

Town Topics

A municipal newsletter for the Wilmington community

From the Manager's Desk

A significant focus continues to be placed on providing safe and functional educational space for elementary school students. On December 5th the Town's selection of Cambridge based SMMA to serve as the owner's project manager (OPM) was approved by the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). The OPM has expertise in public procurement and construction. They will serve as the Town's representative to work with the architect, contractor and subcontractors as the effort to replace the Wildwood School Early Childhood Center proceeds. The first task to be undertaken by SMMA is the preparation of a request for services (RFS). The RFS describes the scope of work and qualifications required by a design firm to work with the Town in evaluating multiple options to replace the Wildwood School.

Plans call for the RFS to be advertised in late January with the selection of a design firm expected by the end of March/early April. Once the design firm is on board, public meetings will take place with the Wildwood School Building Committee to evaluate options which may include a building addition to an existing elementary school, a new standalone school and possible grade reconfiguration within elementary schools. The Town will be seeking input from residents throughout the entire process in order to arrive at a preferred option. This preferred option will be brought before a future Town Meeting for funding.

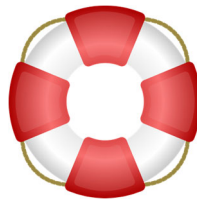


Currently efforts are underway to establish an interim plan to accommodate pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten

students and staff displaced from the Wildwood School due to the breach of the heating oil tank in February of 2022. Students and staff are currently spread between the High School, Shawsheen School and West Intermediate School. Seventeen different options for accommodating students and staff have been evaluated. One approach will be recommended for funding approval at the April 29, 2023 Annual Town Meeting. This interim plan is expected to provide accommodations for approximately five years if the MSBA assisted school project is approved by residents.

In accordance with the Town Manager's Act, the operating budget for FY2024, for the period July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, will be presented to the Board of

Selectmen and Finance Committee at a Board of Selectmen meeting on January 30, 2023. Following this presentation, the Finance Committee will convene meetings on Tuesday and Thursday evenings throughout February and into the first week in March to meet with representatives from each general government department, the Wilmington School Department and the Shawsheen Valley Technical High School to discuss their budget requests. All meetings are posted on the Town's website and residents are encouraged to attend to become informed about the work of each department and the associated costs. On March 21, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. a public hearing will be held in the Town Hall auditorium to review the entire operating budget and proposed capital expenditures. Residents are encouraged to attend to offer comments and questions. Shortly after the closing of that public hearing, the Finance Committee will meet in public to vote on their recommendations for the Fiscal Year 2024 budget. Their recommendations will be reflected in the *Recommendations of the Finance Committee and Planning Board* booklet which will be mailed to all residents prior to the Annual Town Meeting.



The Recreation Department is already planning for the beach program at Silver Lake in 2023. The Town is issuing an appeal to individuals interested in serving as lifeguards. Communities across the country continue to be severely challenged with hiring certified lifeguards. If you are interested, or know someone who may be interested, please contact Brett Sawin, Recreation Director, at 978-658-4270 or at bsawin@wilmingtonma.gov. The ability to provide a safe swimming area for residents depends upon retaining an adequate number of lifeguards.

Hats off to four individuals who will be retiring from the Town over the next few months. Scott Bruce, Public Works Parks and Grounds Foreman, and Michael Underwood, an Equipment Operator in the Tree Division will be closing this chapter after a total of 40 years of combined service to the community. Paul Dacko and Maryanne Gillis, Custodial Supervisors in the Public Buildings Department, are also retiring after working in Wilmington school buildings for over 38 years. All the best in good health to each of them as they have more time to spend with family and friends.

As we are in the midst of the holiday season it is gratifying once again be able to gather more freely with family and friends. May you enjoy this time together and give thanks for the gifts of health and family.

MATTRESS AND TEXTILE WASTE BANS IN EFFECT

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection has added mattresses, box springs and textiles (clothing, towels and other woven materials) to the list of items banned for disposal in Massachusetts as part of a goal to reduce disposal tonnages statewide by 30% over the next 10 years. These items now must be recycled.

To recycle a mattress or box spring, please purchase a \$10 disposal sticker at the Treasurer / Collector's Office at Town Hall. You will be placed on a list and the mattress or box spring will then be picked up and hauled to a mattress recycling plant for proper recycling of the useable materials inside.

Textiles include uncontaminated articles of clothing, footwear, bedding, towels, curtains, fabric, stuffed animals and similar products that can be recycled for their materials. To dispose of these items, please utilize the **free TEXTILE DROP-OFF BINS** located at each of the Wilmington Public Schools parking lots. These bins are collected by the textile recycling company when full. The program returns approximately \$100 per ton of textiles back the Wilmington Public Schools.

AVOID FROZEN PIPES THIS WINTER



As the winter weather arrives, it is important for residents to take proper precautions to avoid the costly damage that can result from freezing pipes. Residents can prevent this by following a few simple precautions:

Locate your master shut off valve. The master shut-off valve controls all of the water into your home. Residents should know the valve location and how to turn it off as this can save valuable time and prevent water damage in an emergency. Once you locate the main shut off valve, mark it so everyone in your family can find it should an emergency occur.

Keep cold air out. Look for air leaks around electrical wiring, dryer vents and pipes and use caulk or insulation to keep the cold out. With severe cold, even a tiny opening can let in enough cold air to cause a pipe to freeze.

Insulate pipes. Insulate pipes in your home's crawl spaces and attic. Exposed pipes are most susceptible to freezing.

Disconnect garden hoses. Disconnect garden hoses and, if possible, use an indoor valve to shut off and drain water from pipes leading to outside faucets. This reduces the chance of freezing in the short span of pipe just inside the house.

Keep the water running. A trickle of water might be all it takes to keep your pipes from freezing. In extremely cold weather, let water drip overnight, preferably from a faucet on an outside wall. The cost of water is small compared to dealing with the cost and inconvenience of frozen or burst pipes.

ANNUAL TOWN CENSUS

Wilmington's Annual Town Census will be mailed in the middle of January 2023. 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.

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.



RECREATION OFFERINGS

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.

TRIPS

The Recreation Department has planned many trips for 2023 including theatre trips to Boston, day trips exploring New England and extended trips to places sure to be on your bucket list. The department has reserved tickets for "Come From Away" in August at the Boston Opera House which includes bus transportation. Upcoming day trips include a trip to the Newport Playhouse to see "Blithe Spirit" and lunch at their extensive buffet. The Amante Experience, a day trip to Windham, NH to see Michael Amante who is known as "The People's Tenor", along with a delicious luncheon. Our Riding Through the Times day trip will take us back to Newport for a ride on the up-and-coming Rail Explorers, a visit to the Newport Car Museum and free time in the city. We will be jetting off to Sunny Tucson & The Old West in April and Idaho in August. Stop by the Recreation Office or visit our webpage (under Trips) for additional information on these, as well as other, trips. Register today to guarantee your spot!

FEBRUARY SCHOOL VACATION PROGRAMS

School Vacation Sensations! – If your family will be in Wilmington for February school vacation, we have got 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. If the kitchen is of more interest than the gym, check out Kids' Test Kitchen Academy for Grades 1 – 5.

NEW PROGRAMS

The Recreation Department offers new STEM programs for children including LEGO Junior Builders (Ages 5 – 8) and Bridges and Building (Ages 7 – 11). In the LEGO program, children will make their own math game, build symmetrical designs and learn about simple machines by building a lever. The Bridges class will teach children about basic structural elements and witness firsthand the forces acting on structural components.



"THE ROOKIES"

Baseball season is fast approaching. Register your child (age 5 by 9/1/23 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 Monday – Thursday, April 24 – June 1. 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 16.**

LIBRARY SERVICES 2023

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

LIBRARY OF THINGS FOR THE HOME – Check out a Thermal Camera, a Moisture Meter or Energy Audit Kit.

NEW YORK TIMES GAMES – free access to the NYT crossword, Spelling Bee, Sudoku and more.

DIGITAL EDITION OF NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS – free access to *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, it is just like reading the print edition. Set up a free account via the library's website.

DOWNLOADABLE AUDIOBOOKS – if you have not tried listening to an audiobook on your smartphone, give it a try in 2023. There are hundreds of titles on Libby and Hoopla to select and download.

TECH HELP – The library offers weekly drop-in tech help sessions (15 minutes) on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2 pm and one-on-one tech help (one hour) on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10 am that can be booked online. Great for help with our digital services or the new gadget you received as a gift.

BOOK GROUPS AT THE LIBRARY

The library offers a variety of book groups for reading and discussing books. For more information on upcoming titles to be read, check the library's website.

Lil Bookworms for Grades K-2 at 3:45 pm on the first Wednesday of the month

Reading Rockets for Grades 3-5 at 3:45 pm on second Wednesday of the month

Middle School Book Group for Grades 6-8 at 3:30 pm on the first Thursday of the month

Teen Book Club for Grades 9-12 at 2 pm on a Saturday every other month.

Well Read Wednesday Book Club – 10 am on the fourth Wednesday of the month

Novel Ideas– 7 pm on the third Thursday of the month (*no meeting in March*)

Pints + Pages: 20s & 30s Book Group – 7 pm on the first Thursday of every other month (January, March, May, July, September, November)

Cookin' the Books: Cookbook Book Club – 12 pm on the second Tuesday of the month

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY NEWS

The Friends of the Library will be hosting its third annual **Gently Used Jewelry Sale** on Friday, March 31, 4 pm - 8 pm and on Saturday, April 1, 9 am - 2pm. Jewelry donations can be dropped off at the library's main desk.

Book Store Next Door is open Saturday 10 am - 4 pm in January and February. Shop for gently used books. Paperbacks are \$1 and hardcovers are \$2. Donations in good condition of up to two boxes are accepted during open hours.

CHRISTMAS TREE PICK-UP

The Department of Public Works will be collecting Christmas trees at curbside beginning January 3, 2023. 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 22, 2023 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 (2 positions) and Shawsheen Regional School Committee (1 position). Nomination papers are due in the Town Clerk's office not later than 4:30 p.m. on March 17, 2023.

The Annual Town Meeting will be held on Saturday, April 29, 2023 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 3, 2023. **The last day to register to vote for the Town Election and Annual Town Meeting is Monday, April 12, 2023.** Town Clerk's Office will remain open until 5:00 p.m.

DOG REGISTRATION

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. If you are 70 years of age or older, the fee is waived. The deadline for renewal is April 1, 2023, 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, 2023.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- FEB 3 - LAST DAY TO SUBMIT PETITIONED WARRANT ARTICLES FOR ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**
- MAR 17 - NOMINATION PAPERS DUE FOR TOWN ELECTION**
- MAR 21 - FINANCE COMMITTEE/PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING TO REVIEW TOWN MEETING ARTICLES**
Town Hall Auditorium 7 p.m.
- APR 12 - LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE - TOWN ELECTION/TOWN MEETING**
Until 5 p.m.
- APR 22 - ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION**
Polls Open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- APR 29 - ANNUAL TOWN MEETING** 9 a.m.
Joanne Benton Auditorium

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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