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Town of Hanson Monthly Newsletter | August 2023



# Hanson Happenings

## Keeping Citizens Connected



## Dates to Remember >>>

### Hanson Day, September 16, 2023, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Join us on the Hanson Green to meet Hanson businesses and enjoy local fare. There will be demonstrations, games, crafts, and more. This is a **FREE** event for all to enjoy!

### Special Town Meeting, October 2, 2023

A Special Town Meeting will be held on October 2nd at 6:30 p.m. at Hanson Middle School, located at 111 Liberty Street.

### Great Pumpkin Classic Car Show, October 8, 2023

The Great Pumpkin Classic Car Show benefitting Whitman Hanson Dollar for Scholars will return on October 8, 2023, at the Whitman Hanson Regional High School. There will be food, raffles, and a costume contest! More details to come...

**OCT 8**  
**2023**  
SAVE THE DATE!



## A Word from our Town Administrator



*And Just Like That, One Fiscal Year Closes and Another Begins.... Hats off to the Treasurer Collector's Office and the Hanson Accounting Team for a job well done!*

Here is a behind the scenes look at the process for closing out a fiscal year and opening a new one, and the series of tasks that must be completed to ensure the integrity of the financial records and to prepare for the upcoming year.

- ✓ Budget Review and Finalization: Before the end of the current fiscal year, the Town's budget for the upcoming fiscal year is reviewed and finalized. This involves discussions among the Town of Hanson's departments and approval by the Select Board.
- ✓ Complete All Transactions: All financial transactions for the current fiscal year should be completed, including processing payments, receipts, transfers and adjustments.
- ✓ Financial Audit and Reconciliation: Hanson's books are reconciled, and an external audit is conducted. This helps to ensure that all transactions are accurately recorded and that there are no discrepancies or errors.
- ✓ Report Generation and Submission: A financial report for the current fiscal year is created. This report details all of Hanson's financial activities for the year. It is submitted to the Select Board, the Massachusetts Division of Local Services and the Department of Revenue.
- ✓ Close Books for the Current Fiscal Year: Once all transactions have been completed, the books are closed for the current fiscal year. No further transactions for this year are allowed to be recorded after this point.
- ✓ Open Books for the New Fiscal Year: The books are opened for the new fiscal year and financial transactions for the new year can begin to be recorded.
- ✓ Implement New Budget: The approved budget for the new fiscal year is implemented on July 1. This involves allocating funds to the various departments and projects as laid out in the budget.

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# Bear Sightings in Hanson!

In response to recent bear sightings in the Hanson area, residents are urged to secure their trash and bird feeders. Bears are highly adaptable creatures. Once they find a reliable food source, they tend to return. Following these steps will help avoid bear encounters:

## Secure Your Trash

- ✓ Store trash indoors. If possible, keep your trash containers inside your garage or shed until the morning of trash pickup.
- ✓ Use bear-resistant trash cans. If you must store trash outside, consider investing in bear-resistant trash cans. These are specifically designed to be difficult for bears to open.
- ✓ Don't overfill trash cans. Ensure lids are securely fastened. Bears can easily knock over a trash can and pry the lid off if it isn't secure.

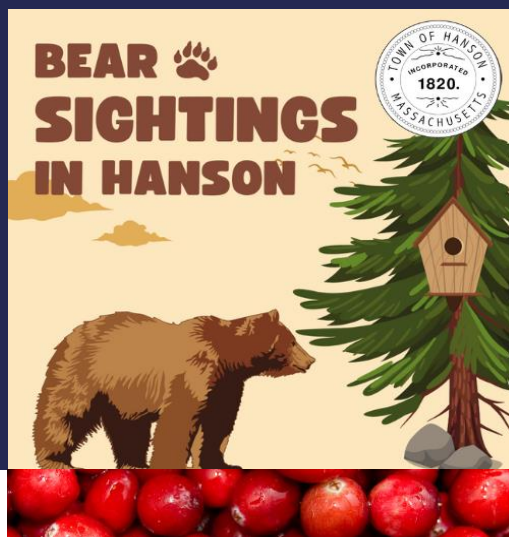
- ✓ Clean trash cans regularly: This will help to reduce odors that may attract bears.

## Manage Your Bird Feeders

- ✓ Remove bird feeders. Consider removing bird feeders entirely during active bear seasons, typically from late spring to late fall. Birds have plenty of natural food sources during these seasons.
- ✓ If you choose to keep your bird feeder: use the right seed. Use thistle or Nyjer seed, which are less attractive to bears.
- ✓ Clean up spilled seed. Be sure to clean up any spilled seed or shells under the feeder regularly.
- ✓ Hang feeders high. Hang your feeders at least 10 feet off the ground and 4 feet from any attachment point, if possible. This will make it more difficult for a bear to access them.

Remember, bears are wild animals and should never be approached. If you see a bear, maintain a safe distance, and do not attempt to scare it away. Instead, report the sighting to local wildlife officials.

By taking these precautions, you can protect your property, ensure the safety of the local bear population, and reduce the potential for bear-human conflict. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.



## A Word from our Town Administrator continued from the cover page...

- ✓ Communicate Changes and Expectations: It is crucial to effectively communicate any changes in the budget or financial processes to all relevant stakeholders. This includes employees, department heads, boards and the public.
- ✓ Continuous Monitoring: Once the new fiscal year is underway, Hanson's financial activities are continuously monitored to ensure that they are in line with the budget and to identify any potential issues as early as possible.

The work that the Treasurer Collector's Office and the Hanson Accounting Team does is at the heart of the Town's operations. Collecting revenue, budgeting, expenditure, borrowing and financial reporting is a crucial aspect of public service. This work secures the well-being of the Town with proper management of our finances ensuring the sustainability of our community.

In addition, we'd like to welcome back Treasurer Collector, Jeanne Sullivan, after a brief hiatus out of the office. With all that has been on her plate, she and her staff tackled through the amazing work detailed in this article and is a testament to the fact that in Hanson, we are stronger together! We are glad to have Jeanne back and we know that the entire Treasure Collector's Office is as well!

## Ask the Town Administrator...

Do you have a question for the Town Administrator? We will be featuring questions from the community in a future edition of the Hanson Happenings Newsletter.

Please submit your question to [media@hanson-ma.gov](mailto:media@hanson-ma.gov).

## Dog Licenses Available Through September 1st

The Town Clerk's Office is conducting annual dog licensing through September 31. If you have a dog, take the opportunity to get the license by visiting the Town Clerk's Office in person, by mail or online through the Town's website. Please note that the Town Clerk's Office will be closed on Fridays through August.

**Regular License Fee:**  
**\$15.00 – Non-spayed/Unneutered Dogs**  
**\$10.00 – Spayed/Neutered Dogs**

For more information, visit:  
<https://www.hanson-ma.gov/town-clerk/pages/dog-licenses>





## *Fiscal 2024 Tax Assistance Program Application being Accepted through April*

The Town of Hanson offers various Tax Assistance Programs to help reduce taxes for those eligible, including the elderly, veterans, widow and widowers, the blind and those wishing to defer their tax liability.

Taxpayers must apply yearly between July 1 and April 1st of the fiscal year in which the tax is assessed. The Town of Hanson's new fiscal year starts every July 1.

We urge the taxpayers of Hanson to call—and let others know to call—the Assessor's Office for more information about how to get real estate tax relief. We realize not everyone has access to social media or computer access. The Assessor's Office telephone number is **(781) 293-5259**.

Most exemptions are state reimbursed for a certain percentage, with funds coming from the Assessor's Overlay Account.

All the exemptions we have to offer are posted on the Town website under the Board of Assessors tab. We also hold a forum in the fall at the Senior Center on School Street in Hanson. You can also stop by the Assessor's Office at any time and the staff will help you with your questions.

The Board of Assessors and staff stay educated on the changing requirements and implement increases as needed with Town Meeting approval.

*Fun fact: the average number of  
cranberries used in a can of cranberry  
sauce is 200.*

Did you know that Ocean Spray was founded in 1930 in Hanson, Massachusetts, by three cranberry growers who wanted to expand the market for cranberries? The cooperative was led by growers Marcus L. Urann, Elizabeth F. Lee and John C. Makepeace, who had created a cranberry sauce. The cooperative developed more cranberry-based products. Ocean Spray was originally known as Cranberry Cannery, Inc.



*Summer is almost  
over and so is the  
Find Your Voice  
summer reading  
program!*

The Summer Reading Program is nearing its conclusion and challenged all of us to "Find Your Voice" through words, music, art and more! The theme was selected to stir the imagination about the power of our own voices. We use our voices to share stories, express ourselves and spark change. Explore, discover, and celebrate the voices of others and learn more about yourself along the way.

Tell us how many books you read this summer from June 16th to August 11th. Paper trackers are available at the library, but you must submit your entries online to be entered into the grand prize drawings. Each book read will be an entry into the grand prize drawings at the end of the summer. For each book read you'll also be able to add a sticker to our Find Your Voice sticker mosaic!



# Announcing the Council on Aging's Newest Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Elders (S.H.I.N.E.) Counselors



From left to right, Faye Vitale, James Hickey and Linda Mulrey.

Introducing Hanson's newly certified SHINE counselors, Faye Vitale, James Hickey and Linda Mulrey.

SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) counselors can help you understand your insurance coverage, find the right coverage, and save money on prescription drugs and health insurance. SHINE counselors are trained and certified volunteers who are available to meet with you in person or by telephone.

Congratulations on obtaining your certification! Hanson is glad to have you available to our seniors to get free, unbiased assistance with health insurance needs.

To contact a SHINE counselor from the Hanson Council on Aging, call (781) 293-2683.

## Conservation Commission Update

Your Hanson Conservation Commission has been hard at work throughout the Spring and the summer maintaining and improving Conservation Properties throughout the Town. More than six weeks ago, 120 Atlantic White Cedar saplings were planted in eight different locations that include three separate areas in the Smitty's Bogs Conservation Area. This essentially completes our work on the U.S. Department of Agriculture grant toward restoration of the bogs to natural habitat. We have been monitoring the plants two-to-three times per week and applying deer repellent. So far, all the plants have survived their initial shock and appear to be thriving. Last summer, we removed many water control devices throughout the area and are pleased to report that the Indian Head Brook can be seen flowing along its old waterway and has been populated with fish and other wetlands species along most of its water course, nearly to the old reservoir.

## Transfer Station

The Town of Hanson Transfer Station is located at 201 Franklin Street, Route 27 Hanson, MA 02341. The hours of operation are:

Monday - Tuesday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.  
Wednesday - Thursday: **CLOSED**  
Friday - Sunday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

The Transfer Station is closed for lunch from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Transfer Station Stickers:

1<sup>st</sup> Sticker is \$102.00 and \$52.00 for each additional sticker within the same household.

Stickers are valid until July 1, 2024.



## Employee Spotlight: Tony DeFrias, PLS, Town Planner

During his tenure in Hanson as our Town Planner, Tony has played an invaluable role in shaping the town's growth and development. His contributions have been significant and will be evident in our community for years to come.

Tony has helped maintain the balance between our town's historic roots and the need for progress and development. His efforts have helped preserve the charm of our small town while also paving the way for new opportunities. Tony has been instrumental in promoting the values and priorities of our community.

As Town Planner, Tony is responsible for crafting plans that cater to our community's growth and making the best use of available space.

He focuses on improving the quality of life in Hanson by planning for open space, parks and commercial spaces. Tony strives to minimize environmental impact, reducing energy consumption, and encourage sustainable practices in all aspects of community development. He works closely with the Economic Development Committee and plays a critical role in stimulating our local economic growth through business development that enhances workforce opportunities.

Tony's role extends beyond the built environment; he focuses on shaping the experiences, opportunities and lifestyles of those living in Hanson. Through his work, he creates a physical stage upon the drama of community life unfolds, influencing social interaction, economic growth, environmental health and overall community well-being.

# Saying "Goodbye" to the Maquan Elementary School and "Hello" to a New Opportunity for Hanson



The Maquan Elementary School has served as the foundation of learning, growth, and community for countless students, parents, and educators. As we prepare to say goodbye to this beloved institution, it's essential to reflect on its legacy and the memories we've shared within its walls.

Maquan Elementary School has nurtured young minds, guiding them through the foundational years of education. Each classroom, filled with the echoes of curiosity, questioning, and discovery, has left an indelible mark on its students. Teachers, with unwavering dedication, have imparted not just academic knowledge, but life lessons that will remain with their students for a lifetime.

While it's an emotional moment to say goodbye to Maquan Elementary School, it's also a time to look forward with hope. The spirit of the school, its values, and the essence of what it represented will continue to live in the hearts of its alumni. Every student, teacher, and staff member who was a part of this establishment will carry forth its legacy, ensuring that the spirit of Maquan Elementary lives on.

As we move forward in identifying a new opportunity for this valued piece of property, we will look to Hanson community members to provide their insights at future planning and development meetings.



## Featured Employment Opportunities

### ✓ **Select Board Part-time Administrative Assistant to the Town Administrator**

The purpose of this position is to provide administrative support to the Town Administrator, Fifteen (15) hours per week.

For more information or to apply, visit:

[www.hanson-ma.gov/employment-volunteer-opportunities](http://www.hanson-ma.gov/employment-volunteer-opportunities)

## Reminder, Pay as You Throw Bag Increase!

Effective Monday, July 24, 2023, Pay as You Throw bags have increased to \$11.50 per roll for both sizes. This increase is to partially cover the cost of the manufacturing increase incurred by the town.

## Stay Tuned, Stay Connected!



[www.hanson-ma.gov](http://www.hanson-ma.gov)



[www.hanson-ma.gov/subscribe](http://www.hanson-ma.gov/subscribe)



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# VOLUNTEER

## Town Committee & Boards Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteering for town committees and boards can be an incredibly rewarding experience, both for the individual and for the community. Volunteering provides an opportunity for citizens to participate actively in governance. It's a way to take civic responsibility seriously and help shape the direction of the Town of Hanson. The Board of Selectmen is seeking volunteers for the following committees and boards:

- ✓ Cable and Internet Committee
- ✓ Capital Improvement Committee
- ✓ Community Preservation Committee
- ✓ Cultural Council
- ✓ Energy Committee
- ✓ Facebook Upkeep Committee
- ✓ Highway Building Committee
- ✓ Historical Commission
- ✓ Nathaniel Thomas Mill Committee
- ✓ Zoning Board of Appeals
- ✓ Recreation Committee

Applications can be found online by visiting: [www.hanson-ma.gov/employment-volunteer-opportunities](http://www.hanson-ma.gov/employment-volunteer-opportunities) or by emailing [employment@hanson-ma.gov](mailto:employment@hanson-ma.gov).



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