



# Town of Westford Massachusetts

## Town Manager's Newsletter

January 2024



**Kristen Las**  
Town  
Manager

[klas@westfordma.gov](mailto:klas@westfordma.gov)  
[www.westfordma.gov/tm](http://www.westfordma.gov/tm)  
978-692-5500

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**Tuesday, January 23, 2024**  
**Deadline for Petition**  
**Articles To Town Clerk's**  
**Office**

**Saturday, March 23, 2024**  
**Annual Town Meeting**  
**Westford Academy**

**J.V. Fletcher Library**  
**Book Sale**  
**February 9 - 11**  
**See Details on page 5**



Watch  
**westford**   
community access television  
[www.westfordcat.org](http://www.westfordcat.org)

### Dear Westford residents,

Happy New Year! January marks new beginnings for many. This was apparent when I attended three retirement parties for five town staff members on January 5<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations to those who have served the Town of Westford for so many years. I also reflect back on January 2023 when I joined the Town of Westford and am grateful for all of the residents and staff who have provided insights, thoughts and information to me over the past twelve months.

If you are looking for a new endeavor or hobby in the new year, we have many Board and Committee openings that you may be interested in that are detailed at the end of this letter.

I would like to welcome Laurie Shaw, Town Clerk to the Town of Westford. She started in her position on January 8<sup>th</sup>. Laurie comes to us from the Town of Natick where she was the Assistant Town Clerk. Please feel free to stop by Town Hall to welcome Laurie to Westford.



*Laurie Shaw, Town Clerk*

The Finance Committee began their public hearing process on the FY25 budgets on January 11th. Their meetings will continue on January 18th and 25th and February 1st. This year's presentations from Department Heads are much more detailed than previous years. Based upon known budget challenges, the Select Board asked that we prepare two different budget scenarios. The School Committee asked the Superintendent to do the same. The first option stays within the constraints of Proposition 2 ½ that includes difficult decisions that contemplate service cuts and staff reductions. The second option is a budget that reflects current service levels and staffing that would require a Proposition 2 ½ override.

The FY25 budget deficit is not anticipated to get any better in FY26 and FY27. In fact, there is a cascading effect to the budget gap that will lead to further cuts than is shown in the budget presentation. We do anticipate seeing some relief during the end of FY26 and beginning of FY27 if the Town adopts MBTA zoning and developers start to build associated with that zoning as well as seeing the effects of an Economic Development consultant that is anticipated to be hired in the late winter of 2024.

We have prepared a variety of educational [videos](#) and a [budget website](#) that portray the budget challenges we are facing and how we are responding to those challenges.

The final approval of the town budget takes place at Town Meeting which is scheduled for March 23, 2024. If an override is approved at Town Meeting it must also be passed via ballot question on the townwide election day, May 7, 2024. Please remain engaged in the process and aware of the conversations taking place.

(continued on next page)

[WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV](http://WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV)

If you have not been able to access and read the full [Budget Task Force report](#), I would encourage you to do so as it presents a significant amount of data and analysis that has been much needed. The more informed everyone is about the budget the better.

Please see below for matters that were discussed or acted upon by the Select Board in the past month.

At their meeting on December 27<sup>th</sup> the Select Board recognized three retiring Westford employees; Paul "Pip" Ricard with the Water Department for 45 years, Detective Eracleo with the Police Department for 34 years, and Sergeant Proia with the Police Department for 30 years. John Cunningham also recognized Steve Cronin for his 13 years of service as Water Department Superintendent and DPW Director, and who has taken the position as Highway Director in Exeter, NH. Kristen Las announced that Assistant DPW Director Kyle Fox would be appointed acting DPW Director.

The Select Board approved the Town Manager to enter contract negotiations with Raftelis for a Townwide Strategic Plan, as well as enter into a contract with Zencity to carry out a community benchmarking public survey and other online public outreach for the Townwide Strategic Plan for a one-year period.

Land Use Director Jeff Morrissette provided the Select Board with an update on the draft MBTA Communities Zoning Bylaw Amendment and authorized the Town Manager and Land Use Department to seek a determination of preliminary compliance from the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities.

The Select Board approved American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding requests for reallocation of Westford Academy Wastewater Treatment Facility Denitrification Tank Repair funding to Alternate Wastewater plan repairs. More information can be found by visiting the [ARPA website](#).

At their meeting on January 9<sup>th</sup> the Select Board recognized Assistant Town Treasurer Pat Studer for her 23 years of service to the Town and wished her well in retirement. The Lowell 5 Bank was recognized for donating \$3,000 to Westford seniors that will be used for the TREAD program including transportation and food gift cards.

Select Board Member Andrea Peraner-Sweet announced the DEI Multi-Cultural Calendar would be updated in a newsflash on the Town homepage, Facebook page and Twitter on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month. She also encouraged residents to sign up for curbside composting with [Bootstrap Composting](#).

The Co-Chairs of the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee as well as the Director of Equity, Curriculum and Instruction for the Westford School Department recognized Holocaust Remembrance Day as January 27, 2024.

A joint meeting was held with the Finance Committee and School Committee to discuss the FY 25 Budget process, and an update was also given on the FY 24 Fair Share Apportionment.

The Select Board approved the recommendation from CEASC that Westford adopt the MA Opt In Specialized building code and put it on a future Town Meeting warrant.

(continued on next page)

There are several openings on our local boards and committees, including:

**Affordable Housing Trust**

**Agricultural Commission**

**Board of Assessors**

**Bylaw Review Committee**

**Capital Planning Committee**

**Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee**

**Commission on Disability**

**Community Behavioral and Mental Health Committee**

**Council on Aging**

**Cultural Council**

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

**Dog Park Task Force**

**Healthy Westford Committee**

**Historical Commission**

**Housing Authority**

**MBTA Communities Multi-Family Housing**

**Northern Middlesex Stormwater Collaborative**

**Parks and Recreation Commission**

**Permanent Town Building Committee**

**Scholarship and Grant Committee**

**Selectmen Policies & Procedures Sub Committee**

**Tax Possession Disposition Committee**

I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees; and if you have interest, please complete and submit a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#).

Would you like more detailed information on the Select Board's meetings? Click the following links to access: [Select Board Documents](#) & [Select Board Meeting Videos](#).

If you have any suggestions for articles or added features in future newsletters, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Town Manager's office at (978)-692-5501 or email at [klas@westfordma.gov](mailto:klas@westfordma.gov).

Sincerely,



Kristen Las, Town Manager

## Public Safety

### Plan Ahead for Any Emergency

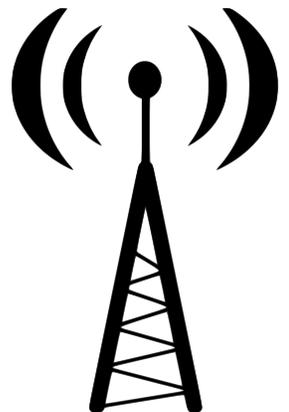
Receive alerts and notifications, stay informed of weather, traffic, and other emergencies in your community via Rave/Smart911 emergency notifications.

Most residents will not need to take action in order to receive notification of events on their home telephone. However, if you have recently moved into Westford, changed your home phone number, or have an unlisted phone number you will need to register your phone number [Click here](#) to register additional phone numbers or email addresses.

Download the Smart911 Mobile App for your smartphone [Here](#).

and

Set Your Radio Preset to Westford Emergency Management's 1630 AM



## January at the J.V. Fletcher Library

Unless otherwise noted, the following programs are made possible by the Friends of the Library.



**Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library February Book Sale: Friday, February 9, Saturday, February 10 and Sunday, February 11.** A Friends Members Only Sale will be held on Friday evening from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. A Friends membership (which may be purchased at the door) is necessary for attending this sale. The entire public is invited Saturday for an all-day sale, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and for the \$10.00 Bag Sale on Sunday, from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. So much stock! So little time!

**Monday Mystery Book Club: Monday, January 22nd at 2:00 p.m. in the Mary Atwood Room** Wake up your week with a stimulating book club discussion! We'll meet in the Mary Atwood Room to discuss *The Paris Apartment* by Lucy Foley. Print copies are available at Main Desk.

**Bluey story time with Strega Mama: Wednesday, January 24 at 10:30 a.m.** While we are preparing for the return of our winter/spring story times, try this special story time featuring performer Strega Mama and her version of the beloved Laura Numeroff story. Enjoy The Grannies, the magic xylophone, and spill the beans. This free, drop-in program is best for ages three and up.

**Virtual Look Inside Hammond Castle: Wednesday, January 24 at 1:00 p.m.** John Leysath, curator at Hammond Castle Museum will dig deep into the life and inventions of the original owner, creator of the castle, and noted scientist John Hays Hammond Jr. Mr. Hammond was one of the most prolific inventors in U.S. history and registered over 500 patents throughout his career. Known as “the father of radio control,” Hammond was a pioneer in many technologies, including television and sound recording. He counted among his friends and mentors Thomas Edison, Nikola Tesla, and Alexander Graham Bell. He was also a collector of ancient, medieval, and Renaissance artifacts, and built his castle-like home in Gloucester, Massachusetts in the late 1920s. This program is presented in partnership with and hosted by the Ashland Public Library. [Register here.](#)

**Lego Club: Saturday, January 27 from 2:00-3:00 p.m.** Do you love to build with Legos®? Come to our Lego® Club each month to create something fun with Library Legos®. All creations will be displayed in the library until the next time we meet. This program is best for any child who will not eat the Legos and takes place in the Meeting Room. Parents stay and join in the fun or visit with other parents in the room. Drop-in; no registration necessary. Thanks to the Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library for providing ALL of the Legos for this program.

**Sweet Reads MG Book Club: Tuesday, January 30 at 6:30pm.** Sweet Reads is a book club for Grade 6 and up that meets one evening per month for desserts and discussions. This month we will be reading *Thanks a Lot, Universe* by Chad Lucas. Copies of the book are available at the Main Desk. Registration is appreciated but drop-ins and newcomers are always welcome. [Register here.](#)

**Winter Story Times** – We offer a variety of small group (under 25 kids) story times for children this winter that take place in the Meeting Room. To accommodate a wider variety of participants there will be no registrations or reservations. Plan to arrive early, before the start of the story time. Your options for story time are Book Bunch (starting February 6) for ages 2 to 4 on Tuesdays at 10:30 to 11:00 a.m. and Wiggle Words (starting February 7) for ages 2 to 4 on Wednesdays at 10:30 to 11:00 a.m. Please visit our [website and Events calendar](#) for more information.

Winter also means the restart of Mother Goose, an early literacy interactive story time that is offered every Monday (starting January 29) at 10:30 am. Children and their caregivers join us in the Meeting Room for this drop-in program.

(Continued on next page)

## J.V. Fletcher Library (continued)

Friends of the Library e-newsletter: The best way to learn about our upcoming programs and new services is through the FOL weekly e-newsletter. [Sign up here.](#)

Check out our [Museum Passes page](#) or call the Library for reservations. Unless otherwise noted, our museum passes are generously funded by the Friends of the Library. [Have you joined the Friends yet?](#)

### Quick Links to Our Most Popular Services!

[Programs – Adults](#)

[Programs – Kids](#)

[Programs – Young Adults](#)

If you have questions or need assistance, please call us at 978-399-2300 or send us an email at [westfordlibrary@westfordma.gov](mailto:westfordlibrary@westfordma.gov).

# Winter Book Sale

FRIENDS OF THE JV FLETCHER LIBRARY • 50 MAIN ST • WESTFORD MA

<b>Fri Feb 9</b> 6:30 - 9	<b>Members' Night</b> Join now or at the door!
<b>Sat Feb 10</b> 10 - 5	<b>Public Sale</b> Most items \$1 or \$2
<b>Sun Feb 11</b> 2 - 4	<b>Bag Sale</b> Buy a \$10 bag and fill it up!

Thousands of gently used books and AV materials  
Your purchase supports our many innovative programs  
Cash, checks, and credit cards accepted

**Sustainability Update - Sue Thomas, [Sustainability Coordinator](#), 978-399-2798**

**New Year, new data, new progress and more work to do!**

It's a new year, and likely a [hotter](#), wetter, wilder [more expensive year](#), [with plastic](#), and [the associated hormone mimicking chemicals now found everywhere](#), but also a [hopeful](#) one. A lot of us, as citizens and governments, are making the needed changes to stabilize our climate, and these efforts are making a difference in the future impacts we will see, even as we suffer through a new abnormal caused by past inaction. Here is a list of things to know and act on this month.

**Report Damage from January 10<sup>th</sup> and/or 13<sup>th</sup> storms by January 23rd**

[The form at this link](#) may be used to report damage to your home or business so the Town is aware of the extent of storm damage and can determine eligibility for federal assistance programs.

**Check your electric bill - 2024 Electricity supply price changes to Westford POP**

Community Aggregation continues to be a great way to reduce the impact of your energy use in 2024. Customers should note that Westford POP has new rates for 2024 that should appear on January bills. While these rates are higher than the previous contract negotiated by the town, reflecting current market conditions, they are still competitive relative to National Grid Basic Service and other suppliers. Westford residents and small businesses can sign up, or opt up to 100% Gold (more renewable energy) at any time [here](#).

			
Westford POP Standard (default, formerly POP Green)	Westford POP Basic	Westford POP Gold	National Grid Basic Service
16.178 ¢/kWh All Rate Classes	15.784 ¢/kWh All Rate Classes	17.282 ¢/kWh All Rate Classes	18.213 ¢/kWh Residential
Adds 10% voluntary renewable energy (MA Class I RECs)	No additional renewable energy	Adds voluntary renewable energy (MA Class I RECs) to total 100%	No additional renewable energy
December 2023 through November 2025			November 2023 through July 2024

If you are a former Pop Silver or POP Gold customer who did not re-enroll as instructed and have been bumped to National Grid Basic Service (your supply portion of the bill no longer lists Westford) , you may still enroll re-enroll in Westford POP [here](#).

**If you are a member of Westford Pop the supply portion of your bill will look like this:**

**Supply Services**

SUPPLIER CONSTELLATION  
NEWENERGY (WESTFORD POP)  
1310 POINTE ST.  
BALTIMORE, MD 21231



We are aware there was a problem with some former POP Silver and POP Gold customers who followed instructions to re-enroll by November 20<sup>th</sup> but were not actually signed up. The Town has been working with our consultant, Good Energy, and Constellation Energy to resolve the issue for those customers. More information will be available soon.

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## Sustainability (Continued)

### Make and Work your electrification plan for your home or business

As you make your plans for 2024, [this](#) guide may help you ink in your electrification to-do list and calendar.

### Join the Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee

The Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee (CEASC) needs you! The CEASC works with me to advise town government as we navigate the transition to clean energy and define the path to net zero by 2050. This dedicated group of citizens volunteer their time to maintain and introduce programs that assist both town government and the community at large. Given the breadth of the mission, the CEASC is composed of both subject matter experts and generalists eager to learn and contribute. If you have the time and the interest to become a member, please attend a meeting, visit the [CEASC website](#) or talk to me or any of the members to learn more. When you are ready to jump on board, fill out a Citizen Activity Form [at this link](#) to be considered for appointment.

### Follow local government and make a plan to vote in 2024

Westford is expecting a multi-year budget crunch in these inflationary times that will require a substantial over-ride in March to provide level services in FY 25. Mark your calendar for the Annual Town Meeting March 23<sup>rd</sup>, local elections May 7 (where an over-ride will be on the ballot) and follow the [Finance Committee Budget hearings](#) this month.

In addition to budget discussions, Town Meeting is expected to vote on an MBTA Communities Multi-Family Housing Bylaw. While none of the housing addressed by this by-law may be built, if it is, this by-law provides incentives for clean energy and other sustainability features which have been selected to be appealing, and in line with Westford's character and climate goals. Learn more [here](#).

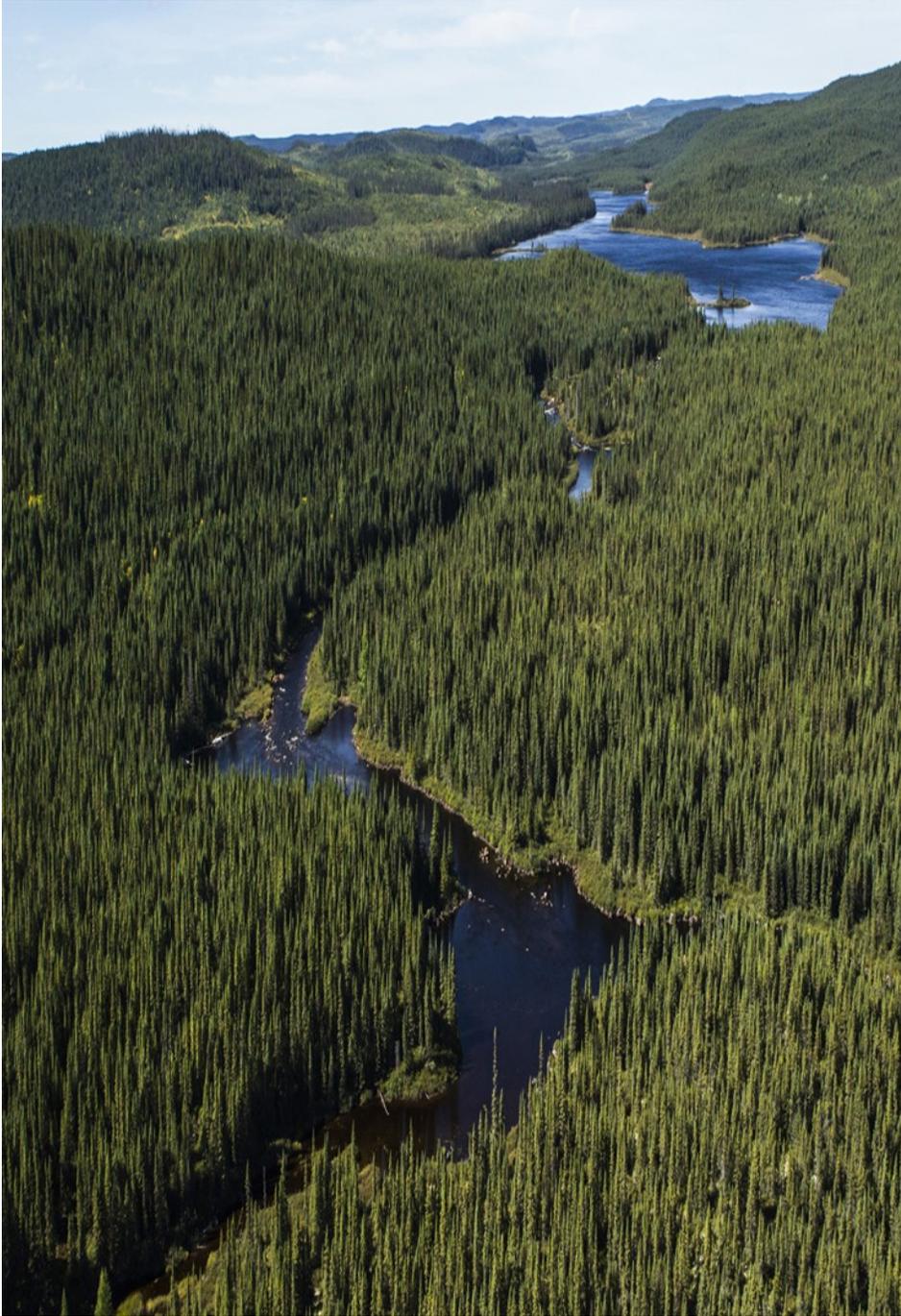
Finally, the CEASC and I recommended that the Select Board place an article to adopt the Specialized Energy Code on the Town Meeting Warrant. This elective energy building code is specific to new construction and ensures that our new buildings are designed to be electrified, preventing the need for expensive retrofits by future new owners and tenants. Our neighbors and peers are adopting this code quickly. It is a requirement for a new designation by DOER called Climate Leaders which opens up additional state funding. Westford, having received over a million dollars in grant money since being designated a Green Community, is capped in how much future money we can receive. Attaining designation as a Climate Leader eliminates this cap. Look for a town web page with more details soon.

### Review Trash and Recycling Policies

- Trash is limited to three 32/35 gallon containers of trash per week. Full barrels must weigh less than 50 pounds.
- Recycling is unlimited and mandatory. Pick ups are every other week.
- 64-gallon wheeled and covered recycling totes are available for \$60. Send a check payable to Westford Recycling Commission to Westford Town Hall, 55 Main Street. You will be contacted to arrange a time to pick it up.
- Trash and recycling must be at the curb by 7:00 A.M. Containers must be clearly marked and preferably on opposite sides of the driveway.
- Large sections of cardboard must be flattened and either
  - cut into no larger than 3x3 foot sections and bound with string or tape
  - stacked inside another box not exceeding 3x3 feet
- Reference [Recycle Smart](#) to confirm what can be recycled and the Westford Recycling Commission's [How to Recycle Most Everything](#) page for ways to dispose of reusable and recyclable goods that should not be in your trash.
- Mark your calendar for the next [Electronics and Collection Event](#), April 27<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the highway garage and Brush Chipping, April 20<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 am to 4:30 PM. See the [Westford Recycling Commission Website](#) for details.

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## Sustainability (Continued)



### Rethink your paper tissue products use (paper towels, napkins, toilet and facial tissue) to protect [Canada's Boreal forest](#)

Paper towels, toilet paper and tissues are contributors to deforestation and climate change worldwide. Making changes to these habits is something we all can begin today. Replace disposable paper tissue with washable cloth items and bidets, which are now popular enough and easy enough to install that you can find a kit at your favorite hardware store for about \$100 and install it yourself in a few hours, especially if you are willing to forego the most cushy creature comfort features. If you want a luxury experience, it might be a good idea to consult a plumber. For those items/jobs where disposal is necessary, or if you aren't ready to forego disposable paper items just yet, the Natural Resource Defense Council offers [this great report](#) to help you choose products made from sustainably sourced and/or recycled paper.

*Photo credit:  
Riccardo Cellere Photography*

Join Meteorologist Harvey Leonard who will be giving a talk entitled **Climate Change: Simple, Serious, Solvable** sponsored by the [Middlesex Conservation District](#) on Tuesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 3:00 p.m. at the First Parish Church.

# Community Wellness

JOIN US FOR THE UPCOMING FREE

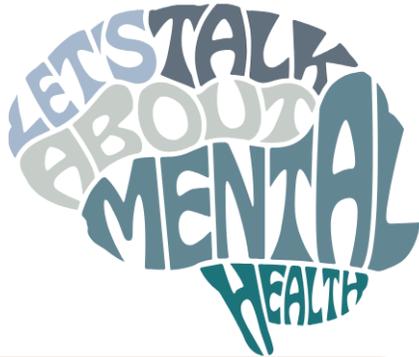


# ADULT MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

MIDDLESEX COUNTY

## WHAT IS ADULT MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

The Adult Mental Health First Aid training teaches adults how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among adults



## WHO SHOULD KNOW AND BE INVOLVED?

- Community members
- Employers
- Police officers
- Hospital staff
- First responders
- Caring individuals

1.5-2 HRS OF PRE WORK

## HOW IS THIS TRAINING BENEIFICAL?

1. Informs Adults on common signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use challenges
2. Helps reduce stigma
3. Teaches you how to interact with a person in crisis and how to connect a person with help
4. Provides guidance with a simple 5-step action plan (ALGEE) how to properly and safely respond to these challenges

## WHEN & WHERE?

Date & Time: January 23, 2024  
9:00AM-4:00PM

Location: Westford Fire Department  
65 Boston Rd, Westford, MA

Register by January 15, 2024

Interested in attending?

Please contact Nicole Laviolette

[NLaviolette@westfordma.gov](mailto:NLaviolette@westfordma.gov)



Health Department



JOIN US FOR THE UPCOMING FREE  
YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH  
FIRST AID TRAINING

*This Youth Mental Health First Aid Training is supported by a grant from the Greater Lowell Community Foundation (GLCF)*

WHAT IS YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH  
FIRST AID?

The Youth Mental Health First Aid training teaches adults how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among children and adolescents from ages 12-18

HOW IS THIS TRAINING  
BENEFICIAL?

1. Informs adults about common mental health concerns among youth
2. Helps reduce stigma
3. Helps adults recognize common signs and symptoms of mental health and substance misuse challenges beyond "typical" teen behavior
4. Provides guidance with a simple 5-step action plan (ALGEE) how to properly and safely respond to these challenges

WHO SHOULD KNOW AND  
BE INVOLVED?

- Parents
- Educators
- All community members



Date: Jan 30th, 2024  
 Time: 10:15AM-4PM  
 Location: J. V. Fletcher Library,  
 Mary Atwood Meeting Room,  
 50 Main St, Westford, MA, 01886



NEPHA  
NORTH EAST PUBLIC  
HEALTH ALLIANCE



Interested in attending?  
Please contact Brittany Nash  
for registration

bnash@westfordma.gov

# Tips to Avoid Slips

The Town of Westford cares deeply about the health and safety of its residents! That's why so many local entities are joining forces on projects to reduce the risk of falls. According to a CDC report on October 25, 2022, "Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries in older adults." About 36 million falls are reported each year, resulting in 1 million hospitalizations and over 36,000 deaths.

Because falls are such a major cause of serious injury – especially for older adults and those with certain health conditions – here are some suggestions adapted from the National Council on Aging to protect your loved ones. Special appreciation to NACCHO (National Association of County and City Health Officials) as well, for supporting such initiatives to prevent falls.

**Check your front steps** to make sure they are not broken or uneven, and fix damage such as cracks and wobbly steps. Consider installing a grab bar next to the front door, for balance when putting a key in the lock, especially if you are carrying bags.

**Enhance the lighting around your front door.** Make sure all entryways are well lit, so you can see where you are stepping, and look out for any slick surfaces or debris.

**Move commonly used items within easier reach.** For example, put kitchen items that you use every day – such as plates and glasses – on the lowest shelves. This will help you avoid using stepstools and chairs that could cause a loss of balance.

**Replace scatter rugs with rubber backed rugs,** or place a non-slip mat underneath. Loose scatter rugs and area rugs can become tripping hazards.

**Clean up spills immediately.** Smooth surfaces can be slippery and dangerous when wet! Keep a hand towel within close reach, to help you wipe up spills right away.

**Keep steps and hallways clutter-free.** Clear the environment of any loose cords, and be aware of small pets that may be underfoot.

**Ensure that the light at your bedside and your phone are within arm's reach.** These measures will keep you safer if you require help or need to get up in the middle of in the night.

**Keep the path from your bed to the bathroom clear.** Make sure it is well lit and clutter free. Place nightlights along the route; the kind with motion sensors can be especially helpful.

**Add a non-slip rubber mat or self-stick strips to the shower or tub.** The traction from these items can keep you from slipping on wet surfaces. Use of a shower chair and hand-held shower head can also reduce straining and slipping hazards.

**Consider installing a walk-in tub or shower,** with grip bars by the toilet and tub.

**Be proactive about your health!** Have your vision and hearing checked annually. Consider weight-bearing exercises to improve strength and balance. Know that some medications may make you dizzy or drowsy. All of these measures can help to reduce your risk of falls.



**WESTFORD CARES!!!  
PRACTICE THESE AND OTHER TIPS TO PREVENT FALLS.**



## Health Department



### Westford Winter Resources

This project is brought to you by the Town of Westford's Health, Police and Fire Departments, Upper Merrimack Valley Medical Reserve Corps, Cameron Senior Center, and contributions from Ace Hardware, Rotary Club of Westford, The Westford Fund, Enterprise Bank, and Granite Willow.



#### Cameron Senior Center – 978-692-5523

If you run out of ice melt and need sand/salt from the Highway Department Garage, call and ask for the Outreach team to have the Westford Police Department deliver these materials.

If you are experiencing financial challenges and would like social services assistance with food, utilities, or household needs, ask to speak with the Social Worker or Outreach Coordinators.

Westford Food Pantry is located inside the Cameron Senior Center and is open Wednesdays from 6-8PM and Fridays 9-11AM: [www.westfordfoodpantry.org](http://www.westfordfoodpantry.org)

Web page for general services: [www.westfordma.gov/593/Council-on-Aging](http://www.westfordma.gov/593/Council-on-Aging)

#### Westford Health Department – 978-692-5509

To sign up for the Westford Special Needs Emergency Registry, complete the form available online at: <https://bit.ly/WestfordNeeds> - and deliver it to the Health Department. You can also access the form by scanning the QR code.



Web page for Health Department services: [www.westfordma.gov/health](http://www.westfordma.gov/health)

#### Westford Police Department – 978-399-2345

To provide public safety the information they need to better help and communicate with you in an emergency, sign up at [www.smart911.com/](http://www.smart911.com/)

Web page for general police services: [www.westfordma.gov/police](http://www.westfordma.gov/police)

#### Westford Fire Department – 978-399-2345

Web page for Fire, EMS, and general services: [www.westfordma.gov/fire](http://www.westfordma.gov/fire)

#### Medical Reserve Corps – 978-399-2549

Call or email [nburns@westfordma.gov](mailto:nburns@westfordma.gov) to learn about the local unit and how to volunteer.

Web page for the Westford-based unit of the national MRC program: [www.UMVMRC.org](http://www.UMVMRC.org)



Health Department

#OurHearts

# February is American Heart Month

Love your heart. Learn more  
about keeping it healthy.



[Live to the Beat: Right Ways:](#) A one minute YouTube video on getting healthier.

[Facts About Hypertension / High Blood Pressure.](#) From the CDC.

[American Heart Association Heart Healthy Recipes](#)

### Town Clerk's Corner



Hello, my name is Laurie Shaw, I'm the new Town Clerk here in Westford. I had the privilege of having Patty Dubey show me around the town before she retired. Westford is beautiful. I look forward to meeting and working with all of you.

We have a busy year ahead with four elections and two, possibly three town meetings.

We will be scheduling early voting hours for three elections in 2024. The Presidential Primary, The State Election, and the Presidential Election.

**Early Voting Hours** for the Primary Election will be held at the Westford Police Station, 53 Main Street, in the EOC Room, Saturday, Feb 24<sup>th</sup>, 9am-3pm and Monday, Feb 26<sup>th</sup>-Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 9am-2pm.

<b>Presidential Primary -</b>	<b>Tuesday, March 5, 2024</b>
<b>Annual Town Meeting -</b>	<b>Saturday, March 23, 2024</b>
<b>Town Election -</b>	<b>Tuesday, May 7, 2024</b>
<b>State Primary -</b>	<b>Tuesday, September 3, 2024</b>
<b>Special Town Meeting -</b>	<b>October 2024</b>
<b>General Election -</b>	<b>Tuesday, November 5, 2025</b>

### Not registered as a voter in Westford yet?

It's easier than ever ... just go online! [www.sec.state.ma.us/](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/)



### When you register to vote, you may



- Register in a POLITICAL PARTY by selecting one of the listed parties (currently Democratic or Republican) OR
- Register in a political designation, OR
- Register with no party affiliation by selecting "NO PARTY (unenrolled)," which is commonly referred to as "independent" meaning that you do not have a party designation

If you do not enroll in a party (i.e., choose unenrolled or a political designation), you may still vote in state and presidential primaries by choosing a party ballot and will remain unenrolled.

If you enroll in one of the parties listed above, you may vote only in that party's primary. In a general election, all voters receive the same ballot regardless of party enrollment.

(Continued on next page)

Town Clerk's Corner (Continued)

**OPEN POSITIONS FOR LOCAL OFFICE IN 2024**

Never too early to be thinking about running for office. Nomination papers will be available January 2<sup>nd</sup>. The table below lists open seats for the May 7, 2024 Town Election. The deadline to file nomination papers bearing the signatures of at least 50 Westford voters is Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm.

Office	Number of Positions	Terms expiring for:	Length of term
Select Board	1	John H. Cunningham	3 years
Board of Health	1	Joanne E. Belanger	3 years
Housing Authority	1	Barbara Upperman	5 years
Housing Authority	1	Patricia Dubey	1 year
Library Trustees	2	Marianne C. Fleckner Deborah Teal	3 years
Planning Board	1	Michael Bonenfant	5 years
School Committee	3	Kathryn Clear Christopher P. Sanders Mingquan Zheng	3 years

You may apply for a "vote by mail" ballot (no excuse) or you may apply for an absentee ballot by noon on day before the election. Remember absentee ballots are only available for those who meet the criteria and are unable to vote at the polls on election day. Any ballots voted by either of these methods must be received by 8 pm on Election Day to be counted.

**Deadline to license your dog(s)**

Dogs must be licensed by March 31, 2024 to avoid the \$25.00 late fee. Spayed or neutered dogs are \$15.00. Non altered dogs are \$20.00. Dog licensing began December 1st.

**A reminder** - We have a drop box for ballots, dog license requests, census forms and any other items for the Town Clerk's Office. It is located at the back door to Town Hall on the sidewalk leading to the Police Station. Access is available 24 hours a day. The box is securely locked and tamperproof.



# Recycling Commission

## Post-Holiday Recycling Tips

Still cleaning out after the holidays? Here are some ways to recycle this year, and to keep in mind for next.



RECYCLE	REUSE	TRASH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Brown kraft wrapping paper</li> <li>✓ Cardboard boxes</li> <li>✓ Thin gift boxes</li> <li>✓ Wine and champagne bottles (no corks)</li> <li>✓ Paper greeting cards with no glitter, foil, metallic ink, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Bows and ribbons</li> <li>✓ Tissue paper</li> <li>✓ String/fairy lights*</li> <li>✓ Plastic garlands and wreaths*</li> <li>✓ Gift bags</li> <li>✓ Wrapping paper</li> </ul> <p><i>* Can also be donated.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decorations and wreaths</li> <li>• Wrapping paper</li> <li>• Confetti, shredded paper, tissue paper</li> <li>• Styrofoam (all kinds)</li> <li>• Tinsel</li> <li>• Cellophane</li> </ul>

## Tree Lights

Lights only last for so long, and then you're left wondering – what do I do now?

If you feel you can repair your broken lights, give that a try. Below is a video with instructions - [try this repair tip](#).

If you're unsuccessful in your repair attempt, you'll have to dispose of them in the trash. They are not accepted at Westford's "Electronics and More" collection, next scheduled for April 27<sup>th</sup> at the DPW Highway Garage.



## Gift Wrap

Americans trash an estimated 2.3 million pounds of wrapping paper each year, and over 38 million miles of ribbon.

This is an area where "re-use" is the best option. Why spend more \$ next year on more paper and ribbons? Gift bags can be saved and used for years and are easy to store.

Another tip – use craft paper for gift wrap. It's easily recycled, and you can write your "To/Froms" and messages to the giftees right on it!

If you ultimately need to toss these items, gift bags can go in the recycling bin as long as there is no metallic ink, foil or glitter on them, in which case, they go in the trash. Don't forget to cut those string handles off your gift bags before recycling!



All conventional wrapping paper, tissue paper, ribbon, and bows that are unusable go in the trash as well.

## Holiday Cards

An annual tradition for many, Americans purchase 1.6 billion holiday cards each year.

If you still have cards banging around from the holidays, they are recyclable unless there is metallic ink, foil or glitter on them, in which case, they go in the trash.

And next year, please consider buying cards made from recycled paper.

Each year the holidays cap off our year with fun, fellowship and festivity. By keeping some of these tips in mind, we can enjoy the season while making less of a negative impact on our environment.



## Cameron Senior Center

### *A Myriad of Cameron Offerings for Adults Aged 55+ Join us at 20 Pleasant Street!*

#### **Guided Meditation with Brittany**

Monday, January 22nd and Monday, February 12th at 11am

Join Brittany Nash, Community Health and Wellness Coordinator at the Westford Health Department for a 45-minute guided meditation once a month on the second Monday of each month. What a great way to start your week. Please call the front desk at 978.692.5523. FREE

#### **SPECIAL REPORT: FY25 BUDGET PRESENTATION & LUNCH**

Friday, January 26, 2024, at noon

Please join us at the Cameron to learn and ask questions about the FY25 Budget considerations. We will host special guests Tom Clay, Select Board Chair; Kristen Las, Town Manager; Christopher Chew, Ed. D, Superintendent; Dan O'Donnell, Finance Director and Valery Young, School Board Committee Member. Please RSVP at 978.692.5523 by January 23 and let us know your sandwich preference which includes: chicken salad, turkey and cheese, ham and cheese or vegetarian.

#### **Loving Our Bodies and Impacts Of Aging On Sexuality**

Wednesday, January 24, 2024, from 2-3 pm

What does aging mean for us as older adults? Many of us are critical about our bodies. And it affects us sexually. For all of us who have ever felt too fat, too short, too tall, too dark, too light, too ANYTHING – your body is beautiful. Join Dr. Jane Fleishman as we talk about loving our bodies as we age. She'll give practical tips, recommendations, and resources that can help you start loving your aging body today. Call 978.692.5523 to sign up.

#### **Join Us For Dinner With Donna**

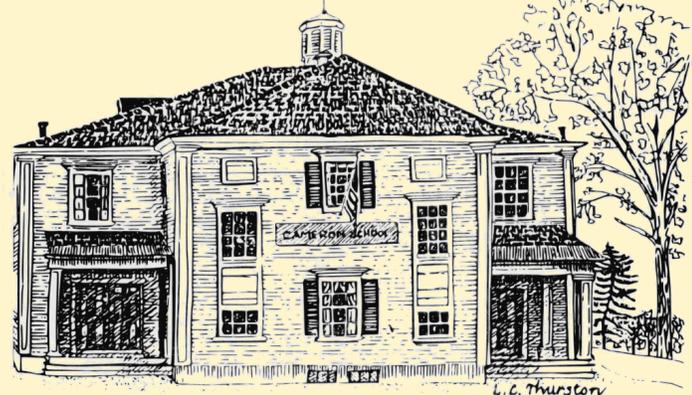
Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup> at 5:00PM

Donna will warm us up with her homemade tortellini soup one with turkey and the other with sausage, bread, and salad. Entertainment will be a **Classical Indian Dance Presentation**. Be sure to call and sign up quickly, dinner slots fill fast. 978-692-5523. We can accommodate **40 people for the meal and entertainment at \$10 each**, and another **30 people for just the entertainment at \$5 each**. Thank you to the Friends of the Cameron and the Food Pantry for subsidizing the costs for this event.



Food Pantry for

To learn more about the Cameron Senior Center programs and services please visit:  
[www.westfordma.gov/coa](http://www.westfordma.gov/coa),  
[www.facebook.com/CameronSeniorCenter/](https://www.facebook.com/CameronSeniorCenter/)  
Or please feel free to call us at 978-692-5523.



Westford Senior Center

## Cameron Senior Center (continued)

### Westford "A Spa For YOU" Here At The Cameron

MONDAYS—January 29th and February 26th 10 am—2 pm

For \$15.00, A Spa for you will perform one of the following services: 15 Minute Chair Massage, 15 Minute Express Facial, 15 Minute Pedicure, or 15 Minute Manicure. All Services provided by Licensed Tech. Payment in cash due at time of the service. Any questions call Eleanor at A Spa for You at 978.486.8900. Sign up for an appt at the front desk 978.692.5523.

### Valentine Luncheon

Friday, February 9th at 12 pm

Location: First Parish Church Fellowship Hall, 48 Main St.

Please join us for the seventh annual Valentine Luncheon with Mistress of Ceremony, Evie Moran and Vocalist, Judy Pancoast. Bring your sweetheart, spouse, your best friend, or anyone who makes you smile! Enjoy Chicken Marsala, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Caesar Salad, Rolls & Chocolate Truffle Cake Entertainment Highlight: Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter, Judy Pancoast, grew up in the seventies as the "number one fan" of the best-selling brother and sister duo, The Carpenters. She will perform "All My Best Memories: Built by The Carpenters". The show premiered at world-renowned cabaret club "Don't Tell Mama" in NYC and received rave reviews. This special event has been made possible by the following sponsors: Anonymous Center Donor, COA and Friends of the Cameron Board, River Court Residences – Groton, Westford Garden Club and Westford Rotary Club. Please call 978.692.5523 to sign up by January 29th! Cost: \$8 Friends Member, \$14 non-Friends Member

### Special Upcoming Trips :

**IRISH SPLENDOR** October 18-25, 2024 Join Collette Tours on an eight-day trip to Ireland. 9 Meals included. Day 1 is an overnight flight into Dublin. Day 2 Your own tour of Dublin and a local farm to table dinner. Day 3 Enjoy a lively and historical sightseeing tour of the Fair City of Dublin. Later an Optional Tour of the Guinness Storehouse followed by dinner and Irish Dancing. Day 4 Leaving Dublin and traveling to Killarney. Make a visit to Cashel and to Blarney Castle. Once in Killarney you will enjoy the beautiful landscapes and enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. Day 5 Enjoy the day at the Dingle Peninsula. Day 6 You will travel to Ennis and visit the Cliffs of Moher and an Optional Tour to a Medieval Banquet Dinner hosted in a castle. Day 7 Travel to Kingscourt, visit a Whiskey Distillery and stay in a castle. Day 8 Your tour comes to an end as to start your departure home. For more information email Katie at [krussell@westfordma.gov](mailto:krussell@westfordma.gov)

**TROPICAL COSTA RICA** March 7-15, 2025 Join Collette Tours on a 9-day trip to Costa Rica. 14 Meals included. Explore San Jose, a Coffee Plantation, the Arenal Volcano, a Cano Negro guided river boat tour viewing the 20,000 acres of indigenous wildlife, a family-owned farm or a classroom without borders, Lake Arenal, the world's largest butterfly garden, the Hanning Bridges or the longest canopy zip line tours, Guanacaste, the breath-taking fine sand beaches and Samara, one of the top sunset spots in Costa Rica. For more information email Katie at [krussell@westfordma.gov](mailto:krussell@westfordma.gov)

To view the complete Council On Aging Newsletter please visit our website:

[www.westfordma.gov/coa](http://www.westfordma.gov/coa) and click on [Newsletters](#).