

# THE PELHAM SLATE



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FALL EDITION 2021, PAGE 1

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### FALL SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

**October 23, 2021**

*Old Town Hall  
& Pelham School  
9:00am*

### DRUG TAKE BACK DAY

**October 23, 2021**

*Police Station  
10:00am-2:00pm*

### TAXES DUE

**November 1, 2021**

*Questions?  
Call Tax Collector  
(413) 253-2267*

## FROM THE SELECT BOARD OFFICE

### FALL SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

The leaves are turning so it must be time for Fall Special Town Meeting. This year's event will be held on Saturday October 23, 2021 opening at the Old Town Hall, 376 Amherst Rd, at 9:00am then continuing at the Pelham Elementary School, 45 Amherst Rd, under a tent. Please wear a mask and remember to bring your copy of the warrant which was mailed. Similar to previous set-ups, chairs will be spaced to allow for households to sit together. We look forward to seeing everyone there!

### REMINDER ABOUT BOARD/COMMITTEE MEETINGS

With the continued presence of COVID-19, all Pelham boards/committees are allowed to continue to meet either in-person, remote, or as a hybrid of the two until April 2022. Please check the board/committee agendas for location and connection information.

### PROJECTS IN AND AROUND TOWN

The Rhodes Building and Highway Department driveways were ground up and re-paved in August by Warner Brothers. In September and October, the Museum at the Historic Complex was painted by Northeast Painting, and the Rhodes Building interior walls was painted by Dennis Petrides.

## COUNCIL ON AGING NEWS

The CoA is thrilled to announce that we have hired a Pelham resident as an Outreach Worker! She will connect Pelham seniors to state and local resources that can help them live independently and will be available to meet with folks in their homes and in community settings soon. Sally Kaufmann has a clinical background in Occupational Therapy and more than 20 years of business development and strategic planning experience in the hospital setting, home health and in long term care. As the new Outreach Worker, Sally is looking forward to supporting the overall health and well being of her fellow community members and older adults as we all strive to age safely in place in Pelham. An information pamphlet has been developed for our first responders to give to vulnerable seniors they meet in the course of their work as another means of

communicating information about local and state resources.

**Birthday greetings** from the COA will now include a card containing contact information for the COA.

The CoA is collaborating with the Pelham Library staff to set up a system to deliver library books and materials to homebound seniors. **Volunteers are needed to pick up "book bags" at the library and bring them to Pelham seniors.** Call Tracy Osbahr at (413) 253-3018 if you are interested in making occasional deliveries.

**Are you able to occasionally fill in to bring home-based meals to Pelham seniors?** We always welcome substitute drivers. Contact Tracy at (413) 253-3018 if interested. The route takes less than 1 ½ hours to complete.



Thanks to the voters at the 2021 Annual Town Meeting who approved funds to regrind and repave the Rhodes Building/Town Offices and Highway Department driveway and parking areas. A special thank you to the Pelham Highway Department crew who worked to remove an old bulletin board, backfill, grade, and reseed the lawn to complete the project.

## PLANNING BOARD POSITION ON CPA SPENDING: AMETHYST BROOK APARTMENTS

Members of the Planning Board have discussed at length the request for CPA \$500,000 in CPA funds being made by Home City Development to show community support for the affordable housing project at 20-22 Amherst Road. Fall town meeting is being asked to vote half of this sum, \$250,000 with the expectation that the rest will be sought at a later date.

While the Board recognizes that the developer needs a strong showing of community support to raise state and other funding for the project, we believe that the **total** sum should be no larger than \$250,000 for a town Pelham's size. Granting that Pelham does not yet meet the state requirement for 10% state-qualified affordable housing, providing over \$7,350 per unit for 34 apartments to be built in the town center seems entirely reasonable. We understand that Amherst recently provided \$500,000 for a similar sized project, but Amherst's population is 14 times larger than Pelham's!

As with any development, service costs for police, fire, schools, and road maintenance will be permanently incurred even though very little change in tax revenue is expected. Even if the total contribution is halved, giving too much will forestall the town's ability to put more than modest sums toward other highly worthy open space, historic, or even other affordable housing projects that would adhere to our zoning regulations to enhance the Village Center and provide opportunities for small business. At this writing, the only reason that has been offered for voting a total of \$500,000 is that this is the amount that the developer requested. In other words, as of October 1st, no justification has been provided for this particular amount. If the town doesn't provide the full amount, the developer has indicated that they will be looking for other sources. The Planning Board looks forward to a substantive discussion at town meeting.

## HOUSING COMMITTEE BULLETIN



**The Housing Committee is pleased to announce that Pelham's first two affordable housing initiatives are well underway.** The two families who will move into two affordable single-family homes later this year, were introduced at a virtual "Wall Rising Celebration," hosted by Megan MacDonald of Habitat for Humanity. Members of the Housing Committee, as well as other attendees from Pelham, expressed their gratitude to those who helped make this project a reality. We were pleased to (virtually) meet and welcome our new neighbors to Pelham, who are currently helping to build their new homes and are looking forward to becoming part of our community.

**In August, Amethyst Brook Apartments, Pelham's first affordable rental development, received unanimous support from both the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Community Preservation Committee.**

Home City Development Inc., the non-profit developer of Amethyst Brook Apartments, is seeking \$250,000 in CPA funds at the upcoming Fall Special Town Meeting to be held on October 23rd.

Last fall, Pelham voters overwhelmingly approved a non-binding commitment for up to \$500,000 in CPA funds for 34 affordable rental units at Amethyst Brook Apartments. The warrant article states that the funds being requested are currently available; therefore, the CPC determined, committing \$250,00 for affordable housing now will not jeopardize the availability of funds for future projects. Although the money will not be disbursed for at least a year, *this financial commitment from Pelham voters is a necessary part of Home City Development's application for state and private funding*, which must be filed in early 2022.

But there's another reason to VOTE YES at the Town Meeting on October 23rd. *Millions of dollars are available to small rural communities in MA that show "a strong commitment to affordable housing,"* according to Chris Kluchman, at the Dept. of Housing and Community Development. These funds may be used for a variety of projects, such as sidewalks, and extending water and sewer lines in the Village Center. There are also certain financial incentives for the town itself. **The next step is up to YOU. Come to FALL SPECIAL TOWN MEETING on OCTOBER 23 and VOTE YES to confirm Pelham's commitment to affordable housing.**

Please come to a meeting (we generally meet on the first Tuesday of the month) or **contact Tilman Lukas, [tlukas@lukasdesign.com](mailto:tlukas@lukasdesign.com)**. Thanks!

**THE HOUSING COMMITTEE IS SEEKING 1-2 NEW MEMBERS TO CONTINUE TO CARRY OUT OUR MISSION: "TO INCREASE THE DIVERSITY, AVAILABILITY, AND AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING OPTIONS IN TOWN, PARTICULARLY FOR YOUNG FAMILIES AND SENIORS."**



## UPDATE FROM THE BOARD OF HEALTH

### PIONEER VALLEY MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT

The Board of Health supports Pelham joining the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District. As a member of the District there will be weekly trapping and testing of mosquitoes for Eastern Equine Encephalitis and West Nile Virus during the season of risk. The District also provides educational aides, an integrated pest management program and would put the Town in charge what is done case of a mosquito born disease out break.

### COVID UPDATE

COVID is still with us so we should still be careful around other people wear a mask, social distance, get vaccinated. If you are over 65 or have other health conditions that place you at risk you can get a booster shot for the Pfizer vaccine 6 months after your second

shot. As of the week ending October 1, 2021 Pelham had no new COVID cases according to DPH.

### PFAS WELL TESTING

Below are the results PFAS private well testing to date. The bottom line is of the 31 samples analyzed PFAS were detected in 4 wells, 1 of which exceeded the maximum contaminate level determined by DEP to be a threat to health. The well that exceeded the MCL already has treatment in place that removes the

Total Signups: 62	
Accepted Signups: 60	ND: 27
Form Return Rate: 60%	<10ppt: 3
Total Forms Signed: 36	10-20ppt: 0
Wells Sampled: 32	>20ppt: 1
Results Received: 31	>90ppt: 0

## FROM THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S DESK

The Summer was full of outdoor programming, including a visit from the Forest Park Zoo, a magic show with Ed the Wizard and concerts by Jay Mankita and Wendy & Anna Plummer. Over 80 children and nearly a dozen teens participated in our Summer Reading Program this year and next year we hope to host an adult program as well.

### OUR HOURS HAVE CHANGED!

The school is dismissing earlier this year, which allows us to open earlier:

**Monday 2:00 - 7:00 p.m.**      **Tuesday & Thursday: 2:30 – 7:00 p.m.**      **Wednesday: 1:00 – 7:00p.m.**  
**Friday: 10:00 a.m. – Noon**      **Saturday: 10:00 a.m.— 2:00 p.m.**

**HAVE YOU MET OUR NEW STAFF MEMBER YET?** Jane Urban, a former school librarian, came out of retirement to join our team. She'll be reviving our teen program so watch for news about upcoming events and if you have a teen who might be interested, please contact us.

**SENIORS:** The Pelham Council on Aging is now providing home delivery and will drop off and pick up on Friday mornings. If you're interested, please get in touch with us by calling (413) 253-0657.

Margaret White from the Collaborative for Educational Services will again host outdoor play groups on Monday mornings. Wendy & Anna Plummer will follow with Sing with Your Little Ones. Visit our website, [www.pelham-library.net](http://www.pelham-library.net) and/or our Facebook page for the full schedule of events. Wowbrary offers a weekly newsletter with all of our newest happenings and arrivals, at <https://www.wowbrary.org/signup.aspx>.

**TWO NEW SERVICES BEING ADDED:** **Hoopla** as well as a wide array of streaming video, ebooks and e-audio, and **Comics Plus!** which offers unlimited access to comics and graphic novels for all ages. These are in addition to Overdrive (e-books & e-audio) and Kanopy (streaming movies, Great Courses, kids' content and more). Feel free to contact us for help logging in.

Our fish tank is full of new life thanks to Terry Pratt. Feel free to reach out with any questions and don't forget your mask when you come.

-Jodi Levine

## PELHAM'S FLAG



Pelham's Flag: Centered, in a field of white, a sprig of hemlock, needles dark green, cones dark brown.

**Did you know that Pelham has a town flag? Have you noticed the hemlock symbol on the left on many of Pelham's signs? Ever wondered about its significance?** Below is an article written by Joseph Larson which answers all those questions.

If you have an interest in Pelham's history and would like to become involved with the Pelham Historical Society, please contact Cynthia Weigel, President, at (413) 256-4606.

### THE PELHAM FLAG

Of the 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, only a few had adopted their own flags by the mid-1980's. Some of these date from the American Revolution. Although the Town of Pelham was founded in 1743, 23 years before the Revolution, it was not one of the towns that had created its own flag.

At the Annual Town Meeting on May 3rd, 1986, the citizens of the Town adopted the Pelham flag by unanimous vote to accept Article 24 on the Annual Town Warrant. The Article had been proposed by a petition from ten citizens to the Board of Selectmen, one of the ways that an Article may be placed on a Warrant for consideration by Town Meeting. Article 24 read:

To see if the Town will adopt a Town flag, of the design illustrated below, in commemoration of the 200th Anniversary of Shays Rebellion and in recognition of the constitutional form of government that followed, the flag symbol being that adopted by Captain Daniel Shays, of Pelham, and his men in 1786, or take any other action relative thereto. (Sponsored by a petition of ten or more registered voters)

### HISTORICAL BASIS

Although the flag itself is not old, the citizens of the Town reached back 200 years for a symbol of historic significance to both the Town and Nation. After the American Revolution, the merchants in the coastal towns of eastern Massachusetts found that they had to pay for their imports with cash and in turn started insisting on payment in cash from their inland customers. Previously it had been the custom to accept farm produce in trade for essential goods, like nails, from subsistence farmers such as those who eked out a living on the Pelham hills. These and other poor farmers of western Massachusetts had no cash, so the merchants began to go to the courts to get the sheriffs to seize the farmers homes and lands in payment of their debts. In 1786, Daniel Shays, a former Captain in the Revolution, led an armed farmers rebellion against what they saw as cruel injustice.

The ill-clad officers and men of Shay's Rebellion had no uniforms. To identify themselves they stuck in their hats, small branches, or sprigs, from hemlock trees, *Tsuga canadensis* (L), one of the most common evergreens in Pelham. So signed, they trained on the drill field in front of the Town Hall on Pelham Hill,

*Pelham Flag Continued on page 6*

*Pelham Flag Continued from page 5*

surrounded the county court houses to prevent the judges from meeting or sheriffs from taking action and marched on the Federal Armory in Springfield.

Although supported by one third of the citizens of Massachusetts, Shay's Rebellion failed when government troops routed them at the Armory. But the fact of the Rebellion changed the course of American government. Alarmed at the specter of armed protest, the weak national government, then organized under the Articles of Confederation, drafted and adopted the Constitution of the United States. Among the state delegates who met on January 9, 1788, in the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to vote on ratification of the Constitution, eighteen had marched with Daniel Shays of Pelham and worn the sprig of hemlock.

### "SPRIGS OF HEMLOCK"

The Pelham flag, with its sprig of hemlock, is of classic heraldic design: simple, distinctive and unique in symbolism. But the sprig of hemlock is not only evocative of Shay's Rebellion but also of Walter A. Dyer's book "Sprigs of Hemlock, A Tale of the Shay's Rebellion" (1931:Century, New York). Long out of print, this volume can still be found in used book stores in the Pioneer Valley. Dyer, who lived in Pelham at the junction of Meeting House and North Valley Roads, dedicated this book:

*To my own  
TOWN OF PELHAM  
beautiful amid its hills,  
a land of verdant woods, laughing waters,  
and sunny slopes,  
a town with a worthy past and a peaceful present,  
this tale is lovingly dedicated.*



Since its settlement by Scots-Irish, over 200 years ago, the landscape of Pelham has changed from forest to extensive farm fields and back again to forest. Despite these changes, it is the nature of hemlock trees to create a distinctive micro-environment when they grow in dense stands. Because of this characteristic, we can be fairly certain that the stream side hemlock groves in Pelham today are much like those from which Shay's men picked their sprigs. Without doubt, these groves also resemble the "verdant woods and laughing waters" familiar to Walter Dyer. With citizen dedication, the hemlocks of Pelham will grace our streams and flag for another 200 years.

## DO YOU WANT TO JOIN THE CULTURAL COUNCIL?

The Pelham Cultural Council is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils serving all 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth. The LCC Program is the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation, supporting thousands of community-based projects in the arts, sciences and humanities every year. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, which then allocates funds to each community.

The Council meets monthly each year from October to January to review applications and make grants to individuals and organizations interested in celebrating arts and culture in our community. We also occasionally sponsor and staff our own Council-sponsored event in the winter, spring, or summer. Join us!

Email Council Chair Nora Maroulis at [nora@wunderarts.com](mailto:nora@wunderarts.com) for more information.



## Town Office Schedules & Contact Information

### Assessor's Office,

Lori Turati  
(413) 253-0734  
Wed. 9-12pm &  
by appointment

### Tax Collector/ Treasurer

June Masee  
(413) 253-2267  
Mon-Thurs  
8am-3:30pm

### Select Board Office, Administrative Assistant

Susannah Carey  
(413) 253-7129  
Mon-Thurs  
8:30am-2:30pm

**Town Clerk**  
Sandra Burgess  
(413) 253-0512  
Tues. 10-2pm  
Wed. 10-2pm  
Thurs. 10-1pm

## WANT TO BE MORE INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

Positions open on:

- **CABLE ADVISORY BOARD**
- **COMMUNITY HALL COMMITTEE**
- **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMM.**
- **COUNCIL ON AGING**
- **CULTURAL COUNCIL**
- **HISTORICAL COMMISSION**
- **HOUSING COMMITTEE**
- **PERSONNEL BOARD**

Contact: Select Board Office to obtain Board/  
Committee contact information, (413) 253-7129.

## STAY INFORMED!

Go to [Townofpelham.org](http://Townofpelham.org)  
and click on the **CodeRED**  
icon to be notified by your  
local emergency response  
team in the event of  
emergency situations or  
critical community alerts.



## MEETING SCHEDULES

### REGULAR MEETINGS

#### Assessors, Board of

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

#### Cemetery Commission

2nd Tuesday  
7:30 PM  
Library, 2 South Valley Rd

#### Conservation Commission

2nd and last Thursdays  
7:00 PM  
Rhodes Building,  
351 Amherst Rd

#### Community Preservation Committee

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

#### Council on Aging

2nd Wednesday  
3:00 PM  
Library, 2 South Valley Rd

#### Energy Committee

1st Tuesday & as needed  
7:30 PM  
Library, 2 South Valley Rd

#### Health, Board of

2nd Tuesday 7:00 PM  
Rhodes Building,  
351 Amherst Rd

#### Historical Commission

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

#### Housing Committee

1st Tuesday  
4:30 PM  
Library, 2 South Valley Rd

#### Library Trustees

2nd Wednesday  
7:30 PM  
Library, 2 South Valley Rd

#### Planning Board

2nd Monday  
7:00 PM  
Rhodes Building & Library

#### School Committee

1st Thursday & as needed  
6:00 PM  
Library, 2 South Valley Rd

#### Select Board

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

### Public Bodies that meet AS NEEDED:

- Anti-Racism Advisory Committee
- Cable Committee
- Capital Planning Committee
- Community Garden Committee
- Community Hall Committee
- Community Hall Accessibility Committee
- Cultural Council
- Finance Committee
- IT Committee
- Regional School District Planning Committee
- Zoning Board of Appeals

Please note that these are  
only anticipated meeting  
times and locations:  
By law, definitive meeting  
information is posted 48  
hours in advance on  
[www.Townofpelham.org](http://www.Townofpelham.org)



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

PRESORTED  
STANDARD MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
AMHERST, MA  
PERMIT NO. 31



# PELHAM SLATE

## Fall Edition

\*Fall Special Town Meeting Warrant Enclosed

### WHAT'S INCLUDED:

- ♦ All About Pelham's Flag
- ♦ New Housing Progress Reports
- ♦ Taxes Due: November 1, 2021

Pictured: Pelham's Flag