

Town Topics

A municipal newsletter for the Wilmington community

From the Manager's Desk



The credit rating agency Standard & Poor's (S&P) recently completed a rating review of the Town of Wilmington and reaffirmed its AA+ rating on the Town's general obligation debt. This rating is the second highest achievable from S & P and serves as a barometer of the Town's financial health. A strong financial rating enables the Town to obtain some of the lowest rates available when issuing long term debt. Many factors are considered when reviewing the Town's financial condition. Factors that were specifically noted were the Town's "strong management and 'good' financial policies and practices," "very strong budgetary flexibility," "very strong liquidity" and low overall net debt.

The May 2015 Annual Town Meeting appropriated \$150,000 to develop a facilities master plan and to investigate opportunities for senior housing. Work will begin in earnest this fall and continue for 12 to 18 months to develop a plan that establishes priorities and a time line for rehabilitation, replacement, repurposing and decommissioning of Town buildings. The Facilities Master Plan Committee will conduct public meetings and will provide opportunities for input from residents.

The Town is seeking to understand the needs of seniors for housing and to identify opportunities to foster such housing. Results from a survey, currently being conducted, will assist the Town in developing proposed alternatives to the market rate single family home model that is most prevalent.

In an August 18, 2015 status report filed with the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB), New England Transrail (NET) is seeking to convince the STB to modify their June 2012 decision which requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to issue a Record of Decision on the Olin Corporation Superfund Site before STB will conduct an environmental assessment of NET. The plan outlined to Town staff in March 2015 calls for paving much of the Olin site and extending rail siding on to the site. An estimated 25 rail cars per day with solid and liquid commodities would enter the site to unload the products to approximately 80 trucks daily for transport to various regional destinations. The Town is working with legal counsel and our environmental consultant to oppose NET's efforts to impose their development on an active Superfund site.

Serious concerns remain about the Kinder Morgan pipeline and lateral proposed to extend through the Town of Wilmington. Current plans call for the lateral line to extend beside a utility corridor that runs through north Wilmington in close proximity to the Benevento quarry operation. The Town is calling for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the agency authorized to grant approval for this pipeline, to require an independent evaluation of the safety of a 24-inch gas pipeline on the edge of an active quarry and to assess the pipeline impacts on existing drainage patterns, groundwater flow and hydrology within the Town's Zone 2 Groundwater Protection District.

James White and Chester "Chip" Bruce, III recently retired from the Wilmington Police Department after serving with distinction and honor for the past 31 years and 26 years respectively. I extend my very best wishes to both gentlemen for continued good health and active retirements.

With school back in session and sunrise occurring later each morning students will be walking to school and bus stops in the dark. Please be attentive when traveling throughout Wilmington.

NAVIGATING THE TROUBLED WATERS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Residents are invited to the showing of "If Only", a movie filmed locally by the Mark Wahlberg Youth Foundation. The event will take place on **Wednesday, October 28, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.** at St. Thomas of Villanova Church.

After the film there will be a presentation on the signs of substance abuse; trends in our communities; prevention strategies and resources for families. A panel discussion will follow. This is a combined effort of The Catholic Community of Wilmington and Tewksbury, the Wilmington Board of Health, the Wilmington Police Department and the Wilmington Public Schools.

BE IN THE KNOW

Looking for emergency alerts for severe weather, unexpected road closures, missing persons, evacuation notices and other critical information? Sign up for the Town of Wilmington's Community Alert System. Signing up takes only a few minutes and gains you access to alert messages sent via email, text and call. You pick where, you pick how. To sign up, visit www.wilmingtonma.gov and click on Wilmington Community Alert System on the homepage. Already signed up and want to update contact information and preferences? Follow the same link to login and manage account information such as phone numbers, email addresses, preference for contact method and other important settings.



The Town is now on Twitter! Follow @TownWilmMA for quick updates about town news, activities and announcements.

SENIOR HOUSING SURVEY

The Town is currently seeking information from residents aged 50+ regarding senior housing. We hope to identify current housing challenges and housing features that are important to seniors.

Paper copies of the survey are available at Town Hall, Buzzell Senior Center or the library. The survey may also be accessed on the Town's website. Completed surveys will be accepted through the month of October. Paper copies can be dropped off at Town Hall, Room 6 or at the Senior Center.

For more information, please contact the Department of Planning & Conservation at 978-658-8238.



PROTECT YOUR PIPES



As the colder weather approaches, residents are encouraged to review items around their home that need to be protected from freezing, especially water pipes and meters. Failure to properly prepare for the winter months can lead to freeze-ups, which leave residents without water. Since freeze-ups typically occur in the basement, it is important to eliminate cold drafts by securely closing windows and doors along with filling gaps with expandable foam insulation. Wrapping vulnerable pipes with pipe insulation is another step that helps to prevent freeze-ups. These maintenance items are inexpensive and may be purchased at any home improvement store. A few minutes of prevention this fall can save you from real troubles when the snow flies. Please take a moment to check these items in addition to winterizing your sill cocks, garden hoses and sprinkler systems before the holiday season.

SAFETY TIPS FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT



November 1st is the date to set clocks back one hour. The Fire Department recommends replacing the batteries in all Carbon Monoxide and Smoke Detectors including plug-in and hard-wired types, which usually have battery back up in case of power loss. Massachusetts Law requires replacement of smoke detectors after 10 years.

Carbon Monoxide detectors are required on each habitable level of a home. Detectors must be within ten feet of a bedroom. If an alarm activates on detectors, exit the home and call 9-1-1 for Fire Department response.

The Fire Department recommends heating systems be serviced and chimneys cleaned. This is especially important for those using wood and pellet stoves to prevent creosote build-up.

Residents are reminded that school is back in session and to be alert while driving. A review of your home fire safety plan is suggested and would coincide with Fire Prevention Training that younger students receive at the beginning of the school year.

The Fire Department will host an Open House on Saturday, October 10, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The season for open burning runs from January 15 through May 1. The Fire Department must be called to obtain permission to burn.

For more fire safety information, log on to the Department of Fire Services website at www.mass.gov/dfs.



REMEMBER OUR VETERANS

In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..."

The original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11:00 a.m.

A sincere thank you is extended to our veterans and their families. The Wilmington Department of Veterans' Services invites all the residents of Wilmington to attend, remember and honor all our past and present veterans on **Wednesday, November 11, 2015 at 11:00 a.m. on the Wilmington Town Common**. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the Department of Veterans' Services at 978-694-2040 or veterans@wilmingtonma.gov.

ATTENTION VETERANS AND SPOUSES

- Did you know that your town has a Veterans' Service Officer (VSO)? Every city and town in the Commonwealth does!
- Did you know your local VSO can help you file VA disability claims and pensions?
- Did you know your VSO may be able to assist you with housing, medical costs, financial assistance (if qualified), tax abatements, employment and obtaining your military records, including your discharge paper?



To find out more, call the **Department of Veterans' Services** at (978) 694-2040. All conversations and correspondences are **STRICTLY** confidential. We are committed to giving all veterans of Wilmington the benefits they deserve!

SENIOR CITIZEN WORK PROGRAM

The Senior Citizen Work Program offers Wilmington residents the opportunity to work off a portion of their property tax by working part-time for the Town. This year's program will enable the Town to fill a minimum of 24 positions in various school and municipal departments. Participants earn \$9/hour for up to 80 hours of "volunteer" service. Since the program's beginning in 1995, approximately **365** positions have been filled.

The purpose of the program is to assist seniors in reducing their property tax burden. Participants **MUST** be Wilmington residents occupying a house for which property taxes are paid (or spouse of homeowner), have limited financial resources and be 60 years of age or older as of January 1, 2016. Applications are available in the Town Manager's Office and at the Buzzell Senior Center. **Application Deadline: October 21, 2015.** As in past years, priority will be given to qualified applicants not previously selected for the program. All seniors, regardless of past participation however, are encouraged to apply. Job listings and program information are on the application.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Town Museum is a special place in our community. Be a part of it by volunteering. Contact the Museum at 978-658-5475 or e-mail us at htavern@wilmingtonma.gov

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

To all Wilmington real estate taxpayers who may be eligible for a property tax exemption (Veterans, Elderly, Widows/Widowers, Blind, Paraplegics etc) in FY 2016, please be reminded that the Board of Assessors will accept applications starting in October. If you received an exemption for FY 2015 property taxes, an exemption application will be mailed to you by the Assessors' Office in October. By Massachusetts General Law, applications for FY 2016 are due to the Board of Assessors by April 1, 2016 (which is 3 months after the mailing of the actual tax bill on January 1st). The Board then has 3 months to act on the application and may request further information from you regarding your eligibility during that time.

Please remember that filing for an exemption is by **ANNUAL** application. Your qualifications and status may change year to year as well as the eligibility requirements for certain exemptions.

Voters at the Annual Town Meeting passed articles that increased the Income and Asset Limits substantially over last year's numbers. If you have not qualified in the past, you may now qualify.

Senior Exemptions have Age, Ownership, Residency, Income and/or Asset requirements. The FY16 Senior Income requirements for Clause 41C are as follows:

	<u>INCOME LIMIT</u>	<u>ASSET LIMIT</u> (excluding domicile)
SINGLE	\$24,523	\$40,000
MARRIED	\$36,785	\$50,000

For Seniors (over 70) or Surviving Spouse, the Clause 17D FY16 ASSET Requirements may not exceed **\$50,000**, excluding the domicile. There are **NO** income requirements for this exemption.

If you apply and qualify for an exemption, the Board will notify you by sending a green Exemption Certificate after the January 1st bill.

The Assessors office will have brochures available explaining the types and qualifications for the various exemptions. For more information you may also review the back of your tax bill which outlines the application filing deadline; visit the Assessor's website to view a brochure that summarizes the exemption qualifications at http://www.wilmingtonma.gov/Pages/WilmingtonMA_Assessor/ex or contact the Assessor's Office at 978-658-3675.

FALL PROGRAMS AT THE LIBRARY

Register for programs online using *Calendar of Events* at www.wilmlibrary.org or by calling (978) 694-2099 (for Adult) or (978) 694-2098 (for Children/Teen).

Welcome to Wilmington Reception Monday, November 30, 6:30 pm

Anyone new to Wilmington who would like to learn more about our town and meet representatives from town government and community groups is invited to the Welcome to Wilmington Reception. This event is sponsored by the Wilmington Memorial Library and the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce.

TECHNOLOGY EVENTS

Telescopes 101 Thursday, October 8, 7:00 pm
Join us for a family-oriented presentation of the library's new telescope! Learn about the telescope, how it works and how to use it.

3D Printer Demo Tuesday, October 13, 2:30 pm
Technology Librarian Brad McKenna will demonstrate how the library's 3D printer works.

Digital Security Wednesday, October 14, 7:00 pm
Learn some helpful tips on how to tell if your information is safe on any given webpage.

Intro to the Cloud Wednesday, November 4, 7:00 pm
Come learn about "cloud" computing and how you can use it for email, file storage, music/movie streaming etc.

Microsoft PowerPoint Tuesday, November 10, 2:30 pm
This hands-on class led by Brad McKenna will cover such topics as explanation of the various tabs found on "The Ribbon", how to apply themes and how to insert pictures and videos.

HOLIDAY EVENTS

Halloween Party Friday, October 30, 10:00 am
Come dressed in your Halloween costume. Have a snack and make a spooky craft. Ages 3+.

Trick or Treat at the Library Saturday, October 31, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Wear a costume to the library and get candy at the checkout desks! Adults, teens and kids can all participate!

Cook the Foods You Love to Eat! Thanksgiving Side Dishes Monday, November 16, 3:45
Watch as cooking instructor Liz Barbour demonstrates a variety of cooking techniques that will help everyone prepare healthy Thanksgiving side dish recipes. Grades 4-12.

Crafternoons: Grapevine Wreath Thursday, November 19, 3:45 pm
We'll create some decorations, add some others and put them all together to create a welcome sight for friends and family! Grades 4-8.

Homemade Gift Ideas or Pinterest Comes to Life! Thursday, December 3, 7:00 pm
Hear tutorials and get instructions on how to make 6+ crafts from library staff, enter in a raffle and make something to take home.

After Hours Concert – The Bel Airs Friday, December 4, 7:00 pm (AGES 21+, \$15)
Tickets on sale at the main desk starting Monday, November 2
The Bel Airs are New England's premier doo wop and oldies vocal quintet. Ticket price includes a complimentary glass of wine, coffee and dessert.

ROTARY AUCTION

The annual Wilmington Rotary Club Auction will be held on **Friday, November 20, at the Knights of Columbus Hall** located on Middlesex Avenue behind St. Thomas Church. Doors open at 6 p.m. with the auction starting promptly at 7 p.m. As always, a wide variety of items will be put up for bid. Attendees will enjoy a free buffet, courtesy of Winchester Hospital, cash bar and the chance to participate in the \$10,000 raffle. *Admission is free.* For further information please contact Auction Chair, John Doherty, at 978-658-3805 or visit www.wilmingtonrotary.org. Proceeds fund scholarships for Wilmington students, support a blood donor drive and enable partnership programs for municipal and school projects.



ONLINE REGISTRATION NOW AVAILABLE

Wilmington Recreation now offers online registration for programs and classes. Residents may sign up from the comfort of their home, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Payments for online registrations may be charged to your MasterCard, Visa or Discover credit card. It is fast, easy and secure. Click on the link on our website to set up your account.

BASKETBALL UPDATES



The registration deadline for Recreation Basketball (Grades 3 – 8) is Tuesday, October 6. We are celebrating our 53rd year! This popular program runs from November 30 – February 6 (there are no games/practices December 24 – January 1 or January 18). There are separate leagues for boys and girls. There are 9 Saturday games with weeknight practices. Cost of program is \$78.

The registration deadline for Freshman/Sophomore Girls Hoops (Grades 9 & 10) is Wednesday, October 7. This new program provides supervised, refereed pick-up games for girls. Have fun and keep in shape this winter. Cost of program is \$21.

The registration deadline for Junior Basketball (Grades 1 & 2) is Thursday, November 12. This six-week co-ed program runs on Saturdays from January 2 – February 6 and costs \$37.

The **Recreation Department** is currently offering a **Coach Clinic** on Thursday, October 8 or Tuesday, October 13 for anyone in Grade 9 or above interested in coaching to satisfy community service requirements. On Mondays, November 2 & 9, we are offering our annual **Referee Clinic** for anyone age 16 (by 12/1/15) and up interested in a possible paid position for Recreation Basketball. Register online or contact the Recreation Office for additional information or to register for these free clinics.

CARTER COMMITTEE SPONSORS CONCERT

The Sarah Carter Lecture Fund Committee is sponsoring a free concert featuring George Lyons' "*Sounds Like Frank*" on Friday, October 23, 2015 at 7 p.m. at the Wilmington Middle School.



These programs, suitable for all ages, have been offered to the Town since 1910. All are welcome.



HAUNTED HAPPENINGS

Haunted Woods at Harnden Tavern! Stroll through our Haunted Woods - if you dare! For two weekends, beginning Friday, October 16, the grounds of the Town Museum will host the return of this spooktacular Halloween event. Check the Museum's website for details!

The 48th Annual Horribles Parade is Sunday, October 25 at 4:30 p.m. Participants march from the Public Safety Building to the High School Cafeteria where goodies galore await costumed children.



A walk for the **Wilmington Educational Foundation** will be occurring in all schools, except the high school, the last week of October. Please visit the schools' website (www.wpsk12.com) for further information.

TRASH AND RECYCLING INFORMATION

Every residence is allowed to dispose of one bulky item each week. To arrange for pick up of a bulky item, call Russell Disposal at 617-776-5854 by 11 a.m. on Thursday. Bulky items are picked up on Fridays. Bulky items include, but are not limited to, sofas, chairs, bureaus, bicycles, mattress and box spring, gas grill (no propane) and tables.

FUEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Community Teamwork, Inc. Fuel Assistance Program is available to new applicants starting November 1, 2015. Any Wilmington resident 60 years or older who is in need of fuel assistance should contact the Elderly Services Department at 978-657-7595. Wilmington residents who applied last year and are receiving renewal applications in the mail may also call for an appointment. Residents under the age of 60 in need of assistance should contact the Veterans' Agent office in Billerica at 978-671-0968. The income guidelines are as follows:

Household Size	Maximum Annual Gross Income
1	\$33,126
2	\$43,319
3	\$53,511
4	\$63,704
5	\$73,897
6	\$84,089

TOOLS FOR CAREGIVERS WORKSHOP

Caring for a loved one is easier when you have support. Starting in November, the Department of Elderly Services will be offering a FREE workshop designed to help caregivers who are caring for a relative, friend or someone else in their life with a chronic illness such as Alzheimer's or Parkinson's. "Powerful Tools For Caregivers" is a six week program that will help provide the caregiver with the skills needed to take care of themselves. There will be an information session on Monday, October 19, 2015 at 10:30 a.m. at the Senior Center. Please register by contacting Laura Pickett at lpickett@wilmingtonma.gov or by calling 978-657-7595. This program is funded in part through Tufts Health Plan Foundation & Minuteman Senior Services.

DON'T MISS SANTA!



Santa and his elves will be welcoming Wilmington boys and girls at **Santa's Workshop** on Thursday, December 3, 6 pm-7:30 pm at Town Hall. Please bring your cameras. **Breakfast with Santa** is on Saturday, December 5 at the K of C Hall. Pre-purchased tickets from the Recreation Department are required for both seatings, 8:15 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. Tickets available beginning October 28.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCT 4	HARNDEN TAVERN OPEN HOUSE	2 pm to 4 pm
OCT 6	RECREATION BASKETBALL REGISTRATION DEADLINE	Grades 3-8
OCT 7	GIRLS HOOPS RECREATION BASKETBALL REGISTRATION DEADLINE	Grades 9-10
OCT 10	FIRE DEPARTMENT OPEN HOUSE	11 am to 2 pm
OCT 21	APPLICATION DEADLINE SENIOR CITIZEN WORK PROGRAM	
OCT 23	SARAH CARTER COMMITTEE CONCERT	Middle School Auditorium 7 pm
OCT 25	HORRIBLES PARADE	Rotary Park 4:30 pm
OCT 28	IF ONLY	St. Thomas Church 7 pm
NOV 1	HARNDEN TAVERN OPEN HOUSE	2 pm to 4 pm
NOV 11	VETERANS' DAY CEREMONY	Town Common 11 am
NOV 12	JUNIOR BASKETBALL REGISTRATION DEADLINE	Grades 1 & 2
NOV 20	ROTARY AUCTION	Knights of Columbus 7 pm
NOV 21	SENIOR CITIZEN HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR	Buzzell Senior Center 9 am to 2 pm
DEC 3	SANTA'S WORKSHOP	Town Hall 6 pm to 7:30 pm
DEC 5	BREAKFAST WITH SANTA	Seating at Knights of Columbus 8:15 am & 10:15 am
DEC 5	HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING	Town Common
DEC 6	HOLIDAY SOCIAL	Harnden Tavern 1 pm to 4 pm

FALL YARDWASTE PROGRAM



The end of the year **curbside pick-up of leaves and grass clippings will begin on October 26 and extend for five weeks through**

November 28. Residents should place their yardwaste in biodegradable paper bags or uncovered barrels at curbside on their regular trash collection day. Yardwaste in plastic bags will not be accepted.

Residents may also use the recycling center off Old Main Street near the Woburn line for leaves and brush drop-off. **The center will open for 9 weeks on Wednesdays and Saturdays from October 7 through and including December 5.** Hours of operation are Wednesdays, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. and Saturdays, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

In order to use the yardwaste recycling facility, residents must purchase a \$15 punch card which is good for five visits to the center. The card may be purchased at the Treasurer/Collector's Office, Room 1, Town Hall. **Wilmington residents only** are allowed to use the facility for leaves and brush drop-off. **NO GRASS CLIPPINGS.** The punch card and an ID must be presented at the entrance. **No contractors or commercial vehicles** are allowed to use the facility.

The Conservation Commission reminds residents to dispose of yardwaste away from wetlands. Yardwaste can be composted to be used as mulch to enrich soil and increase its moisture-holding capacity. More information is available at the Planning & Conservation office and at www.mass.gov/dep/recycle/reduce/

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

This newsletter can be made available in an alternative format. Contact {978} 658-3311 or TTY {978} 694-1417