

## **BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING**

Town Hall Meeting Room 3 East Main Rd. Peru MA

Monday, January 30, 2023 @ 6:00 PM

1. Call to order
2. Roll Call
3. State recording status
4. Pledge Alliance to the Flag
5. Review and Approve BOS Meeting Minutes for 1/9/23, 1/23/23
6. Updates of Departments
7. Discussion and possible vote regarding Peru Volunteer Fire Department radio license.
8. Discussion regarding well maintenance-water pump project.
9. Update and discussion on ARPA funds.
10. Discussion and review of posting for Town Administrator position.
11. Public input
12. Review and Approve Accounts payable, Treasury Warrant.
13. Adjourn

The list of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Board which may be discussed and other items not

listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

Official posting: Peru Town website: [www.townofperuma.com](http://www.townofperuma.com)

Posted January 25, 2023 @ 7:48 pm , *Kim Leach, Town Clerk*

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES: January 30, 2023 @ 6:00 P.M.**

Peru Town Hall Meeting Room

Verne Leach, Chair Selectman/ACO  
Bruce Cullett, Selectman/Police Chief  
Doug Haskins, Selectman / Fin Com  
James Welch, Town Administrator  
Terry Walker, Administrative Assistant  
Justin Russell, Highway Superintendent  
Jesse Pelkey, Fire Chief

Public Attendees: None

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

**Item 2: Roll Call:** Chairman Leach present, Selectman Cullett present, Selectman Haskins present

**Item 3: State Recording status:** Selectman Leach 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 01/09/2023, 1/23/2023.**

Selectman Cullett motion to approve 01/09/2023 minutes, Selectman Haskins second, 3-0

1/23/23 minutes are not ready to review.

**Item 6: Updates of Departments:**

Highway Superintendent Russell mentioned that the Town Treasurer has received the MassWorks Reimbursement for East Windsor Road. Superintendent Russell provided a spreadsheet from Mass Highway and noted the available funds in Chapter 90 total \$608,817.47. Superintendent Russell also mentioned that the dumpsters were not swapped because of the weather but were swapped today.

Fire Chief Pelkey mentioned that two items need to be changed on the approved minutes for January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023.

- Training days for Chief Pelkey
- Senior Grant

Selectman Leach instructed Chief Pelkey that he needs to write an addendum with changes and attach to the 1/3/2023 minutes. Next time Chief Pelkey should double check the minutes before they are approved by the Board of Selectmen. Chief Pelkey agreed.

1. Fire Chief Pelkey emailed Town Clerk Leach asking permission to update the Fire Department webpage and he hasn't heard from Town Clerk Leach. Chief Pelkey mentioned that the Police Chief updates the Police Department webpage and he feels that he has critical information that should be on the Fire Department webpage. Selectman Leach agreed to train Chief Pelkey to access website and he will be able to update the Fire Department webpage.
2. Chief Pelkey mentioned that there is a remaining balance of \$500.00 in the Continuing Ed account. Chief Pelkey is requesting to purchase 2 adult mannequins, 1 child mannequin and one infant mannequin for training. He reiterated that Logan Brooks is certified to teach CPR and the mannequins would be helpful.
3. Chief Pelkey will be asking Bonnie DiTomasso, Shine Counselor, to help with Safety Day for seniors and kids.
4. Fire Chief Pelkey was concerned with ice storms and down trees in Peru. The Eversource contact person has already been established and Police Chief Cullett has the credentials. Fire Chief Pelkey is willing to stay at the

Fire Station to report down trees or roads closed. It was noted that during a major storm a command center would be set up and the EMD will be in charge of the command center.

5. Fire Chief Pelkey questioned whether the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant has been approved. Selectman Cullett affirmed that this has been approved.

TA Welch mentioned that has self-inking stamps for all the department heads which will assist the accountant in paying invoices. The GL Account number, vendor number, date and department head signature stamp will be filled out by department heads. This will allow the departments to code invoices, and scan to accounting firm. The Accounting firm recommended a new scanner which would cost in the vicinity of \$420.00 and would make things more efficient. The scanner would scan double sided invoices unlike the present scanner/copier. Also, W9's are needed by the new accounting firm to cut checks and keep on file.

Selectman Cullett mentioned that with the new accounting firm additional work is falling on the Treasurer's lap. This is the first time in 20 years that the Treasurer is expected to verify the warrant, print checks and match the checks to the warrant. Selectman Cullett explained that the Treasurer/Collector does not have time to complete the additional tasks. Selectman Cullett emailed both Administrative Assistant, Terry Walker, and Treasurer, Caryn Wendling and they were both in agreement that they would work together to free up time for the Town Treasurer/Collector. Administrative Assistant Walker has experience and is well versed in SoftRight software. Selectman Leach was in favor of the Administrative Assistant organizing the invoices, verifying the warrant and printing the checks.

TA Welch mentioned that budget requests will be sent out today and due back on February 24<sup>th</sup>. TA Welch also mentioned that a retired gentlemen would like to provide services that is needed in the Assessor's office. All three Selectmen were in favor of contacting this gentleman.

Selectman Leach received a letter from the DOR looking for Schedule A which is due in November. The Accounting firm is in communication with the Town Treasurer to finalize Schedule A.

Selectman Haskins has an issue with people illegally dumping at transfer station in middle of week when the transfer station is not opened. He mentioned there is a \$100 fine for illegal dumping and the person was on camera. Selectman Haskins questioned whether the Police Chief should send a letter warning them that illegal dumping is a \$100.00 fine. Selectman Haskins suggested a bigger sign and noted that this individual has done this in the past. Selectman Haskins suggested a certified letter warning the person and next time they would be fined. Selectman Haskins was also notified that a contractor was loading his sander with town sand for his personal use. It was noted that the cameras are not directed toward the sand pile.

Police Chief Cullett mentioned that he is getting quotes on a cruiser for the upcoming budget season. He also mentioned that left over vehicles are about \$20,000 less than new ones. Chief Cullett suggested a Special Town Meeting to authorize future equipment purchases or utilizing ARPA funds. If the Chief waits until July 2023, it may take 1-2 years to get a cruiser.

**Item 7: Discussion and possible vote regarding Peru Volunteer Fire Department Radio License:**

Fire Chief Pelkey asked to put this item on agenda. Chief Pelkey stated that the Fire Department Radio License is owned by Fire Association not the town and that it is all taken care of. In ten years when we renew the license it will not cost anything, this year the cost was \$600.00 because the license had expired. Chief Pelkey said he should have the license in hand in the next week or two. Chief Pelkey mentioned that he contacted FCC because his FEMA grant submission was contingent on an updated license. Selectman Cullett mentioned that he didn't want Chief Pelkey to fall victim to fraudulent companies asking for money to renew the license. Chief Pelkey reiterated that FCC did not contact him that he had contacted FCC to follow the correct protocol to get license reinstated. Selectman Cullett asked if there



was an emergency to contacting FCC. Chief Pelkey stated that he had to get everything in line with the license before he submitted the FEMA Grant. Chief Pelkey stated that the Association paid the \$600.00. Selectman Cullett requested all correspondence between Fire Chief Pelkey and FCC be given to the Board of Selectmen.

**Item 8: Discussion regarding well maintenance- water pump project:**

Highway Superintendent Russell asked what had taken place with the well project. Fire Chief Pelkey explained that the well was repaired by Henshaw, the pump was pulled up 50 feet and the wiring was replaced. The  $\frac{3}{4}$  horsepower pump was replaced with a 1 horsepower pump. The well is 400 feet deep and Chief Pelkey reported that the well would adequately supply 2 buildings. Superintendent Russell mentioned that some of the valves were plugged in the highway garage.

Highway Superintendent then asked what happened to the copper wire that Henshaw removed. Fire Chief Pelkey mentioned that Henshaw donated the copper wire to the Fire Association. Highway Superintendent Russell questioned why Henshaw would donate town property. Fire Chief Pelkey stated that Henshaw takes everything from job sites and Henshaw decided to donate the copper wire to the Fire Association. The Selectboard agreed that Henshaw cannot donate town property to the Fire Association. Selectman Leach mentioned that in order to get rid of town property it must go out to bid. It was decided the copper wire would be returned to the town. Fire Chief agreed and he would do whatever the Board of Selectmen wanted. Selectmen Cullett and Leach agreed that town property cannot be taken off site. Again, the Selectboard reiterated that only the Board of Selectmen can decide what is surplus property.

TA Welch questioned whether Henshaw's \$4,675.00 invoice should be paid out of ARPA or building maintenance account. Selectman Leach asked TA Welch to notify Board of Health that the town well is ready for the water to be tested. Fire Chief Pelkey made Highway Superintendent Russell aware that the amps had been moved to 14 amps on the pumps and asked him to make sure both pumps are on.

**Item 9: Update and discussion on ARPA Funds:**

TA Welch presented the Selectboard with an ARPA condition of Accounts. An undated report is needed with additional ARPA funds included. The report that was distributed was dated 6/30/2022 and the total funds available was not accurate. Some discussion on utilizing the remainder of the ARPA funds included: a 10 x 10 shed for the transfer station for \$4,800.00 or a 8x8 shed for \$3,500.00. TA Welch needs to acquire 3 quotes for the structure. It was mentioned that there is around \$7,000 in grants for the transfer station. The Shed Man and Westfield Hometown Structures will be asked for quotes. Highway Superintendent asked if there was a possibility of having an engineer design drainage and pave the area. DEP report suggested that water should be controlled from the compactor that runs under the fire house. It was agreed that black top would help with the water situation. Once the Selectboard have quotes for paving the town hall parking lot, community center and park, this will be discussed with the Finance Committee and decide whether the funds will come from Free Cash or ARPA.

**Item 10: Discussion and review of posting for Town Administrator position:** Selectman Leach made a correction on page 2 of the TA job description. under procedures-it should read works with elected and appointed positions. The Selectboard agreed to post on the MMA website. TA Welch and Selectman Leach will meet to post position with one correction. TA Welch mentioned that he has a large bill from the Vocational School and questioned whether he should place on next week's warrant. More discussion to follow.

**Item 11: Public Input:** N/A

**Item 12: Review and Approve Accounts Payable, Treasury Warrants and Payroll Warrant:** N/A

Discussion regarding how invoices should be emailed accounting firm.

Selectman Cullett motion to purchase 2 scanners, one for town hall and one for highway garage. TA Welch was instructed to purchase two scanners @ \$420.00 per scanner and speak with Renatus Solutions before purchasing.

**Item 13: Adjourn:** Selectman Leach made motion to adjourn the 01/30/2023 BOS Meeting, Selectman Cullett second, Vote 3-0. The 01/30/2023 BOS Meeting adjourned at 7:45 P.M.

**Articles used:**

Minutes- 01/09/2023,

Fire Chief mileage log

TA job description.

ARPA condition of accounts-6/30/2022

Chapter 90 funds available

Email Selectman Cullett, Treasurer Wendling, Administrative Assistant Walker (assistance in Treasurer's office)

Henshaw invoice

Scanner description

Respectfully Submitted,

*Terry Walker*

*Administrative Assistant*

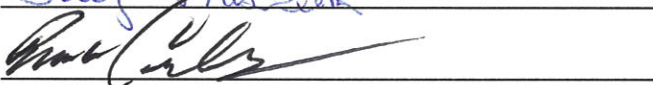
Verne Leach, Chairman



Doug Haskins, Selectman



Bruce Cullett, Selectman



Date Approved: 2-6-2023

RECEIVED  
FEB 07 2023  
*Kim Leach*  
TOWN CLERK  
TOWN OF PERU