

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Peru Community Center

3 East Main Rd. Peru MA

Monday, September 26, 2022 @ 6:00 PM

1. Call to order
2. Roll Call
3. State recording status
4. Pledge Allegiance to the Flag
5. Review and Approve BOS Meeting Minutes 8/29/2022, 9/6/2022, 9/19/2022
6. Updates of Departments
7. Discussion regarding purchase of Pay Loader for Highway Department
8. Update and discussion on Procurement Cards and Vendor Accounts
9. Discussion and possible vote to update Town Owned Vehicle Policy
10. Interview with Jamie Leach for Town Accountant Position @ 6:30pm
11. Discussion and possible vote to appoint Town Accountant.
12. Update and discussion regarding Town Owned Properties.
13. Discussion and possible vote regarding a Special Town Meeting for Wahconah HS Athletic Track project.
14. Public input
15. Review and Approve Accounts payable, Treasury Warrant, Payroll Warrant.
16. 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

Posted September 22, 2022 @ 4:15 pm , Kim Leach, Town Clerk

TOWN HALL 3 EAST MAIN ROAD PERU, MA 01235

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES: September 26, 2022 @ 6:00 P.M.

Peru Community Center

Verne Leach, Chair Selectman/ACO
Bruce Cullett, Selectman/Police Chief
Doug Haskins, Selectman/Finance Committee
James Welch, Town Administrator
Terry Walker, Administrative Assistant
Justin Russell, Highway Superintendent

Public Attendees:

Bonnie Ditamasso
Sharon Greule- previous Town Accountant
Rick Peters – Central Berkshire -co-chair school building committee

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 use

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

Item 5: Review and Approve BOS Meeting Minutes for 08/29/2022, 9/6/2022, 09/19/2022

Selectman Leach 8/29/2022 minutes on hold

Selectman Leach motion to approve 09/06/2022 minutes pending changes, Selectman Haskins second, Selectman Cullett abstain, 2-0

Selectman Leach motion to approve 09/19/2022 as written, Selectman Haskins second, Selectman Cullett abstain, 2-0

Item 6: Updates of Departments

Police Department- Police Chief Cullett attended training for Emergency Management via a MEMA based website.

Annual EMD grant is due in November. This is an automatic guaranteed grant with an in-kind match by the town. In the past the town has obtained GPS units plus search and rescue gear. Chief Cullett will reach out to the Fire Department and Highway Department to see if the grant funding can be utilized for the departments.

Police Chief attended a grant writing course, and he will be attending Fall training for recertification as a firearms instructor for the next 3 Saturdays.

Highway Superintendent Russell mentioned that paving on East Windsor Road is completed. The shoulders and driveway aprons need to be completed. Tuesday, September 27th, an appraiser will meet Highway Superintendent Russell to do the appraisal on the F350 and give an estimate for the auto body repairs to passenger side.

TA Welch mentioned that he received an official notification from Woodland Partnership Grant and Peru will be receiving \$20,000 for Pierce Road.

Patriot Properties representative Mark Harrold is working with Amy Davidson to get forms and documents that he requested.

Candidate volunteer for the Woodland Partnership, Sam Haupt, will be on the agenda for next week.

Item 7: Discussion regarding purchase of Pay Loader for Highway Department. Selectman Leach had placed the payloader on hold at a prior meeting because Selectman Cullett was not present. Selectman Haskins has been contacting Camerotta and has not received a response. Plus, John deer and Caterpillar have not responded. Selectman Haskins would like to see more quotes from other companies. Selectman Leach asked Selectman Cullett if he is comfortable with Volvo which is top of the line. Selectman Haskins will be calling Schmidt Equipment and will drive to West Springfield to get a quote. This was put on hold for two more weeks.

Item 8: Update and discussion on Procurement Cards and Vendor Accounts: no change in the process approved a request paperwork coming back to set limits. Selectman Leach put on hold.

Item 9: Discussion and possible vote to update Town Owned Vehicle Policy: TA Welch added an amendment to clarify which vehicles are used by part time department heads, and use of a mileage log. Selectman Cullett and Selectman Leach were able to address this issue due to **-Rule of Necessity.** It was voted that the Animal Control Officer and Fire Chief would keep track of mileage, odometer reading plus usage of vehicles. There is also a concern about the Fire Chief using the Command Vehicle for non-emergency situations. Selectmen Leach mentioned there is a possibility of executive session next Monday, October 3rd regarding use of town vehicle and inspections. TA Welch was instructed to place on next week's agenda and notify Fire Chief Pelkey of a possible executive session. Selectman Leach motion to approve mileage log amendment, Selectman Haskins in agreement, Selectman Cullett in agreement, vote 3-0 in favor of amendment.

Item 10: Interview with Jamie Leach for Town Accountant Position @ 6:30 pm: Selectman Leach recused himself and interview with Jamie Leach was cancelled prior to the meeting. Selectman Cullett mentioned that if the Selectboard hired someone without experience the individual will need training and the trained accountant will need to be compensated. Sharon Greule as a former Town Accountant for Peru gave an overview on cleaning up the books. She mentioned that the Tax Recap Sheet, Certification of Free Cash, and Schedule A needs to be completed by November. Sharon also mentioned that it would take up to a year to clean up unfinished work and that the books need be closed and reconciled for the last year. Sharon mentioned that hiring someone that is inexperienced will be setting them up for failure. Sharon also mentioned that she does not have the time to train a new person. Sharon also mentioned that the candidate would need support, training and cleaning up for the previous fiscal year. TA Welch mentioned that Eric Kinsherf's Accounting firm would bring peace of mind and be beneficial to the town, but the cost is \$35-\$40 thousand per year. TA Welch is anticipating that the new Accountant will take a lead on reconciling on a timely basis. TA Welch will be looking into the benefits of hiring an accounting firm such as hiring an Accountant from FCROG. The issues with certifying Free Cash, Schedule A and setting the Tax Rate have been ongoing issues and the town is attempting to resolve these issues by hiring an outside firm. The Selectboard did not vote on this issue and will revisit at a later date.

Item 11: Discussion and possible vote to appoint Town Accountant: N/A

Item 12: Update and discussion regarding Town Owned Properties: Spreadsheet from the Town Treasurer with town owned properties was presented to the Selectmen. Selectman Leach is in favor of an auction. KP Law will be asked how to pursue auctioning off properties. There are 5 properties to auction off; in addition; the Selectboard agreed that unpaid taxes should be a top priority. The Selectmen and Treasurer will look into making a payment plan for people with unpaid taxes.

Item 13: Discussion and possible vote regarding a Special Town Meeting for Wahconah High School Athletic Track project: Bonnie Ditomasso mentioned that a Special Town Meeting should happen before October 24th and most towns are having a STM to get a supporting vote by town residents. The High School Athletic Track project will not increase capital expenditures and the track can be fixed without a separate bond. The Board mentioned that a STM does not make sense. The Selectboard is in favor of approving funds for the High School Athletic Track and Peru will not have a STM, Selectman Leach -yes vote, Selectman Cullett -yes vote, Selectman Haskins- yes vote. Vote 3-0.

Item 14: Public Input: N/A

Item 15: Review and Approve Accounts Payable, Treasury Warrants and Payroll Warrant none

Item 16: Adjourn: Selectman Leach made motion to adjourn the 09/26/2022 BOS Meeting, Selectman Cullett second, Vote 3-0. The 09/26/2022 BOS Meeting adjourned at 7:34 P.M.

Articles used:

Minutes- 09/06/2022, 09/19/2022

Vehicle Policy

List of Town owned properties - Treasurer

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry Walker

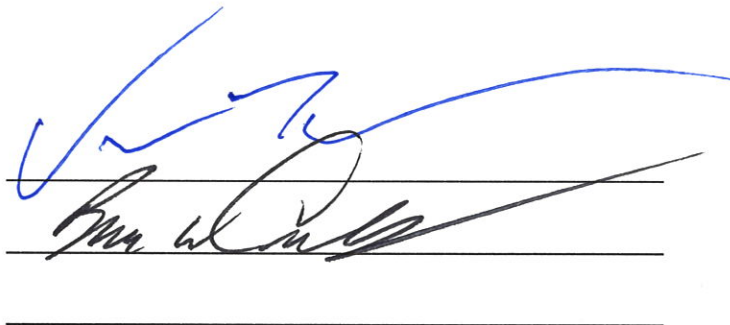
Administrative Assistant

Verne Leach, Chairman

Doug Haskins, Selectman

Bruce Cullett, Selectman

Date Approved: _____

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