

Town Topics

A municipal newsletter for the Wilmington community

From the Manager's Desk



With the issuance of this edition of *Town Topics* we find ourselves in the heart of winter in New England. The severity of the cold and snow remains to be seen but as New Englanders we will persevere.

COVID-19 is surging once again and the Delta variant has taken center stage over the past several months. The Omicron variant appears to be the next variant to further test our collective health and well-being. Mask requirements remain in place when entering public buildings in Wilmington. If there is a silver lining in our collective efforts to respond to this pandemic it is access to vaccines. Protection against COVID is not 100% but vaccination and boosters mitigate the severity of illness for individuals subject to break through illness from COVID. Unvaccinated individual who contract COVID are much more likely to have severe health effects and be hospitalized. If you are not vaccinated, *please*, get vaccinated for yourself, your family and your friends.

The Board of Selectmen are expected to call a Special Town Meeting for March 8, 2022. The purpose of this meeting will be to seek an appropriation to complete a feasibility study to replace the Wildwood Early Childhood Center which was constructed in 1955. Several options will be investigated including replacement of the existing pre-kindergarten and kindergarten school with a standalone school or several consolidation options which would reduce the total number of schools and reduce transitions between schools during a student's academic years in Wilmington Public Schools. The Town is one of 15 school districts invited by the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to have an opportunity to participate in their financial assistance program. Special Town Meeting approval of the feasibility study will enable the Town to remain eligible for grant funding to defray the cost of constructing a new school. You are encouraged to go to https://www.wpsk12.com/our_district/facilities/school_building_projects to learn about this effort. Specifics about the date, time and location will be announced.

While sites for the construction of a town/school administration building and a senior center have not yet been endorsed by the Board of Selectmen, the expectation is that the Board will be again considering recommendations submitted by the Town/School Administration Building Committee and the Senior Center Building Committee. As noted in the prior edition of *Town Topics*, the two building committees were slated to make site recommendations to the Board. The Board of Selectmen heard the recommendations and expressed

reservations including concern that possible use of the athletic fields at the Glen Road site were not considered during deliberations. The Board directed the committees to re-exam the sites under consideration.

Once Selectmen have reached consensus on sites for both buildings, the architects will be able to conduct more extensive evaluations of the site characteristics, more fully develop the design of the two buildings and establish cost estimates for construction of each facility. If sites can be agreed upon in January, a Special Town Meeting would be recommended for the fall of 2022 to seek final design and construction funding for both building projects. For information about both projects, please visit the Town's website at <https://www.wilmingtonma.gov/permanent-building-committee>.

It is understandable that some are impatient with the pace of these projects, but progress is taking place. In addition to paid staff and consultants, the volunteers elected to serve on the Board of Selectmen and volunteers appointed to serve on the building committees are taking their roles on behalf of residents very seriously. In the words of Robert Kennedy, Jr. "*Democracy is messy, and it's hard. It's never easy.*" Residents will be asked to spend significant money on each of the projects. Given the significance of the cost and the long-term impact of these facilities to cite the English proverb "measure twice, cut once."

Assistant Town Manager and Human Resources Director Kerry Colburn-Dion, Patrol Officer Paul Krzeminski, Deputy Treasurer/Collector Mary Kelley, Public Works Equipment Operator III Joseph Morgan, Garage Foreman Ken Roberts, Mechanic John Mulholland and Public Works Assistant Business Manager Lorraine Church will all be retiring over the next three months after dedicating their time and talents ensuring that Wilmington receives top notch and dependable services. Now it is time for each of them to pursue new adventures. May they have many years of good health to enjoy their time with family and friends.

Work is ongoing to develop the Town's financial plan for the next fiscal year which begins on July 1, 2022. The budget will be presented at the Board of Selectmen meeting on January 24, 2022. Meetings with the Finance Committee will follow during the month of February and early March. A public hearing to preview the operating budget, zoning and non-zoning warrant articles will take place on March 15, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are held at Town Hall and will be covered by WCTV. Residents are encouraged to "tune in" to these meetings to learn how your money is proposed to be spent.

RECREATION OFFERINGS

TRIPS

The Recreation Department has slowly begun to return to travelling – we offer theatre trips to Boston, day trips around New England and extended trips to various places sure to be on your bucket list! We currently have reserved tickets for “Ain’t Too Proud”, the story of the Temptations, in April and “Anastasia” in August, both at the Boston Opera House. We provide your orchestra seat and bus transportation so you can avoid the traffic in Boston, parking fees and a long walk to the theatre. Our upcoming day trips include an American Heritage Day with a visit to the American Heritage Museum in Stow followed by lunch at the Wayside Inn in Sudbury, or a Spring Fling with lunch, a sing-along and bingo to welcome back the better weather. Our “March Gladness” Trip will include two nights and three days of fun activities at the Villa Roma Resort in the Catskills, and we will also be jetting off to Yellowstone and the Grand Teton National Parks in August. Stop by the Recreation Office or take a look at our website (under Trips) for additional information.

FEBRUARY SCHOOL VACATION PROGRAMS

School Vacation Sensations! – If your family will be in Wilmington for February school vacation, we have some great programs for the kids to have fun and make new friends. Keep them active with Super Sports for Grades K – 3 or the Basketball Clinic for Grades 4 – 8. Both programs are run by SNL – the Flag Football folk who are masters at combining skills and drills with fun. Or, if the kitchen is of more interest than the gym, check out our new “Cookies, Cakes and Meringues – Oh My!” for Grades 4 – 8.

NEW PROGRAMS

We also offer new STEM programs for children including RE/CO Robot (remote controlled robot) for Grades 3 – 7, and Anatomy Academy for Grades 2 – 5. In the Robot program, students will receive a kit that allows their machine to access play modes including singing, dancing and storytelling. The Anatomy program is great for future doctors – students will create models of blood and skin, a working lung and even a creepy eye.

THE ROOKIES

Baseball season is fast approaching! Register your child (age 5 by 9/1/22 through Grade 1) for our baseball program “The Rookies”. This program combines our traditional T-Ball program with a coach-pitch format to prepare children to advance to Little League. This six-week program will run from Monday – Thursday, April 25 – June 2. Choose from a Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday schedule. Children will have one practice session and one game each week. Cost is \$40 per child. Registration will begin on February 1 and the registration deadline is Thursday, March 17.

For a complete listing of programs, tickets and trips, check our page on the Town’s website at www.wilmingtonma.gov; then click on Recreation under Departments.

ANNUAL TOWN CENSUS

Wilmington’s Annual Town Census will be mailed in the middle of January 2022. Please keep an eye open for it and respond immediately. Remember, responding to the annual town census keeps your name on the active voting list. Please contact the Town Clerk’s office if you have not received your census by the last week in January.

CHANGES TO PRECINCT MAPS

The change in Wilmington’s population as a result of the 2020 Federal Census required changes to the precinct maps. The Town Clerk has worked with the Secretary of State’s office to make changes that will have the least impact on residents. In the event your precinct has changed, you will receive notification by mail as soon as possible.

ENROLLING IN REVERSE 911 NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

Receive alerts about emergencies and other important community news by signing up for Wilmington’s Reverse 911 notification system. This system provides critical information quickly in a variety of situations, such as severe weather, unexpected road closures, missing persons and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods. Participants receive time-sensitive messages through a chosen option, such as home, mobile or business phones, email address, text messages and more. Information will never be shared nor sold and will be used solely for Reverse 911 notifications. To sign up, please scan the QR code or visit <https://member.everbridge.net/892807736723463/new>



WINTER PARKING BAN IN EFFECT

Residents are reminded that the Town of Wilmington enforces an overnight parking ban that is in effect between 1:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. from December 1 to April 1 each year, and anytime during snow removal operations. Failure to comply with the regulation will result in the owner receiving a \$50 fine from the Wilmington Police Department and/or the removal of the vehicle at the owner’s expense from the roadway during a snow emergency. If a vehicle is impaired and cannot be removed until morning, the owner is required to alert the Wilmington Police Department for assistance.

CLEARING FIRE HYDRANTS

Following a snow event, it is important for residents and businesses to clear snow around fire hydrants. The best practice is to clear two feet around the hydrant. If that is not possible, simply making sure the hydrant isn’t completely buried is a good idea. Town personnel do their best to clear as many hydrants as possible, but with over 1,200 fire hydrants in Wilmington, this is a time consuming endeavor. By clearing a hydrant, you are helping the Fire Department’s ability to respond quickly to an emergency, possibly at your residence.

POLICE DEPARTMENT PROVIDES INFORMATION ON POPULAR SCAMS

Has someone asked you to pay a bill with gift cards? Has someone you do not know asked you to wire them cash? Has someone offered to send a courier to your home to collect money or offered to hire an Uber to bring you to the bank? **THINK ABOUT IT....IT IS PROBABLY A SCAM!!**

COMMON SCAMS

IRS IMPOSTERS: The Internal Revenue Service has demanded immediate payment for taxes owed.

BAIL/GRANDPARENT SCAM: You have been told a family member has been in an accident, or arrested and in jail, and you need to send money for bail, lawyers, court or damages. Consider having a CODE WORD with family so you can confirm you are actually talking to a family member.

GRAND PRIZE/SWEEPSTAKES WINNER: You won the grand prize in a contest, sweepstakes or lottery and must send money upfront to pay fees or taxes to claim your prize.

TECH SUPPORT: You are told your computer has been detected as having a virus or is running slow but, for a fee and access to your computer, it can be repaired.

OVERPAID CHECK: You got an internet job to work from home, or you sold something online and you received a check for too much money. Your "employer" or the "buyer" tells you to deposit the full amount and send back or wire the difference.

ONLINE DATING SCAM: You have met a new special someone online and they have gone away on a trip before meeting you in person, but they need money to get home or need to send you something to re-ship.

If you suspect a scam, before sending or handing over any money or buying any gift cards, call the Wilmington Police Department at (978) 658-5071

SAND BUCKETS FOR SENIORS

The Fire Department and the Department of Elderly Services is excited to introduce a new program called "Sand Buckets for Seniors". Thanks to a generous donation from the Wilmington ACE Hardware and the assistance of the DPW, the Fire Department will provide a bucket of sand/salt mixture to eligible residents. The program is a part of our Community Risk Reduction efforts to help lower the risk of slips and falls in icy conditions. The mixture is spread on outdoor walking surfaces such as porches, steps, walkways and driveways to provide better traction and a safer walking surface.

This is the first year of the program and we have a limited number of buckets available. Eligible residents should request a bucket through the Department of Elderly Services (978-657-7595). This is a first come first serve program. One bucket per household. Each bucket will be serialized and tracked by the Fire Department. The buckets will be collected in the spring when the risk of snow and ice is no longer a threat to the area.

Eligible residents are those aged 60 or older, reside in a single or multi-family home and are capable of spreading the mixture without assistance.

LIBRARY SERVICES 2022

As we launch the New Year, discover library services and resources that may be new to you. Make it a New Year's resolution to try one of them! More information can be found on the library's website www.wilmlibrary.org.

LIBRARY OF THINGS – This collection includes puzzles, board games, a projector screen, a karaoke machine, , a trail camera and more to keep you occupied during the winter months.

PRINT FROM HOME – If you do not have a printer at home or yours crashes, you can print remotely to the library and pick up your copies.

TECH HELP – The library offers weekly drop in tech help sessions (15 minutes) and one on one tech help (one hour) that can be booked online. Great for help with the new holiday gadget you received.

WHS YEARBOOKS ONLINE – This collection of high school yearbooks goes back to the 1940's. Check the "local history" page on the library's website for this link and more.

WALL STREET JOURNAL AND NEW YORK TIMES DIGITAL EDITION – it is just like reading the print edition. Set up a free account via the library's website.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY ANNUAL APPEAL

The Friends of the Wilmington Memorial Library have launched its 2022 Annual Appeal with the goal of raising funds for a StoryWalk® at Rotary Park. A StoryWalk® is a way for children and their families to enjoy a story and the outdoors at the same time. Laminated pages from a children's picture book are displayed on signs along an outdoor path telling the story from beginning to end. The plan for the StoryWalk® will include 19 signs that begin across from the playground continuing to the path around the pond and ending on the Church Street side of the field. Donations to the Friends Annual Appeal can be made online at <https://wilmlibrary.org/about/friends/> or mailed to the Friends of the Library, 175 Middlesex Avenue, Wilmington, MA 01887.

NEWS FROM THE TOWN MUSEUM

The Museum has a new curator. Please welcome Cienna Lyon who is at the Museum and giving tours to the public. The Museum will be open this winter as follows:

- Sunday Open House: January 10, February 14, March 14 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Free tours of the Wilmington Town Museum.
- The Museum is also open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- By appointment – Please do not hesitate to contact the Museum to schedule an appointment at the convenience of you or your group.

Don't forget you can buy postcards of historic Wilmington sites at the Town Museum for 25 cents! Historical books and commemorative tote bags are also available for purchase.

For more information or to schedule a tour please call 978-658-5475 or e-mail clyon@wilmingtonma.gov. Or visit us on the web at <https://www.wilmingtonma.gov/town-museum>.

CHRISTMAS TREE PICK-UP

The Department of Public Works will be collecting Christmas trees at curbside beginning January 3, 2022. Residents should remove all decorations and plastic wrapping from their tree and place it curbside on their regular trash pick-up day. It is anticipated that the collection will take approximately two weeks. Please note that the pick-up may be delayed by weather and other work demands on the DPW.



The Christmas trees collected by the Town will be recycled into mulch. The mulch will be made available to residents in the spring at the Recycling Center and will also be used on Town projects.

For details on public works services, please refer to the "Public Works" link on the Town's website at www.wilmingtonma.gov or call the Department of Public Works at 978-658-4481.

DO YOUR PART, RECYCLE SMART MASS DEP PROGRAM

The Recycle Smart Program is centered around the webpage www.recyclesmartma.org which includes a searchable "Recyclopedica" where you can search on hundreds of items to learn how to dispose of them.

ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION - TOWN MEETING

Nomination papers are available in the Town Clerk's Office for the Annual Town Election to be held Saturday, April 23, 2022 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Interested residents may file nomination papers for the following offices: Board of Selectmen (2 positions), Housing Authority (1 position) and School Committee (3 positions), Shawsheen Regional School Committee (1 position) and Town Moderator. Nomination papers are due in the Town Clerk's office not later than 4:30 p.m. on March 4, 2022.

The Annual Town Meeting will be held on Saturday, April 30, 2022 beginning at 9:00 a.m. in the High School Auditorium. Petitioned articles are due in the Town Clerk's office by 4:30 p.m., Friday, February 4, 2022. **The last day to register to vote for the Town Election and Annual Town Meeting is Monday, April 4, 2022.** Town Clerk's Office will remain open until 8:00 p.m.

DOG REGISTRATION/RABIES CLINIC

New Dog Registrations are always ongoing, and Renewals are happening now. You must have an updated rabies certificate to complete your initial registration or renewal. Reminders have been sent out to currently registered dog owners by email if there is one on record or regular mail if not. New registrations or renewals can be accomplished online or by mail. The cost is \$10 if your dog is spayed or neutered, \$15 if intact. The deadline for renewal is April 1, 2022, after which a \$15 late fee will be assessed in addition to the registration fee; a \$50 civil fine will be added to these amounts if renewals have not been completed by June 1, 2022.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- FEB 4 - LAST DAY TO SUBMIT PETITIONED WARRANT ARTICLES FOR ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**
- MAR 4 - NOMINATION PAPERS DUE FOR TOWN ELECTION**
- MAR 15 - FINANCE COMMITTEE/PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING TO REVIEW TOWN MEETING ARTICLES**
To Be Determined 7 p.m.
- APR 4 - LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE - TOWN ELECTION/TOWN MEETING**
Until 8 p.m.
- APR 23 - ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION**
Polls Open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- APR 30 - ANNUAL TOWN MEETING** 9 a.m.
To Be Determined

DEPARTMENT



TELEPHONE

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Accountant | 694-2029 |
| Animal Control | 658-5071 |
| Appeals Board | 658-4531 |
| Arts Center | 657-3887 |
| Assessor | 658-3675 |
| Building Inspector | 658-4531 |
| Cemetery | 658-3901 |
| Collector of Taxes | 658-3531 |
| Elderly Services | 657-7595 |
| Engineer | 658-4499 |
| Fire | (Business) 658-3346 (Emergency) 9-1-1 |
| Fire Prevention | 694-2006 |
| Harnden Tavern Museum | 658-5475 |
| Health | 658-4298 |
| Housing Authority | 658-8531 |
| Library | 658-2967 |
| Nurse | 658-4298 |
| Planning/Conservation | 658-8238 |
| Plumbing Inspector | 658-4531 |
| Police | (Business) 658-5071 (Emergency) 9-1-1 (TDD) 657-8368 |
| Public Buildings | 658-3017 |
| Public Works | 658-4481 |
| Recreation | 658-4270 |
| School | 694-6000 |
| Selectmen | 658-3311 |
| Town Clerk | 658-2030 |
| Town Manager | 658-3311 (TDD) 694-1417 |
| Treasurer | 658-3531 |
| Veteran's Agent | 694-2040 |
| Water & Sewer | 658-4711 (Billing) 658-3116 |



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