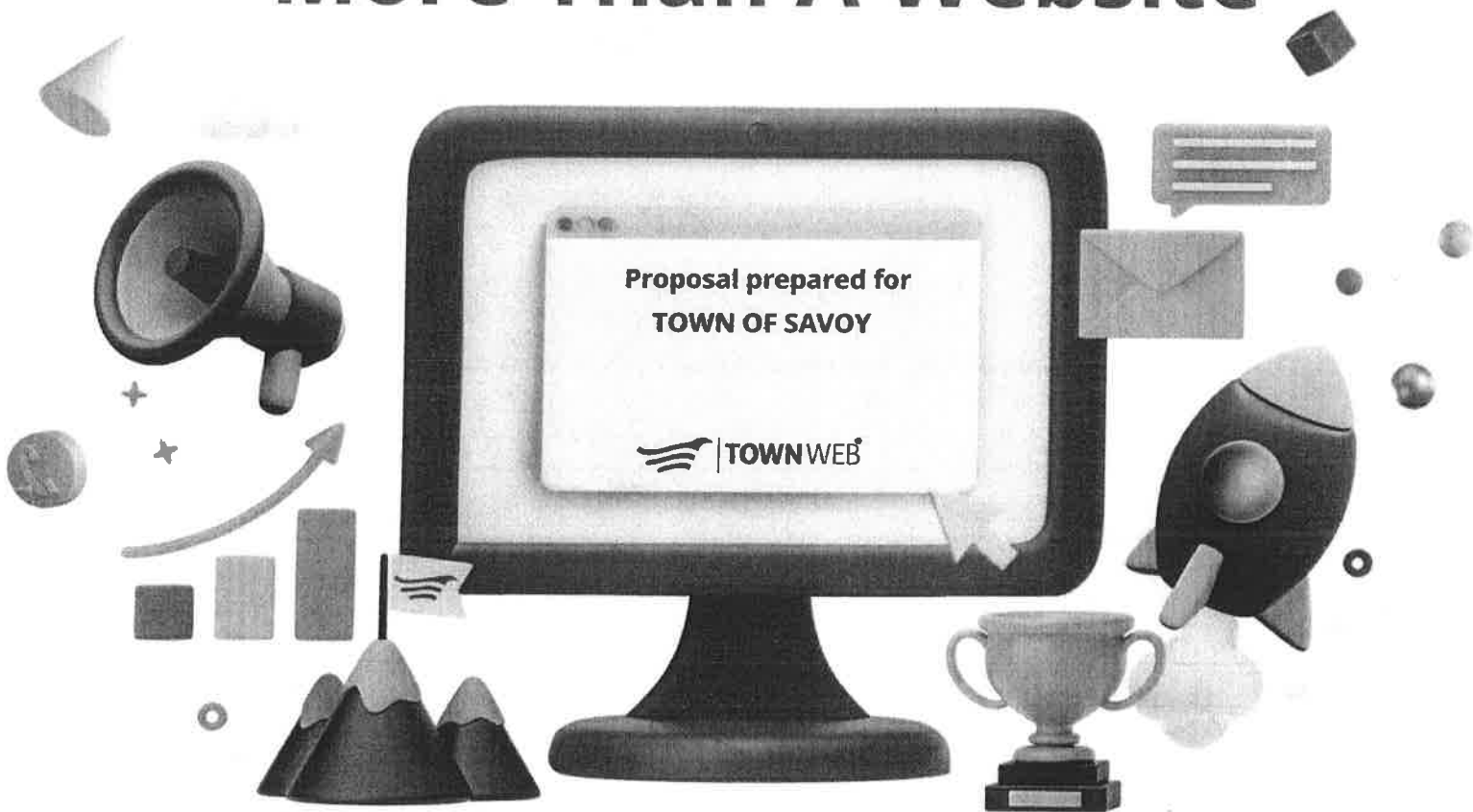
Samuel Haupt, Fin Com _____



Date Approved: 1-20-2026

Received 1-24-2026
Kim Leach Town

Town Web: More Than A Website



You Gain Civic Engagement Where Connectivity Meets Community

Delivered on: April 10, 2025 | Submitted by: Peter Stanko, Town Web | Expiring on: July 31, 2025

Town of Savoy
720 Main Rd
Savoy, Massachusetts, 01256

Dear Justin,

In today's world, keeping up with a digital presence while making sure everyone's in the loop can feel like juggling flaming torches for municipalities. As a city clerk, you've probably got your hands full. Between a pile of tasks, trying to get a word out in a way that sticks, and adapting to how things have shifted post-pandemic, it's a lot.

Ever feel like you're stuck on a hamster wheel, thanks to a website that seems more like a foe than a friend? Yeah, we get it. It's not just about slapping on a new coat of digital paint. What really makes a difference is having a solution that gets the whole picture and a partner who's got your back on the unique challenges that municipalities face.

That's where Town Web comes in, and I'm happy to provide you with a custom solution.

We understand that for the Town of Savoy, the priority is clear, centralized communication focused on official town business. Your new website will serve as a reliable, easy-to-navigate home for posting agendas and meeting minutes, with dedicated space for your essential municipal information. Whether it's a few departments or just the key ones that need visibility, we'll structure the site to be clear, clean, and tailored to your workflow.

The Agendas and Minutes Module and Events Calendar will ensure everything is timely and organized, while the News Ticker Bar and News & Notices Module will help you keep your residents in the loop with just a few clicks. Residents will also be able to subscribe for updates, receiving notifications via email or text message based on their preferences, and you'll have the power to issue Emergency Alerts to all subscribers in urgent situations. Should you choose to, you can also list rentable venues and accept payments directly through the website—no extra systems required. We'll empower your staff with the tools and training to manage the site confidently while always being available to step in if you ever get too busy. Whether you stick to the essentials or expand over time, we're here to grow with you.

We are committed to creating accessible, affordable, and visually stunning websites that make your municipal life easier. We don't want to just be your vendor. We desire to be a long-term partner.

In the following pages, we'll dive deeper into how Town Web can help you overcome your challenges and transform your municipal website from a source of stress to a fountain of success.

Sincerely,



Peter Stanko

New Client Coordinator with Town Web

peter@townweb.com | Toll-Free: 877-995-TOWN (8696)

TOWN WEB'S STORY

Back in 2007, nestled in the heart of Wisconsin, Town Web began its journey. We started as a small team with big dreams, spotting a need for communities to dip their toes into the digital waters. As the digital landscape morphed—from desktops ruling the roost to smartphones becoming our fifth limb, from the first ping of a push notification to the comprehensive wave of digital transformation—we've been right there, growing and adapting hand-in-hand with the evolving needs of our municipal clients.

Fast forward to today, and you'll find us in 45 states with 800 customers under our belt. What's even more heartwarming? Hundreds of those clients have stuck by us for over a decade! And why, you might ask? Because at the core of everything we do, it's all about our solutions for you and how we support you!

We're all about listening—really listening—to what municipal staff like you need and then crafting our solutions to fit those needs perfectly, all while keeping your budget in mind. Our commitment to R&D means we're ahead of the curve, ensuring the tools we provide solve the demands you have. (And yes, even some of our municipal software is powered by AI!)

We're boasting a 97% average customer satisfaction rate from our municipal customers. Yet, what truly sets us apart isn't just our software or our support. It's our dedication to making your municipal life easier.

How do we deliver an easier municipal life for you? It's a mix of the following:

1. Our software is a breeze to use and highly intuitive.
2. Our tutorials, how-to files, and training video library cover all the bases.
3. Our support team is on standby 24/7 to help you.
4. Plus, if you subscribe to our White Glove Service – which about 50% of our clients do – we will even update your site for you. Just like having your very own website butler!

In essence, Town Web's story is a tale of dedication to you, the heartbeat of municipal operations. We're not just a provider; we're your guide to navigating the complexities of digital governance & municipal life.

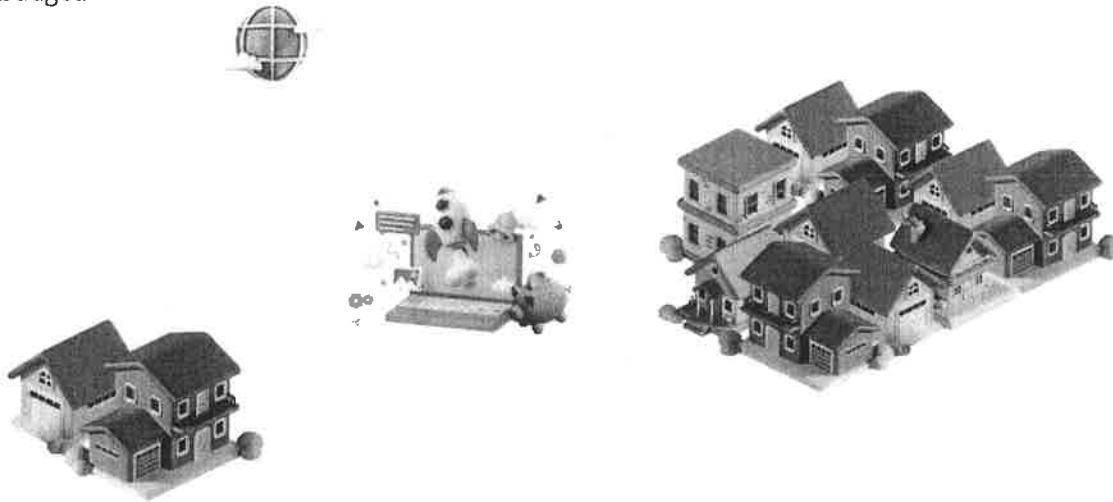
We arm you with the tools and support so you can serve your community better. Let's embark on this journey together, towards a more efficient, effective, and digitally empowered municipal government!



Beyond A One-Size-Fits-All Approach

Every municipality has its own unique set of challenges and needs. We're here to guide you beyond the conventional path of simply launching a new website. We're here to help you with your success.

This is why, during the discovery and quoting phase, we ask a series of questions to really understand what your needs are. We want to make sure the solution we quote you is something that fits both your needs and your budget.



Below are three main areas of service. Each can be adjusted from basic – and less costly – to more robust and comprehensive, for a higher price. Note that we've got a solution that can match your needs & budget.

- 1. Citizen Communication:** Imagine using a communication platform so intuitive that keeping everyone from residents to officials in the loop feels effortless. Our platform does this. It offers mass communication and emergency alerts that residents can subscribe to, ensuring vital information is disseminated quickly and efficiently. This information can also be syndicated to social media. Therefore, it's not just about posting info to your site. It includes sending out official emails and text messages to keep your community informed.
Similar to competing services such as: *TextMyGov, SeeClickFix.*
- 2. Simplifying Digital Governance:** Paperwork can be a thing of the past with our digital government & payment solutions. From online forms that streamline processes to workflows that ensure efficiency, and a payment portal that makes transactions a breeze, we're ready to transform how your municipality operates. These tools are designed to save time, reduce errors, and improve the overall experience for both your staff and your residents.
Similar to competing services like: *GovPilot, CivicPlus Forms, PSN/InvoiceCloud*
- 3. Tailored Website Support:** We know that each municipality has its unique quirks and requirements. That's why our website support is fully customizable. Whether you need hands-on training, on-demand tutorials, or "White Glove Service" where someone handles the website updates on your behalf. Our team is equipped to provide the level of support that perfectly matches your needs & budget.

With Town Web, you're not just getting a website. You're gaining a "Government Operating System" that is custom for you and your staff.

Your Future with Town Web

We're passionate about helping municipal employees like you achieve digital success. Below are short stories of others who've worked with us to have success.

"The team is always helpful and answers me in a timely fashion. I met a couple of ladies at the WTA convention, finally, this year. It was a pleasure to talk to them."

- Kay Murre, Treasurer



"I just viewed the new Lafayette website and it is very, very, nice and a huge improvement on our old website. A lot of more information is now easily available to the public."

- Tom Larson, Citizen



"I wanted to take a moment to express my appreciation for how easy you've been to work with. It's been an interesting journey to reach this point, and you have made it a joy. Thank you!"

- Nan Ladehoff, Treasurer



We want you to imagine a future where your website is no longer a source of frustration. It can be a powerful tool for engaging your community and showcasing your leadership.

When you partner with Town Web, you can expect a positive transformation in your daily work:

- Start each day with a sense of calm and control, knowing that your website is working for you, not against you.
- With our user-friendly CMS and streamlined communication tools, you can easily keep your residents informed and engaged, without sacrificing hours of your valuable time.
- You become the "digital hero" your community deserves, empowered by the tools and support of Town Web.
- You're able to focus on the important work of serving your residents, confident that your website is making your job easier, not harder.

Product & Service Overview

In crafting this proposal, our focus is on delivering a solution that seamlessly aligns with both your unique needs and budgetary parameters. Consider the outlined services & pricing within these pages as a flexible starting point, not a final offer. We're committed to adjusting our proposal to perfectly match your requirements & budget.

WEB DESIGN / THEME DESIGN

Under 1000 population
Up to 10 Departments, up to 50 pages
Personnel Directory
Data Entry / Content Migration
~~Contact us forms~~

~~Business Directory~~
~~Stream Video Embedding on the Website~~
~~Bespoke Homepage / Department Pages~~
~~Multi-language Website~~

CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

Subscribers Database and Sign-up Widget
Email Message Mass Communication
Citizens Requests App "Hey311"

Emergency Notifications & Alerts
Text Message Mass Communication
Facebook Syndication

DIGITAL GOVERNANCE WITH ONLINE FORMS AND PAYMENT PORTAL

Citizens Payment Portal: unlimited portals-if selected
~~Digital Forms with Payments~~
~~Digital Forms without Payments~~

Reservations Module: up to 5 venues-if selected
~~Marina Module~~
~~Campground Module~~

WEB HOSTING

Weekly Website Backups
Same Day Website Restores
Cloud Hosting

Domain Name(s): 1
~~Daily/hourly website backups~~
~~Dedicated Hosting~~

EMAIL ADDRESSES - BRANDED EMAILS POWERED BY GOOGLE AND JATHEON ARCHIVING

Mailboxes with Archiving - if selected
Mailboxes without Archiving - if selected

~~DotGov domain name set up~~
~~Email conversations migration~~

CUSTOMER SERVICE PLAN

Online Knowledge Base for Website CMS
Video Tutorials for Website CMS
Email Support: 24x7
"White-Glove" Service via Email

~~Online Knowledge Base for Digital Governance~~
~~Video Tutorials for Digital Governance~~
~~Phone Support: Business Hours~~
~~"White-Glove" Service via Email and Phone~~

Town of Savoy Proposed Pricing

The previous page of this proposal shows an overview of the different elements. It highlights the level of service for each item. The corresponding prices for the selected services/products are listed on this page. Each item will be either a one-time fee or an annual fee. We aim to find the right solution for you that fits your budget. We can adjust our products/services to fit your needs.

Description	Price	Qty	Total
Web Design / Theme Setup (one-time fee)			
Data Entry / Content Migration (one-time fee)			
Citizen Communication Platform (one-time fee)			
Web Hosting, Web Maintenance & Domain Management			
Customer Support Plan - Unlimited 24x7 Tech Support			
<input type="checkbox"/> opt: Customer Support Plan - "White-Glove" Customer Service via Email			
<input type="checkbox"/> opt: Digital Governance with Online Venue Rentals & Payment Portal			
<input type="checkbox"/> opt: Branded Email Addresses <i>The migration of old emails (history) is +\$50 per email account.</i>			

ONE TIME FEES
ANNUAL
TOTAL 1ST YEAR

The contract is for 3 years, ensuring a fixed annual fee for the full duration of the contract. The total first-year fee will be invoiced after the proposal is signed and is due 30 days after invoicing. To accept this quote, you can electronically sign it above, or sign and fax it to 321-600-9008. Once we have a signed copy, we will email you an invoice, and after it's paid your dedicated Account Manager will contact you to schedule your Onboarding meeting.



2025-07-15 16:24:34 (CEST)

Justin Kaczowski, Town of Savoy, Finance Committee Member

Town of Peru

Peru, Massachusetts 01235



January 12, 2026

The Honorable Paul W. Mark
Massachusetts State Senate
24 Beacon St., Rm. 504
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable John Barrett, III
Massachusetts House of Representatives
24 Beacon St., Rm. 277
Boston, MA 02133

Gentlemen:

The Selectboard of Peru writes to raise the topic of local aid and express our collective and unified concern about how the amount allocated by the Legislature for this item has fallen as each year passes. This topic has become critical for the Town of Peru and for almost every other city and town in the Commonwealth as we continually struggle to balance our municipal budget. Despite our best efforts to craft a responsible budget which addresses the basic needs of our community, the historical cap on property tax collections as a result of Proposition 2 ½ have left us with very few options to address this revenue shortfall. Local aid is such an important revenue source and an increase in these receipts would go a long way to help close our budget deficit.

The mechanisms which cities and towns are permitted to utilize in raising revenues to fund their respective budgets are well known and we do not need to go into that topic in detail except that one aspect must be highlighted as we have seen first-hand how it wreaks havoc on the ability of a municipality to balance its budget. That aspect is that the foundational mechanisms of proposition 2 ½ (which were developed some 40 years ago) are such that the revenues cities and towns are statutorily able to generate do not allow these same cities and towns to keep pace with inflation. For example, although the reported inflation rate of 1.2% in 2020 was relatively low, 2021 and 2022 we saw a sharp increase of 4.1% and 8% respectively. The years of 2023 and 2024 did show a downward trend (4.1% and 2.9%) but they nonetheless still exceeded the Proposition 2 ½ ceiling on revenue generation through an increase in property tax levy. Plainly put, expenses are increasing based upon inflationary pressures, yet in some cases, municipalities are not able to raise revenue proportionally to level fund expenses. This is unsustainable and we ask for your help in securing a material increase in the amount of local aid.

A solution is to urge your colleagues to allocate a portion of the interest earned from the state's Stabilization Fund (Rainy Day Fund) directly to municipalities, which as the unofficial title of this fund indicates, is designed to help reduce budget shortfalls. According to the Office of the Comptroller, the balance of this fund at the close of Fiscal year 2025 increased by \$111,350,000.00 to **\$8,634 billion** and interest generated during this same fiscal year totaled \$405,930,000.00. See <https://cthru.data.socrata.com/stories/s/eqrd-tdvi>.

As with all rural communities, we have a fiscally constrained budget and the interest earned on this Rainy-Day Fund would significantly help fund our needs. As cities and towns struggle to meet basic

obligations and deliver critical services, even a modest share of this Rainy-Day Fund earnings could provide meaningful relief and a measure of financial stability. This would represent a responsible reinvestment of state-held wealth into the communities that generate the fund's balance. These earnings represent a potential source of relief that could have a meaningful impact at the local level without compromising the integrity of the stabilization fund itself.

Massachusetts communities take great pride in managing their budgets prudently. However, without increased support, they will continue to face mounting deficits and difficult choices that undermine the quality of life for residents.

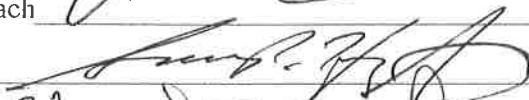
Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. We appreciate your commitment to serving the people of Massachusetts and respectfully ask for your leadership in addressing the long-term fiscal health of our local governments. We would be glad to speak further or help coordinate input from other local leaders who are dealing with these issues also.

Sincerely,

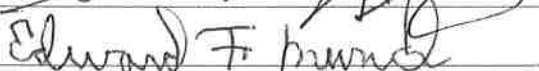
Chairman Verne Leach



Samuel P. Haupt



Edward Munch



Selectboard Members

Town of Peru