



Town of PRINCETON MASSACHUSETTS

Municipal Update
JULY 2022

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR SHERRY PATCH'S UPDATE

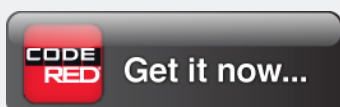
As we enter a new fiscal year, I would be remiss if I didn't take a moment to extend my gratitude to the town employees for their hard work and commitment to providing high-quality services for the community year-round. As Town Administrator, I am inspired by Princeton's many passionate and community-oriented people. Thank you to the Selectboard, volunteer boards and commissions, and the community for your ability to work cohesively and for your confidence in me as your Town Administrator. I look forward to working with you on future projects to move Princeton forward.

The Selectboard met in mid-June to discuss their goals and priorities for the upcoming fiscal year, with a full list being approved on July 13, 2022. Areas of focus include continued work on existing projects such as PFAS and Public Safety Infrastructure, public safety assessments, increased communication, recruitment of volunteers, continued fiscal discipline, and upcoming special projects like the sale of mechanics hall and updating the Master and Housing Production Plans. A full list of these initiatives with brief descriptions can be found [here](#).

I am excited to announce that the Town of Princeton has received a \$100,000 grant from the FY23 Municipal Small Bridge Program for replacing the bridge at Calamint Hill Road North over South Wachusett Brook. This Program provides design and construction funding to communities to preserve, rehabilitate, and replace small bridges on a need and merit basis. Special thanks to the Baker Polito Administration, Senator Gobi, and Representative Ferguson for assisting us in this initiative.

Over 150 voters attended the Annual Town Meeting held on May 14 at Thomas Prince School to discuss and vote on warrant articles related to the FY23 Town and School budgets, zoning changes, and capital projects, among many other items. Those interested can find the results of the Town Meeting at www.town.princeton.ma.us. I want to thank those involved in organizing another successful Town Meeting, including The Princeton Financial Management Team, Moderator Harry Pape, the Town Clerk's Office, Public Safety Officials, and many other staff and volunteers.

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



TOWN HALL HOURS

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

[Department Directory](#)

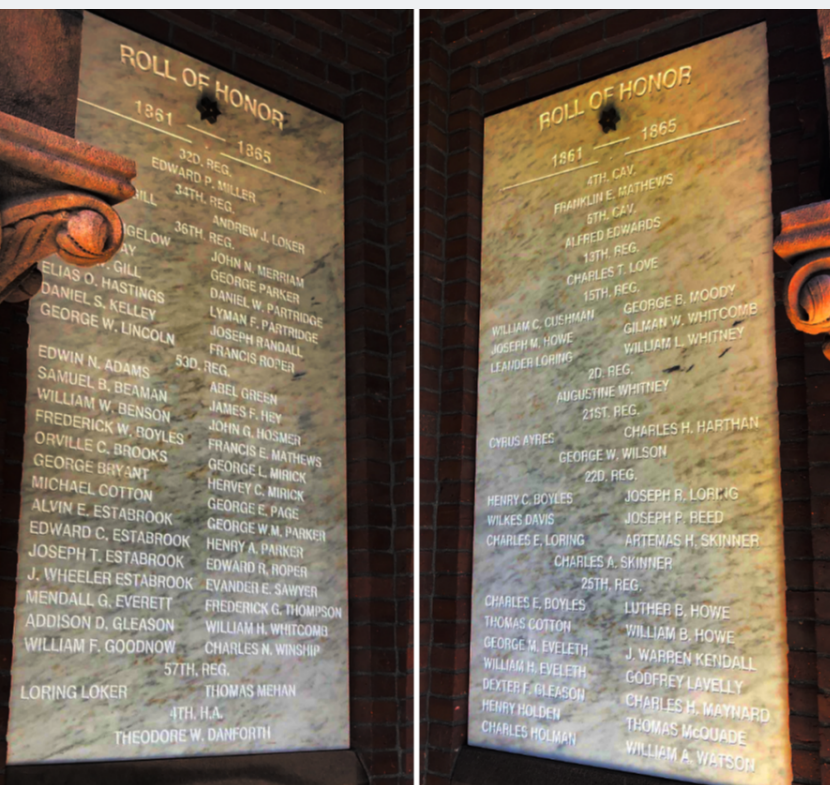
The Selectboard seeks two additional members for the Board of Health to enable the BOH to expand its public health services. Local Boards of Health are charged with a complex set of responsibilities, including enforcement of state sanitary, environmental, housing, and health codes. This includes reviewing septic plans and installations in Princeton, observing perc tests, and inspecting food service providers. Adding two new members with public health-related backgrounds will allow the Board to do more outreach in the community. If you are interested in applying, please fill out the application that can be found [here](#).

Please take a moment to participate in the Master Plan Steering Committee's Survey, which will guide the town's decisions for the next 10-15 years. In addition, you can follow the Master Plan process at the committee's [website](#).

Managing and creating our municipal budget is a constant and ongoing process. We have already begun building the FY24 budget by asking Department Heads to submit their capital requests in September. Please feel free to contact my office anytime with questions, concerns, ideas, or questions at 978- 464-2102 or by email at townadministrator@town.princeton.ma.us.

Historical Commission

For over 2 years, the Princeton Historical Commission has been coordinating the reconstruction of the Civil War Honor Roll that graces the front entrance to Bagg Hall. On May 13, 2022, the new marble tablets were finally installed, replacing the old plaques that had deteriorated beyond any chance of restoration. Engraved in the brilliant white marble are the names of 80 Princeton residents who honorably served during the Civil War including the 18 Princeton soldiers who died during the performance of their service to the Union.



POSITIVELY PRINCETON

A Spotlight on what's good in town



34 YEARS AS MODERATOR AND COUNTING

If you have attended a Town Meeting in Princeton over the past three decades, you have probably noticed a familiar face and staple of the meeting and community. Moderator Harry Pape has been Princeton Town Moderator, a position tasked with leading Town Meeting elected yearly, since 1989 after being "recruited" by then-Moderator Bruce Bennett. Mr. Bennett had just been named Publisher of the Worcester Telegram & Gazette and felt it would present a conflict of interest to hold both a media and moderator role. Mr. Pape noted his interest in pursuing the opportunity stemmed as much from curiosity as from wanting to serve the town in some meaningful way. Mr. Pape, his wife of almost 50 years, Wendy, and their three children had lived in Princeton for approximately eight years when he was first elected Town Moderator. His children have since grown and gifted the Pape's with five grandchildren.



When asked about the perks of being a Town Moderator, Mr. Pape quoted his predecessor, Mr. Bennett, "Moderator is the best job in Town Government because you work one night a year and have to be impartial; so, no one asks you to take on any other responsibilities." However, this is not necessarily true for Mr. Pape, who has been involved with Town Common Improvements, the town's 250th observance, veterans' ceremonies, and several other projects in his 40+ years of town involvement.

After graduating from college, Mr. Pape served honorably in the United States Air Force on active duty for six and a half years, transferred to the Air Force Reserve and retired in 2002 in the rank of Colonel. One of Col Pape's last acts was commissioning his son Tim into the Air Force from ROTC. Three weeks later, Second Lt Pape read Col Pape's retirement order at the Pentagon.

Once discharged from full-time Air Force Service, he applied his interest in energy conservation by installing a solar hot water system on their home in Chelmsford. This interest led to a short stint with an energy engineering firm in Burlington that did Department of Energy Audits on municipal buildings. Mr. Pape was recruited by a defense contractor, Nuclear Metals, in West Concord, Massachusetts, to be their government contracts administrator and then materiel manager. Additionally, during this time, Mr. Pape started a consulting practice with a neighbor in Chelmsford, eventually becoming a North Andover-based specialty injection molding company.

Mr. Pape and his business partner, a Umass Lowell Plastics Engineering Professor, based their business model on doing projects other companies wouldn't or couldn't do. An example of this is the company was one of two manufacturers in the world making plastic polo balls. That company still exists and specializes in resorbable plastics in medical devices. Mr. Pape's ventures in injection molding started several companies before he pursued a new interest, the world wide web.



Moderator Pape calling the May 2021 Town Meeting to order

Mr. Pape worked with a company in Westborough that developed early websites and digital media platforms for the Telegram and Gazette, Hanscom Air Force Base, the Pentagon, and many other organizations. Recruited again, he returned to government work as a contractor at Hanscom AFB and the Pentagon. After 15 years with this company, Mr. Pape spent his last four years before semi-retirement as CEO.

After thirty-four Annual Town Meetings (and numerous Special TMs), Mr. Pape noted that the most protracted issue was the several years of discussion over the need for more high school capacity. The studies and proposals for splitting the region or enlarging/rebuilding Wachusett Regional High School consumed many hours of debate on the Town Meeting floor. Mr. Pape also noted other significant projects, such as the pending Public Safety building and zoning bylaws on cell towers. Regarding the latter, he responded wittily to a suggested amendment to adorn the towers with appropriate foliage by stating, "the question is, who will put up the leaves in the Spring and take them down in the Fall."

Moderator Pape noted that "with a duty to be impartial, I have always tried to stay out of the pre-meeting debates/lobbying. My role has been confined to providing suggestions as the warrant is formed to facilitate an orderly and efficient process. However, I'm always open to questions about procedure so that those interested in the process can participate fully" when asked about relationships with Town Officials and members of Town meetings.

In recent years information channels have changed rapidly. However, Mr. Pape believes that all media platforms have a place in preparing the community for productive Town meetings since different individuals may receive or process information differently. Pape noted that throughout his business career, his most consistent received advice was to OVER-communicate.

At every Town Meeting, Moderator Pape acknowledges first-time participants. When asked why he does this, he stated, "Participatory democracy is the cherished tradition of New England Town Meeting. EVERY voter has a precious right, which is the right to be heard on the floor of Town meetings to share views, ask probing questions, advocate for positions on issues, and add to the quality of the process by offering helpful improvements/amendments to proposed actions. That is why I welcome first-timers and want them and the regulars to know their active participation is valued."

While there will not be a Town Meeting until the Fall, it is quite evident that Moderator Pape has plenty to keep himself busy. This piece is the first of the Princeton Municipal Update that aims to highlight the life and accomplishments of the community. We hope that learning about members of your community, what they do, and their experiences may inspire more residents to get involved. The entire Town of Princeton would like to thank Moderator Pape for his past, present, and future distinguished service as Town Moderator.



Think someone deserves a spotlight for their positive actions in town?
Email suggestions to Townclerk@town.princeton.ma.us



Parks and Recreation

The parks and recreation department has welcomed Jaime Greenland as the new director. Jaime is a lifelong resident of Princeton. She is eager to build a strong community feel within the town by taking care of our parks and creating enjoyable events and programs. Her passion for Princeton is what brought her to this role, and she is excited to see her goals come to life.



We are very excited to announce the second annual Redemption Fund Run 5k at Krashes Field! The race will take place on September 17th at 10:30am! We hope that you will join us afterwards for festivities including food, live music, and a raffle! Here is the link to [register](#)

We are working diligently to keep our parks in peak condition by making updates to better the use and safety!

Afterschool programs are being planned for the 2022-2023 school year! If you have any interest in running one, please email recreation@town.princeton.ma.us

Keep your eyes out for lots of exciting events happening this year! Future events include a family friendly movie night in August and more!



TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE



Vote By Mail applications can be submitted by any Princeton voter who has not already requested an Absentee ballot for the September 6, 2022, State Primary. You may drop off the application at the Town Clerk's Office, email it to townclerk@town.princeton.ma.us or place it in the secure official election ballot drop box located in the front lobby of Town Hall, 6 Town Hall Drive, Princeton, MA. Over the summer, an outdoor drop-box will be installed. If you wish to vote by mail, you are strongly encouraged to return your application as early as possible to ensure that you will receive your ballot in time to return it before the close of polls on Tuesday, September 6, 2022, at 8 p.m.

To obtain a Vote By Mail Application, [click here](#). You may also contact the Town Clerk at 978-464-2103 or email townclerk@town.princeton.ma.us and one will be sent to you.



SEPTEMBER 6, 2022 STATE PRIMARY ELECTION

EARLY VOTING

SATURDAY AUG. 27	8:00 AM – 1:00 PM
MONDAY AUG. 29	9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
TUESDAY AUG. 30	9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
WEDNESDAY AUG. 31	9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
THURSDAY SEPT 1	9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

VOTING IN PERSON AT THE POLLS AFTER SUBMITTING AN EARLY BALLOT IS PROHIBITED AS OUTLINED IN 950 CMR 4 7.19.

TOWN HALL

6 TOWN HALL DRIVE



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO STATE PRIMARY EDITION

ARE YOU A REGISTERED VOTER?

The deadline to register to be eligible to vote in the State Primary election is Saturday, August 27. The Town Clerk's Office will be open on this date from 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM for in person voter registration or register to vote online at <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr/> This is also the last day to make changes to your party affiliation. REMEMBER, the Primary is a Partisan Election and you must vote on the ballot for the party in which you are registered. If you are registered as Unenrolled, you may choose which party ballot you want to vote on.

IS YOUR VOTER STATUS ACTIVE?

Voters must return their signed street list census form annually to the Town Clerk's office to maintain an active voter status. Inactive voters are still eligible to vote but will be required to complete additional forms and show an ID at the polls in order to vote. To avoid having to complete additional paperwork at the polls, voters who appear as inactive can change their status to active by stopping by the Town Clerks Office to sign a census form in person up until Saturday, August 27 @ 1:00 pm. Changes to the voting lists cannot be made after the deadline of August 27.

CAN I VOTE EARLY IN PERSON OR BY MAIL?

Yes – You can vote early either in person or by mail. See the Early Voting schedule for dates, hours, and location! You can also vote by mail by submitting an application to the Office of the Town Clerk not later than 5 pm on the 5th business day before the election – For the 9/6 State Primary, Monday, August 29 at 5:00 pm. Applications can be found on the Town's website or the Secretary of States website.

WHAT WILL I BE VOTING ON?

Voters are encouraged to educate themselves on the many races and questions that will appear on their ballot PRIOR to arriving at the polls. By visiting the website:

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/eleupcomingelections/upcoming-elections.htm>

You will have the option to view your ballot and check your registration status. Educated voters will reduce the amount of time necessary in the voting booths and reduce lines and crowding on Election Day. Sample ballots will also be available to view at the Office of the Town Clerk as well as on the Town Clerk's page of the Town's website.

WHERE DO I VOTE ON ELECTION DAY?

The Town of Princeton has 1 polling location and 1 precinct. All voters vote at: THOMAS PRINCE SCHOOL, 170 Sterling Rd, Princeton, MA

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!

Open Space Committee

Open Space Committee: Rick Gardner (Chair), Karen Rossow, Susan Downing, Laura Reynolds, Annie Charrette (alternate), Deb Cary



Trail Signage and Kiosks Installation: Committee members with help from volunteers have continued to work on making trails welcoming to all, easy to find and follow. Kiosks, small trail signs, trail blazes, and "mini maps" have been installed through the town at most walking areas open to the public including town owned land as well as lands owned and managed by the Princeton Land Trust. New benches are being provided in select locations thanks to volunteers Joe Difranza and Phil O'Brien.

Trail Connections: Committee members continue to explore potential new trail connections between conservation areas and with abutting towns, most recently with the town of Sterling. The Committee sponsored a student team from WPI which studied inter-town trail connections.

Website Improvements: Considerable time and effort has been put into the Open Space Committee website and associated links so people can easily find maps and information about the many wonderful areas one can walk and enjoy in Princeton. <https://www.town.princeton.ma.us/open-space-committee/pages/princeton-hikes-documentation>

Princeton Hikes: Thanks to Rick Gardner and other volunteers, the scheduled and guided Princeton Hikes series is continuing. <https://www.town.princeton.ma.us/open-space-committee/pages/princeton-hikes-schedule>

Goodnow Park: Open Space Committee restored a basic walking trail around the park that once was home to a Disc Golf Course. There has been enthusiasm expressed by some local residents to bring back the course so Open Space Committee members have reached out to both the Historical Commission and Parks and Recreation Committee and will report back to the Select board with possible recommendations. The OSP Committee is welcoming the new Recreation Director, Jamie Greenland to the July meeting.

Conservation Options for Princeton Land Owners: OSC members are reviewing various conservation options for land owners, meeting with other agencies and organizations such as the Princeton Land Trust, and the State Dept of Conservation and Recreation that work with land owners who are interested in conserving some of their land. We plan to sponsor a workshop in the fall or winter for landowners to attend who would like to learn more about private and public land conservation.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION COMMITTEE

There are several vacancies on the EAC! We are a great group of environmentally-minded people with a variety of skills and knowledge. We're particularly interested in new members with skills in communication and/or design who can help us keep our website current, and produce our quarterly newsletter and other flyers/info sheets/etc. We're involved in many exciting initiatives. You can check them all out on the EAC's town webpage.

Please fill out the online application if you are interested in joining us!

MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE



Princeton Master Plan

Community Vision Survey

Take the survey **today!**

Use this link:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/PrincetonCommunitySurvey
or

Scan the QR code with your phone



Stay up to date by visiting

MasterplanPrincetonMA.com

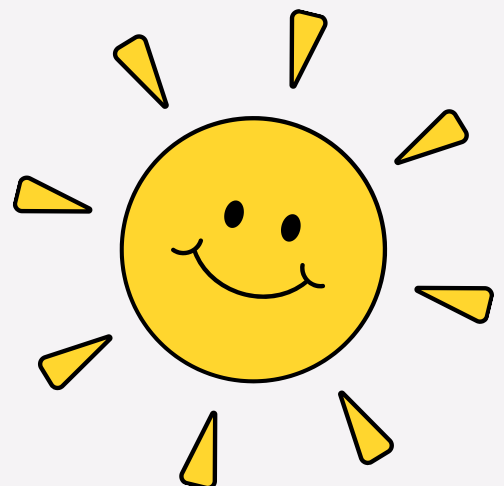
Or like us on Facebook
Facebook.com/MasterplanPrincetonMA



Do you want to help determine Princeton's future? The Town is updating its Master Plan which will guide the town's decisions for the next 10-15 years. Take the Community Survey to ensure your thoughts are included in the master planning process!

Follow the Master Plan process at our [website](#)

Take the survey [HERE](#)

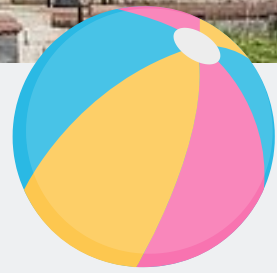


PRINCETON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Princeton Public Library has planned a busy summer for patrons of all ages! There are three summer reading programs (kids, teens, and adults) and a slate of in-person and virtual programs.

The Clock Tower project is wrapping up. Over the past couple of months, workers from Kronenberger and Sons Restoration repointed the tower, repainted the clock face, gilded the weathervane, and replaced portions of the roof. Thank you to all library users for their patience with some minor disruptions and a bit of noise during this process!

Summer Reading Programs for kids, teens, and adults are underway, but there's still plenty of time to sign up. Come into the library to register or visit www.princetonpubliclibrary.org and scroll down to the information on Summer Reading. Please note that you don't actually have to come to the library to participate in summer reading and enter to win raffle prizes (but we would love to see you!).



Kids' Programs

- Drop-in story time in the garden: Tuesdays, 10:30-11am. Stories, music, and movement for kids ages 0-6 and their caregivers.
- Reading Buddies: Thursdays 10:30am-12:30pm. Read to a certified service dog! Registration required.
- Join us for a Bubble party on Tuesday, July 12, at 10:30am!
- Visit our Story walk, August 1-14, on the green space next to the library. This year's book: *The Ugly Vegetables* by Grace Lin.
- The Library will host Animal Adventures on Tuesday, August 2, at 11am. No registration required. "This program is supported in part by a grant from the Princeton Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency."
- Join us for the program wrap-up party and ice cream social on Thursday, August 11, at 1:00pm.

Teen Programs

- Sign up for the Ten to Try reading challenge on Beanstack (www.beanstack.com)! Each book read earns a raffle ticket to win a prize.
- Escape Room: Thursdays in July, 3:00-6:00pm.
- Paint Night!: Thursday, August 4, at 5:30pm.
- Sewing class: make a throw pillow cover with Nicole! Thursday, August 25, at 6:00pm. Registration is required, as there is limit of 8 participants for this program.
- Letterboxing Challenge: Go to www.letterboxing.org to get started. Find the letterbox closest to the library—and see how many more you can find!

Adult Programs

- Enter our summer reading program and earn a raffle ticket to win a prize for each book read. Log your titles and enter the weekly raffle for gift cards to local businesses in the library or online at <https://padlet.com/eredihan1/yttaubjtn1zbd85>.
- Build your own terrarium night! Thursday, July 28, at 6:00pm. Registration required, as there is a limit of 8 participants. Teens welcome!
- Join us for a candle-making program presenting by the Kitchen Sink Candle Company. Thursday, August 11, at 6:00pm. Registration is required by August 4, as there is a limit of 12 participants.

The Library is partnering with the Tewksbury Public Library on a series of virtual programs. Use the links below to register for the programs of your choice!

- Wednesday, July 13: 7pm, [My summers with a serial killer](#)
- Wednesday, July 20: 11am, NASA presents "[The life cycle of a star](#)":
- Wednesday, August 3: 7pm, [Amateur sleuths and the world of art and artifacts](#)
- Thursday, August 25, 11am: [The Gilded World of Isabella Stewart Gardner](#)
- Wednesday, August 31, 11am: [From Apollo To Artemis -- NASA's Most Recent & Next Missions To Mars](#)



Looking forward to the fall

- Save the date for a poetry reading with Kevin King on September 15, at 6:30 pm in the library.
- Keep an eye out for more information on the Metro West ONE Read program. The book is Thank you Mr. Nixon, and the author, Gish Jen, will be making an appearance (location TBD). This is a hybrid program with more information forthcoming. For now, reserve a copy of the book through the library or online (cwmars.overdrive.com) and start reading!

Congratulations to Sara Gardner on her retirement! Sara, who retired on June 30, worked at the library for 25 years.

Want to stay up-to-date with library happenings?

We're everywhere! Follow us on social media: Facebook, Instagram (@princetonmapubliclibrary), call (978-464-2115), 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.

Princeton Police Department



In March, Officer Doyle and Officer F. Russell presented a bicycle safety program to students at the Thomas Prince School as part of a Municipal Road Safety Grant. During the presentation, students were asked to speak with their teacher if they needed a bicycle helmet. The Princeton Police Department was able to purchase helmets and provide them to the students who needed them. If anyone who needs a helmet and cannot afford one, please contact the department at (978)464-2928 or email Officer Doyle at hdoyle@princetonpolice.org to see if we can assist you with a new helmet.



On Wednesday, June 15, 2022, nine students successfully graduated from the RAD program held by Officer F. Russell of The Princeton Police Department. Students of this program are empowered as they learn awareness prevention, risk reduction, and risk avoidance in addition to hands on self-defense techniques. The class culminates with a controlled simulation that allows students to put into action all the techniques they've learned. Officer F. Russell was assisted by Officer Doyle of The Princeton Police Department, Officers Chase and Mucci of the Sterling Police Department, and Sergeant Herzig of the Rutland Police Department.

On June 16, 2022, Sergeant Thebeau had the honor of driving 3 students to the Thomas Prince School. Anna, Evan and Lilah were given a VIP ride to school. We hope they have a great summer!!

Officer William McGuinness was appointed as a part-time officer in June. Officer McGuinness previously served the Princeton Police Department from 2010 to 2015. Welcome back Officer McGuinness!!



Fire Department

The Princeton Fire Department participated in the 95th annual Wachusett Firefighter's Muster and Fire Truck Parade on Saturday, June 18th in Rutland. Participating Fire Departments included Princeton, Rutland, West Boylston, Sterling, Holden, Boylston, Harvard, and Bolton Fire-EMS in various races. Princeton tied for third but lost in the tie breaker by 2.5 seconds due to mechanical issues. A fun time was had by all!



Congratulations to Princeton Firefighter/EMT Ryan Preville for graduating from the Mass Call/Volunteer Firefighting Academy! Ryan is one of 28 graduates represent the 17 fire departments of Boxborough, Douglas, Dover, Grafton, Hardwick, Haverhill, Lunenburg, Mendon, Northbridge, Paxton, Princeton, Royalston, Sherborn, Shrewsbury, Stow, Tisbury, and Weston.



Graduates have completed 240 hours of training on nights and weekends. Upon successful completion of this program, all students have met the standards of National Fire Protection Association 1001. In addition, they have the ability to become certified to the level of Firefighter I and II and Hazardous Materials First Responder Operations Level by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council, which is accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications.



Board of Health

Town of Princeton residents are eligible for free at-home rapid COVID-19 test kits thanks to the Princeton Board of Health, Commonwealth of MA, and federal American Rescue Plan Act funding.

Test kits are available during regular business hours in the Board of Health Office while supplies last.

For questions, contact Terri Longtine, Board of Health Administrative Assistant, at 978-464-2104 or tlongtine@town.princeton.ma.us.



OPPORTUNITY FOR HOBBY FARMERS AND BACKYARD GARDENERS

The Princeton Agricultural Commission is looking for members! While Princeton has centuries of history as a farming community, in the 21st century most of our agricultural activity is small scale, for supplemental income or just for personal use and enjoyment. We're looking for members who can help us develop programs to support these activities.

If you have some animals, grow some vegetables, maintain a few fruit trees, tap to make maple syrup, or tend your woods as part of the Forestry Program, you have something to contribute to the Agricultural Commission, and experiences that will benefit the other residents of Princeton.

In the past, we have brought in speakers on planting and caring for fruit trees, control of parasites in livestock, best practices for vegetable gardening, reducing taxes through participation in the Ch. 61 Forestry Program, and protecting against development by conservation restrictions. We regularly organized "Farm Day" to encourage visits to some of Princeton's small farms with alpacas, sheep, chickens, and cows, and we had a tent at Hey Day at Wachusett Meadows. We have been pretty quiet during COVID, but with COVID restrictions being phased out, our goal is to resume these activities.

What we need are people with interests, ideas, and energy. Do you have a few chickens and want to encourage others to share that experience? Have you thought about fencing in the acre of old hay field behind your house and raising a heifer? Do you enjoy fresh-pressed cider and want to know how to grow apple trees and make your own? Do you have some sugar maples that you are thinking of tapping next March? Have you been fighting a losing battle with the deer and rabbits who visit your vegetable garden? These are just some of the topics that the Agricultural Commission could present.

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 6:30 in the small room at the Town Hall Annex, generally for no more than an hour. Come introduce yourself to us! Even if you're not ready to become a regular member, we would welcome your ideas and participation. And if coming to a meeting does not fit in with your schedule, drop us a note on our emails or on our website (princetonagcom.com)

Eddie Good, Chair - eddiegood@princeton-ma.us

John Mirick - jmirick@mirickoconnell.com

Chad Steiner - chadsteiner@mac.com

Dylan Stimson - dstimpy12@gmail.com

PLANNING BOARD

With the issue of commercial marijuana cultivation and processing resolved by the approval of Zoning By-Law amendments at Town Meeting in May, the Planning Board is focusing on issues raised by the state mandate for “high density” zoning, senior housing, solar power generation, and the update of Princeton’s Master Plan, as well as responding to the usual requests for approval of plans, special permits for accessory apartments, site plan reviews, and other matters as set forth in the Zoning By-Laws.

“High Density” Zoning. The Commonwealth has circulated draft regulations for high density zoning (up to 15 residential units per acre) in MBTA municipalities, defined as municipalities with an MBTA station, or adjacent to a municipality with an MBTA station. This definition includes Princeton. The regulations are intended to implement the recent amendment to Ch. 40A sec. 3A which is part of the Legislature’s response to the housing shortage in Massachusetts. Unless MBTA municipalities have at least 50 acres zoned for high density, they will not be eligible to certain state-funded programs. Princeton has benefited from those state-funded programs.

Because Princeton’s residences need septic systems and wells, as a practical matter high density residential development is not feasible. The Planning Board has submitted comments asking for revisions to the draft regulations, and will be reviewing Princeton’s zoning by-laws in light of whatever final regulations are issued.

Senior Housing. This is an issue on which the Planning Board has been working for some time. Currently, our Zoning By-Laws allow accessory apartments, and, in older houses with sufficient land, conversions to two or three family residences. The lead on this issue has now been taken by the Housing Production Plan Committee, which may recommend that the Planning Board consider amendments to the Zoning By-Laws to facilitate some multi-unit residential housing in some areas, in addition to Chapter 40B housing (such as Wachusett House).

Solar Power Generation. The Princeton Municipal Light Department is considering installation of a solar generation facility on the old landfill, off of Hubbardston Road. Under Princeton’s Zoning by-Laws, commercial solar power generation is light manufacturing, allowed in Business and Business-Industrial zones by special permit and site plan review. In response to the Commonwealth’s ambitious goal for non-fossil fuel power generation, the Planning Board will be considering amendments to the Zoning By-Laws regulating commercial solar power generation in Residential-Agricultural zones as well as residential solar power generation.

Master Plan. The Selectboard has appointed a Master Plan Steering Committee to review and consider changes to Princeton’s Master plan. The Planning Board expects to make suggestions based on the experiences of the Planning Board in the implementation of the current Zoning By-Laws. Following the final report by the Master Plan Steering Committee, the Planning Board will be reviewing the Zoning By-Laws in light of the recommendations in the updated Master Plan.

The Planning Board usually meets on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, at 7:30 in the Town Hall Annex. Agendas and minutes are posted for each meeting. Residents are encouraged to participate on these on-going issues, as well as anything else that may be on an agenda.

Veterans' Services

Since our last update, we have hired two additional staff, Bob Chace, Assistant Director of Veterans' Services, and Tav Adams, Administrative Coordinator for Veterans' Services.

Our office hours and contact information are below. We invite Princeton veterans and dependents to contact us or drop in during office hours. If you're unable to come to Gardner, Lynette Gabriela can come to you:

Monday-Thursday: 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

Friday: 8:00 am-1:00 pm

Phone: 978-630-4017

Fax: 978-630-4057

You can also email us at tadams@gardner-ma.gov, rchace@gardner-ma.gov, or lgabrila@gardner-ma.gov

Lynette participated in three key events recently:

- Keynote speaker at the Women Veterans' Conference in April, held in Boston
- Facilitator for the LGBTQIA+ roundtable at Women's Conference in June in Norwood
- Presented on Military Sexual Trauma at the Massachusetts Veterans' Services Officers Association (MVSOA) Conference in June at Cape Cod

Lynette and Bob are Veterans' Services Officers (VSOs). VSOs connect veterans and their families with federal, state, and local benefits they are entitled to, as well as community resources. Primary function of the VSO office is to administer financial assistance program Chapter 115 to local veterans, and help veterans file their VA claims.

Chapter 115: Financial assistance and medical reimbursements program for veterans and their dependents, including surviving spouses, who meet income qualifications. Eligible veterans additionally must have an Honorable Discharge or General Discharge Under Honorable Conditions. Please contact us for more information about Chapter 115.

For VA claims, please reach out to us! Examples of medical conditions that if shown to be service-connected can result in disability compensation, include:

- Tinnitus, hearing loss
- Knee pain, back pain, loss of range of motion
- Migraines
- Anxiety, depression, PTSD, including experiencing Military Sexual Trauma (MST) that resulted in PTSD
- And much more

We have much more planned for the coming months, and look forward to our next update for Princeton.