



Dates of Interest:

- Jan. 6 Nomination Papers Available
- Jan. 9 OSRP Public Forum
- Jan. 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Trash Delay, Town Offices Closed)
- Jan. 27 Special Town Mtg.
- Feb. 2 Fix It Clinic
- Feb. 3 Q3 Tax Bills Due
- Feb. 7 Charity Hockey Game

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Town Manager's Newsletter

January 2, 2025

Special Town Meeting – January 27

The Select Board has scheduled a Special Town Meeting for Monday, January 27 at 7:30 PM at the Senior Center. Town Meeting Representatives will be asked to consider the Planning Board's proposed amendments to the Town's zoning bylaws to comply with the provisions of the new State law pertaining to accessory dwelling units (ADU) that becomes effective on February 2. In any zoning district

that allows for single-family residential dwellings, an attached or detached ADU is allowed by right subject to reasonable local regulations. A copy of the proposed zoning amendments to the Town Code pertaining to accessory dwelling units is available [here](#).

On January 8, the Planning Board will hold a public hearing to receive public comments on the proposed Accessory Dwelling



ing Unit bylaw.

Further information pertaining to the new State law pertaining to accessory dwelling units is available at www.mass.gov/adu.

Final Public Forum on Open Space and Recreation Plan

Join us for the final public forum on Chelmsford's Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) on **Thursday, January 9, from 4:00 to 5:30 PM via Zoom**. Your feedback has been invaluable throughout this process, and we encourage you to share your thoughts on the draft plan. To participate, [please register here](#).

The OSRP serves as a roadmap for preserving and enhancing

Chelmsford's outdoor spaces, parks, and recreational opportunities. It ensures that all residents have equitable access to the natural areas and activities that make our community unique.

Your involvement helps shape the future of Chelmsford's parks, trails, and green spaces. By contributing to this plan, you're playing a key role in en-

suring that future generations can enjoy these spaces.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts and working together to shape the future of Chelmsford's outdoor spaces!

[Draft OSRP](#)

Register
to at-
tend via
Zoom



Companion Respite Program

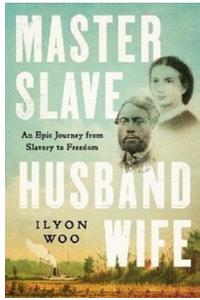
Do you care for a senior loved one but need some time for yourself to run errands or enjoy a hobby? Or are you a senior living alone who would appreciate some company once or twice a week? The Chelmsford Senior Center's Companion Respite Program offers family caregivers the freedom to take care of errands, grocery shopping, visit friends, get a haircut, and more, while your loved one receives one-on-one attention from a caring companion. Our companions provide social inter-

action through conversation, games and puzzles, trivia, current events, light exercise, hobbies, and more, all while ensuring a safe and supportive environment.

- Serving Chelmsford, Westford, Dracut, Carlisle, Tewksbury, and Tyngsborough
- All companions undergo work reference checks and CORI background screening
- Visits are scheduled at the



- same time and day each week
 - Cost: \$18.00 per hour, with a 2-hour minimum per visit
 - In-home visits only; companions do not provide transportation
- Contact April Hunt for more information 978-788-6174 or email ahunt@chelmsfordma.gov.



One Book Chelmsford Welcomes Pulitzer Prize Winner Ilyon Woo!

We are thrilled to announce that this year's One Book Chelmsford author is Pulitzer Prize winner **Ilyon Woo**! Her compelling book, **Master Slave Husband Wife**, will be available for free, courtesy of the Friends of the Library,

starting in early January.

One Book Chelmsford is our community-wide reading program designed to bring residents together through a shared reading experience. Each year, we select a title that

inspires discussion and connection, and we encourage everyone to dive into the pages of our chosen book. Since its inception in 2007, this program has fostered a love of reading and engaged our community in thoughtful conversations.

Responsible Disposal of Holiday Lights



As the holiday season ends, it's important to dispose of your unwanted holiday lights responsibly. Please avoid throwing them in the trash or curbside recycling bins.

Holiday string lights are made from materials like plastic, glass, and copper, and may contain hazardous substances

such as mercury and lead. Improper disposal can harm the environment and damage recycling equipment.

The Chelmsford Recycling Committee is collecting holiday lights for eco-friendly recycling. Drop off your old lights at the following locations through January 31, 2025:

- Senior Center – 75 Groton Road
- DPW – 9 Alpha Road
- Adams Library – 25 Boston Road

For more information, contact Chris Haley at 978-250-5023 or chaley@chelmsfordma.gov. Visit chelmsfordrecycles.com for details.

2025 Dog Licensing Has Begun



License your dog(s) before February 28 to avoid late fees!

Every 2024 dog license expired on December 31. Licensing for 2025 began on December 1. The license fee is \$15 for a spayed/neutered dog or \$20 if unaltered.

A current rabies vaccination is required to license your dog and documentation must be

provided.

Renewals: Previously licensed dogs can [renew online](#), [by mail](#), or in the town clerk's office..

NEW dogs: Register in-person at the Town Clerk's Office, or [by mail](#) with a check and completed application.

LATE FEES go into effect starting on March 1. A \$5.00 incre-

mental late fee will be added to the initial tag fee for every month the dog remains unlicensed through June 1.

CITATIONS for unlicensed dogs go into effect starting on June 15. Citations result in an additional \$50 plus the initial tag and incremental late fees.

[Click here](#) for more information.

Dry January



The New Year is a time for many to set resolutions, and for some, that includes cutting back or abstaining from alcohol for Dry January. Originating in Finland in the 1940s and gaining popularity in the 2010s, Dry January is now common in the U.S. and Britain.

Taking a break from alcohol offers numerous benefits, including increased energy, weight loss, improved sleep, and a stronger immune system. The 2020–2025 Dietary Guidelines recommend that adults drink in moderation, with no more than two drinks per day for men and one for women. For helpful tools and more information, visit the [Rethinking Drinking website](#).

Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Capital Improvement Plan

The Capital Plan Committee unanimously recommended a \$5.97M capital improvement plan for the upcoming fiscal year. The proposed capital investments include funding to replace a portion of the roof at the McCarthy Middle School, install secured entryways at each elementary school and at the Parker Middle School, replace the boilers at the McCarthy Middle School, update the HVAC system at the Adams Library, and improve roads and sidewalks. A summary of the proposed FY26 capital improvement plan is available [here](#). The full plan will be included in the FY26 budget book available a few weeks prior to Spring Town Meeting.

Depression & Anxiety Support Group

The Health Department is organizing a Depression & Anxiety Support Group to provide a safe space for individuals to give and receive peer-to-peer advice and seek guidance from a licensed professional. The sessions are held every 4th

Tuesday of the month from 6:30 to 8:00 PM in the Cabaret Room at the Chelmsford Center for the Arts. The group is facilitated by the Chelmsford Public Health Department's Community Social Worker, Marissa Cameron, LCSW. No

registration is required to attend the sessions. For more information, please contact Marissa Cameron at Mcameron@chelmsfordma.gov or call the Health Department at 978-250-5241.



Chelmsford's New Firefighter Graduates in PFAS-Free Gear

Alec Racioppi, the Chelmsford Fire Department's newest firefighter, is believed to be the first to complete the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's (MFA) Career Recruit Training Program in gear manufactured without PFAS—chemicals linked to cancer risk in firefighters.

Racioppi graduated on December 20, alongside 32 other recruits from 17 fire departments. Over the 10-week course at the MFA's Stow campus, he trained in handling emergencies such as vehicle crashes and hazardous materials incidents, using self-contained breathing apparatus,

hoses, and power tools.

What sets Racioppi apart is his PFAS-free turnout gear, which was provided by the Chelmsford Fire Department before his training. The department purchased this gear in 2024 using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. "This is an investment in firefighter health and safety," said Fire Chief Gary Ryan. "As we come to learn more about PFAS in the fire service, it's become clear that we're all going to transition away from products that contain it. These men and women have signed up to do a dangerous, demanding job. Hazards are part of the job, but

occupational cancer shouldn't be one of them." PFAS, or "forever chemicals," are commonly used in firefighting gear for their heat-resistant properties, but recent studies have linked them to cancer.

In August 2024, Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey signed legislation to phase out PFAS in firefighting gear, with a full ban set for 2027.

Racioppi graduated alongside recruits from departments including Acton, Amesbury, Andover, and Lexington, all now certified to NFPA 1001 standards for firefighting and hazardous materials response.



Third Quarter Property Tax Bills

Third quarter FY2025 Real Estate and Personal Property tax bills were mailed to all taxpayers by December 31, 2024 and are due by February 3, 2025.

A double-sided information sheet summarizing FY25 property tax exemption guidelines

was included inside the envelope with all Real Estate bills. The summary includes an explanation of the requirements for various property tax exemptions, senior tax deferral, and the low/moderate income exemption for the Community Preservation Fund (CPF) tax.

If you have questions after receiving your bill, please contact the Tax Collector's Office at (978) 250-5210. For more information on tax exemptions or tax deferral, please contact the Assessors' Office at (978) 250-5220.



2025 Annual Town Census

The 2025 Annual Town Census has been mailed to every household. Participating in the town census keeps our voting list up to date. Returning your town census keeps you ACTIVE on the voting list and eliminates the need to step out of line at the polls to sign an affirmation that you still live at

that address. Even if you are not a registered voter, responding to the census will ensure that the Town Clerk's Office can provide you with proof of residency. An accurate count of residents in Chelmsford assists in providing better municipal services.

Online Response You will

be able to respond online if there are no changes to your census form! Your form will have your household ID # on it with a link to respond online if you have no changes. If you have changes, mark them on the form, **sign**, and return the completed form to the Town Clerk's Office.



“The Commonwealth will distribute these settlement funds to communities annually through 2038...”

Chelmsford Opioid Settlement Survey

The opioid crisis has affected millions, with nearly 645,000 deaths from 1999 to 2021. In 2021, Massachusetts received funds from a settlement with pharmaceutical companies held accountable for their role in the crisis. The Commonwealth will distribute these settlement funds to communities annually through 2038 to enhance opioid response, recovery, and prevention measures. Massachusetts expects to receive \$1 billion as additional settlements are finalized.

We are now seeking public input on how to allocate

Chelmsford's share.

Funds can only be used for the following purposes:

- Opioid Use Disorder Treatment
- Support for People in Treatment and Recovery
- Connections to Care
- Harm Reduction
- Support for Criminal-Justice-Involved Persons
- Support for Pregnant or Parenting Women and Families, Including Babies with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome

- Prevention of Opioid Misuse and Education

Your input is crucial to shaping Chelmsford's response to the opioid epidemic. Please [participate in our survey](#). If you prefer a mailed or emailed survey, contact the Health Department at 978-250-5241 or tan-gel@chelmsfordma.gov.

Thank you for your involvement. All responses will remain confidential, and participants have a chance to win a \$25 gift card!

Nomination Papers for Annual Town Election

Nomination papers for the April 1 local election will be available in the Town Clerk's Office from January 6 through February 6. The deadline for nomination papers to be filed with the Board of Registrars is February 11. For more information and a list of open offices, [click here](#).



Vote-By-Mail

Voters who wish to receive a mailed ballot for the April 1, 2025 Annual Town Election need to submit an application for the new year. A paper application is included with the 2025 annual census.

Applications can also be found [here](#). Applications must be received by the Clerk's Office by 5:00 PM on March 25 to receive a mailed ballot for the April 1 election. Not sure if you're registered to vote? Check your status at www.voteinma.com.

Comment Period for Newport Air Permit

Newport Aggregates, LLC has submitted an application to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) for an Air Quality Permit for their operations at 90 Ledge Road, Westford, MA.

For information on how to submit comments please view [MassDEP's Public Notice](#). The comment deadline is January 10.

[MassDEP's Draft Air Quality Plan Approval](#)



Parker Middle School Project Advances to Feasibility Study

The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) has advanced the Parker Middle School project to a feasibility study. The Town will partner with the MSBA to find the most fiscally responsible and educationally appropriate solution. The process entails the procurement of an Owners Project Manager and a Designer to explore potential options and solutions. The feasibility study is expected to be completed in approximately 18 months.

Karaoke – Sober Edition

Free admission every 2nd Friday of the Month, from 7:00 to 10:00 PM, at the Chelmsford Center for the Arts, Cabaret Room. Mocktails and snacks are available for purchase. Contact the Health Department at 978-250-5241 if you have any questions.



Holiday Trash Delays

There was no solid waste or recycling collection on Wednesday, January 1, and there will be no collection on Monday, January 20, in observance of New Year's Day and Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Collection for the rest of those weeks will be delayed by one day. Please note that no bulk items are collected during holiday weeks

Exciting January at the Chelmsford Center for the Arts!

This January, the Chelmsford Center for the Arts is bringing you lots of unforgettable entertainment! Join us for **A Night of Comedy: Presented by the G.L.C.F. on Saturday, January 25 at 6:00 PM.** Come on down to the auditorium for an evening of hilarity put on by the Greater Lowell Community Foundation to benefit the Chelmsford Community Fund. Featuring a star-studded lineup of stand-up comedians – **Paul Gilligan, Paul Nardizzi, and Steve**

Sweeney – this show promises to deliver non-stop laughs. Doors open at 6:00 PM, with performances kicking off at 7:00. Partake in delicious hors d'oeuvres and a full bar, all for just \$35 a ticket.

Then, return to the CCA auditorium for **Chrome Horse: The Bob Dylan Tribute on Friday, January 31 at 8:00 PM.** Immerse yourself in the timeless music of Bob Dylan as Drew Gabbert, a Texas-based veteran musician, brings his

Bob Dylan tribute act to life with stunning accuracy, spanning his entire discography. Whether you're a die-hard Dylan fan or new to his music, this performance is not to be missed. Tickets \$15 if purchased in advance and \$20 on the day of the show.

Tickets for both events are available for purchase on the [Chelmsford Center for the Arts website](#). We hope to see you there!



Free Fix It Clinic

Sunday, February 2 at 1:30 PM.
[Register here.](#)

Mark your calendars for our next program where you can learn to repair common household items! Register in advance and come with your broken items and learn to fix your stuff from local volunteers! Please

register to let us know you are coming and what item(s) you need to fix. This is a free event and you can drop-in anytime between 1 and 3.

Examples of what can be fixed:

- ◆ Clothing/ textiles
- ◆ Device and computer hardware

- ◆ Jewelry
- ◆ Bicycles
- ◆ Household Appliances

We will even have a 3-D printer!

Contact Jess at jfitzhanso@chelmsfordlibrary.org or 978-256-5521 with questions.



Planning Board, ZBA, and Conservation Commission

The Planning Board will next meet on January 8 in Room 204 of Town Offices at 6:30 pm. A discussion with property owners in the Kate's Corner / Byam School area will be held to discuss zoning / land use within the existing commercial and industrial zones. A public hearing will be held to receive public comments on the proposed Accessory Dwelling Unit zoning

bylaw. A continued Public Hearing will be held for 4 Paillet Drive for the construction of a new parking area.

The Zoning Board of Appeals will meet on January 2 at the Town Offices to continue the public hearing for Cobblestone Place, a 5-unit 40B comprehensive permit located off Marose Avenue, and to hear an admin-

istrative appeal concerning Ledge Road, which challenges the Building Commissioner's zoning enforcement decision.

The Conservation Commission will next meet on January 14.

The posted agendas for these meetings will be available on the [agenda center](#) of the Town's website.



Stormwater Education at Parker Middle School

DPW Stormwater Engineer Courtney Thompson visited Parker Middle School last month to teach each 5th grade class about stormwater pollution. This unique learning opportunity included using the hands-on EnviroScape table-top watershed model to visualize

how pollutants move through our communities and what we can do to help keep our environment clean. This is an annual public education and outreach initiative that began in 2015. The students were very engaged in the presentation, loved interacting with the Envi-

roScape, and asked great questions. "I think you really sparked interest in a new topic for many of them!" reported one 5th grade teacher. We look forward to next year!

Photo: Stormwater Engineer Courtney Thompson with Jaclyn Bain's 5th grade class





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Sign Up for Notifications!

Would you like to be notified when new editions of the Town Manager's Newsletter are published? Sign up [here](#). Under the News Flash category, choose "Home Page Newsflash." You will receive a notification when any news item is published to the home page of the Town's website, including the Newsletter.

View previous editions [here](#).

Year-End Paving Update: 10 Miles of Roads Completed

Thanks to favorable construction weather, the 2024 paving season was extended into December, allowing for the completion of significant roadway enhancements. A total of approximately 10 miles of roads were completed, at a cost of \$3.3 million.

The following streets were included in the 2024 paving list:

- ⇒ Biltmore Avenue
- ⇒ Boardwalk
- ⇒ Bonanza Road
- ⇒ Carolyn Avenue
- ⇒ Chatham Road
- ⇒ Cushing Place
- ⇒ Delmore Drive
- ⇒ Downing Place
- ⇒ Drum Hill Road
- ⇒ Dunshire Drive

- ⇒ Dunstable Road
- ⇒ Fleetwood Drive
- ⇒ Gary Road
- ⇒ Highland Avenue
- ⇒ Hunt Road (spot milling Garrison Rd to Littleton Rd)
- ⇒ Huntley Street
- ⇒ Manning Road
- ⇒ Marinel Avenue
- ⇒ Montclair Circle
- ⇒ Montview Road
- ⇒ Old Westford Road (Arbitus Rd to Essex Pl)
- ⇒ Orchard Lane
- ⇒ Parkhurst Road (Drum Hill to Rt. 3 Underpass)
- ⇒ Randall Road
- ⇒ Sharon Avenue
- ⇒ Sheila Avenue
- ⇒ Stedman Street



- ⇒ Stearns Street
- ⇒ Sturbridge Drive
- ⇒ Summer Street
- ⇒ Tanglewood Drive
- ⇒ Worthen Street

Looking ahead, the 2025 paving list will be published in the February edition of the Town Manager's Newsletter and posted on the DPW website.

Join Voices of Hope for an Exciting Charity Hockey Game!

The inaugural Boston Bruins Alumni vs. Chelmsford PD/ Westford PD hockey game is happening on Friday, February 7, at 8:00 PM at Warrior Arena in Brighton, MA.

This special event benefits Voices of Hope and their support of the Termeer Center for Targeted Therapies at the MGH Cancer Center. Don't miss your chance to:

- * Meet and get autographs from Boston Bruins alumni and Blades, the Bruins' mascot.

- * Watch an exciting scrimmage with the North Suburban Elite Girls Hockey Team

Bring your family and friends for a night of fun and community spirit while supporting a great cause. For more information, visit VOHBoston.org.



The purpose of this newsletter is to provide timely information to the Chelmsford community regarding its town government. Publications will be issued as needed, but on no less than a monthly basis. Your suggestions and comments are welcome at tmoffice@chelmsfordma.gov.

Paul Cohen, Town Manager