

THE PELHAM SLATE



www.townofpelham.org

SUMMER EDITION 2021, PAGE 1

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 25, 2021
HAZARDOUS
HOUSEHOLD WASTE
DAY

Fort River School
Registration Required
(See page 6)

October 23, 2021
FALL SPECIAL TOWN
MEETING
Pelham School
Outside on Field

FROM THE SELECT BOARD OFFICE

Town Meeting

The Annual Town Meeting on Saturday May 8, 2021 was again held outside under a tent on the Elementary School field due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Those that attended on that chilly morning wore masks, practiced social distancing, and adhered to the seating configuration with household members. The Citizen's Petition to have all dogs leashed at all times inspired many residents to speak about the article. Ultimately after long discussion, the original petitioners who submitted the article removed it from the Warrant. Conservation Commission Chair Dana MacDonald who was present spoke about working with the Select Board to organize a public forum where the dog leash law issues could be discussed further. Both forums were held this past July in the Ramsdell Room at the Community Building.

Town Office Re-Opens

After being closed to the public for about 15 months, the Town Offices/Rhodes Building re-opened on Monday June 7, 2021. At this time only one person will be helped inside the lobby at a time and all visitors will be asked to please continue to wear a mask.

New Platform for Posting Meeting Notices & Minutes

The homepage on townofpelham.org has been refreshed. The Select Board approved use of the MyTownGovernment platform which will enable designated board/committee members to post meeting notices and minutes on their own with easy navigation. Archived minutes and agendas will still be available on each board/committee page on the town website. Minutes and agendas starting on July 21, 2021 will be available at mytowngovernment.org.

Board/Committee Meetings During Pandemic

Governor Baker's Executive Order effective March 12, 2020, which suspended certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law due to the pandemic and allowed Boards/Committees to meet virtually, was extended on June 16, 2021. Going forward all Boards/Committees will have the option to either meet in-person, entirely remotely, or meet as a hybrid of the two; in-person with virtual connection provided. For more information:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/updated-guidance-on-holding-meetings-pursuant-to-the-act-extending-certain-covid-19-measures>

Mosquito Spraying Application

Pelham's recent application to opt-out of the State's mosquito spraying program was denied along with several other moderate-risk communities in the Commonwealth. State Senator Comerford and Representative Domb were disappointed with the decision and have communicated with the State advocating for local cities/towns. Looking forward, the Select Board voted to create a warrant article for Fall Special Town Meeting seeking authorization to join the Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District. Being a member is an acceptable plan for opting out of the State's mosquito spraying program and will implement a monitoring program for mosquito borne illnesses in the town.

Grant Updates

Two best practice grants were awarded from the State's Community Compact Cabinet for an IT Assessment and HR Wage and Compensation Study which are both underway. The IT Assessment will provide a clearer picture of town wide use and practices related to Information Technology with recommendations. The Wage Study will provide a fair and competitive grading scale for current and future employees and will help ensure that Pelham's wages are competitive with other surrounding communities in order to retain current staff and attract candidates to our lovely town. A special thank you to all town employees involved who dedicated additional time and effort to complete the requested documentation.

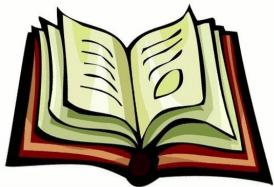
Continued on page 2

Select Board continued from page 1

Community Complex HVAC Project

Work has been completed at the Community Building (Police, Fire, Library) with the new VRF heating and cooling unit that will reduce Pelham's carbon footprint (See page 5). Thank you to Energy Committee member Co-Chairs Tony Rogers & John Larsen and member Randall Spalding-Fecher for their significant work on all aspects of the project. And thank you to Police Chief Gary Thomann, Fire Chief Raymond Murphy Jr., and Library Director Joanne Levine and her staff for their continued patience with the construction.

NEWS FROM THE PELHAM LIBRARY



Happy summer from the Pelham Library! **Thank you to everyone who has been able to get vaccinated, because we're now safe enough that we've reopened!** It'll be a while yet before we host indoor programs again, but you can now come into the library without an appointment, and it's COOL in here thanks to our new HVAC system! Please continue to wear masks to protect the children who are still vulnerable. If you're not yet comfortable coming inside yet, don't worry. We plan to continue to offer curbside service indefinitely so long as it doesn't overwhelm our staff.

We're so excited to be dipping our toes into in-person programming again! Our Children's Summer Reading Program, "Tales & Tails", will feature outdoor performances by Jay Mankita, Ed the Wizard and more. Pelham Players is back, too! Cindy Naughton will be producing "It's A Jungle Out There", for our youngest actors, ages 5-8, in July. Get in touch if your child is interested. If it goes well, look for more programs to come in the months ahead. In partnership with Libraries in the Woods and the Northfield Drive-In, we'll also once again be offering free drive in movie tickets this summer.

Visit our website, www.pelham-library.net and our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/PelhamLibraryMA for the full schedule of events. Also, sign up for [Wowbrary](https://www.wowbrary.org/signup.aspx), a weekly newsletter with all of our newest happenings and arrivals, at <https://www.wowbrary.org/signup.aspx>.

We'd like to offer our congratulations to all the graduating members of our Teen Advisory Board: AnnaMaria Biagi, Vivian Delcore, Halen Hudson, Nora Klotz, and Yabanex Toro Rodriguez. And a special congratulations to AnnaMaria for being the first recipient of the Friends of the Pelham Library's Teen Volunteer Scholarship. It's been fantastic to work with these young people, some of them since elementary school, and we wish them all the best in their journeys to come. We'll have to rebuild our teen program from scratch now, so we're hoping for some more wonderful kids to follow in their footsteps in the Fall.

PICKUP HOURS ARE STILL A REDUCED VERSION OF OUR REGULAR HOURS TO ALLOW TIME FOR SET-UP AND TAKE DOWN, BUT MAY EXPAND AGAIN AS THE SUMMER CONTINUES.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 3:30 - 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday: 1:30 - 6:30 p.m.
Friday: 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Streaming services? We hope you're enjoying Overdrive (e-books & e-audio) and Kanopy (streaming movies, Great Courses, kids' content and more). We're very disappointed that AcornTV is no longer available to libraries, but we're actively looking for a replacement. Feel free to contact us for help logging in.

Do you need something printed? Email us a file and we'll put it out on the curbside table when it's ready. **Need to get online?** Our computers are available again and our WIFI is always on and reaches out to the parking lot. Connect to the PelhamLibraryPublic network, no password needed. Is there something you'd like to see us doing? Let us know. We're here to help and we can't wait to see you again!

-Jodi Levine, Director

CELEBRATE WOMEN: THIRD INSTALLMENT FROM PHS

Prior Installments on Pelham Women were written by Cynthia Weigel with the help of David Boyden and Linda Hanscom, who are all members of the Pelham Historical Society (PHS) Board. Thank you to Pelham residents and historian Joseph Larson who submitted this Third Installment. We welcome further guest contributions about Pelham Women, past and present; if interested, please contact Cynthia Weigel at (413) 256-4606 or via PHS email, info@pelhamhistory.org. **Although the Museum is closed for the 2021 season**, you can still visit the grounds and cemetery from dawn to dusk. Our website has much more information, <https://pelhamhistory.org/>

MARGARET MORSE NICE (1883-1974)

Daughter of Amherst College Professor Anson D. Morse and Margaret Duncan Morse, she became a professional ornithologist and a pioneer female ethologist (the study of animals in their wild habitat), with close ties to Pelham. Her father purchased 203 acres around a rocky knoll he named "Grey Rocks" and built a second home that local residents referred to as "The Castle" (still standing at the extreme end of Arnold Road).

Grey Rocks was much more a second, rather than a summer home. This is demonstrated by its use as the location for of all the Morse daughters, birthplace of all the Morse grandchildren, and the address used by the two Morse sons and one daughter, who listed Pelham as the residence from which they enlisted in the armed forces in World War I.

As a young child, Margaret demonstrated the ability to make close observations and take detailed notes of the behavior of her family's flock of chickens - right down to "who pecked who." Her exposure to the forests and fields around Grey Rocks led her to shift her skills to the study and documentation of the behavior of wild birds. Her Grey Rock studies led to several papers specific to Pelham: *Blackburnian, Myrtle and Black-throated Warblers with their Young; Magnolia Warblers in Pelham; Nesting Behavior of Ovenbirds, Pelham; and Summer Birds of Pelham*.

In the course of her professional career she became a member and served as an officer of several U.S. national ornithological societies. She published over 250 studies of bird behavior and was made an honorary member of British, Finnish, German, Dutch, and Swiss ornithological organizations. In 1997 the U.S. Wilson Ornithological Society honored Margaret by creating an annual award in her name.

Robert Lord Keyes' historical narrative on the "Castle," a part of the Pelham file (PEL 93) in the Massachusetts Historical Commission in Boston, was an important source for this summary, as were several accounts of Margaret's life in the Internet. In 2007, the Pelham Historical Commission, led by Joseph S. Larson, then Chairman, requested that "Grey Rocks" be certified as the official name of the rocky knob at the end of Arnold Road and it now appears as an official designation on all U.S. Geological Survey Maps.

SUBSCRIBE TO EMAIL ALERTS for minutes and agendas for boards/committees on mytowngovernment.org. Click on the "Subscribe to..." link under the Board/Committee chosen from the homepage drop down list then enter your email address.

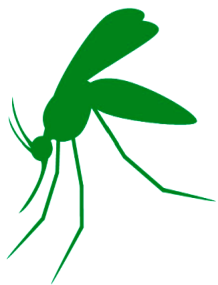
Minutes/Agendas pre-July 21, 2021 are still available on townofpelham.org.

Pelham, MA Select Board

None

For Town: [Pelham, MA](#)
 Name: Select Board
 Chair: [Bob Agoglia](#)
 Clerk: [Tara Loomis](#)
 Members: Tara Loomis
 Bob Agoglia
 David Shanabrook
 Web Site: www.TownofPelham.org
[Subscribe to Email Alerts for this board](#) [Calendar Feed](#)

BOARD OF HEALTH INFORMATION



Though things are starting to return to a pre-pandemic conditions, there are still reasons to take some precautions. **The emerging Delta Variant is 1,000 times more infectious than the original and even people that are vaccinated are being infected.** Not everybody is or can get vaccinated, in particular young children are still vulnerable. So keep a mask handy and use it in crowded conditions when you are indoors, wash you hands frequently, and if you haven't already, please get vaccinated.

WATER QUALITY TESTING FOR YOUR WELL

It is the recommendation of the Department of Environmental Protection that you periodically have your well water tested. A basic test should include lead, arsenic, coliform bacteria, sodium, nitrates, iron and manganese. A basic well water test should cost between \$100 and \$200. For more information on well testing check the DEP website <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/protect-your-family-a-guide-to-water-quality-testing-for-private-wells>.

PFAS TESTING

Almost 40 people have had there wells tested and the results are starting to come in and so far they are encouraging. If your well was part of the testing program it takes about a month get your results by email.

AVOIDING ARBOVIRUS

In the summer we all like to enjoy the outdoors but please protect yourself. Mosquitoes can transmit arbovirus such as Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and ticks can transmit Lyme Disease.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF:

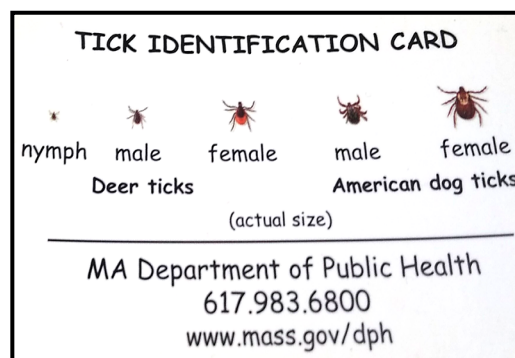
- 1.) *Use EPA-registered insect repellent*
- 2.) *Wear long sleeve clothing and treat clothing and gear with 0.5% Permethrin, which is an insecticide. Do not use Permethrin directly on skin*
- 3.) *Check not only your clothing for ticks but your skin too after outdoor exposure in your yard or woods*
- 4.) *Avoid being outdoors from dusk to dawn when mosquitoes are the most active*
- 5.) *Remove standing water from your yard*
- 6.) *Use mosquito netting to protect children in strollers/carriers*
- 7.) *Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter*
- 8.) *Walk in the center of trails*

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR PETS:

- 1.) *Consult with your Vet about animal safe mosquito repellants and other preventative measures*
- 2.) *Avoid being outside with your pet from dusk to dawn when mosquitos are most active*
- 3.) *Remove standing water in your backyard*
- 4.) *Check doorways or animal entrances for any tears in screens*

MORE INFO:

- <http://www.mass.gov/dph>
- <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/mosquito-borne-disease-prevention#prevention-tips->



NEWS FROM THE ENERGY COMMITTEE

Many of you may have noticed construction at the Community Building this spring. We now have a completely new heating and ventilating system for this complex! The new system is a Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) heat pump – 21st century, all-electric technology that will aid Pelham in reducing our carbon footprint, save energy costs, and improve the heating and cooling in the building. This is the culmination of years of applying for grants to fund engineering studies, final engineering design of the best system, modifying the design to reduce costs, and then applying for grants to fund the actual purchase and installation. Those efforts resulted in getting two large grants from the state for installation of the system, although we were still short of the funds needed ensure success. Thanks to efforts of the Select Board, we not only got one grant extended due to COVID delays but we got an increased award – enabling the town to proceed!



Construction started in March. With the help of the Energy Committee, Rick Adamcek (DPW Superintendent), the Select Board, town staff, and George Kicza, Sr. (Clerk of the Works), the project remained on schedule. The system was started up in the last week of May. At this point, a few items remain to be addressed but the system is fully operational! The new system is designed to provide heating and cooling all year but, as a backup in case there are any problems with the new system, the existing oil heating system will remain operational.

Where do we go from here? If the town can get funding for solar panels on the school or over the library parking lot (hopefully one of the Energy Committee's next projects), the new system will provide zero carbon heating and cooling.

Special thanks go out to the staff in the library and to fire and police personnel who had to be flexible as construction activities invaded their work spaces. The Energy Committee also thanks Co-Chair Tony Rogers for tirelessly shepherding this project through to completion over several years.



VRF UNITS OUTSIDE
COMMUNITY BUILDING

In other news, the Energy Committee would like to thank Tom Thompson for taking over as Pelham's representative, previously held by Karen Willard-Ribeiro, on the Inter-Municipal Task Force on Community Choice Aggregation. This hard-working team from Amherst, Northampton, and Pelham is developing a plan for the towns to potentially cooperate to take charge of their electricity supply, negotiate better prices with electricity generators and suppliers, and access state grant funding to invest in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other community services. This means that towns can potentially lower their environmental impact from electricity consumption in their community while providing more affordable energy services. More updates to come in future Slate newsletters.

The Energy Committee is looking for new members – anyone with an interest in reducing Pelham's greenhouse gas emissions while keeping the town affordable for all is welcome!

COUNCIL ON AGING NEWS



The Pelham COA hopes to offer our annual flu clinic on **October 13th from 1:00-3:00 in the Ramsdell Room at the Community Complex.** While the flu can make anyone sick, people with long-term health conditions—such as asthma, diabetes (type 1 and 2) and heart disease—are at greater risk for serious complications from the flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says an annual flu vaccine is the first and best way to guard against the flu. Come join us – and enjoy some snacks and company with Pelham friends and neighbors. Watch for an update – and look for a postcard with final details in the early fall.

Still waiting to have the COVID-19 vaccine?

CVS and Walgreens pharmacies in Amherst and Belchertown offer vaccines on both appointment and walk-in schedules, as do many local medical practices. Remember, the vaccine is free and available for anyone over 12 who lives, works, or studies in Massachusetts.

“Hi, it’s Becky from Medicare.” No, it isn’t – but it is one of the latest scams that come through our phone lines. A robocaller named “Becky” will claim you are eligible for genetic testing to screen for diseases that Medicare will pay for. She will ask for your Medicare number and mailing address to send you a test kit with instructions. **THIS IS A SCAM!!** Medicare will never call you personally to offer genetic screening or any other test or treatment or device. These scammers want your Medicare number so they can bill the program for services you do not receive. These charges could result in Medicare denying you for services you actually need later on. Review your Medicare summary notices. Makes sure the dates and services listed are correct. If something does not look right, call your medical provider’s office.

For help in determining if something is legitimate, or if you’ve experienced this or other scams, you can call the free AARP Fraud watch Network Helpline at 1-877-908-3360.

HAZARDOUS HOUSEHOLD WASTE DAY: SEPTEMBER 25

- Preregister between 8/1/21 and 9/14/21. Register online at: [Amherstma.gov/recycling](https://www.amherstma.gov/recycling)
- A list of acceptable materials is available at the Transfer Station office and online at [townofpelham.org](https://www.townofpelham.org) or <https://www.amherstma.gov/547/Hazardous-Special-Waste-Collections>. ****No latex/acrylic house paint will be accepted****
- The Town of Pelham will pay the participation fee for Pelham residents. Residents will be responsible for paying the full cost of the disposal. ****Fees will apply for fluorescent bulbs \$1 per bulb****
- There is a per-household limit of 25 pounds or 25 gallons (or combination) of material. Automotive oil & batteries are not included in this limit. Larger amounts will be accepted by special advance arrangement only (call 413-259-3049).





Town Office Schedules & Contact Information

Assessor's Office

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

Collector/ Treasurer

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

Select Board Office Administrative Assistant

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

Town Clerk

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

WANT TO BE MORE INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

Appointed positions open on:

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

Contact: Select Board office to obtain Board/
Committee contact information

STAY INFORMED!

Go to 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 Wednesdays & as
needed
7:00PM
Rhodes Building,
351 Amherst Rd

Public Bodies that meet AS NEEDED:

- Anti-Racism Advisory Committee
- Cable Advisory Committee
- Capital Planning Committee
- Community Garden Committee
- Community Hall Committee
- Community Hall Accessibility Committee
- Cultural Council
- Finance Committee
- Space Needs 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

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

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PELHAM SLATE

Summer Edition

What's Included:

- ◆ Celebrate Pelham Women
- ◆ How to Protect from Arbovirus
- ◆ Council on Aging Flu Clinic
- ◆ New Platform for Meeting Notices & Agendas, MyTownGovernment.org