



Town of Wendell

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2023 SPONSORED BY THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD
THE TOWN OF WENDELL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER

Exciting Job Opening

An important and very exciting job with the Town will be opening up in May. One Selectboard member, Dan Keller, has been on the Board for 20 years, and when his 16 year-old grandson told him “Enough is enough,” he decided not to run for the position again. A new member will be elected in May.

The Selectboard (SB) is a 3 member Board which is the executive authority of the Town. All major decisions about Town policy and actions are made at the public Town Meetings which are open to all citizens of the Town, where actions are voted on by all registered voters. But between Town Meetings, everyday decisions to carry out those policies are made by the SB, much like the role of a mayor in a city.

The result is a job that is wide ranging and fascinating, touching on all Town functions, from the police and fire departments, to the library, the schools, the highway department, and Town finances, to name some. The only requirements for the position are Town citizenship, the desire to help the Town, and the willingness to be part of a team effort. This includes coordinating the various arms of Town government, answering requests, questions, and sometimes complaints, from the general public, and responding to emergencies. SB meetings are generally held once every two weeks, and usually last 2 to 3 hours. Members are often called upon to answer phone calls and email between meetings. There is a stipend for the position, which currently is \$4000 per member annually.

A complete job description is available through our Town Coordinator, Glenn Johnson-Mussad, who can be reached at 978-544-3395, extension 100, or email at coordinator@wendellmass.us. Anyone interest in running for the post should contact Town Clerk Anna Wetherby well in advance regarding nomination papers, at 978-544-3395, extension 102, or email at townclerk@wendellmass.us. Anna holds office hours at the Town Office Building on Saturdays, 9AM-2PM.



**SIGN UP FOR
WENDELL
ALERTS via
CODE RED**



Don't wait! Sign up today!



Ways to sign up to receive Wendell Alerts:

- Visit the Town of **Wendell Website** to access the link to enroll online OR
- Text "**WendellAlerts**: to 99411 to receive link to enroll
- Download the **CodeRED Mobile Alert app** available in the App Store or Google Play

ENERGY COMMITTEE UPDATE

ELECTRIC RATES ARE GOING UP! HOW CAN WE SAVE ON ELECTRICITY?

Conservation helps, and the Wendell Community Choice Program offers savings this winter compared to National Grid.

Here are some details:

The Wendell Community Choice Power Supply Program will change suppliers from Dynegy to Constellation in January of 2023.

The electric supply rate will change from 8.74 cents/kWh to 22.87 cents/kWh and is locked in for one year.

For those participating in this program, the average household using approximately 800 kWh a month could see an increase in their monthly supply charges from \$72 to \$184.

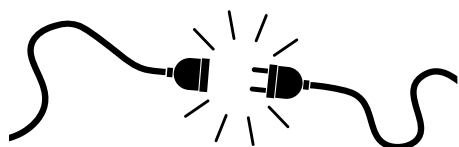
National Grid's rate (Nov 2022-April 2023) at 33.89 cents/kWh (average monthly supply charge of \$272) is higher than the Wendell rate.

Almost 350 Wendell households are already signed up for the Community Choice program. If you are in the program and take no action, your electric supply will switch to Constellation for your January 2023 bill

To join (or leave) now, go to this website: <https://colonialpowergroup.com/wendell/> or call (866) 485-5858 ext. 1 (make sure to have your electric bill handy!)

Fuel Assistance is available for low-income families from Community

Action: <https://www.communityaction.us/fuel-assistance>



NEWS FROM THE WENDELL FREE LIBRARY

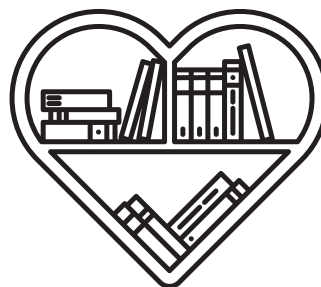
Thanks to the efforts of Miriam Warner, her assistants, Linda Chatfield and Maggie Houghton, and several volunteers, the past months have seen an uptick in library use and circulation. Patrons of all ages are enjoying a rich variety of programs and the reinstatement of art exhibits in the Herrick Room. Miriam partnered with Rosie Heidkamp to kick off the first “Ghosttown at Sundown” Halloween celebration that promises to be an annual event. Thank you to all who helped, participated and made the night magical.

Thanks also to Mez Ziemba and Ruth Flohr for leading the monthly book group, which met for the last time in December.

The Friends of the Wendell Library sponsored a Holiday Fair to benefit the library. Thanks to all who made the event successful, in particular Sara Jenney who spearheaded the effort with the help of Johanna Bartlett, Shawn Jarrett, Sarah Vular, and Sally Alley. Judy Diemand and Ina Peebles donated baskets for a drawing, Bride Johnson donated face painting and Michael Cortina provided music.

Library events and programs are regularly posted on the Townfolk List, the Library page on the Wendell Town website, on Facebook and Instagram, on the circulation desk and library windows, and on the library mailing list, which everyone can sign up for at the library or on the town website.

We’re excited that once again Wendell’s library has become a town hub.



BOARD OF HEALTH NEWS

At the time of this writing, it has been three years since the first outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in China, and two years since vaccinations first became available. During this time we have learned a great deal about this disease and how to deal with it to the current extent possible. Yet because it is a virus, we cannot predict its future behavior with much degree of certainty. What is likely is that it will continue to mutate and spawn other variants. Fortunately, our researchers continue working hard to develop effective vaccines and treatments.

This fall and winter we are experiencing the unfortunate collision of three highly transmissible viruses: Covid-19, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), and the flu. The Wendell Board of Health will continue to provide our residents with accurate information and to distribute free Covid-19 tests and protective masks as they become available. As individuals and as families, we must make thoughtful decisions about how to best protect ourselves and our community from these and other threats to public health that may arise. Standard and effective protocols are well known by now.

If you are exposed to Covid-19 or have symptoms, here is where you can find Curative PCR testing sites that are open to the public. Tests are free and no one will be turned away. Bring your ID and insurance card, if you have one. Walk-ins are welcome, or you can schedule a test at <https://book.curative.com>

Deerfield: At the South County Senior Center, 67 N. Main St., Mon., Wed., Fri. from 10am-1pm.

Greenfield: At Greenfield Community College, 1 College Drive. Mon., Wed., Fri. from 1pm-4pm.

Shelburne Falls: At the Greenfield Cooperative Bank Community Room, 33 Bridge St. Tues. from 9am-1pm and Thurs. from 12pm-4pm.

Walgreens: Sign up online

Where to find rapid tests to have on hand, at home:

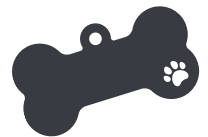
Mass Health, Medicare, and many private insurances cover rapid antigen tests to have at home (up to 8 tests/4 boxes per month). Private insurance may allow online orders or reimburse the cost of tests from a purchase receipt, or allow you to purchase for free at the pharmacy counter. Check with your insurance company or ask at the pharmacy about your coverage.

For Mass Health and Medicare, the pharmacy needs to create and fill a “prescription” so that tests get covered. Bring tests to the pharmacy prior to purchase to bill Mass Health and Medicare directly at Big Y, CVS, Rite Aid, Stop & Shop, Walmart, and Walgreens.

An up-to-date list of local places to get a Covid Test or vaccine in Franklin County can be found at <https://frcog.org/covid>.

Contact the Wendell Board of Health at
978-544-3395 ext. 106 or boardofhealth@wendellmass.us

TOWN CLERK UPDATES



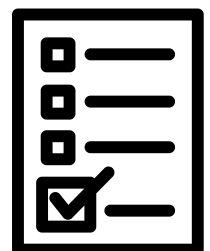
Annual town census is coming! Please complete it and return to the town clerk promptly.

2023 dog licenses are now available. And they are very cute this year. Make your dog happy and legal. \$4 for spayed/neutered. \$8 for intact dogs. FREE for owners over 70!

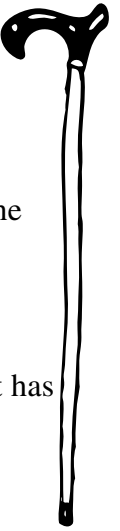
Annual Town election is on May 1st. Nomination papers are available in the Town Clerks office.

Known open seats for Planning Board and Selectboard. Please feel free to contact me with questions regarding the election process in Wendell.

Anna Wetherby, Wendell Town Clerk
Notary Public
9 Morse Village Road
P. O. Box 41
Wendell MA 01379
Tel. (978) 544-3395 x102



Wendell Selectboard Honors Oldest Citizen



The Wendell Selectboard honored Wendell's most recent oldest citizen with an informal ceremony at the Town Offices on Tuesday December 13.

Dorthee (also known as Dor, no last name), was born in January 1929. As part of the ceremony, Laurie DiDonato, Selectboard Chair presented Dorthee with the Boston Post Cane. As inscribed on the cane, it has been "given to the eldest citizen in Town since 1908."

She received a certificate and a pin in the design of a cane.



FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS

Greetings Wendell and New Salem residents. The joint New Salem/Wendell SAFE program has secured grant funding for this year. The focus of the grant is on fire safety education in the school, and community, our smoke/CO inspection and installation program, and street number installation for Seniors. Smoke and CO program is available to inspect/replace alarms for Seniors, and for families with school age kids. The most expensive part of the alarm installation program are the alarms themselves. If we start running short on funds for alarms, we can always at least inspect, recommend the needed alarms, and install them.

Winter brings an increased risk for fires in the home. In MA, the number one cause of structure fires is cooking; 70%!! Don't leave cooking unattended. If you have a fire in an oven, keep the door closed, turn it off, then call the fire dept. We can check it. Fire in a pan, "Put A Lid On It" Franklin County has a higher percentage of fires caused by home heating equipment, woodstoves, chimneys etc. Make sure your chimney is cleaned and inspected every year. Check on it periodically, it may need to be cleaned more often. Make sure you maintain safe clearances to combustibles around woodstoves and stovepipes. Check the name plate on the stove and it will tell you the proper clearances. Test your smoke alarms every month. Replace the batteries at least once a year. Have a Home Escape Plan in case of fire. Two ways out of every room, and a safe meeting place outside. Fire can move very fast. You may only have 2 to 3 minutes to escape. Practice your Home Escape Plan with your family. Have a fire safe winter season!

To sign up for smoke/CO alarm inspection (Seniors, families with school age kids), street number installation (Seniors) Contact:

Asa de Roode
978-544-8695
Asaspades911@gmail.com

TOWN OF WENDELL ROAD COMMISSION

submitted by Chair, Phil Delorey

Winter 2022-2023, or is it Spring??

On January 1, my son apologized to me for making mud ruts on the way to our home, coming up the “back way” on Locke Hill Road – he knows we take road care seriously. The week before, we heard several stories of folks having problems with untreated ice, on some of other “back” roads in town, following a heavy rainstorm that washed away the sand. Those same roads drew complaints of neglect and frustration the week before that because the snow was building up on roads that were too muddy to plow and wouldn’t hold the weight of a plow. This week we had ice buildup on several roads following an early morning drizzle that was light enough to enjoy a walk in.

Lately, it seems it is not the condition of the roads that we have to live with but rather the weather conditions that effect the roadways, and those conditions are changing from year to year. Not too long ago, it was reasonable to expect an orderly transition from fall to winter; the foliage left the branches barren, the trees shed their syrup, the days got shorter and, along the way, the ground froze so the snow wouldn’t melt. Not so anymore; we have changing weather patterns to adjust to. It is increasing difficult to predict what to plan for, especially when the conditions of the dirt roads are under discussion; the spring mud season was a more noticeable problem than the fall. The following is from a 2021 Newsletter;

“While Wendell residents are still in the grips of winter, we are assured that Spring is just around the corner, and that Spring will bring on the annual mud season. In the December 2020 Newsletter, the Road Commission noted that every year is different with respect to our dirt roads; the 2020 mud season passed almost without notice as a result of natural conditions while the 2019 mud season left folks barely able to get through some of the worst mud spots. There are many places in town where the water table is very close to the surface, and there are other conditions that will impact the intensity of the thaw; depth of the frost, rate of rising temperatures, rain and sunlight, to name a few. The roads can become like a sponge, with every passing car or truck serving to bring more water to the surface.”

Sorry to say, the fall is seeming more like the spring thaw, only it is in reverse; the roadways aren’t fully frozen, they react in different ways and must be treated in different ways by the Road Crew. So, the same message goes out to all of Wendell’s good folk; please be patient with the Road Crew, they work long hours during the storms and make every effort to keep the roads safe. The good news going forward is that the Crew has combined our equipment and now have 5 vehicles able to be on the road at the same time, plowing, making the time between plowing each road less than before. Also, residents may direct access to the Plow Truck during storms, via a radio that has been installed for better communications. **We trust folks will use the following number for semi-emergencies or other notices of public-at-risk; during storms you may call Phil Delorey at 544-2236 – he may advise folks of Highway Crew availability and be able to reach them if assistance is needed: PLEASE- this is not a complaint line but available for those who need assistance.**



**Wendell Selectboard
Town Offices
PO BOX 41
Wendell, MA 01379**

**Prsrt Std
US Postage
PAID
Permit #183
Greenfield, MA**

**RESIDENT
WENDELL, MA 01379**

In This Issue

- Open Select Board Seat
- Electricity Rates
- Board of Health updates
- Town Clerk Updates
- Library Update
- Oldest Citizen
- Fire Dept News
- Road Commission

**Contact the Selectboard or Town coordinator at (978) 544-3395 ext. 100
Or visit the Town Website for town information: www.wendellmass.us**

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Town Offices
PO BOX 41
Wendell, MA 01379**

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**RESIDENT
WENDELL DEPOT, MA 01380**

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**RESIDENT
MILLERS FALLS, MA 01349**

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