



The Pelham Slate

WWW.PELHAMMA.GOV

WINTER 2025

FROM THE SELECT BOARD

In September, the Town of Pelham and Amherst were awarded a joint Housing Works and Infrastructure grant for \$2.1 million from the Office of Housing and Livable Communities. The grant is for the sewer extension and water line replacement project in the Village Center. This project will cover all Cadwell Street and Jones Road, and part of South Valley Road. Guilford Mooring, Town of Amherst DPW Superintendent, and Town of Amherst Engineer Jason Skeels have been key to supporting the Pelham Select Board and this project. Residents in the Village Center construction area will receive information in the new year regarding sewer line connection and costs, and the decision to hook up to the sewer or not will lie with the residents.

Fall Special Town Meeting was well attended at the Old Town Hall on October 15, 2025. Thank you to all the residents who showed up to actively participate in town government and vote on articles that de-

cide how the town is run.

The Pelham Elementary School playground improvement project is close to completion. Thank you to Jeff Squire of Berkshire Design Group and School representative Venuta Carulli for their continued focus throughout.

The Select Board decided in December to not continue using the online permit platform launched in September but is actively searching for a new program that will serve the town's needs and is a better fit for our community. Thank you to Building Inspector David Waskiewicz for all the time and effort he invested to get the platform set up and launched. Also, thanks to Electrical Inspector John Lamoureux for the time he devoted to training. Stay tuned for future updates.

Sincerely,
Robert Agoglia, Chair '27, Tara Loomis, Vice-Chair '26, Jessica Barr, Clerk '28



matters while we awaited the Attorney General's (AG's) response to the ADU bylaw that passed at spring Town Meeting. (Whenever we pass bylaws at Town Meeting, AG review is the standard next step.) Now in December, we've received that response, but its meaning is opaque to us in at least one key regard. We've reached out for consultation to interpret the AG's decision, after which we'll better know whether and how we'll want to adapt our bylaw. Also in December, Governor Healey announced measures intended to encourage more ADUs. We'll be attentive to the impact of the new regulations, our bylaw, and these new measures as we establish what next steps could best maximize benefits and minimize potential drawbacks of such development for Pelham.

On other fronts: We expected an application for a 63-acre solar project on a Cowls-owned plot in Cadwell Forest in November or December, and we have not yet received it. We've been helping to spearhead the response to the two electric transmission line projects proposed for Pelham and many other towns.

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Planning Board Updates

The Planning Board continues to juggle a plethora of priorities. Top ones include regulations related to accessory dwelling units (ADUs), including short-term rentals both within ADUs and more generally. We'd still like to collaborate with the Housing Committee and consider their proposals for affordability. However, we were delayed on these

Census & Dog Licenses

CENSUS

When the 2026 Annual Street Listing forms are mailed, please fill them out according to instructions and return them at your earliest convenience. Election law requires that the Board of Registrars, each year, verify the residence of voters for the purpose of keeping the voter registration rolls accurate. The Annual Street List is the primary tool for doing this. If a voter does not respond to the first or second Annual Street List mailings, they will be placed into INACTIVE status and a Confirmation Card will be mailed to them. If the voter fails to return the Confirmation Card, they will remain in Inactive Status. If they are in inactive status when they go to the polls to vote, they will be required to complete and sign an affidavit of current and continued residence and to show official documentation that confirms their residential address.

DOGS

2025 Dog Licenses expire on March 31, 2026, and must be renewed by May 31, 2026, to avoid a late fee. Any dog license renewed on or after June 1 will incur a late fee. All dogs 6 months or older must be licensed annually.

DOG LICENSE FEES

- ◇ \$10 for a spayed or neutered dog.

Proof of spaying or neutering must be provided if the procedure was done since the previous license was issued.

- ◇ \$15 for a non-spayed/non-neutered dog.

TO LICENSE BY MAIL:

- A copy of the current rabies vaccination certificate for each dog if done less than a year ago
- Proof of neutering or spaying if procedure done less than a year ago
- A #10 size SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE to return the license and tag
- Check payable to "Town of Pelham"

Send the following items to:

*Town Clerk
351 Amherst Rd
Pelham, MA 01002*

Pelham Seeks Paid Climate Resilience Community Liaisons

The Town of Pelham is seeking at least three community members to help the town plan for climate change. The three positions, known as "Community Liaisons," will be paid a stipend of \$2,625 over six months from February - July, 2026, and will be responsible for leading community conversations about residents' climate-related challenges and how the Town can help.

The Town has received a **Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant from the Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to help protect our community from the impacts of climate change.** A group of key municipal leaders, known as the core team, has come together and conducted research on who might suffer most as a result of climate change. The

team determined that they would like to hear more about the challenges faced by youth and their parents, low- or moderate-income renters, homeowners who struggle to meet basic needs, residents with disabilities, and immigrants. The core team is seeking three or more new members who have strong ties to these communities, who are passionate about improving the environment, and who are excited to talk to their friends and neighbors about how they are affected by climate change. In addition to being excited to do community outreach, people selected for this role must live or work in Pelham and must commit to attending regular team meetings for the full six-month period.

People who would like to serve on the Pelham MVP Core Team as a community liaison should fill out an application at tinyurl.com/PelhamCLApp by February 2, 2026. For questions or more information about this opportunity email, caitlin@taprootembodied.com

Board of Health

As we start the new year, there have been several changes with the Board of Health. Leonor Rodriguez is the newest member of the Board, and her nursing expertise is a great addition. Longtime Administrative Assistant with the Quabbin Health District, Betty Barlow, has retired, and Desiree Vennert has been promoted to her position.

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Pelham, along with Ware and Belchertown, is a member of the Quabbin Health District which supplies professional services to the Board.. For more information, please visit our website, <https://quabbinhealthdistrict.com>.

The District is currently working on waste disposal (septic system) and drinking water (well) requirements for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)—in common language, a second housing unit on a lot with an existing home.

Lastly, it's not too late to get your COVID, RSV, and flu vaccinations. Wishing everyone a healthy winter and a happy New Year.

Bill Pula, Chair

Council on Aging

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION can be found on the town website: www.pelhamma.gov Lt. Derick Lamoureux, the town's Emergency Management director, can be reached at (413) 253-0484 x3 and at policeadmin@pelhamma.gov

FREE SHUTTLE BUS TO MASS GENERAL, MASS EYE AND EAR OR BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S HOSPITALS

A free shuttle bus leaves at 6:30 a.m. from Cooley Dickinson Hospital in Northampton and returns from the Boston hospitals at 3 p.m. Rides are scheduled every weekday (except major holidays). To be eligible, you must have an appointment at one of the MGB destination hospitals between 10 a.m. and

1:30 p.m. Reservations are required. Call 413-966-8011 Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and noon. Outside of those hours, press '1' to leave a message which will be returned the next business day.

FREE SHARPS DISPOSAL KIOSK

Available at the Bangs Community Center Lobby at 70 Boltwood Walk (where the Amherst Senior Center is located). It is open to Pelham residents. The Public Health Department in the same building has sharps containers. The program accepts needles, syringes, lancets, and other similar sharp objects used for home health care. Contact the Amherst Public Health Department at 413-259-3077; email publichealth@amherstma.gov with questions.

Tracy Osbahr, Chair

Happy 2026 from the Library

As I'm writing this, there is good news on the library front both at the state and national level. **The Massachusetts Senate passed S.2726 An Act Regarding Free Expression (Freedom to Read)**, which aims to protect intellectual freedom in Massachusetts libraries by preventing book bans, ensuring fair material selection, and safeguarding librarians from political pressure. Amid rising censorship efforts nationwide, it establishes clear policies for selecting and challenging library materials, requiring transparency and adherence to American Library Association standards. It mandates public reporting on book

challenges, ensures due process for removal decisions, and protects librarians from retaliation. It is now being reconciled with the House version, and will hopefully become law soon. At the federal level, the courts have ordered funding to IMLS to be fully restored, at least for this fiscal year. This won't undo the budget cuts that were already made by the state, but is potentially good news going forward. There may have been appeals at the federal level by the time you read this, but for now, it means that grant money which had been frozen has been released and the state is looking at ways to restore the cuts to databases and other services that had been necessitated by the earlier defunding. Hooray!

It's warm and wonderful here at the Pelham Library, where, in addition to our top-notch collection of books and media, we continue to offer a wide slate of programming for all ages, as well as so many wonderful things to keep you occupied during the long, cold days of winter. Come borrow a puzzle, a game or a craft kit. We have them for all ages from preschool to senior. We've recently added a new streaming service, too: Biblio+, which features movies, documentaries, British mysteries and more. Contact the library if you want more information. We're also continuing to expand our Library of Things. The latest addition is a beginner's magic set for kids. Do you have something that you'd like to see? An idea for a program or an art exhibit? Let us know!

Jodi Levine, Director

Police Department

The Pelham Police Department would like to welcome the following new officers. Officer James Fitzgerald was hired in November 2025. He comes to us with a few years of experience including being a part-time officer in Deerfield. Officer Fitzgerald completed a period of time on Field Training and is now patrolling on his own.



Officer Gabriel Socko was hired in July 2025 and attended the MPTC Police Academy from August 12, 2025 to December 12, 2025 at which time he graduated. Upon graduation Officer Socko began Field Training and will do so for approximately 12 weeks. Officer Socko is also an active member of the Massachusetts Army National Guard.



CPC Requests Project Ideas

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) always welcomes ideas from Pelham residents for future projects to benefit our town. Town Boards,

Committees and Commission also encouraged to apply. Currently we have money set aside for the following categories that CPA funds can contribute to:

- Open Space and Recreation: \$20,242.13
- Historic Resources: \$130,643.00
- Community Housing: \$52,000.40
- Undesignated: \$394,392.65 (can be used for any of the three categories listed above)

If you have an idea for a project that would be eligible for CPA funds, i.e., Open Space and Recreation, Historic Resources, or Community Housing, please contact the appropriate town body and ask them to submit an application to the CPC. If you have questions, please send an email to CPC Administrative Assistant, Kate Sypek at kate.sypek@gmail.com.

Projects currently being funded by Pelham CPA funds:

- Pelham Elementary Playground ADA Upgrade
- Documentation of Historic Buildings

Members:

Cydnie Reiman, at-large, James Lumley, at-large, James Pewtherer, Housing, Joseph Larson, Historical, Judith Eiseman, Planning, Richard Seelig, Conservation, Vacancy-Recreation

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Concerns include loss of forest habitat, threats to waterways, and destabilization of the cliff between North Valley Road and Buffam Brook, along with the noise and traffic with these extended projects. We are grateful for the Con-

servation Commission's great leadership.

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We are working with the Centennial Water Treatment Plant as they seek to address final loose ends and close out their project, also in consultation with the Conservation Commission. We're staying connected to Pelham's ongoing Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness project. Concerns about noise and data centers are on our radar as possible next-tier priorities once we regain some bandwidth.

It's a time of some upheaval for the Planning Board. We've been planning for long-time Chair Judy Eisenman's intent to step down from the board when her term ends in May. To support continuity and handle a varied workload, we've been working closely with Kyle Finnell of Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. Kyle has just left PVPC, and we're pursuing ideas about how to contend with the gap created by this alteration of our contract with PVPC. Some of our work is in a bit of a holding pattern until we do.

We welcome you to get involved, from simply attending a meeting all the way up to establishing a committee you can lead. Then in May, we're going to need at least one new board member. To get emails of our meeting agendas, use the Subscribe link on the Planning Board page at mytowngovernment.org. Join us!

Stacey McCullough, Member
Judith Eiseman, Chair

School Committee

For the first time in several years the Pelham School Committee has all five seats filled! Current members are Jenny Bradbury, Rachel Figurasmith, Sarahbess Kenney, William Sherr and Margaret Stancer. Pelham is represented on the Regional School Committee by Sarahbess and William and is also represented on the Regional Policy Subcommittee.

The Committee meets on the first Tuesday of the month in the Ramsdell Room of the Community Center. This year we are able to stream our meetings live on the ARPS YouTube channel and these recordings are made available for later viewing. Meeting information including agendas and related documents can be found in two places: mytowngov.org and <https://go.boarddocs.com/ma/arps/Board.nsf/Public>. We also meet jointly with the Amherst and Regional Committees when items of business impact all three committees.

Business of the Committee to date includes the creation of its goals for the year and approval of the Superintendent's goals. We received the yearly Human Resources report and an update on MCAS scores for Pelham as well as having a first read of many new and updated policies. Tracy Novick from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) Gave us a presentation on Chapter 70 state education funding for Pelham. The first draft of the FY27 budget was presented in November. Ongoing work with the other committees has included updating current policies and adding new ones where needed and discussion of the proposed strategic

plan, Portrait of a Graduate, and first read of the SY27 academic calendar.

On the agenda for future meetings are the presentation of a draft capital budget for FY27 in January, the FY27 budget hearing in February, and the final budget vote in March. The policy work will continue along with tracking progress on committee goals. We will receive a mid-year update on attendance and bullying prevention, approve the tool for the Superintendent evaluation, and evaluate the Superintendent as well as ourselves. You may direct questions to committee members and at meetings you may present public comment. We look forward to continuing our work this year as we endeavor to make the Pelham Elementary School a place where all students belong, thrive, learn, and grow.

Next meetings: Tuesday, January 6, and Tuesday, February 3, 5:30 pm in the Ramsdell Room.

Margaret Stancer, Chair School Committee

Cultural Council

Earlier this fall, the Pelham Cultural Council (PCC) invited organizations, schools, and individuals to apply for funding to support cultural programs serving Pelham residents and students in the Amherst-Pelham Regional Schools. This year, the Council awarded **\$6,840** in direct funding for community-based arts, humanities, and science projects. Priority was given to programs serving local families and youth, celebrating Pelham's history and environment, highlighting local artists and educators, and bringing global

perspectives to the community.

2026 funded projects include: Pelham Library Summer Reading Program; *Plant a Seed: Read; Lose Your Blues* Jazz Piano Concert with Stephen Page; West African Drumming Workshop; Pelham Players summer youth theater; Cemeteries of Pelham historic tours; Hampshire Young People's Chorus Spring Concert; Pelham Elementary PTO Art & Culture Night Performer; 6th Annual Odenong Powwow; Amherst Regional Public Schools concert series at The Drake; Mindfulness Garden Mural at Summit Academy; Secret Planet Music Series; Silverthorne Summer Theater Season; Tunes@Noon community concert series; and *Uniquely Quabbin* Magazine.

The Pelham Cultural Council is **actively seeking new members**. Serving on the Council is a meaningful way to support local arts and culture and participate in Pelham's civic life. Interested residents are encouraged to email pelhamculture@gmail.com. We thank the Pelham community and the Massachusetts Cultural Council for their continued support.

Members: Carolyn Bassett, Lisa Crossman, Susan Daniels, Jim Lumley, Tony Maroulis, John Page, Ruth Rinard

Pelham Historical Society wishes everyone a Happy New Year.

A new schedule of events will be available soon.

-David Boyden , PHS Member

Energy Committee

The Pelham Energy Committee is in search of additional members! If you are interested in helping the town and your neighbors save money and address climate change, please send an email to energy@pelhamma.gov. Since the town became an official Climate Leaders community at the beginning of the year the Energy Committee has secured \$140,000 (with no town match required) in planning grants for new energy efficiency and electrification projects for most town buildings. These include designing electrical upgrades at the DPW garage to eventually accommodate electric vehicles and designing heat pump retrofits in the community hall. This is the first step. When we have project designs in hand, we can apply to the state for up to \$1 million in state money with a 10% town match to pay for actually doing these projects. There is a lot going on! That's why we can use new members.

Our *Electrify Pelham* team encourages Pelham residents to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and supports residents' efforts to electrify their homes and vehicles.

The team offers free coaching and guidance regarding home weatherization, heat pumps for space heating and cooling, heat pump water heaters, electric vehicles and charging, home solar and batteries, incentives, rebates, finding contractors, and more. For more information or to join our team please visit <https://pelhamma.gov/p/136/Electrify-Pelham-Energy-Saving-Opportunities> and contact us at

Anti-Racism Advisory Committee

This fall, the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee offered the Town our third annual Anti-Racism Training. To accommodate our community's schedules, we offered two times for the presentation to Pelham employees, volunteers, and residents: one in the morning and one in the evening. The workshops were led by Jennifer Moyston, who has worked in the public sector for many years and is "committed to Operational Excellence and Inclusive Community Service". Participants enjoyed meeting with colleagues and neighbors, listening to a leader in this work, and discussing the implications with one another. Ms. Moyston aimed to further develop our understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion. She presented a very engaging, clear, and easy to follow workshop with the following objective:

"Deepen your understanding of race and racism to enhance your ability to apply equity and inclusion in your daily work."

A key concept of the presentation lay in the difference between Equality and Equity. Ms. Moyston explained:

"Equality gives everyone the same resources, while Equity means giving everyone the specific resources they need to reach an equal outcome."

Ms. Moyston further addressed such concepts as race, intersectionality, unconscious bias, microaggressions, and more.

To engage participants in conversation, Ms. Moyston asked,

"How can the Town of Pelham apply what we discussed today to improve how we serve the community?"

"What barriers might prevent us from putting DEI principles into practice - and how can we address them together?"

Lively discussions followed both presentations and participants indicated interest in continuing the workshops into the future. We hope to reach more of our colleagues and neighbors, to invite all to join us for our next workshop, now in the planning stage, and welcome your input for future ideas on the subject of increasing our understanding of the often subtle biases we all hold and how to address them.

Anne Stoddard, Member

Garden Committee News

As you may or may not know, our small Town of Pelham has a Community Garden. The garden is located on Meeting House Road in the Buffam Falls Conservation area. Some tools are provided as well as a wheel barrow for gardeners. Plot donations are \$20 for the season to help with the upkeep of fencing and other incendiary needs.

We are always looking for gardeners and non-gardeners to be a part of the Pelham Community Garden Committee. We meet once a month on an "as needed" basis.

Cyd Reiman, Chair



Town Offices
351 Amherst Rd

Call Ahead to
 Verify We Are In:
(413) 253-7129

**Assessor's
 Clerk**
Ext. 2
 Lori Turati
 Wednesdays
 9am-12pm
 & by appointment

**Collector/
 Treasurer**
Ext. 3

June Masee
 Monday-
 Thursday
 8am-3:30pm

Town Clerk
Ext. 4

Melissa Hibbard
 Monday-
 Thursday
 8am-2pm

**Select Board
 Executive
 Assistant**
Ext. 1

Susannah Martin
 Monday-
 Thursday

State Representatives

Representative, Aaron Saunders

7th Hampden District
 (617) 722-2425 x7300

STATE HOUSE

AARON.SAUNDERS@MAHOUSE.GOV

State Senator, Jo Comerford

(617) 722-1532

STATE HOUSE

COMERFORD@MASENATE.GOV

STAY INFORMED!

*Do you want to be notified by your
 local emergency response team in
 the event of emergency situations or
 critical community alerts?*

SIGN UP ONLINE:

pelhampolicema.com

-Click on CodeRed icon.

-Enter information.



Board/Committee Meeting Schedules

Assessors, Board of

3rd Tuesday, 7:30 PM
 Rhodes Building,
 351 Amherst Rd

Council on Aging

2nd Wednesday, 2:00 PM
 Community Center,
 2 South Valley Rd

Housing Committee

2nd Monday, 4:30 PM
 Community Center,
 2 South Valley Rd

Cemetery Commission

1st Thursday, 6:00 PM
 Community Center,
 2 South Valley Rd

Energy Committee

As needed, 7:30 PM
 Community Center,
 2 South Valley Rd

Library Trustees

2nd Wednesday,
 7:30 PM
 Community Center,
 2 South Valley Rd

Conservation Commission

2nd and last Thursdays
 7:00 PM
 Community Center,
 2 South Valley Rd

Health, Board of

2nd Tuesday, 7:00 PM
 Community Center,
 2 South Valley Rd

Planning Board

2nd Tuesday, 7:00 PM
 Community Center,
 2 South Valley Rd

Community Preservation Committee

3rd Thursday, 7:00 PM
 Community Center,
 2 South Valley Rd

Historical Commission

3rd Tuesday, 7:30 PM
 Community Center,
 2 South Valley Rd

School Committee

1st Tuesday &
 as needed, 5:30 PM
 Community Center,
 2 South Valley Rd

Select Board

1st & 3rd Mondays
 & as needed, 7:00PM
 Rhodes Building,
 351 Amherst Rd

Please Note: Only anticipated meeting times & locations:

By law, definitive meeting information is posted
 48 hours in advance on

<http://mytowngovement.org/01002>

Public Bodies that meet

AS NEEDED:

- Anti-Racism Advisory Committee
- Cable Advisory Comm.
- Capital Planning Comm.
- Community Garden Committee
- Community Hall Committee
- Cultural Council
- Finance Committee
- IT Advisory Group
- Sustainability Committee
- Zoning Board of Appeals

OTHER DEPARTMENTS:

Police Department

Non-Emergency, Station
 (413) 253-0484

Fire Department

Non-Emergency, Station
 (413) 253-3311

Town of Pelham
Rhodes Building
351 Amherst Road
Pelham, MA 01002

PRESORTED
STANDARD MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
AMHERST, MA
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PELHAM SLATE

Winter
Edition

Photo:
*Stairs inside Old Town
Hall
Courtesy of Pelham
Historical Society,
John Crispen*

