

# OUR TOWN

A Digital Newsletter from the Town of Dover, MA

## Welcome to the January Issue of OUR TOWN

Hello and welcome to the new year! There is a lot to look forward to in 2024, and we have started with the release of our third volume of the town newsletter. In this edition, you will find updates on the budget process, Board of Selectmen reorganization, new Council on Aging programs and much more.

We are pleased to announce that we have moved our newsletter subscription platform to Constant Contact, which will make it easier for you to subscribe and receive the newsletter in a more concise form. Furthermore, we have added a new subscription option for "Town News & Alerts" on Constant Contact. Our goal is to ensure that it is effortless and efficient for you to stay informed about your local government. We encourage you to subscribe and invite others to do the same. Please sign up below!

**If you are part of a Town board/committee/commission and would like to submit content for the January issue, please contact [newsletter@dovertownma.gov](mailto:newsletter@dovertownma.gov)**

## SIGN UP FOR THE NEWSLETTER

and tell a friend  
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**VOL. 3, NO.1, JANUARY 2024**

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### WHAT'S IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE...

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# In Memoriam

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Robert P. “Bob” Springett, a valued member of our community. Bob will always be remembered for his unwavering dedication to serving Dover and making it a better place for everyone. Bob’s family was by his side when he passed away on December 4, 2023, at the age of 76.



Bob spent 17 years of his life volunteering for the community, serving on the School Committee, the Capital Budget Committee, and the Board of Selectmen. He joined the School Committee when his children were still in the school system, driven by his passion for ensuring that the children of Dover received the best education possible. Bob had a professional management background and a unique ability to see opportunities to professionalize and provide structure to the local government organization. He shared his vision for the town and tackled issues with his dedication, knowledge, and intelligence. Bob was particularly passionate about the community center, as he saw the value that a shared community space could provide. His greatest satisfaction was seeing the community center vote pass at town meeting.

Bob’s ultimate goal was to make Dover a better place for everyone, and he worked tirelessly to achieve that goal. People like Bob are the backbone of our community, and we are grateful for their selfless service. The town of Dover expresses its deepest gratitude to Bob for his many years of service. His contributions to our community will not be forgotten.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to Bob’s family and loved ones during this difficult time. In memory of Bob Springett, we invite you to consider making a donation to the Friends of the Dover Community Center. Donations can be made payable to Friends of the Dover Community Center and mailed to Friends of the Dover Community Center, care of Cynthia Devall, 28 Francis Street, Dover, MA 02030. The donations will be used to construct a rock wall that includes built-in benches in the outdoor space. The wall was removed earlier due to price overruns, but it was Bob's wish to have it built. All donations will be matched by the Springett family.

# Board of Selectmen



In  
Brief

## **Town Meeting:**

Preparations for the Annual Town Meeting are currently underway. On November 30, 2023, the Board of Selectmen voted to open the town meeting warrant for the placement of articles. The warrant will remain open until Friday, January 12, 2024. To learn more about Dover's Annual Town Meeting or how to get an article placed on the warrant, please visit <https://www.doverma.gov/453/Town-Meeting>.

## **Police Chief Appointed**

The search to appoint Dover's new police chief has been completed. On Thursday, December 14, 2023, the Dover Board of Selectmen voted to appoint Joseph Vinci as Dover's Police Chief. He previously served as a lieutenant for the police department in Westwood. The Board of Selectmen is excited to welcome him to Dover and expects that he will commence his role as Chief at the end of January. The Board of Selectmen would also like to thank the search committee for their time and interest in helping Dover select the best candidate for our next chief.

## **Budget Update**

On November 30, 2023, Town Administrator Michael Blanchard presented the FY25 Preliminary budget outlook. This overview included maximum estimations of revenues and expenditures to provide a baseline for further review and refinement. The presentation also highlighted significant requests, which included new positions such as the Finance Director and Municipal Project Manager under the Board of Selectmen. In anticipation of the community center opening in FY25, the positions of community center director and two custodians were requested to support operations once the building is open. The presentation also included a summary of capital budget requests and an overview of the reserve policy implementation. The preliminary budget will continue to be refined ahead of Annual Town Meeting 2024.

## **Capital Budget:**

The Capital Budget Committee (CBC) has been meeting with Department Heads to review capital budget requests for Fiscal 2025. Initial capital budget requests approximate \$3.5 million and are comprised of: \$2.0 million for infrastructure including storm water upgrades at the DPW, a replacement salt shed and culvert replacement; \$0.8 million for replacement of DPW vehicles originally purchased in the late 1970s, \$0.15 million for design fees for park & recreation playground and pickle ball court project and \$0.55 million for replacement equipment for fire, police and town buildings. The CBC makes its recommendations, establishes and applies parameters of due diligence on each request, including age and condition, utilization, operations, alternatives, return on investment, maintenance, safety, reliability, technology improvements, and environmental issues. As such the CBC is working closely with the Town Administrator and Head of the DPW to identify sources of funding for the infrastructure projects to offset taxpayer costs. At the December 28, 2023 Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting the board voted to utilize \$0.8 million of ARPA funding to offset the \$2.0 million of investment related to infrastructure upgrades.

## **Re-organization and Election:**

With the loss of Selectman Bob Springett, who was serving as chair at the time of his passing, the Board reorganized and voted to appoint Robyn Hunter as chair through February 29, 2024 followed by John Jeffries who will serve as Chair starting March 1 and continue through the end of his term in June 2025. The board also agreed to hold a special election, scheduled for March 5, 2024, to fill Bob Springett's vacant seat. Candidates for the special election can request nomination papers from the Town Clerk. Papers must be returned by January 12 by 1:00pm.



# Board of Selectmen cont.



**In  
Brief**

## Housing Task Force

The Housing Task Force continued to take action on Dover's housing priorities. The task force finalized a land development and housing website page that will allow the public to educate themselves on major housing initiatives such as Chapter 40B and MBTA Community Act. The site will also allow the public to view the current projects under review. The task force also discussed submitting a warrant article for consulting funds to create a comprehensive Dover development and housing plan. This would help provide a roadmap for zoning bylaw changes. You can view the new page at <https://www.doverma.gov/589/Land-Use-Development-and-Education>

## Community Center:

In the last update from 11/21, the footings for the Pavilion building had been completed. As of 12/22, the foundation walls were poured. The waterproofing and perimeter insulation followed, and the foundations were backfilled to the finished grade. Ongoing work in this area includes the underground electrical and plumbing which are anticipated to be complete during the week of Christmas. After this, the concrete slab will be placed. Within the Gym building, the progress included excavations/compaction for the foundations, formwork, reinforcing, and concrete placement of the footings and foundation walls. Next activities include waterproofing, insulation, backfilling, and start of the concrete masonry walls around the gym and elevator which is another major milestone. Within the 1910 building that will remain, openings were cut for the new windows and repointing of the brick is ongoing. The next major milestone is steel delivery which anticipated in mid-January. The project team continues to monitor the schedule on an ongoing basis for a scheduled completion date in the fall of 2024.



construction site with wood frame prepared for concrete pouring



construction site with foundation partially set



construction site with foundation partially set

## Meet the Team

### Town of Dover Welcomes Local Inspector

The Building Department welcomes Joe Doyle as our part-time Local Inspector. Joe comes to us from Westwood where he served as Building Commissioner. Joe will be handling building inspections, approval of building permits, and answering contractor and homeowner questions.



# State Representative

Please save the date! State Representative Denise Garlick will be presenting her Annual Report to the Community where she will share her accomplishments from 2023 and her priorities for 2024. This presentation will be held in person, with the option to attend virtually.



Rep. Denise Garlick's Report to the Community

Monday, February 5th

Dover Town House - 5 Springdale Avenue

7:00 - 7:30 P.M. - Presentation

7:30 - 8:00 P.M. - Q & A

## Department of Public Works

The DPW is pleased to announce the news certifying our Fair Share apportionment for Fiscal Year 2024. The Fair Share Amendment funds are being distributed according to two formulas. The first \$50 million is being distributed using the traditional Chapter 90 formula based on local road mileage (58.33%), population (20.83%), and employment (20.83%). The second \$50 million is being distributed using a formula based on each municipality's share of road mileage. Dover will be receiving an additional \$169,140 to support local infrastructure (similar to the Chapter 90 Program.)

### Expanding Services: Water Work Improvement:

On September 25 and again on October 29th, the DPW responded to Spring Lane at Springdale Avenue for water main breaks. Due to the frequency of this failure, the team coordinated efforts with Karl Warnick (Dover's Water Operator) and planned a long-term solution. On December 5 the team installed a new run of 4" ductile iron water main, to eliminate the 2" of perpetual failed 2" steel pipe improving the quality and resilience of the Town's water infrastructure.



a hole in the ground with old leaking steel pipe



a hole in the ground with leaking steel pipe covered



a hole in the ground with old steel pipe



a hole in the ground with new steel pipe installed



The Council on Aging has some Informative programs this month and invites all seniors to attend. Please email [coa@doverma.gov](mailto:coa@doverma.gov) or call 508-315-5734 to sign up. Ask to be added to our email list with weekly updates and links to a convenient online program signup page.

## **TALK WITH THE TOWN: SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT**

Wednesday, January 17 at 10:30am

Dover Town Library, Community Room

The COA hosts Dover-Sherborn Public Schools Superintendent Elizabeth McCoy to share an update on the district's strategic plan, including community engagement.

## **LIFE TRANSITION BINDER**

Wednesday, January 10 at 2:30pm

or Friday, January 19 at 10:30am

Dover Town House, Selectmen's Meeting Room

Are all your important details organized in one place so your family can easily access it if you were incapacitated? Could your family step-in and help you manage your affairs if you needed assistance? Join Sandra Batra at one of these free sessions to learn how to create a customized binder that incorporates all your life details, including personal data, property, financial, retirement and insurance details, medical, and service provider information. Take control and act now so your loved ones have the information they need in the event of an emergency and you have peace of mind.

## **PLANNING FOR MEDICARE**

Wednesday, January 24 at 10:30am

Dover Town Library, Community Room



Are you turning 65 or thinking about retirement soon? Join Susan Flanagan of Blue Cross Blue Shield of MA for a free seminar to help you navigate the complexities of Medicare and answer questions about plans and benefits. Topics covered include an explanation of Medicare, the Medicare enrollment timeline, Medigap and Medicare Advantage plans, and programs available to early retirees.

## **INTERGENERATIONAL TEA**

Wednesday, January 31 at 11:30am

The Dover Church, Kraft Hall, 17 Springdale Ave

The COA welcomes members of the DMA (Dover Mothers Association).

This tea brings together seniors and "juniors" to connect over a light lunch and build relationships across generations.



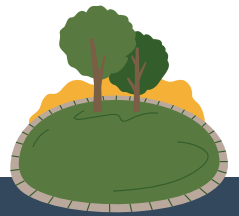
# Open-Space Land Management News

Dover's Land Management Working Group is a joint effort by the Open Space Committee and the Conservation Commission to develop and implement strategic conservation land management plans that aim to protect and enhance the Town's critical natural resources, address climate change, and improve maintenance in town-managed open spaces.

The group meets approximately monthly to discuss ongoing projects. The main effort in trail maintenance right now is to replace a worn-out bog bridge near the Centre Street entrance of Wylde Woods. The new structure is designed to last longer and have less impact on the wetlands it crosses.

The Working Group is also starting a volunteer stewardship initiative to encourage users of Dover's trails and open spaces to contribute to their care and maintenance. There are a wide range of ways to get involved, from simply reporting issues to contributing to projects such as new trail features or rerouting existing trails around problem areas.

join a future planning meeting to share your interest or suggest ideas for future projects! Meetings are posted on the town website.



## Planning Department

Discover everything you need to know about Land Use Development and Education in Dover by visiting the Planning Department's updated land use Development and Education page. Our goal is to provide all the necessary information regarding new and impactful developments in Dover, and ensure transparency in the approval processes involved in growth. You can easily find information on subdivisions, 4OB developments, Approval Not Required Plans, Town Land Acquisitions, Housing Production Plan updates, MBTA requirements, Zoning changes, and updates on this page. We have also provided educational materials and references to laws and regulations governing development in Dover for residents who wish to become more informed. Our efforts aim to help you understand the approval processes involved with growth and become an active participant in Dover's development. If you have an interest in a particular topic or questions, please feel free to contact the Planning Department for assistance. visit the land use and development page here: <https://www.doverma.gov/589/Land-Use-Development-and-Education>





# Assessing Department

## Senior Tax Relief Programs

**Property Tax Exemption for Person Over 65 (Clause 41C) - Administered by Assessor's Office**  
Seniors may qualify for an exemption which discharges a taxpayer from the legal obligation to pay a part of the tax assessed for the fiscal year. You must satisfy tests relating to criteria below as of July 1st of the tax year:

| Clause | Age         | Domicile                      | Ownership/Occupancy | Max. Income<br>(Single/Married) | Max. Assets<br>(Single/Married) | Exempt Amount    |
|--------|-------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| 41C    | 65 or older | in Mass. 10 consecutive years | in Mass 5+ years    | \$35,602/\$53,402               | \$71,203/\$97,904               | up to \$2,000.00 |

**Property Tax Exemption for Person over 70 (Clause 17D) - Administered by Assessor's Office**  
Seniors may qualify for exemption which provides a reduced benefit, but have less strict eligibility requirements. You must satisfy tests relating to age, domicile, ownership and assets as of July 1st of the tax year.

| Clause | Age         | Domicile                      | Ownership/Occupancy | Max. Assets | Exempt Amount  |
|--------|-------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|----------------|
| 17D    | 70 or older | in Mass. 10 consecutive years | in Mass 5+ years    | \$74,222    | up to \$788.00 |

**Property Tax Deferral for Seniors (Clause 41A) - Administered by Assessor's Office**  
Seniors may be able to delay payment of all or a portion of property taxes. You must satisfy tests relating to criteria below as of July 1st of the tax year.

| Clause | Age         | Domicile                      | Ownership/Occupancy | Max. Income | Exempt Amount             |
|--------|-------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| 41A    | 65 or older | in Mass. 10 consecutive years | in Mass 5+ years    | \$64,000    | all or part of taxes owed |

**Other Property Tax Relief Exemption Programs- Administered by Assessor's Office:**

Disabled Veterans (Clauses 22 and 22A-F)

Blind/Disabled (Clause 37A)

Applications due April 1, 2024 for fiscal year 2024

Contact the Assessor's office at 508-785-0032 ext. 241 for an application or additional information.



# Schools

## Chickering Elementary School

December was a busy time at Chickering. Many of our students created handmade holiday cards for each of the Dover Town Departments, including, Public Safety (Police, Fire, EMT, Poison & Animal); School Committee Members, Chickering Staff (Superintendent, Front Office, Nurse, Janitor, DEDA, Cafeteria) and - new this year - our fabulous Bus Drivers!

We had several all school gatherings including the Grade 5 Convocation concert and the Festival of Lights sing along. At the Convocation, we heard the Chickering Strings perform as well as the grade 5 Band. The entire fifth grade participated by singing and playing instruments (drums and ukuleles for example) to accompany the text, Quest by Aaron Becker.

In preparation for the Festival of Lights sing along we learned songs connected to the theme of light in music class, from Jyoti De (Diwali) to Salam Alaikum (Ramadan). We discussed that people around the world, throughout the year, celebrate with light. In December, there are four Festivals of Lights we learned songs for: Hanukkah, Winter Solstice, Christmas, and Kwanzaa.

## Dover Sherborn High School

The Raiders 23-24 Winter Season is underway with 250 student athletes participating across 13 winter sport offerings! Alpine, Nordic, and gymnastics will begin their meets and races after the mid-year break. Records are as follows as of 12/18/23:

Girls swim and dive: 1-0

Boys swim and dive: 1-0

Girls indoor track and field: 1-1

Boys indoor track and field: 1-1

Boys & Girls Alpine, Boys & Girls Nordic,  
and MADS Gymnastics 0-0


Girls basketball 1-1

Boys basketball 2-0

Girls ice hockey (Hopkinton DS Nipmuc Co-Op) 0-2-1

Boys ice hockey (DS Weston Co-Op): 2-1

## Congratulations to Erica Hills on being named the Hometown Weekly December Student Athlete of the Month!



**Erica Hills**

**Hometown Sports**

**Dover-Sherborn**  
December  
2023  
**Athlete of the Month**

**Sport:** Basketball  
**School:** Dover-Sherborn High School

Congratulations to four year varsity starter and two year captain, Erica Hills, on being named the Hometown Weekly student athlete of the month! Erica is a senior captain on the girls basketball team, and hopes to lead her team back to another historic run throughout the 23-24 season. The Dover native has been an integral part of a girls basketball program that has gone down as the most successful girls basketball program in school history. Last year, as the team MVP, she helped lead the team to their first TVL Championship and second consecutive MIAA D3 Elite 8 appearance. As a returning TVL All Star and two time team MVP, she hopes to lead the team even further this year. The versatile guard/forward will be headed to Hamilton College next year where she has committed to play NCAA DIII basketball, and major in the science and chemistry field. Her favorite class at DS was AP Chemistry with Mr. Levasseur.

Sponsored by

**DOVER COUNTRY PROPERTIES**  
*Distinctive Properties & Country Estates*

Sponsored by Jay Hughes of the Dover-Sherborn class of 1969. Jay is a longtime resident of Dover with deep roots in our community, having grown up, raised his family, and situated his business here. While attending Dover-Sherborn, Jay played three varsity sports: Football, Basketball, and Track & Field. Following his graduation from Harvard College, he returned to Dover to begin careers in both real estate and in municipal fire and rescue. In 2016, Jay retired from the Dover Fire Department after 50 years of service, with 23 years as Fire Chief. He remains a local fixture as he continues to oversee the bustling operation of Dover Country Properties, his real estate firm, located in the heart of Dover. A Dover-Sherborn Athletics Hall of Fame inductee, Jay is an avid supporter of our town's student athletes.

4 Walpole Street, Dover, MA 02030  
Cell: 508-269-3322 • [dovercountryproperties.com](http://dovercountryproperties.com)

# Recycling Committee

## Holiday Season Recycling Guidelines:

The Dover Recycling Committee (DRC) announces guidelines for recycling during the holiday season to encourage residents to continue to reduce, reuse, recycle, and conserve town funds.



### RECYCLE – DO NOT THROW IN THE TRASH

- **CARDBOARD BOXES:** Breakdown and flatten all boxes and remove plastic liners and Styrofoam. Include greasy pizza boxes.
- **TEXTILES:** Bag dry textiles (old clothes, shoes, bedding, etc.) in any condition and place them in the textile bins at the Transfer Station or at the Middle and High Schools.
- **CHRISTMAS TREES, WREATHS AND PLANTS:** Strip all ornaments, tinsel and wires and deposit in the yard waste section of the Transfer Station.
- **FOOD WASTE:** Bag all food waste including turkey carcasses, egg shells, all bones, fruits and vegetables and deposit in the Food Waste barrels at the Transfer Station.
- **REFUNDABLE BOTTLES AND CANS:** Place in the barrels at the deposit trailer.

### THROW IN THE TRASH

- **HOLIDAY TANGLERS:** Keep holiday tangles out of your recycling. String decorations like holiday lights and tinsel create a mess once inside recycling facilities.
- **WRAPPING PAPER:** Goes in the regular trash since it is chemically treated with fire retardant and cannot be recycled.
- **STYROFOAM & PLASTIC LINERS:** Throw in the trash.
- **BLACK PLASTIC:** Throw in the trash.
- **WAXED CARDBOARD:** Milk, juice, soup cartons-throw in the trash.



### Transfer Station Tidbits – Not Just Trash!

Bubble wrap, packing peanuts, polystyrene (Styrofoam) are not recyclable. Place in trash.

Food Waste is 25% of all waste. Bag it and put it in the barrels for transport to an anaerobic digester and conversion to biogas.

Books, CDs, DVDs and Video Games can be deposited in the non-profit More Than Words book bin at the Transfer Station to provide job training for young adults.

### Donate Household Items!

**DONATE**

Got duplicates after the holidays? Don't throw them out. Donate to the Dover Recycling Committee's monthly furniture collection with the New Life Furniture Bank. They accept specific household items for families in need. Check their website for accepted items <https://newlifefb.org/give-furniture/what-we-accept/>.

# Tree Preservation Committee



## Shading Our Future: The Public Shade Trees of Dover

Trees are a valuable natural asset to our town providing shade, beauty, and countless environmental benefits. There are various guidelines that exist to encourage protection for some trees in Dover. Those trees that fall within the current state and local regulations are known as Public Shade trees.

### What is a Public Shade Tree?

Public Shade Trees are generally any tree within a public way or public place, including streets, parks, and other areas owned or controlled by the municipality.

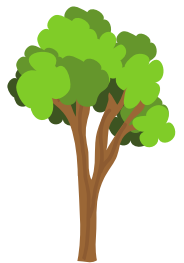
The following guidelines and regulations are designed to preserve and protect our public shade trees. These thoughtful measures are in place to ensure the health and longevity of these essential elements of our landscape.

### Massachusetts Chapter 87 Shade Tree Protection:

Protects all shade trees in the public right-of-way and publicly owned lands. Empowers municipalities to establish tree wardens or tree committees responsible for overseeing public shade trees. Typically, permission or a public hearing may be required before removing a public shade tree. Exceptions are often made for hazardous trees and emergency situations.

### Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act:

Regulates activities within 200' of perennial streams and 100' of wetlands.



### Dover Scenic Roads Bylaw:

Protects trees within Dover's right of way on twenty-seven scenic roads. To find a list of Dover's Scenic Roads click here: <https://ecode360.com/10428309>

### Dover Wetland Protection Bylaw:

Significantly limits tree and vegetation removal within 100' buffer of delineated wetlands and within 200' of perennial streams and places additional limits on tree and vegetation removal on parcels over 5 acres that contain wetlands.

The Committee looks forward to continuing its work in the New Year. Keep an eye out for future community engagement sessions. Together, let's continue to cultivate a community that thrives under the shade of its trees. Thank you for being stewards of Dover's natural beauty.



# Board of Health

## Looking to make 2024 bright?

The Board of Health suggests having your septic tank pumped every three years or, if you have a garbage grinder, every year.

## Friends of the Council on Aging



### FIRESIDE CHEER COCKTAIL PARTY

The Friends of the Dover Council on Aging invite all residents to our “Fireside Cheer Cocktail Party.” This is an opportunity to join your friends and lift your spirits to mitigate the winter doldrums. This is a new event for our organization to show our appreciation to the many residents who support our seniors. We will provide music and hors d’oeuvres at no cost. Hot cider will also be available. This event will take place on Friday, January 26 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. upstairs at the American Legion. A cash bar is available. Please RSVP by January 22 to [contact@coafriends.org](mailto:contact@coafriends.org).

## January Quick Links



Interested in serving on a volunteer board/committee/commission? Click to learn about the process and vacant positions.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Register for the Community Center Club

[LEARN MORE](#)

## Click below to stay updated on Town news

