



Town of Natick

Fall 2014 Newsletter

*Issued by Martha L. White,
Town Administrator*

Natick Board of Selectmen

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John Connolly

Town of Natick, Massachusetts

13 East Central Street

Natick, Massachusetts 01760

www.natickma.gov

2014 Fall Annual Town Meeting

The upcoming Fall Annual Town Meeting will commence at 7:30 p.m. on October 21 at the Natick High School. The Town Meeting will take up customary matters, including amendments to the current year budget, capital funding requests, updates to the Personnel Board classification and pay plan, committee reports and more. There are also numerous proposals, many of which were submitted by citizen petition, that are sure to generate interest among Town Meeting members and their constituents.

The Finance Committee holds public hearings on all warrant articles and generally meets on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. For the upcoming Town Meeting, the Finance Committee began its hearings on September 2 and will continue through early-mid October. Interested residents are urged to watch Finance Committee meetings on Natick Pegasus.

Recently, the Finance Committee joined the Board of Selectmen and School Committee in the use of a web-based program allowing the public to view all meeting materials so as to better follow along with the Committee's discussions. From the Town's website www.natickma.gov go to the meeting calendar and click on the agenda in which you are interested.

New Treasurer-Collector

We are pleased to announce the recent addition of Stephen Price to our finance team in the position of Treasurer-Collector. Steve comes to us with a solid career in municipal finance, most recently serving as Treasurer-Collector for the Town of Framingham.

Working with his office staff and Deputy Town Administrator/Finance Director Jeff Towne, Steve has quickly become acclimated and has identified opportunities for operational and system enhancements.

Assessors' Office Assurance of Fair Taxation

The Assessors' Office recently completed a comprehensive street-by-street review of all residential property, following a similar review of all commercial properties. These reviews involve analysis of comparable sales data and, often, property inspections. Such inspections are necessary to ensure that property improvements are accounted for such that all taxpayers pay their fair share. Without these thorough evaluations, there is risk of unequal valuation and thus taxation. With a completed street-by-street review the Assessors' Office is able to fairly apply the results of their analysis, thus ensuring even and fair assessment practices. As a result, taxpayers may see an increase or decrease to their assessment. As always, if a property owner has concerns regarding their valuation, the assessing staff is available and encourages taxpayers to contact them at 508-647-6420 to arrange an inspection.

By conducting these exhaustive reviews largely with in-house staff, the Assessors' Office saves the taxpayers thousands of dollars annually through the avoidance of consulting services – services that are typically utilized by other community's assessing offices.

Elderly and Disabled Taxation Fund

Please consider making a donation to this fund, which is exclusively used to help qualifying taxpayers of limited means. The Elderly and Disabled Taxation Fund Committee awards grant early in the year, and your support directly helps our neighbors in need. See your tax bill to learn more, or call 508 647-6420.

Speen Street Projects

The Town recently held a "soft" opening of the beautiful 7-acre J.J. Lane Park on Speen Street. A grand opening will be scheduled for early 2015; stay tuned for more details. Meanwhile, we welcome and

encourage residents to enjoy this wonderful passive recreational facility.

On September 3rd the Massachusetts National Guard formally opened their newly constructed Army Readiness Center on Speen Street. This state-of-the-art and energy-efficient facility will provide a training center for and serve the peacetime missions of the 182nd Area Support Medical Company and the 26th Maneuver Enhanced Brigade units of the Massachusetts Army National Guard.

Annual Veterans' Appreciation Dinner

The Town of Natick, along with the Natick Veterans' Council and the Natick Firefighters, welcomes Natick's veterans and their families, as well as families of active duty service members, to the annual Veterans' Appreciation Dinner hosted by the Natick Fire Department on Tuesday, November at 6:00 PM. To RSVP, please contact the Town's Veterans' Services Director Paul Carew at 508-647-6545 or veterans@natickma.org by November 5 so that we may plan a great event. There is no charge to attend. Thank you to all our veterans.

9-11 Memorial

On September 11th, 2001 our world was changed forever. For first responders, the loss was devastating. The Natick public safety departments were fortunate to have been gifted with a section of steel from one of the World Trade Center Towers. This artifact now serves as the central component in a memorial - a place for reflection - honoring the lives lost as well as the survivors and heroes that emerged from that devastating tragedy.

This memorial, located at the public safety building on East Central Street, was dedicated on September 11, 2014 with hundreds of residents in attendance.

Over the past several months, community volunteers including members of the Fire and Police Departments initiated a fundraising effort to build this everlasting memorial and reflection garden for the community of Natick, and for anyone who visits our wonderful downtown. Opportunities remain to purchase a memorial paver to be placed within the commemorative area. Please access donation forms from the Town website through the Quick Link to the 9-11 Memorial site. Alternatively, donations can be

made to the Natick 9-11 Memorial Fund, 22 East Central Street, Natick MA 01760.

We encourage residents to visit this stirring memorial.

Recognition of Long-Time Employees

The Town has been fortunate to retain the service of many career employees; these employees bring a wealth of knowledge and dedication to the Town's operations and delivery of high-quality service to Natick residents. The Town's Human Resources Director, Richard Tranfaglia, has developed a program to recognize the commitment and service of these employees. Those serving 5 years or more will be recognized by their department, and those serving 20 years or more will also be recognized by the Board of Selectmen.

Service for the Town has many rewards, and certainly some challenges. Some people thrive on the concept of service to community; these individuals are the ideal Town employees, and the likeliest to make a career of service to municipal government. Natick has had the good fortune of having many employees committed to the Town of Natick and its sound future. We are proud to recognize their service.

Cochituate Rail Trail

The development of the Cochituate Rail Trail has been in the works for many years. This trail would connect Natick Center with the Saxonville neighborhood in Framingham, connecting to that town's section of the CRT, and provide convenient access for cyclists, pedestrians and other non-motorized users to and between many Natick residential, business, and transit destinations. The CRT offers opportunities for both recreation and commuting.

A milestone was recently achieved with the submission of a "25% Design" to MassDOT. A public hearing on the design will be held early in 2015. Negotiations continue with CSX, the property owner, and the Town hopes to acquire the land in coming years using conservation funds and state grants and appropriations. To learn more, visit www.natickma.gov/crt.

In this and other initiatives, Natick continues to distinguish itself as an imaginative, inventive and forward-thinking community where it is an honor to serve, whether as volunteers or staff.