

# I Heard It At Town Hall

## COUNTING OUR BLESSINGS

As we all get ready to celebrate our first COVID Thanksgiving I hope you will take a moment to count living in the beautiful Town of Buckland as one of your blessings.

Yes, I know—there is a laundry list of things you would fix or change about your community if you could. I promise you, I have my list too.

But take it from someone who only recently discovered your little slice of heaven it's honestly one of the most special places ever. I commute into work each day from points East and even now, more than a full year as your Town Administrator, I relish the ride up the Trail and over the Bridge to my office in Town Hall. I admit to bragging to my fellow administrators that I have a better view — looking out over the Bridge of Flowers—than any of them.

Last summer, my first in Buckland, was amazing. It was so fun to watch local residents emerge from their homes once the tourists had deserted State Street for the day, thereby returning to you your Village. It was heart warming to see couples walk hand-in-hand over to the Pub for date night or a family stroll by with ice cream cones from Mo's. There were evenings I hated the idea of going home.

And by contrast, this summer was certainly strange. Fewer visitors for starters. No tour buses. No parades of Red Hats trouping through Town Hall to use the bathrooms. And maybe you came into Town less often? And when you did come you wore a face covering. And maybe you held a BLM sign at the end of the Bridge. Maybe you didn't come out at all. Know that I missed seeing you.

So what about next year? I have to believe things will get back to the way they were or at least better than they are now. So while we all continue to be patience with our situation, please know your town employees and public officials are working hard to keep your Town moving forward. We would appreciate your suggestions, see page 4

That's it for now. Stay grateful for the space we have to spread out and stay well. And Happy Thanksgiving friends.



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## WATCH FOR

Check the Town's website for the date and time of an upcoming virtual public information session sponsored by the Select Board and Energy Committee to review the [electricity rate-increases for community aggregation customers](#). Colonial Power representatives will be on the call to explain why the rates are changing and answer your questions about the impact to your electric bill.

## MAKE THE DIFFERENCE IN YOUR TOWN



### YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD FOOD PANTRY NEEDS YOUR HELP

Each day we read or watch the headlines about the growing rate of food insecurity in our country due to the evolving Covid-19 Pandemic and our first thought is often I would help if I knew my donation would actually make a difference.

Good News!

By donating to [Community Action for Self-Reliance Food Pantries](#) you are helping people right here in Buckland & Shelburne get the extra help they need today and every day through the West County Food Pantry. The pantry is located at 51 Maple Street in Shelburne and open to all every Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## REGIONAL HEALTH NOTES

### Be a Local Hero: Quarantine When You Need To

We, a group of Public Health Nurses serving Franklin County, are reaching out to readers to correct a misimpression we hear regularly from Franklin County residents regarding quarantine.

As should be clear from the state data (<https://www.publichealthwm.org/covid-19/data/Franklin>), there has been an increase in the number of COVID cases in Franklin County over the last two weeks. While we are still doing well in comparison to many parts of the world, we do need to keep our guard up and keep practicing safety through handwashing, mask wearing, and social distancing.

In Franklin County, as in the rest of Massachusetts, statistics reveal that people are younger and have significantly more close contacts while they are infectious, before being diagnosed, when compared to earlier in the pandemic. "Close contacts" are people the sick person was closer than 6 feet to for a cumulative 15 minutes over a 24 hour period while they were infectious.

People who are close contacts must quarantine for 14 days. Period.

With a novel virus like Coronavirus, understanding is always evolving, but the guidance on quarantine length has not changed in the past year. According to the Department of Public Health:

*Close contacts without symptoms should be tested as soon as possible after they are notified of their exposure to COVID-19. The contact is required to quarantine for the full 14 days, even following a negative test result.*

*Close contacts that develop any symptom at any time during their quarantine period should be tested promptly. Testing should occur even if the person previously had a nega-*

*tive test result during their quarantine period*

Unlike the travel quarantine order, there is no ability to "test out" of a quarantine, because the person involved is not just a traveler, but has been determined to be a close contact of someone with COVID, which can take 14 days to develop after exposure. We hear from many people that they believe they can take a test and then be released from quarantine, but this is not true. You must wait until the 14 days has passed to make sure you do not become sick and infect other people.

Public health nurses working for local health departments in the region, acting on guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control, are working overtime to reach the many people exposed to people infected with COVID at social events, sporting events, workplaces, houses of worship and more. Once we reach these close contacts, we explain their risk and work with them to stay home. We are deeply grateful to the majority of people we talk to who are completely cooperative. If you get a call from a strange number, please pick up the phone – it may be a local public health nurse calling to explain that you have been identified as a close contact, and asking you to take the very important step of quarantining -- staying home and away from other people -- to stop the spread of COVID in our community.

Written by Lisa White, Melanie Zamojski, Meg Burcg, Megan Tudryn, Jennifer Hoffman, Connie Schwaiger and Jenny Potee, Public Health Nurses serving Franklin County and reprinted from the Greenfield Recorder.

## HOLIDAY MEALS & COVID-19: REDUCE YOUR RISK

*Protect your loved ones from getting or spreading COVID-19 during the holidays*

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<b>Who's Coming?</b>	Only household members gathering	People from households that are in your "quarantine bubble" (note new household gathering size limits - 10 indoors, 25 outdoors - in Governor's Order No. 54)	Multiple households gathering
<b>Where?</b>	Outdoors/Open Air	Indoors with doors and windows open	Indoors with no fresh air coming in
<b>How Close?</b>	Virtual dinner with people sharing a meal online	One table per household 6 feet apart	Seated less than 6 feet apart
<b>How to Serve?</b>	Each household brings their own self-contained food and drink	One person serves all food onto plates to minimize handling	Family-style passing of platters, containers, condiments

### OTHER TIPS AND IDEAS TO KEEP THE HOLIDAYS FUN AND SAFE:

This year's holiday celebrations are going to be different - but there is a lot you can do together to honor your traditions and make the holidays special!

Find some great tips compiled by our colleagues at 4SC + The Partnership by [clicking here!](#)

**Use your smartphone camera app to scan the QR code and visit the site now!**



**Have a safe and happy holiday season from all of us at the Franklin Regional Council of Governments!**





# BE IN THE KNOW – GET INVOLVED !

## HOUSING & LAND USE CHOICES TO BE DISCUSSED

The Buckland Planning Board's public forum virtual meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 2, at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. A link will be provided on the town website.

<https://www.town.buckland.ma.us/planning-board/news/public-forum-housing-wednesday-december-2-2020-630-pm>

As a follow-up to our October 2019 forum, we will be discussing potential zoning bylaw changes that would impact housing development in town. The changes mostly involve the possibility of creating accessory apartments in town, and also infill of small lots, particularly in the village district. There are also scenarios for cluster and cottage developments - houses placed relatively close together in the village district. We are looking for input from town residents about a variety of possible changes -- there will be polls to respond to at the Zoom meeting. Please attend and let us know what you think!

### Join A Committee

#### No Experience Needed—Just Your Time & Community Pride

There are vacancies on the Conservation Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Both Committees follow procedures as provided by state law and local by-laws and meet 'as required'.

For more information please email Pam at  
[adminassist@town.buckland.ma.us](mailto:adminassist@town.buckland.ma.us)  
or call 413 625-6330 ext 1

### Get Social with the Schools

[www.vimeo.com/mtrsd](http://www.vimeo.com/mtrsd)

#### Facebook

Mohawk Trail Regional School:

*@mohawktrailregional*

Buckland-Shelburne Elementary:

*@BucklandShelburneElementary*

Colrain Central School: *@colraincentral*

Sanderson Academy:

*@SandersonAcademy*

#### Instagram

Mohawk Trail Regional School:

*@mohawktrailregional*

Colrain Central School: *@colraincentral*

#### District Social Media

Twitter: *@MTRSDistrict @MTRSDSuper*



## SELECT BOARD MEETING NOTES

NOVEMBER 24, 2020

### NOTES & VOTES

- Waived the Town's Right of First Refusal to purchase property on Old Upper Street which will be removed from a 61A Agricultural Restriction.
- Accepted the Recommendation from the Energy Committee to hold a public information session on the proposed rate increase for customers participating the Community Aggregation program.
- Approved payment of a bill to the Town of Ashfield's Whip City for installation of high-speed internet drops in the Apple Valley area with edits.
- Accepted the final draft of the Towns' "Major Concerns" with the proposed creation of a tri-town senior center district.
- Signed the Department of Environmental Protection RDP (recycling grant) agreement for \$4,200.
- Approved minutes from Oct. 5, 2020
- Heard **Town Administrators Report.**

\*\*\* This feature does not replace official minutes. Minutes can be found **online.** For more information including documents reviewed during this meeting please visit the Town's website for the **Nov. 24, 2020 Meeting Posting.**

BUCKLAND  
RECREATION  
COMMITTEE  
MEMBERS  
2020-2021

Cindy Schwartz,  
chair

Mark Amstein

Jamie Bishop

Brandon Boucias

Dan Fleuriel

Carol Foote

Christy Moore

Wendy Sweetser-  
Ferris

Like our

Facebook page

***Fans of the  
Buckland Rec***

and watch for news  
and updates here:

[www.facebook.com/  
groups/15572349078  
62790](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1557234907862790)

## THE REC: AN OVERVIEW

The Buckland Recreation Area saw different types of activity during the warmer months of 2020. Balancing our commitment to safety and activity promoting community health and wellness proved difficult at times but overall it was a successful season.



*Photo taken by resident Phoebe Walker*

We were proud that the playground saw lots of activity as families looked for ways to keep active outside. Sanitizing the equipment was a priority.

There were lots of inquiries about the use of the pavilion. Because of precautions, or simply the timing of the intended event, we were unable to host the bulk of the requests. However, members of the Senior Center used the space regularly, as did other unofficial small social groups, finding ways to be outside together, socially distant but still connecting.

## THE REC: PROJECTS

With less formal activity at the Recreation Area this summer—sadly no summer camp and fewer rentals - that increased flexibility for projects to update facilities and continue to move forward toward returning a pool to the property. You may have noticed these projects that were underway:

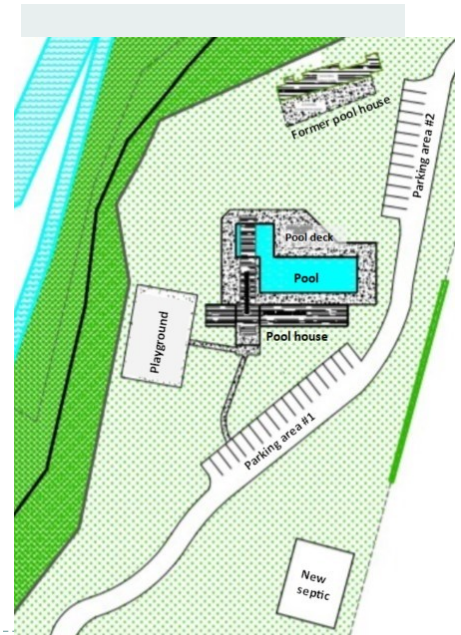
- The pavilion was upgraded, including the pouring of a new concrete pad where there had previously been stone, a drip border installed to shed water away from the structure, and new sidewalks installed around the structure's perimeter, making it handicap accessible.
- The driveway and parking lot near the pavilion was freshly paved with millings for a smoother and safer surface.
- Thanks to an anonymous donor, a new basketball court is in process at the Rec Area. When completed, the court will serve recreational purposes for adult and youth basketball, pickleball, four square and hopscotch. Along the tree line, evergreens were cut to prep for this project.
- Also, the infield at Cricket Field was renovated and increased in size, thanks to the Youth Baseball League, and private fundraising is underway for new fencing, a new driveway, and upgrades to the concessions stand, bathrooms and electrical service.

## THE REC: PARTNERING TO FUNDRAISE

Last winter, members of the Buckland Recreation Committee submitted an application to establish a non-profit organization that would fundraise for projects related to the work of the recreation committee. This spring, the committee received non-profit status approval for the Friends of the Town of Buckland, MA Recreation Committee. (EIN 84-3630628)

The non-profit's first initiative will be to secure funding for the pool project. About \$600,000.00 has been committed to the estimated \$1.2 million project. Board members have begun strategizing about fundraising (community sub-groups, events, grants, etc.) and will offer lots of opportunities to support the pool campaign. If anyone is interested in talking with a committee member about the project, send an email to [friendsofbucklandrecreation@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofbucklandrecreation@gmail.com)

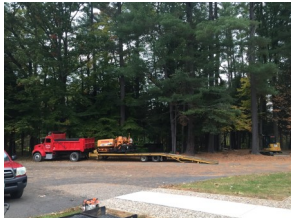
Checks may be made out to "Friends of the Town of Buckland, MA Recreation Committee" and gifts may be sent or delivered to 17 State Street, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370 (in Buckland).



*We offer thanks to the donors, volunteers, and local businesses that continue to make progress possible. Thank you so very much.*

## THE REC: PROJECTS IN PICTURES

The work at and around the pavilion:



The work at Cricket Field:





## HEARD AROUND TOWN

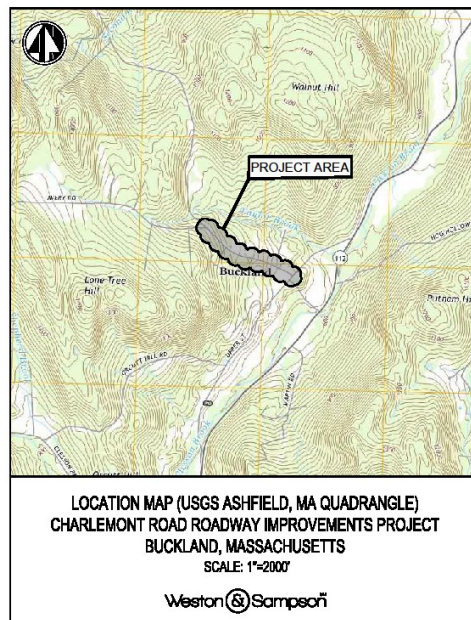
### SELECT BOARD RECEIVES \$1 MILLION FOR CHARLEMONT ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Commuters and locals alike will rejoice at the news that Buckland has been awarded funds from the 2020 MassWorks Infrastructure Program to reconstruct Charlemont Road from Upper Street to Avery Road and to make temporary repairs to the culvert at Avery Road.

This project continues the infrastructure improvements started in 2019 with the reconstruction of Upper Street. The Town received \$1 million from the same MassWorks grant program to fund that project as well. The Town will work with Weston & Sampson Engineers to design the project and plans are to begin construction in the Spring of 2021.

Meanwhile the Select Board will work to identify a grant program or other funding source to permanently replace the culvert at Avery Road.

You can learn more about MassWorks and watch Governor Charlie Baker's grant announcement video [here](#).



#### CONTACT US!

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