



# Town of Westford Massachusetts

## Town Manager's Newsletter

March 2019



Jodi Ross,  
Town  
Manager

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

### Important:

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

[Subscribe to Notifications](#)



**Annual Town Meeting**  
Saturday, March 23,  
10 am, Abbot School

**2019 Dog Licensing**  
**DEADLINE**  
March 31, 2019  
See Page 4

**New KeySafe Program**  
**Helps First Responders**  
**Aid Residents**  
See page 7



Watch Meetings Online



[www.westfordcat.org](http://www.westfordcat.org)

### Dear Westford residents,

I hope you have all marked your calendars and plan to attend our Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, March 23, 2019, starting at 10:00AM in the Abbot School gymnasium, 23 Depot Street. The warrant, motions, 2020 budget, and town meeting reports are all available online at: [2019 Annual Town Meeting](#). Below is a brief summary of each article:

- Article 1** Accept Town Reports for Fiscal Year 2018.
- Article 2** Approve FY19 Supplemental Appropriations – Fire Department, \$14,500, Snow & Ice \$400,000, Recycling Expenses \$75,000, OPEB \$200,000, Recreation Enterprise \$50,000 and Ambulance Enterprise Expenses \$7,000.
- Article 3** Approve Capital Appropriations – we are recommending \$4,496,428 in capital investment.
- Article 4** Approve Community Preservation Committee recommendations as printed in the warrant.
- Article 5** Approve Revolving Funds – setting expenditure limits on revolving funds.
- Article 6** Appropriate for Perchlorate Expenses – to provide \$53,909 to fulfill DEP requirements.
- Article 7** Approve FY20 Operating Budget available online at: [2020 Operating Budget](#)
- Article 8** Create Stormwater Management Enterprise Fund – the EPA has introduced much more stringent regulations related to stormwater runoff. We have estimated that although we already fund stormwater management at \$600,000 in our operating and capital budgets, we will need another approximately \$1M per year to meet the EPA requirements, or the town may be subjected to fines. The Selectmen are discussing whether to seek these additional funds through a fee or taxation. This article simply creates an accounting mechanism to track these funds, to provide transparency. No funds are being requested with this article. The Selectmen will be meeting on March 26<sup>th</sup> to discuss this initiative in more details. Here is a link to more information: [Stormwater Management](#).
- Article 9** Authorization of Debt for the replacement of the roof, windows, and doors at Nashoba Valley Technical High School. This is a request to bond \$3,704,616 and apply for MSBA funds which may fund up to 55% of eligible approved costs. This must be approved by a majority of towns included in this regional school. This will be bonded over 10, 15 or 20 years, and will correspond with debt coming off the books so the increased cost to our town will be minimal.
- Article 10** Appropriate excess premium of \$10,553.73 from the Town Hall refunding to the Roudenbush rehabilitation project.
- Article 11** Appropriate Chapter 90 Local Transportation Funds (state funds) for roadway maintenance.
- Article 12** Appropriate funds from the Water Enterprise Other Post Employment Benefits Stabilization Fund to pay Water Department FY20 retiree benefits.
- Article 13** Request to adopt the Provisions of Chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000 to set the minimum personal property assessment at \$10,000.
- Article 14** Will be dismissed. This was a placeholder that is not required by the state legislature.
- Article 15** Authorizes the selectmen to accept easements for sidewalk, drainage, or other utility purposes.

(Continued on next page)

- Article 16** Citizens' Petition - Authorizes the Board of Selectmen to amend the Agricultural Preservation Restriction at 66-68 Boston Road to allow for the construction of a restaurant. Much more information is available at this link: [66-68 Boston Road - Drew Gardens documents](#)
- Article 17** Citizens' Petition – to require the town to publicly bid the development rights of 66-68 Boston Road in accordance with MGL 184, section 32 and MGL Chapter 30B, section 16.
- Article 18** Citizens' Petition – to establish a policy to limit the use of artificial lights at recreational spaces for organized group sports, with the exception of Westford Academy, from dusk to 10pm.
- Article 19** Citizens' Petition – to amend Section 58 of the Town Bylaws to establish new requirements and limitations for the possession and consumption of alcohol on any municipal athletic field managed and maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department or its associated parking lot.
- Article 20** Citizens' Petition – to amend Chapter 1 of the Town Bylaws: Penalties for Violating Bylaws and Regulations. The petitioner is seeking to require the Board of Selectmen to impose fines when town bylaws are violated.
- Article 21** Add delinquent Fire Bos Alarm Fees to Tax Bills.
- Article 22** Petition the General Court to increase the Board of Cemetery Commissioners from three to five members.
- Article 23** Accept Shannon Circle as a Public Way.
- Article 24** Rename the Stony Brook School in recognition of “Everett V. Olsen, Jr. Middle School”.
- Article 25** Citizens' Petition – rename the Millennium Building and any subsequent school administration building the “Everett V. Olsen, Jr. Building”.

The Annual Town Report for Fiscal Year 2018 is now published and available online and at a number of locations around town, as well as [online here](#). The books will be available at the Town Meeting on March 23, 2019.

There are several openings on other local boards and committees, including the 12 North Main Street Task Force, Affordable Housing Committee, Agricultural Commission, Communications Advisory Committee, Cultural Council, Economic Development Committee, Healthy Westford Committee, Historical Commission, Parkerville Schoolhouse Committee, Parks, Grounds and Recreation Commission, Pedestrian Safety Committee, Permanent Town Building Committee, Westford Scholarship and Grant Committee, Zoning Board of Appeals, and others. I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees. If you have interest, please complete a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#) or stop by and fill out a form in the Town Manager's office.

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](#).

I hope to see you at town meeting.

Sincerely,



Jodi Ross  
Town Manager

## March at the J.V. Fletcher Library

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



**Sunday Hours:** Resumed in January and run thru Sun., April 28. On Sundays the Library is open from 2 to 5 p.m.

**Cookbook Club: Thu., Mar. 21 at 7 p.m.** The Cookbook Club is dedicated to exploring cookbooks and sampling new recipes. We meet on the third Thursday of the month. Our March pick is *Art of the Pie* by Kate McDermott. Copies will be available for check out at the Main Desk. If you would like to bring a dish from the cookbook (not required to participate), please contact Sarah Regan in Information Services at 978-399-2309. No registration required.

**Monday Mystery Book Club: Mon., Mar. 25 at 10:30 a.m.** Wake up your week with a stimulating book discussion! We meet on the fourth Monday morning of each month @ 10:30 a.m. in the Mary Atwood Room. Our March selection is *Bluebird, Bluebird* by Attica Locke. Copies of the current selection are available for check-out at the Main Desk. New members are always welcome. No registration required.

**The Softer Side of Celtic with Jeff Snow: Thu., Mar. 28 at 7 p.m.** Growing up as the son of a drummer in a bagpipe band, Jeff developed a love for the music of Scotland, England and Ireland. His concerts have been described as quiet and relaxing, and much of it is, but sometimes he'll break out and the foot stomping begins! The instruments, vocals and Jeff's love and knowledge of his Scottish heritage create a delightful program of traditional and original songs. Hear those stories along with the songs that educate as well as entertain. Ages 14 and up. FREE! Register online or call Information Services at 978-399-2304.

**Ukulele Strum Along: Sat., Mar. 30 at 2 p.m.** Learn to play by playing! Focusing on 2 and 3 chord songs, this program is for the beginner ukulele player who wants to practice and play music with others. Singing is encouraged. Ukuleles available to borrow, songs projected onto a screen so no music stands or books necessary. This program is open to adults and teens. Register online or in Information Services to borrow a ukulele, or just drop in with your own.

**English Conversation Circle: every Wed. at 10:30 a.m.** Practice your English conversation skills and meet new friends in a relaxed and friendly environment. **Please note that this program moved to Wednesday mornings as of Wed., Mar. 6. We will still meet at 10:30 in the Mary Atwood Room.** Registration is not required. If you have any questions, please call Sarah Regan at 978-399-2309.



**Town Clerk's Corner**



# **2019 DOG LICENSING DEADLINE**

## **MARCH 31, 2019**

\$15 for Spayed/Neutered

\$20 for Non-altered

(Must have current rabies certificate)

**A \$25 Fine Is Applied Beginning April 1, 2019  
For All Non-Licensed Dogs\***

\*Does not apply to dogs less than 6 months old or dogs new to town. New residents should license their dogs within the month of arrival.

## Heath Department

Our MAPHN President, Caroline Kinsella, recently spoke at our Northeast Chapter meeting. She referenced the importance of strengthening our organization as well as emphasizing the growing need for Public Health Nursing in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. I am grateful to Caroline, Terri Khoury and all of the many Massachusetts Public Health Nurses who work together to demonstrate the importance of what we contribute to our communities on a daily basis. I was greatly concerned when I heard that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts appears to believe that TB surveillance is our only contribution to our community. I frequently precept nursing students at the Westford Health Department, and I often find that it takes over half of my workday to explain my job description and responsibilities.

I precept nursing students from Middlesex Community College, UMass Lowell, Fitchburg State University and Mt. Wachusett Community College. Some are there for a three-month internship, and others just for one day. Each of these internships have led to many hours of education focused on the various roles and responsibilities of each individual who, together, make up our Health Department.

One student from Middlesex Community College that I precepted had many interesting things to say to her instructors regarding the responsibilities of a Public Health Nurse. Her comments demonstrate the complexity of our job description, and I would like to share some of her quotes.

*"I was not aware of what is involved for the PHN when facing a communicable disease outbreak, tuberculosis within the community, emergency planning and community education."*

*"The public health nurse is assessing the needs of the community, 24/7."*

*"The floor nurse is responsible for the health and safety of the patients under her care for her shift, while the PHN is responsible for the health and safety of the residents of the community. Both nurses are responsible for educating their patients...the PHN is doing outreach to educate the community to promote wellness, understand communicable diseases, and monitors treatment of those diseases."*

*"The PHN provides health fairs, educational programs, and works with the public, going to senior centers to provide education on different subject matters like; medications, fall risks, emergency preparedness, diabetes and healthy living, in addition, hosting blood pressure clinics and cholesterol checks, organizing flu clinics, or teaching classes like CPR, Stop the Bleed Classes or Until Help Arrives classes to the residents and town employees."*

In closing, Public Health Nurses are essential to their community to provide TB surveillance, but also for so much more. Public Health Nurses are champions for our residents. We offer resources, provide educational programs, offer nursing guidance and support, precept nursing and public health students and provide emergency preparedness and protection for our community. Our goal is to build a trusting relationship not just with our residents but also with all our stakeholders. I love being a nurse and I love serving my community in all aspects of care. I am proud to be a Public Health Nurse.

Warmly,  
Gail Johnson, BSN, R.N.  
Public Health Nurse  
Fellow of Local Public Health  
Westford Health Department

## Heath Department

The Westford Health Department would like to share some food safety thoughts from [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov) . Protect you family through proper food safety during the holidays and the rest of the year too!

### Food Safety Myths Exposed

We all do our best to serve our families food that's safe and healthy, but some common myths about food safety might surprise you.

#### Common myths about food safety at home

**Myth #1:** Food poisoning isn't that big of a deal. I just have to tough it out for a day or two and then it's over.

**Fact:** Many people don't know it, but some foodborne illnesses can actually lead to long-term health conditions, and 3,000 Americans a year die from foodborne illness. [Get the facts on long-term effects of food poisoning.](#)

**Myth #2:** It's OK to thaw meat on the counter. Since it starts out frozen, bacteria isn't really a problem.

**Fact:** Actually, bacteria grow surprisingly rapidly at room temperatures, so the counter is never a place you should thaw foods. Instead, [thaw foods the right way.](#)

**Myth #3:** When cleaning my kitchen, the more bleach I use, the better. More bleach kills more bacteria, so it's safer for my family.

**Fact:** There is actually no advantage to using more bleach than needed. To [clean kitchen surfaces effectively](#), use just one teaspoon of liquid, unscented bleach to one quart of water.

**Myth #4:** I don't need to wash fruits or vegetables if I'm going to peel them.

**Fact:** Because it's easy to transfer bacteria from the peel or rind you're cutting to the inside of your fruits and veggies, it's [important to wash all produce, even if you plan to peel it.](#)

**Myth #5:** To get rid of any bacteria on my meat, poultry, or seafood, I should rinse off the juices with water first.

**Fact:** Actually, rinsing meat, poultry, or seafood with water can increase your chance of food poisoning by splashing juices (and any bacteria they might contain) onto your sink and counters. The best way to cook meat, poultry, or seafood safely is to [make sure you cook it to the right temperature.](#)

**Myth #6:** The only reason to let food sit after it's been microwaved is to make sure you don't burn yourself on food that's too hot.

**Fact:** In fact, [letting microwaved food sit for a few minutes \("standing time"\)](#) helps your food cook more completely by allowing colder areas of food time to absorb heat from hotter areas of food.

**Myth #7:** Leftovers are safe to eat until they smell bad.

**Fact:** The kinds of bacteria that cause food poisoning do not affect the look, smell, or taste of food. To be safe, [use our Safe Storage Times chart](#) to make sure you know the right time to throw food out.

**Myth #8:** Once food has been cooked, all the bacteria have been killed, so I don't need to worry once it's "done."

**Fact:** Actually, the possibility of bacterial growth actually increases after cooking, because the drop in temperature allows bacteria to thrive. This is why [keeping cooked food warmed to the right temperature is critical for food safety.](#)

**Myth #9:** Marinades are acidic, which kills bacteria—so it's OK to marinate foods on the counter.

**Fact:** Even in the presence of acidic marinade, bacteria can grow very rapidly at room temperatures. To marinate foods safely, it's important to [marinate them in the refrigerator.](#)

**Myth #10:** I should wash fruits and veggies with soap or detergent before I use them.

**Fact:** In fact, it's best not to use soaps or detergents on produce, since these products can linger on foods and are not safe for consumption. [Using clean running water is actually the best way to remove bacteria and wash produce safely.](#)

## Cameron Senior Center

### The Cameron Center helps with Benefit Programs and More...

#### KEYSAFE COMES TO WESTFORD

Thanks to partnership with the Fire Department, Cameron and Westford Ace Hardware



Do you live alone? Do you have a chronic medical issue and/or history of calls to 911? Does your medical condition result in difficulty making it to the door to greet first responders (history of seizures, falls, cardiac issues, etc.)? If so, YOU may be a great candidate for this program. The social services/outreach staff will help to identify people who could benefit from a lock box where a house key can be kept outside. The Fire Department will install the boxes at requested homes (no income requirements). The emergency responders would then have a code to retrieve the key and open the door if it is locked, preventing the need to damage the home during an emergency response/wellness visit. The full cost of a KeySafe is \$33.99 and our social service team will be offering subsidized KeySafes to those who have financial limitations and are more vulnerable so please call Alison 978-399-2325 or Annette 978-399-2326 if you have a financial hardship and/or are interested in having a KeySafe installed by the Towns fire department. Westford Ace Hardware located at 527 Groton Road is offering a 20 percent discount to Westford residents who wish to purchase

a KeySafe and are age 60 and older. However, you must show a current driver's license or registered State I.D. when purchasing device.

#### Holi Celebration with Indian Dance Artist and Meal Sponsored by the Westford Cultural Council Wednesday, March 20th at 11am

Celebrate this wonderful holiday by wearing bright colors and join us as we travel to the exotic land through a dance concert that brings to life paintings, sculptures and tells stories from Indian mythology. A rich cultural experience with acclaimed Indian dance artist Mouli Pal. After the concert we will have an Indian lunch and a festive activity. 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. Cost: \$5 Please RSVP to 978-692-5523



Indian Dance Artist  
Mouli Pal



#### Real Estate Tax Exemptions

There are several tax exemptions you may qualify for to help reduce your tax burden. From **November 1<sup>st</sup> until April 1<sup>st</sup>** you may apply for these exemptions through the Assessor's Office and if you need assistance understanding these exemptions or completing the applications please contact Annette at 978-399-2326 or the Assessor's Office at 978-692-5504.

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.](#)



Westford Senior Center

## Cameron Senior Center (Continued)

### **The Aging Mastery Program® coming to Cameron Tuesdays, April 23rd—June 25th, 4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.**

The Aging Mastery Program® (AMP) offers community-based organizations a clear path to engage older adults address the physical, financial, and emotional wellness of older adults. AMP incorporates evidence-based materials, expert speakers, group discussion, and peer support to give participants the skills and tools they need to achieve improvements in their health and economic security. This ten-week program aims to empower older adults to make and maintain small, impactful changes to their behaviors to live a healthier, happier, and more secure life. For more information call Annette at 978-399-2326. Cost: \$30 Registration deadline is March 26<sup>th</sup>

### **We are kicking off spring with a trip to Foxwoods!**

We will be traveling to **Connecticut** on **Tuesday, April 2nd** and are **inviting all those ages 50 and over** to join us. Silver Fox Motor Coach will once again be driving us with **departure from the Franco-American Club at 7:30 AM. Please park at the rear of the lot.** The fee for this trip will be \$36 which includes driver gratuity and is due at sign-up. You will receive bonus and food coupons when you arrive at the casino.

Please call 978.692.5523 to sign-up for this fun day at Foxwoods!

### **Understanding Mental Health Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.**

Lowell General will be offering this free program to our center. Mental health issues are common in at least one out of every five people. In most cases, they are manageable and with the right kind of help, most people who experience these difficulties can live happy and successful lives. Join us to learn about the basics of mental health—signs & symptoms, myths vs. facts, and various forms of treatment. Please sign up at 978-692-5523 by 3/25.

### **Introduction to Reiki Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.**

Kathy Benson, LICSW presents the benefits and basic techniques of Reiki. Reiki is a powerful, safe and effective healing technique that can be used for stress and pain reduction, relaxation, and promotes healing. Reiki is used in hospitals during illness, after injuries, and for pain management. Many people find Reiki to be enormously beneficial in their professional and personal lives including parents, caregivers and health care providers. If time permits, Reiki will be performed on those attending, that request the experience. Nashoba Nursing Service & Hospice offers this FREE program to our center. Please sign up by 4/5, 978-692-5523.

### **Family Movie Time featuring \*COCO\* Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM**

In an exciting *partnership with Roudenbush Community Center* we are offering an intergenerational opportunity for folks of all ages to enjoy an early evening out together. Come lift your spirits during these winter months to watch the family movie, *Coco*. Despite his family's baffling generations-old ban on music, Miguel dreams of becoming an accomplished musician like his idol, Ernesto de la Cruz. Desperate to prove his talent, Miguel finds himself in the stunning and colorful Land of the Dead following a mysterious chain of events. Light refreshments will be served. Please sign up by April 11<sup>th</sup> at 978-692-5523.

## Recycling Commission

NOTICE: April 15, 2019 (Patriots' Day), is NOT a holiday for trash and recycling. Pickups will be made according to the regular blue weekly schedule.

### Alerts from the Westford Recycling Commission

**PLASTIC BAGS**, empty or filled, are NOT acceptable in recycling bins and toters.

**TANGLERS** - cords, coat hangers, light strings, plastic 6-pack rings, garden hoses, wires, strings, ribbons, and chains - are prohibited from recycling bins and toters.

**CAPS and LIDS** – replace caps and lids on clean bottles. Do not discard separately.

**PLASTIC YOGURT CUPS** – toss cups in recycle bin. Put aluminum lids in the trash.

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## RECYCLING 201

Can you believe it was twenty-five years ago that Massachusetts mandated recycling? Now, because of China Sword Policy restrictions on the import of U.S. recycled material, the current market for recycling has shifted, making it imperative that we have cleaner and less contaminated material to make it sellable.

Make sure your recyclables are **EMPTY** - remove food or product residue; **CLEAN** - rinse or wash empty containers; and **DRY** - let containers dry before placing in your recycling bin.

What you **DO** put in your recycling bin: glass bottles and jars, metal cans, and plastic containers (not black), all with attached caps or lids, and clean cardboard and paper.

What you **DO NOT** put in your recycling bin: contaminants like plastic bags and wrap, Styrofoam, food and liquid waste, electronics, textiles, and tanglers like cords, coat hangers, light strings, plastic 6-pack rings, garden hoses, wires, strings, ribbons, and chains. Throw these items in the trash or recycle responsibly.

The triangle symbol with a number on an item is no longer a guide for what to recycle. It is an industry guide to the type of material.

For questions on what is and what is not recyclable, go to the **Recyclopedia**: <https://recyclesmartma.org/>. Bookmark this page!

Are **Black Plastic take out trays recyclable**? The **Recyclopedia** says “**Put this item in your trash bin.**” The clear plastic lids can be rinsed and recycled.

## Recycling Commission (Continued)

### UPCYCLE IT!

You can recycle even more using *Sustainable Westford's* Upcycle It! program. It builds on Westford's curbside recycling program and allows you to recycle items you would normally throw away in your trash. Upcycle It! generates funds that benefit Westford schools. As of January 2019, Upcycle It! earned **\$14,997.90** for the schools and kept **9992 pounds** of trash out of the waste stream from **948,071 pieces** collected from residents.

You can find Upcycle It! collection containers at four convenient locations: J.V. Fletcher Library (basement near elevator), Roudenbush Community Center near the side entrance, Starbucks at 174 Littleton Rd., and Whole Foods Westford (Upcycle It! blue barrel near the store exit).

Visit [www.sustainablewestford.org/upcycle-it](http://www.sustainablewestford.org/upcycle-it) for the latest updated information on what can and cannot be collected, plus Frequently Asked Questions.

**Please note that writing instruments, coffee bags, and candy packaging are no longer accepted.**

#### Upcycle It! accepts -

- Foil Drink Pouches and their straws (i.e. Capri Sun, Kool Aid, Honest Kids etc.).
- Energy or Granola Bars (ANY brand energy, granola, cereal, or protein bar).
- Chip Bags (ANY chip bag small or large).
- Oral Care Products (toothbrushes, plastic toothpaste tubes) We cannot accept electric toothbrush heads or battery powered toothbrushes. Battery powered toothbrushes can be recycled at Westford's Electronics Collection.
- Brita and Pur brand water filters and accessories – Brita and Pur brands ONLY.
- Baby and Toddler food pouches – ANY brand baby or toddler food pouches and their screw caps.
- Cereal Bags – ANY brand cereal bag including clear liners inside a cereal box.
- Beauty Item Packaging – ANY brand makeup/personal care packaging (mascara, lipstick/lip balm, eye shadow, deodorant, lotion tubes) *Please do not include items that can be curbside recycled such as most shampoo or conditioner containers.*

**Please visit [www.westfordma.gov/recycling](http://www.westfordma.gov/recycling) for your recycling and trash questions.**

**Westford thanks you for recycling,  
reducing, repurposing, and reusing!**

