

Select Board Approves Policy Statement Allowing Legal Non-Citizen Residents to Serve in Appointed Positions

BY THERESA KNAPP

At its meeting on Jan. 13, the Holliston Select Board approved a policy statement that allows legal Holliston residents, regardless of citizen status, to serve in appointed positions in local government.

In August, a Holliston resident, who is not a U.S. citizen, asked the town to consider a Home Rule petition to allow non-U.S. citizens residing in Holliston to vote in municipal town elections. At that meeting, Massachusetts State Representative James Arena-DeRosa said similar Home Rule petitions had been denied by the State Legislature because they have been determined to be unconstitutional.

At the January meeting, Select Board member Damon Dimmick, who took on the effort in August, said, "The idea here is to be more inclusive and to actually allow us to [tap into] the potential that we have in

our legal residents who are really eager to contribute to town government and this government in any ways they can."

Dimmick said, "This particular policy statement is a statement only, it is not something that can be litigated in the future, it is us clarifying a viewpoint that we have spoken with counsel about to make it quite clear how we want to be inclusive."

The policy statement reads: "The Town of Holliston welcomes and encourages participation on its appointed boards, committees, and commissions from all legal residents who maintain Holliston as their primary residence, regardless of citizenship status, unless specifically prohibited by state law or other governing regulations. Legal non-citizen residents who maintain Holliston as their primary residence are eligible for appointment to town boards and committees on the same

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*-Damon Dimmick
Holliston Select Board*

basis as citizen residents. As required by Massachusetts law, elected positions may only be held by registered voters who are U.S. citizens. This includes but is not limited to positions such as Select Board, School Committee, Board of Health, Planning Board, Library Trustees, Board of Assessors,

POLICY
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Lighting Up The New Year

Many residents spent their New Year's Eve on the rail trail.

The Friends of Holliston Rail Trail thanked everyone who visited that night.

"Thanks to all who visited the Holliston Rail Trail for the First Night Trail Walk and festivities! Special thanks to T.C. Scoops for donating their time and providing delicious ice cream to attendees, and Holliston Girl Scouts for their wonderful s'mores!

"The Unlikely Strummers and a jazz trio from Holliston High School delighted walkers with their music!

"We also want to thank Holliston Youth Baseball/Softball, Holliston Bike Park, Jon Sullivan (owner of JSE Corp.) and Bob Savin of Fitness Together, 1013 Run Club, and all the wonderful



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Finance Committee, Housing Authority, and Park Commission.”

Select Board member Benjamin Sparrell said, “I think it’s a great idea, I love to see more inclusion and opportunities for people to participate in government.”

Select Board Chair Tina Hein said, “We know that this is an important direction for the board to take policy-wise for our community. I would add that this is very much a Holliston-specific policy decision, it’s devoid of any national consideration rather it’s a response to our local demographics and the need and the benefit of being a community in which every resident feels that they belong. I do believe that this is a core value here in Holliston.”

The policy statement was referred to the Town Administrator and Town Clerk for implementation, or to present any relevant issues to the board by Feb. 24.

TRAIL

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firepit hosts who lit up the trail!
“And finally, thanks to the Holliston Boy Scouts and Holliston Lions Club for the help of the Leos! With gratitude to all the attendees for making this yet another truly special way to welcome a New Year. Wishing you all the very best for 2025!”



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Christian Family Montessori School – A Love of Learning Starts Here

By JENNIFER RUSSO

Maria Montessori, an Italian educator and physician born in 1870, believed that the best way to encourage learning is to cultivate a child's natural interests through hands-on activities, collaborative play, and a self-paced education driven by an environment which inspires functional independence and exploration. Statistics have revealed that Montessori students tend to show better creative performance, higher intrinsic motivation, and a greater self-awareness leading to better socio-emotional outcomes throughout their lives.

The Christian Family Montessori School (CFMS) in Holliston strives to nurture the curiosity of children and foster a lifetime love of learning. Open to children that are between two years, nine months and six years of age, the school began as a home daycare back in 1983, and has since expanded to a Montessori school, where up to thirty students can learn and discover their full potential in a unique way.

"Sometimes people may overlook us because we are a smaller school, but it's an absolutely wonderful place for children to be. Because it is smaller, we are much closer-knit, knowing our families well and having excellent cross-communication. It's a community. We are very attentive to the needs of our students and invested not only in their academic education, but also in who they are as individual people," says school director Gina Russell.

Students at the school come from Holliston and surrounding towns, and the school encompasses a wide variety of learning opportunities dependent on age and ability. Students learn language and math skills, geography, cultural studies, science, and nature, but they also learn practical life skills, problem solving, art, courtesy, and how to be a good community member. Though not all students are of the Christian faith, the school does have a faith-centered approach to learning, teaching the children about compassion and respect, the joy of helping oth-

Business spotlight



Christian Family Montessori School

ers, and practicing gratitude.

With a large 1,500 square-foot classroom, the students are divided into two teams, as equally as possible. Students in these groups can benefit from seeing what the other team is doing throughout the day, which is part of the learning method. Additionally, younger students look up to the older ones and learn from them, while the older students have the opportunity to be mentors and reinforce their own learning by helping younger students. The children also have lunch and playtime together.

CFMS has four full-time teachers with a wealth of credentials, including a wide range of educational backgrounds that span education, psychology, applied physics, IT, and Montessori teaching methodologies. They lead the children through their day, which includes enabling students to choose work for their work cycles and facilitating group lessons, crafts and activities, playtime, and music.

"We also try to accommodate kids who have specific requirements however we are able to. For example, we added speakers in the classroom for a student who was hearing impaired. We are happy to work with caregivers in addressing any needs as best as we can," shares Gina.



Christian Family Montessori School is currently accepting applications for the 2025-26 school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule a tour to learn more about what the Montessori environment has to offer. CFMS is also looking to expand with the addition of a new toddler program and are currently hiring two Lead Toddler Teachers – a fantastic opportunity for a teacher who wants to build a program from the ground up.

The Christian Family Montessori School is conveniently located in the Saint Michael's church located at 1162 Highland Street in Holliston, and very easy to get to from towns like Medway, Ashland, Hopkinton, Milford, Hopedale, Millis, Medfield, and other surrounding communities. Learn more about the school and its mission, the teachers and curriculum, and tuition costs on their website at www.cfmontessori.com and follow them on Facebook at [Facebook.com/cfmontessori](https://www.facebook.com/cfmontessori). You can also reach them by phone with any questions or to schedule a tour at 508-429-5478.

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Select Board selects Community Paradigm Associates to help with Town Manager search

By THERESA KNAPP

On Jan. 13, the Holliston Select Board chose Community Paradigm Associates as the executive search firm to help the town's search for its first Town Manager.

Paradigm was chosen from

the four Requests for Proposals that were submitted, at a cost of \$14,000.

"The differentiator for [Paradigm] was their language about community engagement and particularly the screening panel, making sure that they knew what was expected of them and they

had experience with that," said Select Board member Ben Sparrell. "They certainly had a timeline that made sense and was consistent with our expectations. They have extensive experience in this space in Massachusetts."

The town currently has a Town Administrator as its lead administrative position, but in October Fall Town Meeting passed the "Town Manager Act," which was signed into law by Governor Maura Healey on Jan. 1, 2025.

In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Paradigm helped Holliston select Travis Ahern as its Town Administrator.

In December, Ahern was named the new Executive Director of the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission and will start "potentially" on March 3, according to the agency.

According to the RFP, the creation of a Town Manager form

of government "is the most significant modernization of Holliston governance since the Acts of 1994, which created the Town Administrator role and the Town is excited to recruit under this new governance structure."

Screening panel

The board voted to form a "Holliston Town Manager Screening Panel" to include seven residents who will work collaboratively with Paradigm. According to the panel's charge, the group will be "responsible for presenting the names of 2-4 individuals, who shall be considered finalists, to the Holliston Select Board for consideration as appointment as the Town Manager of Holliston."

The panel will meet with Paradigm, receive and review resumes of semi-finalists chosen by Paradigm, conduct interviews, compare candidate information, review outcomes of reference

and background checks, and "choose up to 4 unranked finalists for presentation to the Select Board."

The board chose to create a seven-member panel with the hope of securing members that represent the seven priorities in the town's Strategic Plan:

1. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
2. Education and Enrichment
3. Environmental Sustainability and Natural Resources
4. Financial Stability
5. Flourishing Economy
6. Robust Infrastructure
7. Thriving and Engaged Community

Ahern said the panel commitment should be approximately four weeks.

The Select Board will make the final selection of the new Town Manager.

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Holliston accepts grant for ADA-compliant van for COA

The Town of Holliston has received a grant for \$85,000 from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs for an ADA-compliant bus/van for the Council on Aging.

The Select Board accepted the grant at its meeting on Jan. 13.

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Holliston Newcomers & Neighbors 2025 Grant Application is now Open

Holliston Newcomers & Neighbors (HNN) has long been committed to giving back to our community. Throughout the year, HNN organizes fundraising events which contribute to the HNN Community Investment Grant Fund. The 2024 fundraisers that contributed to the HNN Community Grant Fund for 2025 were the Prize-A-Day Calendar Raffle, Touch-A-Truck, The Great Pumpkin Trail Walk and the Comedy Night.

We will consider only those grant applications that are completed in full and will prioritize funding for those grant proposals that best fit the criteria established by the Community Investment Committee. Specifically, supporting groups that do not have significant income from fundraising and whose grant application demonstrates that the project would:

1. Have a significant impact on the community
2. Provide needed services/projects to the community at large
3. Impact a large number of Holliston residents

Please note, grant proposals that seek to redistribute funds or that seeks funds strictly for operating costs will not be considered. All educational requests must be

submitted through the designated school administrator, and no individual educator requests will be reviewed.

Also, please indicate whether or not it will be possible to complete the project within the next calendar year if your request is only partially funded. Applicants are also asked to share what they see as the loss to the community if HNN does not fund their grant. All applicants will be notified of committee's decision in April 2025.

The 2025 grant application is available on the Holliston Newcomers & Neighbors website <https://www.hollistonnewcomers.org/page-18102>. The deadline for requests is February 25, 2025. Requests received after the deadline will not be considered.

Applications can be emailed to HNNCommunityInvestments@gmail.com or received at the address noted below.

Community Investments Committee
Holliston Newcomers & Neighbors
P.O. Box 6581
Holliston, MA 01746

If you have any questions, please email the HNN Community Investments Committee - HNNCommunityInvestments@gmail.com



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Key decisions for retired couples



Mark Freeman, CEPA

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Here a few of the most important ones:

• **How much should you withdraw from your retirement accounts?** By the time you retire,

you may have contributed for decades to an IRA and a 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan. But once you retire, you'll probably need to draw on these accounts to help pay your living expenses. Consequently, both of you will need to be sure that you don't withdraw so much each year that you risk running out of money later in your retirement. One common guideline is to aim for an annual withdrawal rate of 4%, but everyone's situation is different based on age, pre-retirement income, lifestyle, health, travel plans and other factors. (Once you turn 73, or 75 if you were born in 1960 or later, you will have to take certain amounts, based on your age and account balance, from your traditional IRA and traditional 401(k) each year.)

• **When should you take Social Security?** The answer to this question depends on many factors, such as your age and other

sources of income. You can take Social Security as early as age 62, but your monthly payments will typically be bigger if you wait until your full retirement age, which will be age 67 if you were born in 1960 or later. And if you can afford to wait even longer, your payments will "max out" when you reach age 70. Your decision on when to take Social Security can affect your spouse — and vice versa. If the lower-earning spouse claims Social Security before their full retirement age — again, age 67 — their own retirement benefit and any potential spousal benefit will be reduced. (Spousal benefits are given to the lower-earning spouse if their full retirement benefit is less than half the other spouse's full retirement benefit.)

• **Should you downsize?** If you live in a big home and your children are grown, you may find it economical to downsize. Of course, this is also an emotional decision, but you may find that

you can save money by moving into a smaller home.

• **Where should you live?** Some states are far more expensive to live in than others. You'll want to weigh your decision carefully, considering the cost of housing, food, income and real estate taxes, transportation and health care in whatever state you choose.

• **Have you finished your estate plans?** If not, now is the time. You'll want to work with your legal professional to create whatever documents are needed — a will, living trust, power of attorney — to help ensure your assets go where you want them to go, and that your financial and health care choices will be protected if you become physically or mentally incapacitated.

Of course, many of these same issues will apply if you are single, divorced or widowed. But if you are married, you and your spouse will want to discuss all your choices and then decide

which steps to take. Once you've got your plans in place, you may well find that you can fully enjoy your retirement years.

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Holliston welcomes Jail Diversion Program mental health clinician

Lyan Albino filled the position in January

By THERESA KNAPP

The Jail Diversion Program (JDP) is a partnership between the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health and local police departments to divert people from jail if the issue is mental-health related.

The Holliston Police Department has been part of the co-response program since 2015, and now (again) shares a JDP clinician with the towns of Hopkinton and Sherborn. The regional position is fully funded through a grant from the Department of Mental Health. The clinician is an employee of the Town of Holliston and will have an office in each of the member towns.

The position had been vacant for two years but was filled in January by Lyan Albino who holds a master's degree in mental health counseling and a master's degree in crime and justice studies. She is a licensed mental health counselor, and previously worked as a JDP police co-responder clinician at Boston Medical Center through the Boston Police Department where she provided crisis services to children and adults. She is bilingual in English and Spanish.

Holliston Police Chief Matthew Stone introduced Albino at a meeting of the Select Board on Jan. 13.

"Having the clinician available to the three departments, [we're] able to provide an immediate response for a person in crisis; we can often help to de-escalate issues," said Stone. "Sometimes we can solve the issue with law enforcement strategies but sometimes having a clinician on hand with us helps to facilitate that."

Stone said sometimes law enforcement or the criminal justice system is not the way to solve a

problem. He said the HPD has noticed a reduction in recurring calls related to mental health issues. "So instead of going to the same mental health-related call over and over and over again, and 'putting a Band-Aid on it,' our clinician can help us find hopefully some behavioral services that the person can benefit from."

Albino told the board she is excited to be in Holliston.

"As the Chief said, I have been in this role before; I've worked the past seven years for Boston Medical Center, contracted through Boston Police. I've been working for Boston Police for quite some time in a similar role and working with their negotiator team, escalation, sections, working with their intelligence center [Boston Regional Intelligence Center] helping them with interviews and consults as well. I'm excited to be out here now and helping to build this program back up for the communities."

Select Board Chair Tina Hein said, "I think we're incredibly lucky to have you serving in our region with those experiences."

Stone said, "We hired Lyan because of her expertise and her experience. The goal, long term, is to create a supervisor position [Lyan would be the supervisor] and then bring on a second clinician because the data that we have between the three communities shows we're servicing well over 30 – 40,000 residents, between the three communities, so the need for one clinician, if you think how many mental health related calls and services that are going on, one person is not enough."

The additional position would also be funded by a DPH grant, and would likely be an

Jail Diversion Program Clinician job description

According to the town's website, "The JDP Co-Response Clinician will deliver overall clinical services alongside police personnel in the communities of Holliston, Hopkinton and Sherborn. The Co-Response Clinician will provide crisis response to individuals in need to offer on-scene de-escalation, support, assessment of mental status, social functioning and determine the level of risk to self and others. Clinician services will include co-response with police to dispatched calls, ride-along on patrols, follow-up visits to identified persons after a law enforcement encounter, assessment of persons, provision of information and referral, applicable data-related tasks, coordination of Jail/Arrest Diversion Program activities among all participating communities and participation in community & statewide forums that relate to the Jail/Arrest Diversion Program's mission."

Source: www.townofholliston.us

employee of another town within the partnership.

Stone said Albino can provide much-needed follow-up and additional support related to mental health issues. She will also closely track relevant statistics.

Stone said, "We go to a call, we clear a call, then we go to

another call; there's no follow-up because us, as police officers, aren't trained in that type of behavioral health."

The JDP clinician will respond with a police officer to "any type of call that is mental health related, that we think an arrest or a citation or a summons

to court would maybe not be the correct route to take – right now, those are our only three options to take." Stone said having a mental health clinician on staff as a fourth option will be beneficial to the community.

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By LISA MASSIMIANO,
LICENSED ESTHETICIAN AND
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Former 'Senior Center' is now 'The Center'

By THERESA KNAPP

As of Dec. 23, the former Senior Center is now known as "The Center."

Council on Aging Chair Yvette Cain told the Select Board in December that the name change is making The Center more inviting to the town's 55-plus population.

"There's a portion of our population who see a negative connotation to the term 'senior,' and so, by removing that, we hope to broaden the spectrum of people who will feel welcome there," said Cain, noting the effort to change the name started a few years ago.

"With a growing population and trying to figure out how to attract an age group that really wasn't taking advantage of the services and the services at The Center, one of the recommendations made by the [UMass Boston Gerontology Institute] was

that we rebrand, that being a name change," said Cain, noting the town's senior population was 25% in 2023 and is expected to be about 30% by 2030.

"We do hope that this is the beginning of trying to attract that 55-plus group that we don't seem to be catching at this point," added Cain. "Several changes have been made to activities, increased events, some lectures, things of that nature. I think that the staff continues to look at how we can expand the offerings and try to attract that younger group, the 'younger elders'."

Cain said most of the current programs take place between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. when the 55-plus age group is still working so they are seeking alternate sites and ways to pull in that group.

For more information regarding The Center and its programs, visit www.townofholliston.us/senior-center-the-center

Nomination Papers Available Feb. 3

On February 3, Nomination Papers will be available to run for an elected office in

Holliston. Running for a Town Office can be a rewarding experience, nomination papers available February 3 and an opportunity to help your community. Holliston depends on its volunteers.

The following is a list of the offices:

- Moderator 3 year term 1 position
- Town Clerk 3 year term 1 position
- Select Board 3 year term 1 position
- Board of Assessors 3 year term 1 position
- Board of Assessors 1 year term 1 position
- School Committee 3 year term 2 positions
- Board of Health 3 year term 1 position
- Trustee of Public Library 3 year term 2 positions

- Finance Committee 3 year term 3 positions
- Park Commissioner 3 year term 2 positions
- Planning Board 5 year term 1 position
- Housing Authority 5 year term 1 position

To qualify as a candidate you must be at least 18 years old, a registered Holliston voter, and collect 50 signatures from Holliston registered voters by April 1, 2025. The Town Election is May 20, 2025.

If you would like to discuss the possibilities, or have your Nomination Papers Prepared, please call or stop by during business hours M, W, TH 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, T 8:30 AM to 7:00 PM, F 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM.

Town Elections are non-partisan. Town Clerk's Office, 508-429-0601. Elizabeth T. Greendale

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Your Money, Your Independence

Marriage & Finances: What's Love Got To Do With It?



Glenn Brown, CFP

Valentine's Day is a time to celebrate love, but also an opportunity to reflect on how love influences every part of your relationship—even finances.

Financial planning for married couples is not just about managing money; it's about working together toward shared goals with trust, understanding, and united purpose.

Yet, it's surprising the rising number of married couples entering financial planning engagements with separate finances and desire to keep it that way. Blame pre-existing debt (i.e. student loans), divorce rates and desired autonomy to continue not having to answer for personal spending habits.

By combining finances and collaborating on financial goals, couples can set themselves up for long-term wealth. Here's how to work together as one effectively.

1. Financial Values and Habits

Before combining finances, it's essential to understand each other's financial habits, values, and experiences. Are you a spender or a saver? Do you prioritize security or investment?

Sharing how you were raised to think about money, past financial experiences, and your attitudes toward spending and investing can avoid future misunderstandings.

2. Combining Finances

Couples must decide whether to share everything, keep things separate, or take a hybrid approach. While some CFPs say there is no right answer, I don't encounter \$5M+ married households where finances are separate. Sure, a small discretionary account may exist, but so does transparency of it and across the household.

When couples feel they're underachieving, I'll see evidence of divided assets, funky income-based ratios to cover expenses and opportunities missed due to each spouse having several unknowns of the other. In summary, a lack of trust prohibits taking calculated risks to generate wealth.

The way you manage assets, liabilities and spending should reflect values and shared vision of where your household is in 3, 5 and 10+ year increments.

- If one enters marriage with 6-figure student loan debt, you both work to pay it down.

- If one comes from family money, accept offers of assistance that align with your household's vision.

- If one makes more than the other, spending and payments are balanced.

- If making a large purchase requiring a loan and/or investments, details are discussed and are to fit into the household's vision.

3. Setting Shared Financial Goals

Once finances are combined, it's time to set shared financial goals. These range from short-term goals (saving for a vacation or building an emergency fund) to long-term goals (buying a house or saving for retirement). Start by discussing your personal aspirations and then find ways to align them into a unified plan. Prioritize these goals based on timelines and importance and be prepared to compromise.

It's essential both partners feel involved and heard when setting goals. This shared vision will make the process of working together more fulfilling and successful.

4. Budget & Prioritize Spending Together

A budget helps couples allocate income, control spending, and save for shared goals. Start by listing all monthly expenses, debt repayments and automatic savings (i.e. 401k). Separately list one-time expenses expected in coming 1-3 years, such as home improvements, travel, auto, etc.

If cash flow is positive, then monitor your budget and adjust as necessary. For some it's monthly, others it's revisited when expected results don't occur.

5. Transparency and Communication

Just as love requires ongoing communication and transparency, so does financial planning. Working together as a team with check-ins and honest conversations ensures you stay on track, discuss progress toward your goals, and adjust when necessary.

Make sure to celebrate milestones together. Besides keeping each other motivated, it recognizes your power of working together and strengthens your emotional bond.

So, "What's love got to do with it?"—the answer is simple: everything.

The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual.

Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of PlanDynamic, LLC, www.PlanDynamic.com. Glenn is a fee-only Certified Financial Planner™ helping motivated people take control of their planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.

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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

Curls Just Wanna Have Fun!

By GINA WOELFEL

The b.LUXE Curly Cut

At b.LUXE, we're all about celebrating texture, and our curly hair specialists love working with every curl, wave, and coil to bring out their unique style. Our professionals focus on unlocking your curl's full potential with a new level of curl confidence you didn't know was possible! With extensive training, a passion for precision, and a deep understanding of curly hair, our specialists consult with you to craft a look that's uniquely your own. Their expert cuts, tailored treatments, and creative styling tips help you achieve a look you love.

The Specialists:

Meet Sandra Wilkey, Emily Mateo, and Donna Guadagno, the b.LUXE Curly Haired Specialists who are revolutionizing curly hair styling in Boston's Metrowest. With their extensive training and passion for natural textures, they offer innovative styling techniques that celebrate curly hair's individuality.

They also offer essential education on maintaining curls at home, product recommendations, tips for heat-free styling, and deep conditioning treatments. By helping clients understand their unique curl patterns and teaching them the proper way to care for them, they can achieve beautiful, healthy hair and wave goodbye to "bad hair days" faster than you can say, "Not today, frizz!"

What's a "Curly Cut"

A "curly cut" is a specialized haircut tailored to enhance curly hair's natural pattern and texture. This technique involves cutting the hair while it is dry, allowing the stylist to see how each curl behaves. Clients are encouraged to arrive with clean, dry hair styled in their usual way. The stylist sculpts the hair during the appointment, cutting each curl individually. This method maximizes definition and reduces frizz by considering the unique characteristics of the client's curl type and density.

Understanding Your Curls, Coils & Waves

Did you know that the shape of your hair follicle where your hair grows determines the shape of your curls? Hair follicles that are flatter or more oval-shaped produce curlier hair, while rounder follicles produce straighter hair. The shape of your curls determines your curl pattern. Many individuals have multiple curl types on their heads, with different curl patterns in various sections of their hair. This phenomenon is known as "multi-textured hair." Hair width can be coarse, medium, or fine. Curly hair is generally more porous and fragile than straight, thus making it more susceptible to humidity.

Every curl is unique with a full spectrum of textures:

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- **Wavy:** Loose, beachy waves that need lightweight products for definition and hold.
- **Curly:** Spirals and ringlets that benefit from moisture and frizz control.
- **Coily:** Tight, densely packed curls that thrive with deep hydration and gentle handling.

To effectively manage your curly hair, it's essential to identify your curl patterns and follow your curly hair specialist's product and styling recommendations.

Key Features of The b.LUXE Curly Cut:

- **Dry Cutting:** The stylist cuts the hair dry to observe how the curls naturally fall and shape the cut accordingly.
- **Curl-by-Curl Sculpting:** Each curl is carefully cut to enhance its natural shape and definition.
- **Focus on Shape and Volume:** The goal is to create a balanced cut that, de-bulks, adds volume and movement while maintaining curl definition.
- **Reduced Frizz Potential:** Working with the natural curl pattern helps define and separate the natural curls, allowing each curl to "stack" on top of one another. This minimizes the exposed hair cuticle surface that contributes to frizz while also removing split ends, which can exacerbate frizziness. A good curly cut helps the curls naturally hold their shape and reduces flyaways and uneven strands. You can also combat frizz and restore moisture with targeted treatments. At b.LUXE we use premium styling products that deeply nourish curls, lock in hydra-



tion, and leave your hair feeling soft, shiny, and manageable. For extreme cases, we also offer "The Saphira De-Frizzing Treatment," which eliminates frizz and smooths dry, brittle hair into soft waves that enhance your natural hair pattern and texture. This treatment includes a full-sized Prep & Maintain Shampoo and Mineral Mist for you to take home.

- **Styling Education:** At-Home Education: Sandra, Emily, and Donna are more than just hairstylists; they're your curly hair confidantes! During a comprehensive consultation, they will assess your needs, customize your haircut, and provide essential tips for washing, conditioning, and styling your curls. You'll leave the salon looking

fabulous and equipped with the knowledge to keep your curls thriving between visits!

Book Your Curly Cut Today!

Are you ready to fall in love with your curls again? Look no further than the experts at b.LUXE. With their specialized curly hair services, Sandra, Emily, and Donna are here to help you achieve the best curls of your life!

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Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission Announces Travis Ahern Will Take Helm as Agency's Next Executive Director

Holliston Town Administrator cites work with local marijuana establishments as qualification

The Massachusetts Cannabis Commission (Commission) announced [on Dec. 23, 2024] that Travis Ahern has accepted the agency's offer to serve as its next Executive Director starting in 2025. His hire, which comes after a 4-0 vote by Commissioners to offer him the post on Dec. 18, marks the end of a nationwide search process as the agency prepares to enter the next phase of regulating Massachusetts' \$8 billion regulated cannabis industry.

Ahern will become the Commission's second Executive Director when he takes over the role from Chief People Officer Debbie Hilton-Creek, who has served as Acting Executive Director since October 2023. When his tenure begins, potentially slated for March 3, 2025, Ahern will be the first Executive Director hired by the sitting Commissioners, who were appointed by the Governor, State Treasurer, and Attorney General in 2021.

"Travis Ahern stood out to the search committee among the 170 professionals who applied for the opportunity to lead the Commission. I am confident he will shepherd the agency and regulated cannabis industry into a new phase of maturation as we approach next steps for finalizing on-site social consumption in Massachusetts and tackling other reforms," Acting Chair Bruce Stebbins said. "Commissioners noted that he has the right combination of leadership knowledge and administrative expertise to oversee the dedicated staff who carry out our mission of ensuring a safe, effective, and equitable cannabis market."

Ahern has served as the Holliston town administrator since July 2020. In previous roles, he served as the policy and finance director for the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA) Advisory Board, the Danvers finance director, and as a financial analyst for the town

"Travis Ahern stood out to the search committee among the 170 professionals who applied for the opportunity to lead the Commission. I am confident he will shepherd the agency and regulated cannabis industry into a new phase of maturation as we approach next steps for finalizing on-site social consumption in Massachusetts and tackling other reforms."

-Bruce Stebbins, Acting Chair Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission

of Weston.

During his October interview, Ahern spoke about his time working with Marijuana Establishments in Holliston, describing how he had worked to implement local changes under reforms related to Chapter 180 of the Acts of 2022, the state's equity reform law. He also named issues like social consumption, potential federal rescheduling of cannabis, and expanding opportunities for social equity as items he would look forward to working on as Executive Director.

"My initial focus as the agency's new Executive Director will be to leverage the subject matter expertise within the organization, from staff and Commissioners, to help the organization deliver on its mission of providing a safe, equitable cannabis marketplace in Massachusetts," Ahern said. "I view Chapter 180 of the Acts of 2022 as a turning point, providing the necessary tools for the CCC to achieve its goals and lead Massachusetts forward. I believe the future is very bright for the CCC and I

am excited to be a part of it."

Ahern joins the Commission at a pivotal time: in November, combined adult-use and medicinal cannabis sales surpassed the \$8 billion mark since 2018, while new regulatory changes are being implemented to operationalize the state's equity reform law and support small businesses and patients, with proposed Social Consumption Licenses coming soon to expand the legal cannabis market in Massachusetts.

The selection of Ahern came after a monthslong process that began with Commission staff meeting in group sessions to talk about what they wanted in a new Executive Director. In June, Acting Chair Stebbins, Commissioner Ava Callender



Travis Ahern has been named the new Executive Director of the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission. Ahern is the current Town Administrator in Holliston.
Photo source: LinkedIn

Concepcion, and Acting Executive Director/Chief People Officer Hilton-Creek were joined by members of staff representing departments ranging from HR

and Communications to Equity Programming and Community Outreach to begin vetting candidates over the course of more than a dozen meetings. The subcommittee narrowed down a pool of more than 170 applicants to the top four finalists.

When he joins the agency in 2025, Ahern will lead the Commission staff of more than 140 employees and report directly to five, appointed Commissioners. The Executive Director serves as the administrative head of the Commission, pursuant to state law.

For more information, visit MassCannabisControl.com, contact the Commission by phone (774-415-0200) or email (Commission@CCC-Mass.com), or follow the agency on Facebook and X.

Source: www.masscannabiscontrol.com

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<p>17 Closed for Presidents' Day</p> 	<p>18 10:00 Meditation 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 12:00 Zumba Gold</p> 	<p>19 9:30 Walking Fitness 9:00 Podiatry*** 12:00 Lunch*** 1:30 Navigating the town website and more***</p> 	<p>20 9:00 Pilates 9:30 SSF Meeting 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 11:00 Vet's Coffee 1:00 KevTech iPhone & iPad Health & Emergencies*** 1:00 Mah Jongg Open</p>	<p>21 10:00 FFBB Exercise Class (see page 8) 10:00 Men's Group 11:00 Grief/Loss Group 1:00 Tune Timers</p> 		
<p>24 9:00 AARP Tax-Service*** 9:30 Coffee & Coloring 10:00 Legal Advice*** 10:00 Metrowest Mediation*** 11:00 Yoga Off-Site 12:00 Lunch*** 1:00 Tai Chi 1:15 Games Day</p>	<p>25 10:30 Energy Focus Movement</p>  <p>12:00 Zumba Gold</p>	<p>26 9:30 Walking Fitness 11:00 Yoga 12:00 Lunch*** 12:00 SHINE***</p>	<p>27 9:00 Pilates 9:30 Java with Jay*** 10:30 Energy Focus Movement 1:00 Mah Jongg Open Play</p>	<p>28 10:00 FFBB Exercise Class (see page 8) 12:00 Lunch & Learn*** (In Sherborn, see page 11). 1:00 Tune Timers</p>		

Sports

Wrestling To Help His Football Game

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Matt Bozyczko has been playing football as long as he can remember—it has been a major part of his life.

When he got to high school, he not only continued to play the sport that he loved, but he also decided to try playing basketball as well. Unfortunately, it wasn't something that he could get into and his friend, Tristan Crimmins-Dearujo convinced him to try wrestling the following year as a sophomore.

"Honestly, originally I didn't want to wrestle at all. People have their opinions on the sport and I was like that until I tried and learned how to wrestle," the Holliston senior said. "That first year was really hard; the conditioning was nothing like I had ever done before. No one knows how hard it is until you do it, but it allows you to push your body to the limit."

During the first couple of weeks Bozyczko didn't even know if he was built for wrestling but realized that everyone else was feeling the same way, so they all struggled together as a family.

"Matt was in my English class and I thought wrestling would be good to help him with his football," Coach Alex Strum said. "He was a little thin and basically had to learn how to wrestle on the job and although it as a tall task he took it to heart and learned how to handle himself rather quickly."

Bozyczko found that wrestling was good for his football career, especially with his hand control in moving his opponent. He found that the more he wrestled the more he saw that his conditioning improved and he was becoming a better football player, so much so that he was named the Tri-Valley League lineman of the year this past season.

The first-time wrestler doesn't remember exactly how he did in terms of wins and losses. He knows it wasn't great and recalls the very first match that he had representing the Panthers.

"That first year was bleak and my first match was against one of the best wrestlers in the

Massachusetts," he said. "I got destroyed, but Coach Strum told me to shake it off and get back into the room and work on getting better."

He did just that and although it took him some time, he was eventually able to secure his first varsity wrestling win.

"My season wasn't that good for a varsity wrestler," he said, "But I don't like to quit and if I start something I am going to keep with it and here I am today."



Coach Strum agrees that Bozyczko's first campaign only saw him win about one-third of his matches, but he could see the potential. According to the Coach, he found himself losing because of his lack of technique and didn't understand the sport of wrestling just yet.

The following year his record improved to above .500, according to the Panther grappler it was not all that glamorous. Coach Strum noted wrestlers historically make that leap in their third year and it looks as though things are starting to click for Bozyczko and the coach is looking for him to be Holliston's anchor wrestling in the 175-pound weight class. At the time of this writing, Bozyczko possessed a 15-4 record on the mat and he feels that he is giving his all in each and every match.

Upon entering the season, the senior was looking to be able to battle hard and come out with a positive record. After that his goals were to place in a tournament and place in the Sectionals

so that he could go to the State Tournament.

"I had never come close to placing in a tournament, but so far I've finished third in the Marlboro Tournament, second in the Agawam Tournament and fifth at the Chelmsford Tournament" he said. "After that I definitely want to place at the Sectionals but would actually like to win at the Sectionals and get my name up on the wall with the other great wrestlers at Holliston."

Whatever he is able to accomplish during his third and final wrestling season with Holliston he can always look back at his TVL Lineman of the Year award and it will remind him of how he actually got there through wrestling.

"Wrestling definitely helped my football game 100%," Bozyczko said. "Without wrestling I know I wouldn't be anywhere as good as I was on the football field this season. Now I want to end up on the top in wrestling."



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Real Estate Corner



The 4-bed, 3-bath, 2,379-square-foot house at 35 Dudley Road in Holliston recently sold for \$789,900. Image credit: www.zillow.com. Source: www.zillow.com / Compiled by Local Town Pages

Recent Home Sales

Date	Holliston	Amount
01/15/2025	532 Fiske Street	\$995,000
01/13/2025	623 Norfolk Street	\$799,000
01/10/2025	17 Westfield Drive	\$675,000
01/07/2025	52 Bittersweet Circle	\$1.06 mil
01/06/2025	35 Dudley Road	\$789,900
01/02/2025	230 Winter St (9.67 acres)	\$449,000
12/27/2024	9 Smithhurst Drive	\$567,500
12/18/2024	53 Goulding Street	\$680,000

Holliston school start times to change next school year

Elementary to start earlier, middle and high Schools to start later

By THERESA KNAPP

In December, the Holliston School Committee voted to change the school day start times for the 2025-2026 school year.

At a meeting of the Select Board on Dec. 23, member Ben Sparrell, who is the board's representative to the School Committee, said the committee had voted on Dec. 19 to implement the following school hours in the fall:

Placentino Elementary: 7:40 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.

Miller Elementary: 7:40 a.m. to 2:18 p.m.

Adams Middle School: 8:25 a.m. to 3:03 p.m.

Holliston High School: 8:15 p.m. to 3:03 p.m.

Sparrell said, "I was part of the subcommittee that was discussing the issues throughout October and this recommendation that was made in December but a lot of work had done previously, a few years ago in 2019, around start times."

He said minor adjustments could still be made before schedules are finalized.

Sparrell said there was a push to implement the changes by Jan. 1 to comply with the teachers' contract which recently negotiated an additional 10-15 more minutes per day of

instructional time. In addition, the district will soon be going out to bid for bus services; the town currently has three bus runs and the new schedule will require two runs.

"I think that the main change is Placentino," said Sparrell. "That affects me because of my Kindergartener. I drop him off right around a little before 9 a.m., around 8:50 a.m., and we'll be moving to a 7:40 a.m. start time, according to this current schedule - there might be some tweaks and some nuance there."

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Name: Cleo | Age: 7

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Always up for an adventure, Cleo is ready for anything you have in mind! Whether it's a shopping spree, a hike on the trails, or a cozy couch cuddle, she's thrilled just to be by your side. She's toy-obsessed, with a soft spot for tennis balls and squeaky toys, showing off her playful hops and spins whenever it's playtime.

Cleo's also a social superstar with people of all ages. She's a natural with kids, greeting them gently and rolling over for belly rubs from kids and adults alike. On a recent field trip, she

charmed everyone she met, navigating busy stores, shopping carts, and even big inflatable displays with ease and confidence.

If you're looking for a loyal, house-trained best friend with a heart full of joy and adventure, Cleo's your perfect match!







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