



Town of Westford Massachusetts

Town Manager's Newsletter

January 2020



Jodi Ross,
Town
Manager

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www.westfordma.gov/tm

Important:

Please sign up to receive updates on the latest road construction in town.

[Subscribe to Notifications](#)



Sign up for Westford's new Emergency Notification service: [Smart 911](#)

Westford Food Pantry Items can be dropped off Cameron Senior Center Mon-Fri 9AM to 4PM

League of Women Voters: Getting involved in Government Event Wednesday, January 29 7:30 PM at Millennium School



Watch Meetings Online



www.westfordcat.org

Dear Westford residents,

The board received an update on January 14, 2020 from the 12 North Main Task Force relative to the disposition of the anodizing mill property. They supported the Task Force using a portion of the \$182,000 CPC appropriation to procure the services of a structural engineer to conduct a structural assessment on the building to identify if any portions can be restored based on the current level of deterioration. Services will include providing cost estimates for both the potential partial demolition/restoration or complete demolition of the structure. The board also supported concurrently moving forward with the Environmental Phase II Site Assessment to be funded through a Mass Development Grant.

Westford Academy student and Sunrise Westford member, Tobias Bluestein, presented information to the board about the National Green New Deal. He spoke on behalf of the group which was seeking to introduce a Citizen's Petition at Town Meeting to require the town's consideration of its carbon foot print in all relevant decisions and purchases, with the goal of moving towards net zero. He had met with me the week prior and I suggested coming before the board to seek their input first. The board suggested Tobias work with the Energy Committee and Assistant Town Manager Heideman on appropriate language to create a resolution.

On December 17, 2019, I presented the town manager's budget message for Fiscal Year 2021 to the Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, and School Committee which is available here: [FY 2021 Budget Message](#). To find out more information about our town's budget and see presentations from that meeting, you may click here: [FY 2021 Budget Information](#).

At that same meeting, Assistant Town Manager Heideman updated the board on the 35 Town Farm Road Project and presented a draft timeline for the proposed project. I informed the board that we may need to procure consulting services to move forward with the project and suggested DRA capital funds or a Finance Committee reserve fund transfer because of time sensitivity. The board supported using DRA funds as long as replenishment is sought at Annual Town Meeting. The board requested the Task Force not seek funding from other boards/committees without first obtaining their approval and reiterated their prior opinion to postpone placing historic and affordable housing restrictions on the property until a viable redevelopment plan is approved by the board. The Task Force will be voting next week on their recommended location for the new Fire Training Facility.

The board held a public hearing in accordance with M.G.L. c.87 §3, Public Shade Tree Law, to discuss a request from National Grid to begin Phase 2 of their Tree Cutting Plan. The program involves pruning and/or cutting trees previously identified by National Grid arborists as being hazardous and a threat to down power lines. Phase 1 was approved by the board earlier this year and progressed with no complaints. As such, the board voted to approve Phase 2 of the plan.

(Continued on next page)

WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

Our Annual Town Meeting will be held in the Abbot School Gymnasium on Saturday, March 28, 2020 at 10:00AM. The Annual Town Meeting timeline was approved by the board and is available online at the following link: [2020 Annual Town Meeting](#) The Board of Selectmen will vote to close the warrant on January 28, 2020.

The public hearing from November 26, 2019 relative to the potential nuisance/dangerous dog located at 9 Dana Drive, was reopened at the board's most recent meeting. At that meeting, the Board voted to direct Assistant Town Manager Heideman to work with Town Counsel to draft an agreement between the Haley family and the town that sets forth the conditions imposed by the board regarding the Haley's dog Hazel. Conditions included the following: 1) keep Hazel leashed at all times when legally required (town bylaw), 2) whenever the dog is required to be legally leashed, she must also wear a basket muzzle, and 3) Hazel must be walked by an adult capable of safely controlling the animal. All parties agreed to enter into a mutual written agreement with the listed requirements. The hearing will be continued again to their next meeting on January 28, 2020, at 7:50PM.

After thirty-eight years of service to our town in the Fire Department, Fire Captain Jim Barrett recently retired. His service to the town will be reflected for many years to come through his instruction of the Fire Department's Firefighter 1 and 2 Classes, EMT/CPR training, recertification programs, and grant writing efforts. The board and I congratulated Jim and extended our best wishes for a long, healthy, happy retirement.

Please join us in welcoming our new Police Department's Patrol Officers, Kristin Connell, Trevor Sampson, and Samuel Brewer! All are Westford residents anxious to bring their skills to our Police Department.

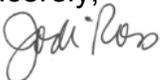
The Board of Selectmen's meeting dates have been scheduled for 2020. They generally meet on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. You may view their meeting calendar here: [2020 Board of Selectmen Meeting Calendar](#)

There are several openings on our local boards and committees, including: 12 North Main Street Task Force, 35 Town Farm Road Task Force, Affordable Housing Committee, Agricultural Commission, Communications Advisory Committee, Conservation Commission, Cultural Council, Election Officer, Energy Committee, Fence Viewer, Healthy Westford Committee, Historical Commission, Northern Middlesex Council of Government, Parkerville Schoolhouse Committee, Parks, Grounds and Recreation Commission, Pedestrian Safety Committee, Permanent Town Building Committee, Recycling Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals. I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees; and if you have interest, please complete a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#).

To learn more about serving your community, The League of Women Voters (LWV) is holding an event on January 29th at 7:30 p.m. at the Millennium School called "Getting Involved in Town Government". The goal of the event is to bring awareness to the many different ways to get involved in town and the different pathways to get there. The night will include a panel discussion followed by a networking period for audience members interested in learning about the town's committees. The LWV is extending a warm invitation to all town committees, commissions, etc to attend (or send a representative) and meet with residents who are exploring town engagement. To RSVP for your committee or for any questions, please contact Anita Tonakarn-Nguyen at anitatonakarn@gmail.com.

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

Sincerely,



Jodi Ross

January at the J.V. Fletcher Library

Our programs are generously funded by the Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library, Inc.



Sunday Hours: Resumed on Sunday, Jan. 5, 2020 and run thru Sun., April 26. On Sundays the Library is open from 2 to 5 p.m.

Coming Soon! New Library Website and Mobile App! : In January the Library will unveil a new website that is intuitive and simple to navigate. This initiative was funded in part by gift and grant funds and by the Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library, Inc.

In January the Library will also roll out a new mobile app that makes it easy to digitally browse the library's collection, checkout or place a hold for later pickup, and even renew items previously checked out.

The Friends February Book Sale is on the horizon: Mark your calendars for the weekend of Friday, Feb. 7, Sat., Feb. 8 and Sun., Feb. 9. A Friends Members Only Sale will be held on Friday evening from 6:30 to 9 p.m. A Friends membership (which may be purchased at the door) is necessary for attending the preview sale. The entire public is invited Saturday for an all-day sale, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and to the special half price extravaganza on Sunday from 2 to 4 p.m.

Stony Brook Middle School Book Club: Wed., Jan. 15 at 2 p.m. Library book club open to Stony Brook Middle School teens in grades 6 to 8. Students actively participate in book discussion and hands-on activities once a month until May 2019 at the Stony Brook Middle School. Sign-up at the Stony Brook Middle School with the school librarian, Mrs. Smith. This month students can choose to read and discuss EITHER *Tristan Strong Punches a Hole in the Sky* by Kwame Mbalia OR *Front Desk* by Kelly Yang! (Or both!)

Blanchard Middle School Book Club: Thu., Jan. 16 at 2 p.m. Library book club open to Blanchard Middle School teens in grades 6 to 8. Students actively participate in book discussion and hands-on activities once a month until May 2019 at the Blanchard Middle School Learning Commons. Sign-up at the Blanchard Middle School with the school librarian, Mrs. Brandt. This month we will be discussing *Beyond the Bright Sea* by Lauren Wolk.

Cookbook Club: Thu., Jan. 16 at 7 p.m. We explore cookbooks and sample new recipes. We meet on the third Thursday of the month. Our January pick is *Carla Hall's Soul Food* by Carla Hall. Copies are available at Main Desk. If you would like to bring a dish from the cookbook (not required), call Sarah Regan at 978-399-2309. No registration required.

Learn Ukulele: Sat., Jan. 18 at 2 p.m. Join Julie Stepanek as she shows the fundamentals of ukulele playing. Learn how to tune, strum and read chords. After a short lesson, you'll be able to play some fun and easy songs. No experience necessary. (This is a beginner lesson, and not our monthly ukulele strum along.) Bring your own ukulele or register in advance to borrow one. Register online or call 978-399-2304. Ages 14 and up. FREE!

Ukulele Strum Along: Sat., Jan. 25 at 2 p.m. Back by popular demand! For the beginner ukulele player who wants to practice and play music with others. Bring your own ukulele or register (online through the Meeting Room calendar or call the Information Dept. at 978-399-2304) to borrow one. Open to adults and teens. Singing is encouraged. FREE!

Make & Take Mondays: Jan. 27. Imagine, create, and participate! Each Monday from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Teens and Tweens can participate in a variety of hands-on activities that include making fun, seasonal crafts and exploring STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) activities. This is a FREE drop-in event for Teens and Tweens in Grades 5 to 12, registration is NOT required.

Town Clerk's Corner



The **2020 Census** is in your mailboxes. Please take a moment to complete and return this important document. The only way to ascertain the current population for grant awards, state funding and school children is through the census.

Dog licenses for 2020 are now available. A current rabies certificate and appropriate fee are all you need to license your dog for the calendar year. Please remember that the grace period for licensing your dog ends on March 31st of every year. Avoid the \$25 late fee and license your dog today.

The deadline to submit a [petition articles](#) to the Town Clerk's Office for inclusion on the Annual Town Meeting warrant is Tuesday, **January 21, 2020 at 2:00 pm**. Refer to [A Guide to Town Meeting in Westford](#).

Presidential Primary: Tuesday, March 3, 2020

Early Voting will be offered for the Presidential Primary the week of February 24 – 28th at the Town Hall. Absentee ballot [applications](#) are available now. The ballots should be ready for mailing by the end of January. Please remember that state law says absentee ballots are for those voters who are unable to vote at the polls due to absence from town during polling hours, disability, or religious beliefs.

Annual Town Meeting: Saturday, March 28, 2020

Annual Town Election: Tuesday, May 5, 2020

Nomination papers for the **May 5, 2020 Town Election** are available at the Town Clerk's Office for the following offices:

Office	# positions	Terms expiring for:	Length of term
Selectmen	2	Elizabeth Almeida G. Thomas Clay	3 years
Board of Health	2	Zac Cataldo Michele Pitoniak-Crawford	3 years
Library Trustees	2	Hajo Koester Robert D. Price	3 years
Moderator	1	Susan McNeill Spuhler	3 years
Planning Board	1	Gary Lavelle	5 years
School Committee	2	Megan Eckroth Gloria Miller	3 years



The deadline to file nomination papers bearing the signatures of at least 50 Westford voters is Tuesday, March 17th at 5:00pm.

Cameron Senior Center

At the Cameron:

All residents age 55 and older are welcome to participate in our many enrichment programs, exercise classes, services and much more. Come see us at 20 Pleasant Street!

Thank you to the Westford Police Department!

Our sincerest appreciation goes out to Sergeant Greg Marchand and the officers that have delivered heavy buckets of sand to local seniors. Many residents now feel more prepared for the icy, snowy days that lie ahead.



The Art of Basket Weaving

Friday, Jan. 24th, 11:00 – 2:00 pm

You are invited to this indigenous basket weaving workshop. Watch and learn the delicate techniques of weaving hand-crafted baskets. You will work with varied materials and learn the history of this fine art. All materials are supplied for this three-hour workshop. If the program is well received, we may continue it into a weekly series of classes to have more time to complete projects. The cost is \$15 for Westford residents and \$35. for non-residents. Remember you can use your **Cameron Bucks** for this class. Sign up by Fri. Jan. 17th at 978-692-5523.

PICTIONARY NIGHT – Tues. Jan. 28th, 5:30-7:30

Be sure to save the date for a fun night. Teams will attempt to guess the word that is being drawn. You don't need to be a great artist to play; all you need is a little "creative drawing" skills! \$3.00 per person for light refreshments, prizes and a night of laughs! Sign up at 978-692-5523.



Water Aerobics Class at WestFit (4 Littleton Road, Westford)

Wednesdays at 10:15 a.m.

Instructor: Diane Grey Cost: \$25 for 4 weeks

This Aqua Aerobics class is one-hour high energy class with a community feel to the group. The class will start with 5 minutes of warm-up and stretching. Next is a 20 -25 minute aerobic to increase heart rate. Class participants will use bar bells for arm workout by using the resistance of the water to build muscle and tone the arms. This class can be modified for anyone with hand/wrist/shoulder problems. Buoyancy belts and noodles are available for going to the deep end of the pool to work on range of motion. People who may be uncomfortable in deep water, can stay in the shallow section if desired. The class finishes with 8-10 minutes of stretching and cool down exercises. Hot tub and shower changing areas are available for class participants use. **Please sign up at 978-692-5523.**



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

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

Cameron Senior Center (continued)

Collette Travels offer Springtime Tulip River Cruise

April 28-May 6, 2020

Book Now and Save \$500 Per Person!

Lower Outside Double Rate \$3,999 p/p

Middle Outside Double Rate \$4,299 p/p

Upper Outside Double Rate \$5,099 p/p

Suite Double Rate \$6,799 p/p

Included in the Price:

Round Trip Air from Logan Intl Airport, Air Taxes and Fees/Surcharges, Hotel transfers and 20 Meals (7 Breakfast, 6 Lunches & 7 Dinners) Trip Highlights: Amsterdam, 7-Night River Cruise, Volendam, Arnhem, Middelburg, Ghent, Bruges, Antwerp,

Kinderdijk Windmills, Kukenof Gardens. For more information ask

Katie at krussell@westfordma.gov or 978-399-2330

Did You Know that the next National Census is happening in 2020?

Once a decade, America comes together to count every resident in the United States, creating national awareness of the importance of the census and its valuable statistics. The decennial census was first taken in 1790, as mandated by the Constitution. It counts our population and households, providing the basis for reapportioning congressional seats, redistricting, and distributing more than \$675 billion in federal funds annually to support states, counties and communities' vital programs — impacting housing, education, transportation, employment, health care and public policy. **We will be hosting online help with completing your census on Friday, March 13th from 10-2 and on April 14th from 4-7 pm.** Any questions feel free to call Annette at 978-399-2326.

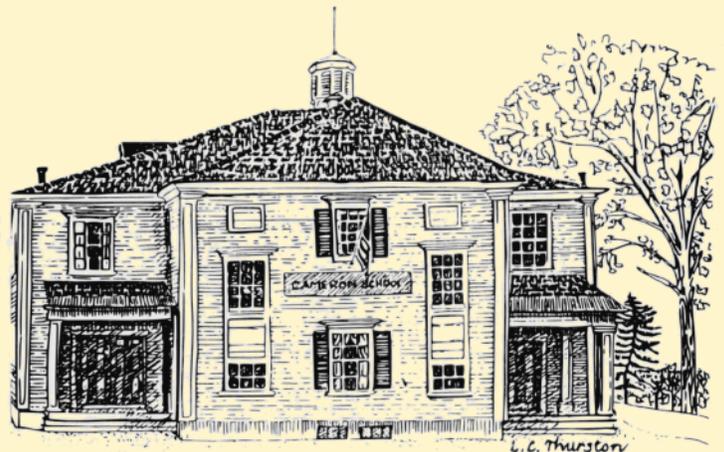


If you would like to receive our view our monthly newsletter via email, please go to the town website and click on “Notify Me” then type in your email to sign in under the “Agenda Center” and click on Council on Aging.

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

www.westfordma.gov/coa

and click on [Newsletters](#).



Westford Senior Center

Health Department

Welcome to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition's (CFSAN) **News for Educators!** Check out our latest information and materials for educating your consumer groups. We also encourage you to share this update and invite your colleagues to [sign up for future issues!](#)



Food Safety

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, lots of people are thinking of sweet ways to celebrate. If you're planning on making any treats for your loved ones, it is important to remember that [flour is a raw food](#). Eating raw dough or batter—whether it's for cake or cookies—could make you, and your valentine, sick. Be sure to share these flour safety tips with your audiences to help keep them and their loved ones healthy:

- Do not eat or allow children to eat or play with raw dough products made with any brand of flour or baking mix before cooking.
- Follow package directions on baking mixes and other products containing flour for correct cooking times and temperatures.
- Clean up carefully after working with flour, raw dough, or raw eggs. Wash hands, work surfaces, and utensils thoroughly.
- Keep all raw foods, like flour and eggs, separate from ready-to-eat foods. Remember, flour is a powder and spreads easily.
- Refrigerate cookie and pastry dough according to package directions. Use a refrigerator thermometer to be sure your refrigerator is at a safe 40°F.

Nutrition

Aim to eat more fish for a healthier eating pattern in the new year. FDA has released four new [photonovels](#)—or comic-style graphic stories—that share information about eating fish while pregnant and why including fish in children's diet can help their growth and development. These photonovels are available in [English](#), [Spanish](#), and [Chinese](#) and support the [updated advice](#) on eating fish from FDA and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Here are a few things to keep in mind when it comes to choosing healthy and safe fish options:

Fish are part of a healthy eating pattern. Fish can have nutritional benefits for children's growth during pregnancy and childhood. And, as part of a healthy eating pattern, eating fish may also offer heart health benefits and lower the risk of obesity.

Choose a variety of fish that are lower in mercury. It is important to limit mercury in the diets of women who are or could become pregnant or who are breastfeeding and young children. There are many types of fish that are both nutritious and lower in mercury.

Do not eat raw fish. Raw fish is not recommended for pregnant women and young children. These groups often have weaker immune systems and are more at risk for foodborne illnesses.

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Health Department (Continued)

Cosmetics

The new year is here, which means it's time to start thinking about your New Year's resolutions. This year consider making a resolution to discard your old cosmetics. A [cosmetic product's shelf life](#) is the general time frame that a product appears and functions as expected, and is considered to be safe for use as directed. The shelf life can differ for each product and be affected by the frequency of product usage and method of storage.

U.S. laws or regulations do not require cosmetic products' labels to have printed expiration dates. However, manufacturers are responsible for making sure their products are safe. FDA considers determining a product's shelf life to be part of the manufacturer's responsibility.

Don't take your old cosmetics into the NEW year! Use these helpful tips to make the best decisions about the cosmetics you choose to keep. If any of your products look or smell odd, throw them away!

- **Contamination:** Practices such as putting your fingers into a product container can introduce bacteria into the product itself. To avoid possible contamination, pour a minimal amount of product onto the back of your hand, or use a new applicator during each use.
- **Time:** Over time, preservatives used in cosmetic products can lose their effectiveness, resulting in fungi and bacteria growth. To avoid using your cosmetic products after the end of their shelf life, label your products with the date you opened them.
- **Exposure:** Products stored in a bathroom could be exposed to moisture, potentially making it easier for fungi and bacteria to grow in them. Additionally, certain cosmetic products can crack, harden, and dry out due to overexposure to air. To help minimize exposure to moisture, light, and heat, store products in airtight containers in cool, dry places.

Conservation Commission Vacancy Announcement

The Conservation Commission has a vacancy and is encouraging anyone interested in serving on the Commission to submit a Citizen Activity Form to the Town Manager's office <https://data.westfordma.gov/bc/newcaf.php>

The Conservation Commission is the Town body responsible for administering the state Wetlands Protection Act and local non-zoning Wetlands Bylaw to protect the town's wetlands and their resource values. This involves the review of projects (residential, commercial, municipal and state) proposed to take place within 100 feet of wetlands to protect the important benefits and resource values provided by wetlands and their adjoining land areas.

The Commission also acquires and holds land on behalf of the Town for protection of the Town's natural resources and watersheds. The Commission manages over 2,100 acres of municipal land for conservation and passive recreation. The Commission holds over 67 Conservation Restrictions on private property totaling more than 1,700 acres.

The Commission typically meets twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month and has occasional site visits. There is one full time staff person to the Commission and two other staff that work for both the Commission and other land use boards.

For more information about the Commission visit the towns website <https://www.westfordma.gov/296/Conservation-Commission>

Westford Cultural Council and the League of Women Voters

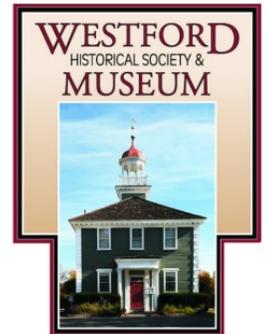
The Westford Cultural Council and the League of Women Voters of Westford are proud to partner under the leadership of the Westford Historical Society and Museum on a series of 19th Amendment events called "Westford Celebrates Women's Right to Vote." The series looks into the 19th Amendment and its legacy through book discussions, historical interpretations and more. We hope to engage the community in celebrating and understanding the legacy of the suffrage movement.

The series kicks off on Monday, Feb. 10, 7pm at the Museum, with Barbara Berenson giving a talk on Votes for Women: Massachusetts Leaders in the Woman Suffrage Movement. On Tuesday, Feb. 27, 7pm at the Museum, Barbara returns with a follow-up discussion on After Suffrage: A 20/20 Perspective on Women's Rights, 1920-2020, which will include a panel discussion among women leaders currently involved in Westford's civic life. The series continues into the calendar year. For more information, visit <https://museum.westford.org/westford-celebrates-womens-rights-to-vote/>.

The Westford Historical Society and Museum

in partnership with the

League of Women Voters of Westford and Westford Cultural Council



Westford Celebrates Women's Right to Vote
Westford Museum, 2 Boston Rd, Westford, MA.

Monday February 10, 2020 at 7pm

Votes for Women: Massachusetts Leaders in the Woman Suffrage Movement

Book reading and talk by Barbara Berenson

Thursday February 27, 2020 at 7pm

A 20/20 Perspective on Women's Rights, 1920-2020
After Suffrage, a talk by Barbara Berenson

Followed by a panel discussion with Westford Women Leaders



For more upcoming events, check out our website at: museum.westford.org