



Town of Pelham - Website Upgrade

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Image: Old Pelham Town Hall¹

Introduction

The Town of Pelham is a Hampshire County community located adjacently to Amherst, Massachusetts, with a population of 1,359 and median household income of \$91,518². Pelham is a small, pleasant town that is home to many residents who appreciate the environment and culture of the region. The Pelham school system is the Town's largest employer and the Old Town Hall, which was originally used as a meeting house, was built in 1743 and is currently the oldest operating town hall in the country. With its rich history and involved citizens, The Town of Pelham sought to improve constituent services and the face of their community online by upgrading their municipal website. On April 27, 2017, the Town of Pelham signed a Community Compact agreement with the Governor's administration and received grant funding to implement this initiative.

¹ John Phelan. "Old Pelham Town Hall, Pelham MA." *Wikimedia Commons*. Accessed on September 25, 2018. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Old_Pelham_Town_Hall,_Pelham_MA.jpg

² "Community Facts." *United States Census. American FactFinder*. Accessed on September 25, 2018. https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

Website Enhancements

Pelham decided to upgrade their municipal website which was well over 10 years old and no longer supported by a service provider. Their overall goal for implementing this initiative was to improve communications between departments, committees, officials, and residents by upgrading the website to a more modern platform. Doing so would help the Town achieve ADA compliance and make it easier for users to navigate the website and find the information and resources they need.

The Town received a Community Compact grant to upgrade the website's features and layout to support more seamless online transactions and communication between residents and government. They worked with CivicPlus to migrate content to the new site. As seen in the screenshot below, the new municipal website is well-organized and hosts a variety of resources.



Screenshot: Town of Pelham Official Website (Taken on September 25, 2018)

The new site is constituent-focused, placing emphasis on topics residents and visitors care about most. For example, towards the right of the website homepage, the "Find It Fast" section showcases a list of popular links to get more information about public records requests, meeting minutes and agendas, bill-pay, public safety, waste and recycling, and more. The rest of the site is designed to increase awareness about Town government processes and guidelines, as well as local events and opportunities.

Conclusion

The Town's Community Compact objective to upgrade their municipal website has been completed. The new site is more user-friendly and has a more robust content management system, which empowers the Town of Pelham to explore new, more advanced ways to communicate. Today, Pelham is better-equipped to support transactions and communication with stakeholders online.