



Town of
PRINCETON
MASSACHUSETTS

Municipal Update
DECEMBER 2021

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR SHERRY PATCH'S UPDATE

Happy December! Things are very busy in Princeton. With Special Town Meeting and Thanksgiving behind us, and the Highway Department ready to take on winter, we look forward to 2022 with optimism and community spirit. Town Department Heads have turned in their proposed FY23 budget and capital requests, and the Finance Team is reviewing them as we work towards creating the municipal operating budget for next year. The number one goal of the Finance Team is to create a fiscally responsible budget that ensures that the residents of Princeton get the most out of their hard-earned tax dollars.

We recently received a \$50,000 grant from the [Commonwealth of Massachusetts Urban Agenda Grant Program](#) to work with the [Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission](#) to develop a Phase 1 update of the [Town of Princeton Master Plan](#) last updated in 2007. Town officials and volunteers will be working on the development of a community-wide vision for the town including a community survey covering the specific chapters in the master plan and the creation of three new chapters on future Land Use, Economic Development, and Open Space, and Recreation opportunities.

The Housing Production Plan Committee held their "kickoff" meeting in early December to discuss their strategy for planning and development of affordable housing in Princeton. The initial meeting was a success with the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission representative sharing a slideshow of necessary components, relevant data, and a timeline for the completion of the housing plan. The committee is excited about the work ahead and plans on submitting the plan to the Commonwealth in the late summer of 2022.

Princeton has received \$521,293.51 as part of the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) and will receive the same amount in June of next year. The Selectboard is working with the Financial Team to create an ARPA investment plan that prioritizes shared community goals relating to public health, community assistance, and one-time technology, infrastructure, and community project costs. Part of this initiative is asking residents to fill out an [opinion survey](#). If you have not already, please take a moment to fill out the linked survey by 12/20/21. For more information on Princeton's ARPA considerations, please [click here](#).

On behalf of the Selectboard, employees, boards, commissions, and myself I would like to wish you and yours a happy and healthy holiday season. Please feel free to contact my office anytime with concerns, ideas, or questions at 978-464-2102 or by email.

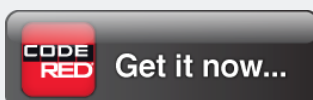
[Click Below For Town News, Updates, and Emergency Alerts](#)

TOWNHALL HOURS

TOWN HALL

[Department Directory](#)

Monday - Thursday
8:00AM - 4:00PM



INTERIM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER APPOINTED

At their November 16, 2021 meeting the Princeton Selectboard interviewed two applicants for a recently vacated term on the Wachusett Regional School District School Committee. The SB appointed Paul Dubois to fill the term for a seat that will be up for election during the May 2022 Annual Town Election. When asked why he chose to submit his name for consideration Mr. DuBois said.

"My heart is in education. I was a high school math teacher at Quabbin Regional High School for ten years. I have been a full-time Academic Coordinator and Instructional Coach for the Math, Science and Wellness department at Quabbin for three years and work with teachers in grades 6-12.

Making department budgets, curating curriculum materials, and helping teachers improve their practice are all important to a student's education. My heart is also with the Wachusett Regional School District. I wanted to take my skills to the Wachusett School Committee because I have three small children (ages 2, 5, and 8). They have had an exceptional experience at Thomas Prince School so far. I wanted to be one of Princeton's voices on the committee for my children as well as all the other children in our wonderful community.

I joined the school committee because I believe in the power of service. Finding a member to join the committee at this time of year can be difficult but the timing was right for me to start to serve. A new member of the school committee would need to get up to speed on many ongoing committees quickly. I am on the Regional Agreement and Legal Affairs subcommittees. I feel like my job has prepared me to hit the ground running."

Mr. DuBois can be reached via email at paul_dubois@wrsd.net



Have an idea for the next edition of the Municipal Update? A community event to promote? A volunteer or employee you would like to see highlighted for their good work in the Town of Princeton?

Send suggestions:

Town Clerk Nathan Boudreau

6 Town Hall Drive townclerk@town.princeton.ma.us

978-464-2103

Thank you to all of the boards, committees, and departments for their assistance with our Municipal Update!



LIGHTS IN COMMON

On the evening of December 3rd, a group of residents and local organizations joined the Holiday Decorating Committee and the John and Patsy Mollica for their annual "Lights In Common Event". Festive musical stylings were performed by **Andrea Surabian, the Girl Scouts, Pack 25 Cub Scouts, Rob Cadwallader, Bill Labaire, and WRHS Senior Emerson DiSalle.**

This year's program was dedicated to Sharon Staz, former PMLD manager, who over 30 years ago, along with Mrs. Mollica, initiated decorating Princeton's Common in conjunction with a musical program, even before there was a gazebo. Sharon passed in August of this year. The event became 'Lights in Common' in 1994 when Patsy wrote a song for Princeton, which closes the celebration every year.

Lights in Common sings of all of our shared stories, hopes, and peace, for our families and community during the holiday this season.



PRINCETON PARKS & RECREATION

Winter Carnival

Presenting winter improvements to the Krashes Fields Complex

**FEBRUARY 5, 2022
STARTING AT 11 AM
KRASHES FIELDS COMPLEX**

Join us for a fun day of outdoor winter activities for the whole family!
Come and enjoy the new skating rink setup under the lights on the basketball court, sledding, a bonfire, and other fun activities throughout the day. More details to follow!



Parks and Recreation are looking for volunteers to help set up our new outdoor skating rink at Krashes Field. The new skating rink will be open to the public all winter long. Interested parties should contact recreation@town.princeton.ma.us



TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE



Special Town Meeting was held on Wednesday, November 17, 2021, at Thomas Prince School. The meeting was attended by 133 residents and lasted from 7:06 PM to 8:58 PM. The warrant had six articles covering various mid-fiscal-year town issues. Running a successful Town Meeting is a team effort, and we would like to thank all of the volunteers that helped make Special Town Meeting, and the time leading up to it, run as smoothly as possible.

The full minutes of the meeting can be viewed [here](#)

Election and Town Meeting Calendar 2022

Nomination Papers Available - Town Clerks Office	Monday, February 7, 2022
Citizens Caucus	Tentatively Wednesday, March 9, 2022
Last day to file nomination papers	Monday, March 21, 2022 5:00 PM
Deadline for Board of Selectmen to submit ballot questions to Town Clerk (if any)	Monday, April 4, 2022 5:00 PM
Deadline to Submit Citizens Petitions for Town Meeting to Town Clerk's Office	Monday, April 4, 2022 5:00 PM
Last day to file an objection to a nomination or for a candidate to withdraw	Wednesday, April 6, 2022 5:00PM
Last day to register to vote at Town Election and Town Meeting	Tuesday, April 19, 2022
Last Day to Post Town Election and Town Meeting Warrant	Monday, May 2, 2022
Absentee Ballot Applications for Town Election Request Deadline	May 5, 2022 5:00PM
Annual Town Election (12PM-8PM)	May 9, 2022
Annual Town Meeting (7PM)	Tentatively May 10, 2022

For more information please visit the [Town Election Information Page](#) or contact the office of the Town Clerk at 978-464-2103 or townclerk@town.princeton.ma.us

Fire Department



Your public safety personnel have been extremely busy this fall and early winter with a higher-than-normal frequency of emergency calls and public service. We have noted an increase in calls related to psychological health and some of these calls have been extremely emergent and complex with multiple police, fire, and state resources from many departments. These are very difficult, stressful, and personally challenging times for many. Please do not hesitate to seek professional help for a loved one if you notice unusual behavior or witness threatening statements. You could save a life.

Princeton Fire / EMS is recruiting qualified candidates for Firefighters, Paramedics and EMT's. Please reach out to us at firechief@town.princeton.ma.us if you are interested. We have daily open 10 hour shifts from 7AM to 5PM weekdays and weekends for per diem EMT's and Medics. Our current pay rate is \$22.00 per hour for EMT's and \$25.00 per hour for Paramedics.

Police Department

There is a lot going on at the Princeton Police Department. Below you will find some recent noteworthy activities:

- Completed Firearms Training for fall 2021
- Officers have begun In-Service Training for FY 22.
- CPR Training completed for Several Officers
- Had increase in motor vehicle Breaking and Entering's. Please don't leave valuables in your vehicles.
- Sergeant Thebeau and Deputy Kelly went and spoke to Wachusett House residents regarding their safety, specifically Sergeant Thebeau addressed scamming.
- Sergeant Thebeau attended DA Early's Safe School Summit.



The Princeton Firefighter and EMT Association Christmas gift delivery will take place on **December 12, 2021, from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM** Santa Claus contacted the Princeton Firefighter and EMT Association to assist in delivering gifts across Princeton. Santa will come to your house on a fire truck and deliver a gift. Please bring gifts to Station 2 (Address: 11 Redemption Rock Trail-North) December 6-10 6:00 pm-9:00 pm (COVID Instructions will be posted at the Drop Off location) For questions please call (978)464-2707 ext 1051 Or email: Princeton FFEA@outlook.com. Please limit one gift per child. COVID 19 PRECAUTIONS WILL BE IN EFFECT.





Conservation Commission

New construction? New driveway? Home addition? Septic repair? The Conservation Commission would like to remind residents that if they have projects like these they hope to start-up in the spring they shouldn't wait too long to apply for wetlands permits. If you think you'll be doing ANY work - large or small - within 100 feet of wetlands, ponds, or streams (or within 200 feet of a larger year-round stream), it's likely you'll need wetlands permit to complete your project.

Please contact us at conservation@town.princeton.ma.us to learn if your project will need a permit or to get any other related questions answered. You may wish to check this [online map](#) from the State to see if there are any mapped resources in your area. The wetland mapping is not guaranteed to be accurate or complete, however, so to be sure you should check with us anyway.

One of the primary functions of our volunteer Commission is to ensure that YOUR wetland resources in Princeton are protected through the project review and approval process laid out in the Wetlands Protection Act. It's an important task and we are looking for new members to fill 2 vacancies on our Commission, so if you like the outdoors and have some time to offer your town please consider joining!

From the Office of the Tax Collector

Actual Real Estate and Property Tax Bills will be mailed out in late December, with a due date of Friday, April 1, 2022.

Congratulations to James Dunbar, Treasurer Collector for the Town of Princeton, on renewing his re-designation as a Certified Massachusetts Municipal Treasurer Collector! Mr. Dunbar's renewal was granted to him by the Board of Certification of the state-wide organization of local Tax Collector's and Treasurers Association. Renewal is awarded every five years only to previously Certified candidates who continue to attend the Annual School of the Association held in August of each year at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and who successfully complete courses in municipal law, finance, and administration.

IT STEERING COMMITTEE

The IT Strategic Planning Committee is working on a strategy to ensure that the Town has consistent policies regarding software, hardware and data storage, retention, and recovery.

Current initiatives include:

- Identifying all town data that committees, boards, and departments possess and where this data is stored. The ultimate goal is to ensure that all town data is accessible and can be restored in the event of a catastrophic event.
- Working with the Town Clerk on a plan to digitize all records that are currently in paper format to ensure that they can be recovered if necessary.
- Identifying a common information architecture for data storage on town servers and ultimately, cloud-based storage.
- Providing support when requested on hardware and software evaluation for town departments, committees, etc.
- Acting as liason to the Town IT coordinator

Do you want to get involved in making Princeton a better place to live? There are many volunteer boards and committees in Town in need of new members. This is your chance to make a difference! There is no better way to give back to your community than volunteering.

Please click [HERE](#) to apply or reach out to the board's chair for more information

PRINCETON HISTORICAL COMMISSION



The Princeton Historical Commission continues to work on replacement of the Civil War plaques, which were removed from Bagg Hall during recent restoration work. Thanks to an allocation of funds at the spring Town Meeting, and with the help of private donations, we are on track to have the new marble plaques installed in the spring. The local monument company which is carving the names has provided us with proof of the final product for review. We are especially pleased that we are able to attain a hand-chiseled look for a fraction of the price. In other news, at Meetinghouse Cemetery, further repairs to historic markers are wrapping up. Next door, we have installed a sign at the Town Pound on Mountain Road, and encourage everyone to go check out this unique local treasure!

Do You Know Where Your Home Energy Dollars Go?

The Environmental Action Committee is pleased to announce a pilot program with the Princeton Municipal Light Department to help Princeton residents save money and use energy more efficiently.

The program has two components:

1. PMLD has purchased several Kill-A-Watt meters which measure the amount of electricity used by specific appliances. You can borrow a Kill-A-Watt meter, plug it in between your wall socket and an appliance, and see how much electricity the appliance requires. Then you can compare your appliance's energy use to your neighbor's, or to other appliances on the market.
2. Light Commissioner Richard Chase is allowing his infrared camera to be used by Charlie Cary to take pictures of Princeton homes upon request. These pictures are remarkable at identifying where buildings are losing the most heat.

Call (978-697-8223) or email (crcary@verizon.net) Charlie Cary if you are interested in participating in either of these energy awareness opportunities

EAC Quarterly Speaker Series – Your Suggestions Needed!

In 2021 the EAC began a quarterly speaker series, supported in part by a grant from the Princeton Cultural Council. Our goal is to engage and inform residents about environmental topics highlighted in our 2020 Environmental Action Plan

Our 2021 topics:

- Energy Savings for Princeton Residents
- Low-Maintenance Landscaping
- Drinking Water Quality
- Climate change in Princeton and the MVP grant program (December 9, 2021)

All of our speaker series presentations are available as replays via our town website. What environmental topics interest you? Electric vehicles? Composting? Recycling? Community solar? Something completely different? Help us plan our 2022 series by sending your feedback and ideas to princetonEAC@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you!



PRINCETON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Thank you to the Friends of the Library for decorating our main floor for Christmas. Stop by and check out the festive décor now through the end of the year. The Friends are always looking for new members too. To get more involved, come to a meeting on the first Thursday of the month at 1pm in the library basement or call the library for more information.

Congratulations to longtime library staff member Betsy Beth on her retirement starting December 18th! Betsy has been welcoming Princeton patrons into the library for several years, running the afternoon book discussion group, and providing book delivery service to those who can't make it to the library. She has also been the library's liaison to the Princeton Historical Society, which is housed in the Woodward Room, in the library's basement.

Upcoming Childrens Events

We will hold a **King Arthur Baking "Bake for good" program** for kids in grades 4-8 on Thursday, December 9, at 4:00 pm in the Town Hall Annex. Kids will participate in a live demonstration with King Arthur bakers via zoom and receive a baking kit with materials to make two loaves of bread, one to eat and one to share.

Lego Club will meet on Saturday, December 11, from 11am-12pm. Kids of all ages are welcome to attend and are encouraged to sign up in the library or by calling 978-464-2115. This program takes place outdoors when the weather permits it.

Book Eaters, a book club for kids in grades 3-5 will meet on Wednesday, December 15, at 4pm. Gather for book swapping, discussion and a craft. Children may join any time and reading a specific book is not required. Please email Jessie: jthrowbridge@cwmars.org to register.

Thanks to a "Mind in the Making" grant provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, we will have monthly **creativity crafts available for preschool-aged kids** through November 2022. This month's craft, a tissue paper mason jar lantern, will be available beginning Wednesday, December 15, first-come, first-served.

Hibernation Day and Pajama Storytime will take place on Tuesday, December 21, at 4pm. Join us at the library to celebrate the start of winter. Children are invited to come in their pajamas as we join wild animals settling down for a long winter's nap. We'll read winter stories and mark the year's longest night with a celebration of light. All children will take home a cocoa-to-go kit.



**There are so
many wonderful
stories out
there!**

Looking ahead to 2022!

We have lots of exciting things planned for 2022! Our children's room is getting a new look thanks to federal funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. We will have a new rotating large toy collection in the room, monthly creativity crafts for preschoolers, and more STEM kits to check out. Come visit us to play and take home new kindergarten-themed and emergent reader titles starting in January!

We will host a series of diverse author book talks this winter and spring with funds provided by a Community Enrichment grant from the Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts. We will host one children's, one young adult, and one adult author in hybrid format. Dates and authors TBA!

Thanks to an American Library Association Libraries Transforming Communities grant, we will be hosting the first Princeton Community Read book discussions this spring. Our inaugural title will be *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins. Keep an eye out for discussion dates in January!

Happy Holidays! Please note that we will be open from 10am-1pm on Christmas Eve and closed on Christmas Day. We will be open regular hours (10am-5pm) on New Year's Eve and closed on New Year's Day.

Looking for more library information? We're everywhere! Follow us on social media: Facebook, Instagram (@princetonmapubliclibrary), call (978-464-2155), visit the library's website (www.princetonpubliclibrary.org), or stop by to learn more about our programs and materials! Need help selecting your next book or movie? Check out our New Acquisitions, updated monthly on the library's website.

