



December 17th, 2020

## An End of the Year Message from Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito



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- **An End of the Year Message from Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**
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### By the Numbers

*City & Town* provides updates on the progress of the tax rate and certification season while also allowing you to follow the tax rate setting process in real time. Thanks to our



With the end of 2020 just two weeks away, I would like to thank you for your critical efforts and leadership over the course of this past year through the many obstacles and hardships this pandemic has posed for every city and town in the Commonwealth. I am appreciative and proud of our continued partnership as we all work together to continue to fight COVID-19.

Over the past month, our Administration has worked to support Massachusetts' 351 cities in towns through grant awards from multiple programs, including the Skills Capital Grant program, MassWorks grants and the Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program. In addition, last week I had the pleasure of meeting via Zoom with the 55 cities and towns that were awarded \$3.7 million in grant funds under the latest round of the Community Compact IT Grant Program

As we continue our battle against this virus and look to the light at the end of the tunnel, I would like to highlight the continued resources available to municipal governments during this time.

Our administration is proud of the Community Compact's

Municipal Databank staff, this public information is available 24/7 by [clicking here](#).

Prelim. Certifications  
Approved: 69

Final Certification: 68 (of  
70 total)

LA4 Approved:  
342 (343 submitted)

LA13/ New Growth Approved:  
342 (343 submitted)

Tax Rates Approved: 304

Balance Sheets Approved: 207

Total Aggregate Free Cash  
Approved: \$1,018,523,890

### **Important Dates & Information**

### **Latest Issue of *Buy the Way* Now Available**

Don't miss the December 2020-January 2021 edition of [Buy the Way](#), the bi-monthly magazine of the Operational Services Division (OSD).

[Click here](#) to get news and

value to each of our state's cities and towns and are pleased to see municipalities continue to take advantage of this program. The Community Compact's Best Practice Program and Efficiency & Regionalization (E&R) Grant Program will be available to cities and towns in Fiscal Year 2021. Last week, Governor Baker signed a budget that makes one million dollars available for both programs. The Governor and I are both appreciative of the Legislature's support for these impactful programs.

The Community Compact Best Practices Program represents an opportunity for a municipality to enter into a voluntary, mutual agreement with the Commonwealth to identify and implement at least one best practice from a broad range of areas, allowing for any identified needs to be met or lessons learned during this unprecedented time to be put into action. Similarly, the E&R Grant Program will be available to governmental entities seeking financial support for implementing regionalization and other efficiency initiatives that allow for long-term sustainability.

While more details surrounding the opening of the Best Practices Program and E&R Grant Program will be made available in the coming days, these programs have a proven transformative impact and have made for more innovative, efficient and improved municipal government operations, ultimately strengthening each of our Commonwealth's 351 cities and towns. The Community Compact has never been more relevant, and we look forward to seeing these programs in action once again over the coming months.

For more information on the [Community Compact Program](#), reach out to DLS Senior Deputy Commissioner Sean Cronin at [croninse@dor.state.ma.us](mailto:croninse@dor.state.ma.us).

We wish you a peaceful and safe New Year and thank you for your continued dedication to our Commonwealth.

updates from OSD delivered to your inbox.

### **DPH Town Meeting Guidance**

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has issued the following Town Meeting Guidance. To view the document, please [click here](#).

### **Free 2020 “What’s New in Municipal Law” Seminar Available Online**

Developed by our Bureau of Municipal Finance Law, the Division of Local Services is pleased to announce its annual “What’s New in Municipal Law” presentation on recent legislation and court decisions is currently available online and at no cost for the first time in our organization's history.

The presentation consists of five narrated videos discussing recent laws and cases related to municipal finance and municipal law. You can view the videos individually or together as a group on our YouTube channel listed under [What’s New in Municipal Law 2020](#).

### **DLS Offers New Online Trainings on Municipal Debt Frank Gervasio - DLS Director of Special Initiatives**

Municipal debt can be a complicated topic! With that in mind, we are very excited to share our new municipal debt training presentations and hope they will assist you and your community. Our training page and YouTube channel now offer an [introductory training presentation](#) that provides an overview of key concepts on local borrowing. In addition, we are excited to offer a “[deeper dive](#)” video series that delves further into each topic. These subjects include:

- [Overview of municipal debt](#)
- [Borrowing authority](#)
- [Voting to borrow](#)
- [Borrowing subject to debt exclusions](#)
- [Issuance roles and responsibilities](#)
- [Credit rating agencies](#)
- [Long-term](#) and [short-term debt](#) instruments
- [Emergency spending](#)
- [Accounting for debt, surplus proceeds, and abandoned projects](#)
- [DLS oversight of borrowing activity](#)

Also, don’t forget that DLS has developed a number of other related guides, templates, and other training materials on municipal debt to assist your community. These can be

The estimated viewing time and link for each segment is included below. We hope you find this resource helpful and informative!

[Part 1 – New Legislation \(19:34\)](#)

[Part 2A – Property Tax Decisions \(21:15\)](#)

[Part 2B – Tax Collection and Public Employment \(14:43\)](#)

[Part 2C – Finance and Land Use \(10:27\)](#)

[Part 2D – Other Municipal Decisions \(16:04\)](#)

### **DHCH Eviction Diversion Initiative Launches New Awareness Campaign**

The Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development is raising awareness of its Eviction Diversion Initiative with a new video. To view and share it, [click here](#). More information is available at [mass.gov/CovidHousingHelp](https://mass.gov/CovidHousingHelp).

found on the [debt section](#) of the Municipal Finance Training and Resource Center. You can also always find debt data specific to your town in the [Municipal Finance Trend Dashboard](#) and [Databank](#).

Be sure to bookmark the [Municipal Finance Training and Resource Center](#) page and subscribe to our [YouTube channel](#) to stay updated on new items added. Something you'd like to see added? We'd love to hear from you! Please email DLS's Data Analytics & Resources Bureau at [DARB@dor.state.ma.us](mailto:DARB@dor.state.ma.us).

**DLS Links:**

[COVID-19 Resources and  
Guidance for Municipal  
Officials](#)

[Events & Training Calendar](#)

[Municipal Finance Training  
and Resource Center](#)

[Local Officials Directory](#)

[Municipal Databank](#)

[Informational Guideline  
Releases \(IGRs\)](#)

[Bulletins](#)

[Publications & Training Center](#)

[Tools and Financial  
Calculators](#)



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