



Town of Westford Massachusetts

Town Manager's Newsletter

March 2024



Kristen Las
Town
Manager

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www.westfordma.gov/tm
978-692-5500

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Annual Town Meeting
Westford Academy
Saturday, March 23, 2024
Check in Begins 8:00AM

Town Meeting Articles
and Guidelines
(See page 3)

Health and Wellness Fair
Saturday, April 6
10AM to 2PM
Stony Brook School
(See Page 13)



Watch
westford 
community access television
www.westfordcat.org

Dear Westford residents,

It appears that spring may have sprung, although I won't put all of my eggs in one basket. This time last year, we had a major snowstorm on our hands. We are right in the middle of March and our focus is on gearing up for town exterior construction projects and the Annual Town Meeting.

You should have received your Town Meeting postcard in the mail. We have enhanced our communication with residents around Town Meeting and have planned for a larger crowd at Westford Academy (WA) on March 23, 2024. For all the details, please visit our Town Meeting [website](#). Town meeting will begin at 9AM and registration begins at 8AM. When the WA parking lot is full, free transportation will be provided from the off-site parking lots at Robinson and Crisafulli schools. If you would like to use free transportation to and from Town Meeting from your home, please sign up through this [website](#) or call the Cameron Senior Center. If you would like to bring your children to Town Meeting and enroll them in free childcare, please register [here](#). Please note that registration closes for both on March 21st. The wifi at WA is limited, so please plan on downloading any documents you would like to use. We will not have a food truck on-site this year, but will be offering pizza for sale in the cafeteria for those who chose not to bring their own lunch. Please bring cash as we cannot accept electronic forms of payment (credit cards/venmo/etc.). The budgets under Articles 1-4 will be discussed close to 9AM. The zoning bylaws under Articles 17-18 will be discussed around 12:45PM.

More information on the budget can be found on the [budget website](#). An updated video has been prepared and can be viewed [here](#). The final approval of the town budget takes place at Town Meeting. 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.

I would like to thank residents who participated in the Zencity Community Survey to support the creation of the Town of Westford Strategic Plan. We will be receiving the data from that report in the coming month and look forward to sharing that with the public. The strategic plan is a forward-looking document to develop a vision and set the goals of the Town for years to come. The strategic plan will guide policy development, prioritize demands and opportunities, and generate an implementation plan to realize the defined vision. This important tool is developed through the lens of community visionaries with specific goals, targets, measures, milestones, and strategies. General information can be found on the [website](#). There will be more opportunities for engagement in the process in the late spring.

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

At their meeting on February 27, 2024, Captain Donald Pick was recognized for his retirement from the Police Department after 27 years of service. The Westford Academy Theatre Arts Department was also recognized for being selected as the only high school in New England to perform "Harry Potter and the Cursed Child" Broadway adaptation.

Select Board Member John Cunningham spoke about the MBTA Lunch and Learn which was held at the Cameron Senior Center on February 23, 2024. He reported that the meeting went very well.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Co-Chairs Joe Diamond and Anjali Rajput, as well as member Wendy Gloyd asked the Select Board to reconsider their recommendation on Article 22, regarding Indigenous People's Day. The Board voted not to reconsider their recommendation.

(Continued on next page)

WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

The Select Board reviewed the FY 25 Budget and override scenarios and recommended Scenario 1, which is a \$6.8 million override that will be under Article 1 at Town Meeting.

The Select Board also reviewed the Annual Town Meeting warrant articles, signed the warrant, and took positions on Articles 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 19, and 20.

Select Board Member Chris Barrett announced the Parks and Rec Commission approved a small rate increase on summer weekly programs and Select Board Chair Tom Clay announced that two potential Economic Development Consultants would be interviewed in the coming weeks.

On March 12, 2024, the Select Board approved the use of the Town Seal on literature advertising the "Acton-Westford Pride Event 2024" to be held at NARA Park in Action on June 15, 2024 from 12PM-3PM.

Kathryn Clear, Chair, and Matty Triccia, Vice-Chair, both of the Commission on Disability, requested the Select Board recognize Neurodiversity Week, which is March 18, 2024 to March 24, 2024. They gave a brief presentation on Neurodiversity awareness and what steps residents can take to encourage the neurodiverse population.

The Select Board discussed outreach and communication methods to inform residents on Annual Town Meeting and reviewed and took positions on Articles 17 and 18. The Select Board also approved placing the following ballot question on the May 7, 2024 Annual Town Election ballot:

Question 1: Shall the Town of Westford be allowed to assess an additional \$6,800,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of funding municipal and school operating expenses for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024?

Yes _____

No _____

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

Affordable Housing Trust

Board of Assessors

Bylaw Review Committee

Capital Planning Committee

Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee

Community Behavioral and Mental Health Committee

Community Preservation Committee

Cultural Council

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Dog Park Task Force

Economic Development Committee

Healthy Westford Committee

Historical Commission

MBTA Communities Multi-Family Housing

Northern Middlesex Stormwater Collaborative

Parks and Recreation Commission

Permanent Town Building Committee

Recycling Commission

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.

Sincerely,



Kristen Las, Town Manager

From the Moderator



ANNUAL TOWN MEETING IS MARCH 23 AT 9 AM AT WESTFORD ACADEMY - CHECK IN STARTS AT 8 AM

There are 22 Articles to be decided by the voters at our upcoming Annual Town Meeting. **These include the town budget and a Proposition 2 ½ override proposed to support it as well as a new zoning bylaw allowing for multifamily housing in compliance with state requirements.** The override and budget matters will be discussed and voted on first thing in the morning, beginning between 9 and 9:30 am. The MBTA multifamily housing proposal will be discussed and voted on after lunch, beginning at about 12:45 pm. A list of all topics to be deliberated follows, detail for each Motion proposed can be found here: [Motion Detail](#)

Article 1 - Requesting approval of a 2025 Budget which includes a Proposition 2 ½ Override

Article 2 - To establish an Override Stabilization Fund for override monies to be used in future years

Article 3 - To fund the Override Stabilization Fund

Article 4 - Requesting approval of a 2025 Budget with no override funds (if Art. 1 passes at TM, this must be done so that we have a balanced budget in place if the override does not pass at the ballot box)

FURTHER DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THESE FOUR BUDGET ARTICLES INCLUDING A SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON OF THE OVERRIDE AND NON-OVERRIDE BUDGETS CAN BE FOUND HERE: [Budget](#)

Article 5 - Accept Town Reports from various departments and committees

Article 6 - Approve 2024 Budget Supplemental Appropriations for 2024 bills from existing Free Cash

Article 7 - Appropriate for Perchlorate Expenses from existing Free Cash

Article 8 - Approve Capital Appropriations

Article 9 - Approve Construction of PFAS Treatment Plants to be paid from the Water Enterprise fund

Article 10 - Approve Community Preservation Committee Recommendations from existing CPA funds

Article 11 - Authorize Revolving Funds

Article 12 - Appropriate Chapter 90 Funds received from the state [received from the state](#)

Article 13 - Appropriate Funds from the Water Enterprise Other Post Employment Benefits Stabilization Fund to the Water Enterprise Budget (transfer between water accounts)

Article 14 - Accept Local Option to Reduce Residency for Disabled Veteran Real Property Exemptions

Article 15 - Authorize the Select Board to Accept Easements (general)

Article 16 - Authorize the Select Board to Accept Easements (Plain Road Sidewalk)

Article 17 - Update Floodplain Zoning Bylaw for participation in National Flood Insurance Program

SEE FURTHER INFO HERE: [FloodplainExplainer](#)

Article 18 - Authorize the MBTA Communities Multi-family Housing Overlay District Zoning Bylaw

SEE FURTHER INFO UNDER ARTICLE 18 HERE: [MBTAzoning](#)

Article 19 – To approve a bylaw regulating Solicitation and Canvassing Door-to-Door

Article 20 – To approve a Civil Fingerprinting Bylaw

Article 21 – To Authorize the Cemetery Commission and Select Board to Adopt and Amend Policies and Regulations for the Cemetery Commission

Article 22 - Citizen's Petition to declare the second Monday in October Columbus Day and Indigenous People's Day superseding the previous declaration that eliminated Columbus Day

Articles 5, 7, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16 and 21 are non-controversial and/or repeating Articles and will be on a Consent Agenda to be voted together. Voters will be given the opportunity to remove these Articles from the Consent Agenda if they wish to discuss or question any one of them.

(Continued on next page)

From the Moderator

Important information about the Meeting:

- Check in will begin at 8 am, an hour before the meeting starts, so arrive early!
- Parking is at WA and when that lot is full at Crisafulli and Robinson with continuous shuttle busses from the overflow locations to WA. Please carpool if you can. There will be 26 spaces in front of the voter entrance reserved for those with handicap parking permits. If you have mobility issues but don't have a handicap permit you should arrive early to get a spot close to the entrance or park at one of the overflow locations and take the COA shuttle bus to WA.
- Advocates will have specific places at which to hold signs, collect signatures and distribute leaflets OUTSIDE the building. For a map showing these designated locations check here: [TM Electioneering Map](#)
- Voters will first be checked in to the gym and when that location reaches capacity voters will be sent to the auditorium. Two-way audio/visual communication between these two locations has been installed and voters in both rooms will have clickers. Gym clickers will only work in the gym and PAC clickers will only work in the auditorium so you must stay in the room to which you have been assigned by the tellers.
- Non-voters must remain in Room 103 where the meeting will be remotely broadcast.

These improvements should make the Meeting proceed efficiently but please bear with us as there are bound to be some hiccups during this transition period. Once again free child care: [TM Childcare Signup](#) and free transportation: [TM Transportation Signup](#) will be available, you must sign up by March 21.

Not familiar with Town Meeting? Here are some guidelines for how things will work:

GENERAL

You must check in with the tellers and be assigned a voting clicker in order to participate in the meeting. On the back of each clicker is a blue square or a red circle. Blue clickers will only work in the gym. Red clickers will only work in the auditorium.

Clickers must be handed to a teller at the door if a voter leaves the building and will be reissued upon the voter's return. Do not forget to turn in your clicker at the boxes by the exit when you leave the Meeting for the day. If you accidentally leave with a clicker please return it to Town Hall after the Meeting.

All electronic devices should be silenced during Town Meeting.

Children are welcome and may sit with you in the audience as long as they don't disturb the proceedings.

Meeting Mentors are in the audience at the flags and are available to answer any procedural questions you may have which may also be asked at the microphone.

The articles on the Warrant constitute the agenda for the Meeting. No business may be brought before the Meeting unless it is covered by an article in the Warrant.

A motion must be on the floor before any discussion can take place. All motions must be seconded by a voter other than the person offering the main motion and only then can discussion and debate begin.

A Motions Booklet will be available at the Meeting which has the wording of the motions to be discussed and the recommendations of relevant town boards on each motion. During the Meeting many motions will be accompanied by presentations put forward by their proponents to facilitate understanding by the voters. Such presentations will be limited to six minutes.

(Continued on next page)

From the Moderator (continued)

During discussion and debate demonstrations of support or disapproval by voters (clapping or booing) generally are discouraged as an inefficient use of our precious time. Please express your approval or disapproval with your vote.

If, after warning from the Moderator, a person persists in disorderly behavior, the Moderator may order that person to withdraw from the meeting.

SPEAKING AT THE MEETING

Non-voters may not address the Meeting without a 2/3 vote of the Meeting allowing them to do so. Non-voters may never vote. Except for accompanied children or town employees and consultants, non-voters must remain in Room 103 to avoid confusion during discussion and voting.

To maintain order and fairness, persons wishing to speak at Town Meeting must be recognized by the Moderator. A voter seeks recognition by standing in an orderly manner at one of the microphones placed around the hall and waiting to be recognized by the Moderator.

After being recognized, a speaker should state their name and address or the board/committee they represent. Each speaker may speak for up to two minutes. A speaker may speak only to the motion before the Meeting at the moment. A speaker, once recognized, should make all of their points and ask all questions prior to any individual rising to respond.

All questions must be directed to the Moderator, who will delegate them as appropriate. Dialogue between two or more speakers is not permitted, nor is dialogue between a speaker and any individual answering a question posed by that speaker.

Speakers should not engage in personal speech or reference the character or motivation of another individual. Rude or disrespectful speech is discouraged and often has the effect of making others give less credence to the actual relevant points being raised by the speaker.

While all may speak on a motion more than once, no one should speak a second time until everyone who wishes to has spoken once.

Repetitive or redundant comments should be avoided and will be cut off by the Moderator.

MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

Motions to move the question and terminate discussion are not generally subject to debate. A motion to move the question requires a 2/3 vote for approval. At the Moderator's discretion, such a motion may be determined out of order, particularly if the Moderator believes the motion would restrict informed consideration of the Meeting or comes before sufficient discussion has taken place on the main motion.

A speaker may not address the Meeting and then finish their comments with a motion to terminate debate and move the question. Such a motion must be the only thing the speaker says on that trip to the microphone.

Any voter may propose an amendment changing or limiting the main motion which can be offered at any time during the course of debate. Simple amendments to a motion that change only a few words or numbers can be made verbally. All other amendments must be presented to the Moderator in writing after being stated at the microphone.

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From the Moderator

The party proposing an amendment shall concisely state the consequence of the amendment on the existing main motion or article being considered.

The Moderator may rule an amendment out of order if it is beyond the scope of the warrant article.

VOTING

Votes are taken by two methods – voice (“Ayes” and “Nays”), or a counted vote (using electronic vote tabulation) – and declared to be complete by the Moderator when results are announced. The Moderator will determine which of these methods to use in each instance in the interest of the efficient running of the meeting. Often, non-controversial issues will be decided by voice vote and all other matters will be decided using the clickers.

If the declaration of a voice vote is doubted, a request by at least seven voters, either rising or standing in place, will mandate the Moderator to request a counted vote using the clickers. The number of votes needed for a motion to pass (simple majority, two-thirds or other) will be noted by the Moderator at the time of the vote.

During voting and while votes are being counted voters must remain seated to ensure the accuracy of the vote.

More in response to your questions and requests:

- **PLEASE ARRIVE EARLY**
- **THERE WILL BE COFFEE IN THE AM AND PIZZA IN THE CAFETERIA FOR LUNCH – LIMITED CHOICES – YOU MAY ALSO BRING A BAG LUNCH**
- **LUNCH BREAK WILL BE 45 MINUTES – STAY ON SITE IF YOU CAN**
- **MOTIONS FOR RECONSIDERATION WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR ANY ARTICLE AFTER IT HAS GONE TO A FINAL VOTE UNLESS BASED ON A CLEAR TECHNICAL OR PROCEDURAL ERROR**
- **A 2/3 MAJORITY IS USUALLY REQUIRED FOR A ZONING BYLAW CHANGE BUT THE STATE STATUTE REQUIRING ZONING THAT ALLOWS MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING IS AN EXCEPTION TO THIS GENERAL RULE AND REQUIRES A SIMPLE MAJORITY ONLY (ARTICLE 18.)**

I hope to see you at the meeting - feel free to contact me directly if you have any questions at all. Remember, you may attend either part or all of the day. The more people who attend the better our decisions will be. Democracy works best when everyone participates.

See you soon!

Angela Harkness
Westford Town Moderator

March at the J.V. Fletcher Library

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



Virtual Job Search Help for 50 & Over -Resumes

– **Part 2: Wednesday, March 20, 9:30 -11:30 a.m.** The Massachusetts Library Collaborative's 50+ Job Seekers Group meets on biweekly the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, from 9:30am to 11:30, via Zoom. If you are unemployed and actively looking, underemployed, seeking a new career direction, re-entering the job market after a long employment gap, or recently retired and looking for your "Encore Career", this networking group program is perfect for you!

[Register Here](#)

Adult Felting: Thursday, March 21 at 6:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room. Do you love felting? Is it something you have wanted to try? Join us as we host Rachel Benson from The Fiber Web as she guides patrons through creating a felt owl! Beginners and advanced levels all accepted. [Register here.](#)

Lego Club: Saturday, March 24 from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. Families are invited to make Lego creations at the library using the library Legos (generously funded by the Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library). Parents and caregivers need to stay and play too – you can participate as long as you are old enough to not eat any Legos. Everyone helps clean up at the end and creations will stay on display in the Children's Room through the month. Free. No registration required.

Second Annual YA Tiny Art Show: Registration is open to take part in our **YA Tiny Art Show!** Submissions are open for art in any medium, as long as it is **smaller than your hand.** Westford residents in Grades 6-12 are welcome to register. Artists can pick up a **tiny canvas** from the library, or you can use any of their own materials to create a tiny sculpture, drawing, fiber art, or anything else! Artists must be **registered** to submit their art. **Submissions are due by March 25th.** A public, all-ages reception will be held for the artists on the evening of March 28th. [Register Here.](#)

Monday Mystery Book Club: Monday, March 25 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 *Cold, Cold, Bones* by Kathy Reichs. Print copies are available at Main Desk.

Sweet Reads MG Book Club: Tuesday, March 26th at 6:30 p.m. For Grade 6 and up. Join us in the Meeting Room to discuss some great books and enjoy on-theme desserts. Copies of each month's book are available at the Main Desk. At our March meeting we will discuss *A Duet For Home* and enjoy an on-theme dessert. Please e-mail jdymment@westfordma.gov if you have any questions. [Register here.](#)

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J.V. Fletcher Library (continued)

Story Times – Story times are held in the Meeting Room. All Story Times are Drop-In and scheduled Monday – Thursday. There are no story times during February and April school vacation weeks.

Mother Goose – Mondays 10:30 to 11:00 a.m. – for babies up and kids up to age 5

Book Bunch – Tuesdays 10:30 to 11:00 a.m. – for kids ages 2 to 5

Wiggle Words – Wednesdays 10:30 to 11:00 a.m. – for kids ages 2 to 4

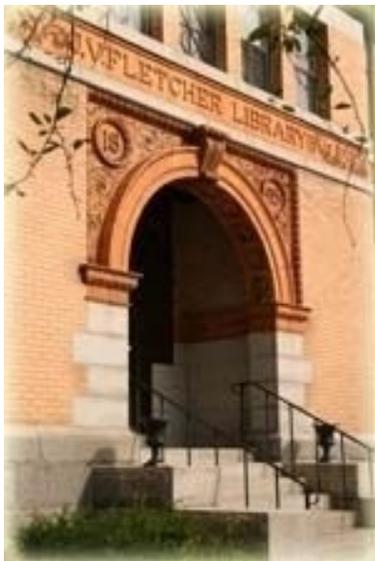
Stay and Play – Thursdays 10:30-11:30 a.m. – for babies and kids up to age 5

Mobile App Update - The MVLC (Merrimack Valley Library Consortium) Mobile App is back! If you already had the app, just download the update from the [IOS store](#) or from [Google Play](#) (the android version is now available). View your account record, search the catalog, save a digital copy of your card, and place holds! We hope to see links to our website and events calendar restored in future releases.



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.

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



These plants are blooming too early! March has come in like a lamb, [ushering out the warmest winter, and February, on record](#). In my yard, plant and animal behavior are at least a full month ahead of their historic schedules. **If you aren't a winter person, why should you care?** Because you need to eat. Both temperature and daylight are biological signals. Plants that bloom too early are subject to killing frosts, as was the case last year with the loss of the New England peach harvest. In addition, plants and animals who respond to confused weather and daylight signaling may not emerge (or arrive, if migrating) at the same time as their food supply or pollinators, resulting in failed reproduction and starvation. This can have unpredictable effects on the food web, and when repeated annually, can result in extinction. **A changing**

climate that challenges the current ecosystem means less, and more expensive, food, not just here, but around the globe, while new ecosystem and human adaptations become established. Breadbaskets and planting zones are moving North and up (altitude), with far reaching economic and geopolitical consequences. Most commodity markets, farmers and agribusiness are starting to understand and react to the global impacts of climate change on agriculture and famine. Many consumers, who have an outsize influence on natural and human systems through their lifestyle choices, and are subject to the outcomes of those choices, are learning and responding more slowly. For more information on climate change and human health, [watch this presentation on the Health Impacts of Climate Change](#) offered by the Health Department last month. Go ahead and shed your jacket and savor an early spring lift/fever, but don't rejoice. **Act! Take another step to reduce your carbon footprint today!**



✓ **VOTE! At [Annual Town Meeting, March 23rd](#)**

- **Article 1**, is the override budget. This decision will impact town services, including **sustainability**.
- **Article 18**, [the MBTA Communities Multi-Housing Overlay District Zoning By-law, will be discussed](#). The climate case for this initiative may be found [here](#). Westford staff have been very intentional about including as many incentives for sustainable development as possible in this by-law.
- **Article 9** would approve the construction of **PFAS treatment plants**, necessary to **remove these "forever" chemicals** that are harmful to human health.
- The warrant includes **electric vehicle purchases** in line with our climate roadmap goals.

✓ **Join the [Westford Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee](#), the [Westford Recycling Commission](#) or [Westford Climate Action](#)**. Join a meeting to learn more or fill out a [Citizen Activity Form](#) to express your interest. Reach out if you have any questions about these groups doing great work in Westford.

✓ **Learn and Celebrate the Green – See the [Sustainability Calendar](#) for opportunities in celebration of spring and Earth Month, including:**

- Walking our public lands with the Westford Conservation Trust
- Exploring environmental health at the Public Health Fair
- Evaluating electric vehicles with your neighbors and Westford Climate Action
- Gazing at the stars with the Amateur Telescope Makers of Boston
- Moving to Zero Waste with events offered by the Westford Recycling Commission
- Reading about climate with the JV Fletcher Library
- Exploring how to make your property into a "Homegrown National Park" or a Pollinator Preservation Garden

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Sustainability (Continued)

✓ Stay Current and Connected

- Check out the [Sustainability Website](#) for more information on how to electrify your home
- **Municipal Grant and Rebate update**
 - DOER and the Green Communities Program awarded Westford **\$97,530** to fund **weatherization work (insulation and air sealing) at Westford Academy and Rita Miller Elementary School this summer**. In total, **\$206,360** of work will be performed at no cost to the town with approved rebate applications from National Grid making up the balance.
 - DOER awarded Westford a **\$13,900** Municipal Energy Technical Assistance grant to support **owners agent services, including solar contracting**, for an energy savings performance contract.
 - National Grid approved rebate applications for all identified outstanding **weatherization work at 10 municipal buildings (including 4 additional schools)** as part of the generous 2023 incentive program, providing up to **75% of the cost of materials and labor** for work performed by November, in advance of the heating season.
- **Westford Pop Update**
 - From February 2021-November 2023, **Westford Pop saved residents \$12,568,422** as compared to National Grid Basic Service, **and the program purchased 26,943 MWh of renewable energy, avoiding the production of 6,587 metric tons of carbon dioxide**.
 - **Customer Tax information for 2023** Look for an email and postcard from the Green Energy Consumer's Alliance providing guidance on how to deduct your clean energy purchase or scroll down [this page](#) to find the form to request a tax receipt.
 - **Pop Gold and Pop Silver customers** who had re-enrollment issues with the contract rollover in December will be receiving an explanatory letter via US Mail followed by **a check for the amount they are owed** for the time they were erroneously bumped to National Grid Basic Service.
- **Bootstrap Compost Update** Since beginning our MOU with Bootstrap compost in November, total enrollment has grown to 106 by the end of February. We need 120 households to get the additional \$1 discount! More importantly, during the three month period from December through January, Bootstrap Compost customers diverted just under 7 tons of compostables from the trash. **To learn more and sign up for the program [click here](#)**. Or learn to compost at home with the Westford Recycling Commission [here](#).
- [Review this great presentation](#) about how to perform solar siting and preserve the environmental services, including carbon sequestration, performed by MA forests. We need both solar and forests to reach net zero by 2050.

Celebrate Sustainably:

- Avoid single use items: Carry reusable straws, utensils and washable containers for leftovers.
- Skip décor that won't stand the test of time.
- Just say no to plastic novelties and throw away basket fillers – show your love with something that lasts or make memories and take photos. Size your container to the stuff, not the stuff to the container.
- Purchase clothing and gifts made from natural materials.
- Shop local.
- Plan to minimize food waste.

Community Wellness

SULLIVAN'S MESSAGE

★ LOVE. LOSS. HOPE. PURPOSE. ★

THIS PRESENTATION ON SUBSTANCE USE AND AWARENESS WILL BE OFFERED AT WESTFORD ACADEMY AND IS OPEN TO ALL. THROUGH TAYLOR'S MESSAGE, KATHI SULLIVAN IS ABLE TO HELP STUDENTS AND PARENTS/CAREGIVERS SEE THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING GOOD CHOICES IN LIFE SURROUNDING ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND COPING WITH ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO RSVP CLICK [HERE!](#)

WESTFORD ACADEMY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
★★★ WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024 AT 6:30PM ★★★

Health Department



WESTFORD HEALTH DEPARTMENT hosted Tevin Wooten, Emmy Award Winning Weather Reporter “First Alert Meteorologist” of NBC10 TV BOSTON on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at the Stony Brook Auditorium on **“THE HEALTH IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE.”** Tevin gave a very informative presentation on the science of climate change, and we thank him for coming out to Westford to share his knowledge with us. Westford CAT videotaped his presentation, so please check it out.



Pictured with Gail Johnson, BSN, RN, Public Health Nurse and Brittany Nash, B.S., Regional Community Health & Wellness Coordinator

[VIDEO: Health Department hosts 'The Health Impacts of Climate Change' - WestfordCAT](#)

Health Department (Continued)

A colorful poster for the Westford Health & Wellness Fair. The background is light blue with white clouds and white flowers. At the top, a yellow banner with orange borders contains the text 'WESTFORD HEALTH & WELLNESS FAIR'. Below the banner, it says 'Presented by the Westford Health Department'. The date and time 'April 6th, 2024 10-2PM' are in a large red font. The location 'STONY BROOK SCHOOL 9 FARMER WAY WESTFORD, MA 01886' is in a smaller teal font. A red ribbon at the bottom of the cloud says 'FREE ENTRY'. Below this, it says 'JOIN US FOR LOTS OF FUN!' followed by a list of activities: 'Free handouts, sample items, and raffles', 'Health education information', 'Blood pressure checks', 'Petting zoo \$5 per child', 'Touch a truck', and 'Teddy bear clinic (bring your favorite stuffed animal for a check-up by our medical volunteers) and much more!'. In the bottom left corner, there is a logo for the Westford Health Department with the text 'Public Health Prevent. Promote. Protect. Westford Health Department'. At the bottom of the poster, an orange banner says 'This event will take place rain or shine! (This event is mainly located inside the gym)'. The website 'WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV' is at the bottom right.

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Westford Health
Department

**This event will take place rain or shine!
(This event is mainly located inside the gym)**

Health Department (Continued)

Emergency Preparedness Training for People with Disabilities

The Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD), in partnership with the **Westford Health Department** cordially invites you to a training presentation on emergency preparedness for people with disabilities. This training will bring together people with disabilities and emergency preparedness professionals.

This meeting will be held on **Tuesday March 19, 2024 at 1:00pm-2:30pm at the Westford Council on Aging, 20 Pleasant St, Westford, MA 01886**. The purpose of the meeting is to explore ensuring people with disabilities have the assistance and resources they need in times of emergency. Possible scenarios discussed include:

- An ice storm leaves the region without electricity.
- Fire in an industrial plant forces evacuation of surrounding communities.
- A train jumps the tracks, releasing a cloud of toxic chemicals.

Communities across the Commonwealth are planning for emergency situations like these: some are natural, and others are man-made. Some emergencies require evacuation while others require sheltering at home.

Members of the disability community will learn about the emergency response resources and procedures within their local communities and the steps that can be taken to personally prepare for emergency situations. **Persons with disabilities will also receive an "Emergency Go Pack" with essential items that might be needed during an emergency. First Responders in attendance will receive "[Tips for First Responders, 5th edition](#)."**

If you would like to attend, please **register** by contacting Brittany Nash by **Monday March 18, 2024** at bnash@westfordma.gov or calling her at (978)399-2564.

Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. In order to make requests, please contact Aimee Ott by phone at (857)283-2596 or by email at aimee.ott@mass.gov no later than **March 12, 2024**.

**Be Prepared and Informed
Incase of an Emergency**

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





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 BENEIFICAL?

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: April 29th and 30th
 you must attend both sessions
Time: 10:00AM-1:00PM
Location: J.V. Fletcher Library, Meeting Room, 50 Main St. Westford, MA 01886



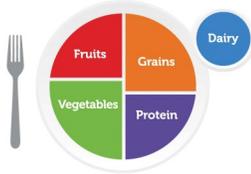
NEPHA
NORTH EAST PUBLIC HEALTH ALLIANCE



Interested in attending?
 Please contact Brittany Nash for registration!
 bnash@westfordma.gov

Health Department (Continued)

Start simple
with MyPlate



Be Salt Smart

Healthy eating is important at every age. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding what to eat or drink, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:



Read the label

The **Nutrition Facts label** shows you how much sodium is in packaged foods. Choose lower sodium foods—especially if you have high blood pressure, diabetes, or kidney disease.



Eat fruits and veggies

Enjoy a variety of fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables—almost all of them are naturally low in sodium. Look for canned vegetables labeled “no added salt.”



Look for cue words

Items that are “pickled,” “brined,” or “cured” tend to be high in sodium. Include these foods in your meals sparingly.



Put together meals at home

Making your own meals gives you more control over the salt you eat. Taste your food before adding salt from the shaker.



Go easy on the sauce

Be mindful of how much sauce, gravy, salsa, ketchup, soy sauce, marinade, or dressing you’re using. The sodium from these can add up quickly.



Spice it up

Flavor your foods with fresh or dried herbs and spices instead of salt. Pick spice blends that do not list salt or sodium on the ingredients list.



Go to MyPlate.gov for more information. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

**The benefits of healthy eating
add up over time, bite by bite.**

FNS-905-10
March 2022

Health Department - USDA Dietary Guidelines

The Guidelines

Make every bite count
with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. Here's how:

Follow a healthy dietary pattern at every life stage.



1



Customize and enjoy nutrient-dense food and beverage choices to reflect personal preferences, cultural traditions, and budgetary considerations.

Limit foods and beverages higher in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium, and limit alcoholic beverages.



4



2



3



Focus on meeting food group needs with nutrient-dense foods and beverages, and stay within calorie limits.

(Continued on next page)

Health Department - USDA Dietary Guidelines (Continued)

Key Recommendations



Follow a healthy dietary pattern at every life stage.

At every life stage—infancy, toddlerhood, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, pregnancy, lactation, and older adulthood—it is never too early or too late to eat healthfully.

- **For about the first 6 months of life**, exclusively feed infants human milk. Continue to feed infants human milk through at least the first year of life, and longer if desired. Feed infants iron-fortified infant formula during the first year of life when human milk is unavailable. Provide infants with supplemental vitamin D beginning soon after birth.
- **At about 6 months**, introduce infants to nutrient-dense complementary foods. Introduce infants to potentially allergenic foods along with other complementary foods. Encourage infants and toddlers to consume a variety of foods from all food groups. Include foods rich in iron and zinc, particularly for infants fed human milk.
- **From 12 months through older adulthood**, follow a healthy dietary pattern across the lifespan to meet nutrient needs, help achieve a healthy body weight, and reduce the risk of chronic disease.



Customize and enjoy nutrient-dense food and beverage choices to reflect personal preferences, cultural traditions, and budgetary considerations.

A healthy dietary pattern can benefit all individuals regardless of age, race, or ethnicity, or current health status. The *Dietary Guidelines* provides a framework intended to be customized to individual needs and preferences, as well as the foodways of the diverse cultures in the United States.



Focus on meeting food group needs with nutrient-dense foods and beverages, and stay within calorie limits.

An underlying premise of the *Dietary Guidelines* is that nutritional needs should be met primarily from foods and beverages—specifically, nutrient-dense foods and beverages. Nutrient-dense foods provide vitamins, minerals, and other health-promoting components and have no or little added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. A healthy dietary pattern consists of nutrient-dense

forms of foods and beverages across all food groups, in recommended amounts, and within calorie limits.

The core elements that make up a healthy dietary pattern include:

- Vegetables of all types—dark green; red and orange; beans, peas, and lentils; starchy; and other vegetables
- Fruits, especially whole fruit
- Grains, at least half of which are whole grain
- Dairy, including fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese, and/or lactose-free versions and fortified soy beverages and yogurt as alternatives
- Protein foods, including lean meats, poultry, and eggs; seafood; beans, peas, and lentils; and nuts, seeds, and soy products
- Oils, including vegetable oils and oils in food, such as seafood and nuts



Limit foods and beverages higher in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium, and limit alcoholic beverages.

At every life stage, meeting food group recommendations—even with nutrient-dense choices—requires most of a person's daily calorie needs and sodium limits. A healthy dietary pattern doesn't have much room for extra added sugars, saturated fat, or sodium—or for alcoholic beverages. A small amount of added sugars, saturated fat, or sodium can be added to nutrient-dense foods and beverages to help meet food group recommendations, but foods and beverages high in these components should be limited. **Limits are:**

- **Added sugars**—Less than 10 percent of calories per day starting at age 2. Avoid foods and beverages with added sugars for those younger than age 2.
- **Saturated fat**—Less than 10 percent of calories per day starting at age 2.
- **Sodium**—Less than 2,300 milligrams per day—and even less for children younger than age 14.
- **Alcoholic beverages**—Adults of legal drinking age can choose not to drink or to drink in moderation by limiting intake to 2 drinks or less in a day for men and 1 drink or less in a day for women, when alcohol is consumed. Drinking less is better for health than drinking more. There are some adults who should not drink alcohol, such as women who are pregnant.

Westford Recreation

Westford Recreation After School Program (WPC)

WPC is safety focused, with cool activities and scheduling flexibility like no other program. Conveniently located at Abbot, Crisafulli, Day, Miller, Nabnasset, and Robinson schools. Program runs Monday-Friday, from school dismissal to 6:00 p.m. Visit [About WPC - westfordma.myrec.com](http://westfordma.myrec.com).

Rec's Special Programs, grades K-8

Wednesday, April 10, Eid al-Fitr Observed

Join us for a visit to the [NEW ENGLAND AQUARIUM](http://www.newenglandaquarium.com). Program runs 9am-3pm, with early arrival and extended day options. Enrollment is open to surrounding communities as well. Visit [Special Programs - westfordma.myrec.com](http://westfordma.myrec.com).

Rec's Seasonal Programs

March 20, sign up now: CPR, instructed by EMT, ER, RN, Mike Votano.
Starting in April: Soccer Shots, Marcus Lewis Tennis, and Nitehawks Track and Field. SUMMER radar up? Check out Prime and JR. Impact Speed & Agility, Brazilian Youth Soccer, Fast Skills Football, and more. Visit [Programs - westfordma.myrec.com](http://westfordma.myrec.com).

Rec's Summer Weekly Programs

Think Kids. Think Summer! Swimming, Arts & Crafts, Sports & Games, Wingersheek, Canobie Lake Park, and more. Enjoy nine weeks of flexible full-week programs with early arrival and extended day options:
Kids Club, Destination Exploration and Summer Beach Party at D.E.
Visit [Summer Weekly Programs - westfordma.myrec.com](http://westfordma.myrec.com).

Annual Town Meeting Childcare

Enjoy free childcare at the Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, March 23, 2024. **Register by Thursday, March 21. NO Drop-ins.**
Visit [Annual Town Meeting Childcare - westfordma.myrec.com](http://westfordma.myrec.com)

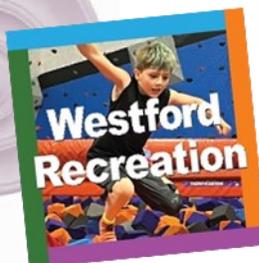
Information Presentation Wednesday, March 27, 7-8pm

Give your child the gift of travel.

Athens, Acropolis, Delphi!

Chaperoned by current Westford teachers.
Presentation will be held at 65 Main, 3rd floor.
Please REGISTER at westfordma.myrec.com.

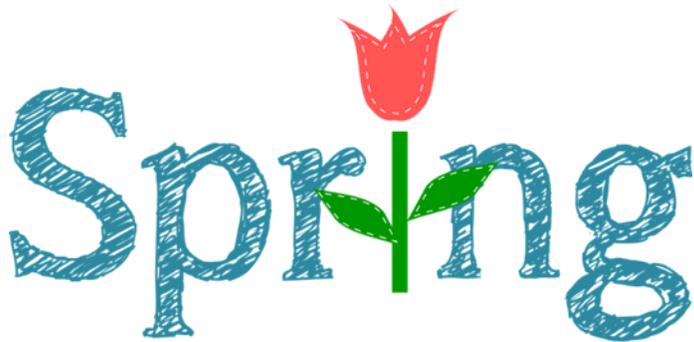
Grades 7,8,9 GREECE TRIP 2025



*More eye-opening programming at Westford Recreation!
Recent program pics at Recreation's After School Programs
at Abbot and Robinson Schools.*

VISIT SOON: 65 Main Street, 3rd Floor, Westford, MA
978-692-5523 | westfordma.myrec.com

Recycling Commission



Mark your calendar now for these upcoming Special Collection events!

Brush Chipping

Saturday, April 20th 10:30 am - 4:30 pm. \$10/load
At the Highway Garage, 28 North Street.

Zero Waste Day - Saturday, April 27th 9 am - 1 pm.
Several collections/several locations...

Electronics & More

April 27th at the Highway Garage, 28 North Street
Computers, monitors, and most other electronic devices and equipment, appliances of all sizes, and scrap metal.

Additional Zero Waste Collections

Blanchard Middle School, 14 West St., also April 27th, from 9 am - 1 pm
Donations of usable furniture, small appliances, household goods, toys and games, clothing, office and school supplies (with some exceptions), small musical instruments. textiles for recycling.

Drop off Container

Old Water Department on Forge Village Rd.
For donating books and media, VHS tapes, cassette tapes, older textbooks, full sets of encyclopedias, and any book in fair but still usable condition. Note that this book container is available 24/7.

Household Hazardous Waste

Saturday, May 4th 9 am - 1 pm
At the Highway Garage, 28 North Street.
Fees will apply. Check our recycling website for details on accepted items, to be posted soon.

Visit www.westfordma.gov/recycling now, and for further details
as we approach these collection events.

Cameron Senior Center



To The Cameron for new adult programs, services and more...

WOMEN'S BREAKFAST

Friday, March 20th at 9 am

Gather with good company for a tasty meal and lively conversation!

Topic: Estate Planning lecture living trusts /avoiding probate court/ protecting your assets; and much more with Gerald I. Shyavitz Esq.

RSVP to 978 692 5523 Cost- \$4.00



SIT WITH THE STATE SENATOR STAFF MEMBER

Thursdays March 21st and April 18th at 1:30 - 3:00 pm

The Cameron is glad to offer office hours with a representative from the office of Senator John J. Cronin, Democrat, on the third Thursday of

each month. Feel free to speak about concerns, ask questions or just introduce yourself. Senator Cronin represents Worcester & Middlesex County.

PLANNING FOR MEDICARE: COUNTDOWN TO 65

March 26th, 5:00 pm

Lisa Farnham of BC/BS (Blue Cross / Blue Shield) will be here to discuss how and when to sign up for Medicare. She will answer your questions and help you through this critical process. Please R.S.V.P.

NEWEST TRENDS IN REAL ESTATE!

Tuesday, March 26 at 12 pm

Come to a presentation from Kathy Cunningham of Coldwell Banker to hear the latest in Market Trends, styles, strategies for making a move. There will be prizes and a light lunch! Call to register.978.692.5523

DEMENTIA CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP - 3/26 & 4/23 6 PM

Joanne Fontaine RN and Lisa Sobhian LICSW have been co-facilitating a support group for many years with the Alzheimer's Association. Joanne is a Geriatric Care Manager, owner of Pro-Active Eldercare. Lisa is an Alzheimer's Specialist and is currently the Director of Dementia Services and Social Services at D'Youville Life & Wellness Community. The group will meet at Cameron on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 6-7PM. Please call Lisa before attending your first meeting at 978.808.4246.

RESTAURANT REVIEW—Wednesdays 3/27 & 4/24 at 11:30 am

Be sure to mark your calendars for our next outings on Wednesday, March 27th at Mario's 223 Groton Rd, Westford and Wednesday, April 24th at Elegant Chef, Nashoba Tech School, 100 Littleton Rd, Westford. Please pre-register at 978-692-5523 so we can call the restaurant with a head count for adequate seating. When you arrive you can check in under "Westford Senior Center". Bon Appétit.

(Continued on next page)

Cameron Senior Center (continued)

CARING FOR THE CAREGIVER WEBINAR:

TOPIC: Programs that May Assist Families with Medicare Costs DATE: Thursday, March 28th. Executive Office of Elder Affairs is hosting a webinar which will focus on programs that may assist families with Medicare costs, including federal, state, and other programs for which Medicare beneficiaries may be eligible.

You can register on this website: <https://zoom.us/webinarregister>



PROPERTY TAX WORK PROGRAM: Deadline for applications: May, 24, 2024

Many folks are concerned about the increase in property taxes in our area. Property Tax Work Off allows for work in a Town Department in exchange for a reduction in your property taxes. The program is for seniors age 60+ and Veterans age 18+ who own and occupy their homes and pay taxes to the town. The maximum benefit is \$1500 minus a few federally mandated deductions. This equates to about 100 hours of work anytime between July 1st 2024 and March 15th of 2025. If you are interested, pick up an application and information packet at the Senior Center front desk and submit to Alison Christopher. If there are more applicants than slots in the program, we will hold a lottery in May with new participants given priority. You will be notified in June if you are able to participate.

Call Alison to learn more about these options at 978-399-2325.

AN AFTERNOON WITH THE "BEE WHISPERER"

Wednesday April 10 at 2:00 pm

With Special Guest Ken Warchol

Join us for this special program welcoming Ken Warchol, a Massachusetts state Bee Inspector, who will share his heartwarming and engaging presentation on the honeybee. Ken Warchol is a 6th generation caretaker of bees. Ken's program "The Role of the Honeybee in Our Environment" brings you inside a beehive to better understand the mysterious social insect, challenges it faces, and the role it plays in humanity's survival. Ken also brings samples of a variety of his honey to taste. Door prizes and refreshments promise this will BEE a program you won't want to miss!

This **FREE PROGRAM** is sponsored by the **Westford Women's Club**.

Please call the Cameron at 978-692-5523 to sign up.

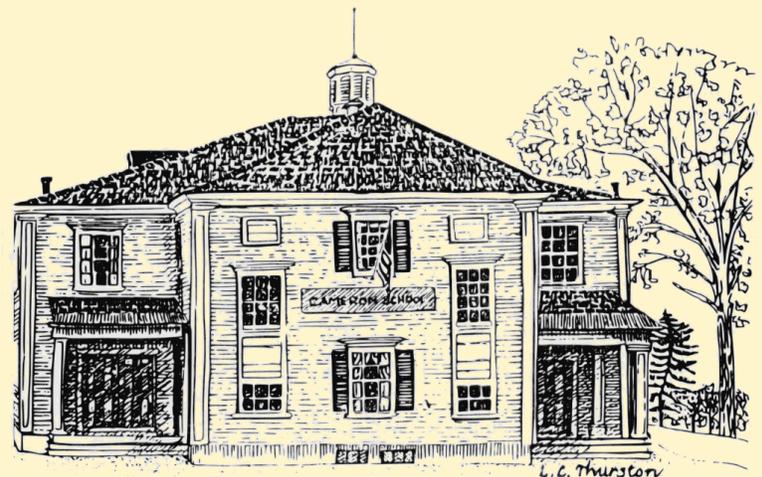


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To learn more about the Cameron Senior Center programs and services please visit: www.westfordma.gov/coa, www.facebook.com/CameronSeniorCenter/ Or please feel free to call us at 978-692-5523.

If you prefer to drop by we are located in Forge Village at 20 Pleasant Street.

To view the complete Council On Aging Newsletter please visit our website: www.westfordma.gov/coa and click on Newsletters.



Westford Senior Center

Cameron Senior Center (continued)

THE "BEAT GENERATION"

A Cultural Review of the 1950s Through Music
Wednesday April 3rd at 12pm Cost \$5.00

Please Join us for this 1950s Multi-Media Event and Lunch. The music reflected the times, and we pay tribute in this presentation to many of the greats: Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly, Jerry Lee Lewis, Ray Charles, Little Richard, James Brown, Fats Domino, Pat Boone, and others. The presenter is Fran Hart, founding member of the Beatles tribute band 4EverFab. The presentation is family-friendly and suitable for all ages. **This program is supported in part by a grant from the Westford Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.** Sign up online or at 978-692-5523.



VET 2 VET

Tuesday, April 9th at 11 am

Are you a Veteran who has questions and would like to talk to another Veteran? Just give the Cameron a call at 978.692.5523 and sign-up for a one-on-one appointment with **Terry Stader**, Westford's retired veteran's agent and Westford resident.



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION BRUNCH

Sponsors: Executive Office of Elder Affairs Formula Grant, RiverCourt Residences, and Muffins on Main

Wednesday, April 17th at 11 am

We are honored to celebrate our volunteers!

The Cameron wouldn't be nearly as successful without the generous gift and YOU.

Please RSVP to 978-692-5523 and don't forget to tell the front desk your volunteer task(s).

L.I.H.E.A.P. * Heating Assistance Nearing Deadline *

We are approaching the end of the Fuel Assistance application season! If you have noticed your National Grid or oil bills stacking up this winter, the **last day to apply for help with payment is April 30th, 2024.**

The Massachusetts' home energy assistance program (LIHEAP) is a free resource to help eligible households pay a portion of winter heating bills. No matter what type of heating source you have, LIHEAP may be able to help you pay your winter heating bills. All Massachusetts residents are encouraged to explore eligibility for this free program and apply for assistance. You can apply directly through the Community Teamwork website www.commteam.org/program/low-income-home-energy-assistance-liheap/ or call Alison, Annette, and Jen B. at the Cameron- 978-692-5523 for assistance.

Income Eligibility:

Household income cannot exceed 60% of Massachusetts' estimated State Median Income (for example in 2024, \$59,359 for a family of 2 and \$87,294 for a family of four. Other than income is others factors involved in eligibility.

To learn more about the Cameron please visit our website at www.westfordma.gov/coa, https://www.facebook.com/Cameron_Senior_Center/ or simply call us t 978-692-5523 and schedule a time to schedule a tour and speak with a staff member.

Westford Public Schools

ATM...an update! WPS 3-1-24

At this time of year, we tend to see the acronym ATM in many places as we prepare for our Annual Town Meeting. This year it is scheduled for Saturday March 23, 2024 at Westford Academy starting at 9:00 am. More information regarding logistics, the timeline of the day, as well as the articles on the warrant can be found on this webpage: <https://www.westfordma.gov/393/Town-Meeting> The Recreation Department will once again be providing childcare for families who register in advance using this link: [TM Childcare Signup](#)

Leading up to this year's ATM, along with Town Manager Kristen Las and members of the School Committee and Select Board, we have been holding a number of different Road Show events to provide information and answer questions regarding the upcoming FY25 budget. Our final event on that tour is an [Open Forum](#) this Monday night March 4, 2024 at the Millenium Building starting at 7:00 pm. This will be a hybrid event with the ability to participate via Zoom, as well. To attend virtually, please register here: https://westfordma.gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8Knl7y-7Ssu1DFXfv6puKw

During this forum, we will be sharing the most recent updates to the FY25 budget requests and discussing the impacts of both scenarios: one budget that remains within the constraints of Proposition 2 ½ and one budget that would require an override. Additionally, the presentation provides context for the impacts that the final FY25 budget decision could have on FY26, FY27 and FY28. As a reminder, the overall town budget is determined by the voters each year. Last Monday night, the School Committee approved a lower budget request amount that would still require an override but recognizes additional cost reductions from the initial budget request determined earlier. The new slides from that meeting with the updated amount and potential impacts can be accessed here: [New Slides for Updated FY25 Budget Proposal 2 26 2024.pdf](#)

Finally, this month from March 18th - 24th, Westford Public Schools will once again be participating in [Neurodiversity Celebration Week](#). As a community, this celebration is intended to build awareness and appreciation of all neurodiverse individuals. Each of our schools will be conducting age appropriate events and or activities such as exploring specific literature or read-alouds, introducing learners to famous neurodiverse individuals, and or sharing fun facts and information through special announcements and events. It was a wonderfully successful week last year and we are looking forward to it again. Many of our classrooms already include curriculum throughout the year that helps to highlight the importance of building this awareness and we are excited as a community to bring this dedicated focus to everyone's attention during a unified week of celebration.

Sincerely,

Chris

Christopher Chew, Ed. D
Superintendent
Westford Public Schools





APRIL 2024 EARTH MONTH EVENTS

Westford Climate Action is hosting many events and presentations in Westford throughout Earth Month this year – April 1-30. We hope you will join us! For more details and the full list, please visit our website westfordclimateaction.org

Every Saturday in April, Westford Conservation Trust Walks

No registration is required for these walks and all walks will run rain or shine. Well-behaved dogs on leash are welcome. For more information about these walks, call the walk leader for each walk you are interested in, or call Marian Harman at 978-692-3907. For maps and descriptions of these areas, check out the Trust's website at westfordconservationtrust.org

Saturday, April 6, 9-10:30 a.m. A Walk at O'Brien Farm

Join Gerry DiBello for a walk at the historic O'Brien farmstead on Vose Road. O'Brien Farm has been permanently preserved by owner Charlie McCullough. The trail leads through woods and fields, by a pond and wetlands, where birds abound. Walking is mostly flat and easy. Meet Gerry at the parking lot on Vose Road across from Steeplechase Circle. For more information, call Gerry at: 978-692-9137

Saturday, April 13, 9-10:30 a.m. A Walk on the Emmet Land

This walk will be led by premier birder Len Palmer. The Emmet Land is a conservation area of several hundred acres of woods and streams and surrounds a large pond. and one of the best birding areas in Westford. The area is hilly and rocky; wear sturdy hiking shoes. Meet Len at the parking area near the end of Texas Rd. For more information, call Len at: 978-392-9876

Saturday, April 20, 9-10:30 a.m. A Walk at Greystone Pond

Westford Conservation Trust President, Rich Strazdas, will lead a walk around Greystone Pond and its associated trails. This is a good birding area in the spring. The area is fairly flat but may be muddy in places. Meet Rich at the parking lot for the Greystone Recreation Area. There is a sign on Russell's Way for the driveway to the parking lot. For more information, call Rich at 508-340-8775.

Saturday, April 27, 9-10:30 a.m. The Stone Arch Bridge

Join Bill Harman for a walk to the Stone Arch Bridge, one of the largest and oldest railroad bridges built entirely of huge granite blocks without mortar. The bridge spans Stony Brook and is one of Westford's most important historic sights. There is a large beaver dam here, and numerous waterfowl. The trail is mostly flat and easy to walk. Meet Bill at the park. For more information call Bill: 603-533-0325.

Neighbor to Neighbor Electric Vehicles 101

April 11: Are you curious about getting an electric car, but not sure where to start? Attend our in-person (Millenium School) and online **Electric Vehicles 101 hybrid webinar** on Thursday, April 11 at 7 PM to learn the basics. We will cover environmental benefits, cost savings, and charging and purchase incentives. At the end of the presentation, panelists, who are all Westford EV owners, will discuss a wide variety of topics including making the switch to electric cars, range anxiety, road trips, charging, and more! Get your questions answered in person or online.

April 13: Come to the Abbot School parking lot from 9 AM-2 PM where we will have several **models of Electric Vehicles available** for you to see and talk with their owners.



(Continued on next page)

Westford Climate Action (Continued)

Westford Star Gazing Party

April 14: Star Gazing Party: Free and open to all. Come to Stony Brook School, 7 Farmer's Way, on Sunday, April 14, from 7:30-9:30 PM where members of the Amateur Telescope Makers of Boston will have their telescopes and expertise to share planets, stars, close-up views of the moon and more. **Please register in advance** for the Stargazing Party at [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com). Once registered you will receive updates by email. Rain/cloud date is Monday, April 15, at the same time.

Heal the Earth with Music

April 21: Piano concert. Please join us Sunday at the Parish Center for the Arts, 10 Lincoln Street, from 7-8 PM for Nancy Eberiel's Suzuki piano students' recital. Donations accepted.

"Kiss the Ground" Movie

April 27: Sustainable Westford presents the award-winning film "Kiss the Ground," a free, in-person event on Saturday, April 27, 2:00 pm, at the Parish Center for the Arts, 10 Lincoln Street. Narrated and featuring Woody Harrelson, "Kiss the Ground" is a groundbreaking documentary that reveals that regenerating the world's soils can stabilize Earth's climate, restore lost ecosystems, and create abundant food supplies.

The afternoon will also include a panel discussion with soil experts from Bootstrap Compost, Clark Organic Farm, and Weston Nurseries. A Q&A will follow the panel.

All attendees will be eligible to win one year of bi-weekly food waste curbside pick-up service from Bootstrap Compost.

Westford Community Climate Reads

April 29: J. V. Fletcher Library Climate Reads: 7 PM-8:30 PM at the Library, 50 Main Street. Books will be available all month for you to borrow and read, and a discussion gathering will be held and moderated by Justin Liberti. Booklist available [Climate Reads Booklist](#).

If you have a question, please email WestfordClimateAction@gmail.com.

Our events are co-sponsored by the Westford Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee, Westford's Sustainability Coordinator, Westford Recycling Commission, Westford Conservation Trust, J.V. Fletcher Library, League of Women Voters of Westford, Sustainable Westford, and Indivisible Westford.