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Vol. 9 No. 2

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May 2023



## Hopedale Jr.-Sr. High School 2023 Empty Bowls Fundraiser

BY LAURA BUCHANAN

On Thursday, March 23, the Hopedale Jr.-Sr. High School was abuzz with the

Empty Bowls fundraiser.

Upon entering the school, patrons were greeted and checked in to purchase a \$10

ticket. The ticket could be

**EMPTY BOWLS**

*continued on page 2*

## Alley serving as Hopedale's Project 351 Ambassador

BY THERESA KNAPP

Hopedale 8th grade student Megan Alley is this year's Project 351 Ambassador.

Before being told last fall that she had been nominated for the program, Megan did not know anything about the program that was founded in 2011 by then-Governor Deval Patrick as a way to focus on the potential of the state's youth.

"I wanted to participate because it was a really good opportunity for me," says Megan, 13. "I have done some leadership programs in the past and I loved that this was a service leadership opportunity. I enjoy participating in service projects through Girl Scouts, with my brothers in Cub Scouts and with my family. I was surprised I hadn't heard anything about the program before being nominated, and I got an email from [school guidance counselor] Ms. Brass with some information as to what it was about. She ex-



plained the values they look for in a nominee and why I had been chosen."

The statewide project taps eighth grade students who can be described as "unsung heroes and quiet leaders" from all 351 municipalities in Massachusetts.

"I try to lead by example at

**PROJECT 351**

*continued on page 3*

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### EMPTY BOWLS

continued from page 1

used as their auction number and allowed patrons to choose a Hopedale student handmade bowl and enjoy an ice cream sundae.

The main event took place in the cafeteria.

To the right there were several tables organized with silent auction pottery of specially selected student artwork, including pieces by Sophi Machado and Samantha Burke, as well as pieces donated by the Hopkinton Center for the Arts.

To the left, many patrons of all ages crowded the tables filled with board games, while others waited in line for a hand-scooped ice cream sundae provided by Laura Fonseca, Ava Romano and Emily Stewart.

The Memorial Elementary School Student Council aided in educating the community with



the impacts of food insecurity in our state via school announcements, and assisted in decorating the cafeteria with cheery streamers, vibrant table cloths, and handmade signs.

Live music, provided by Cyrus Guest, filled the cafeteria and students dressed as sparkling cutlery (reused from the Beauty and the Beast production) added excitement to the evening.

Empty Bowls is a community



based project, used around the world, aimed at making and selling handmade bowls to benefit local food banks. This marked the 3rd year of this fundraiser, under the guidance of Art Teacher Laura Buchanan who has been teaching at Hopedale Jr.-Sr. High School since 2013.

The previous Empty Bowls were hosted in 2017 and 2018. Buchanan restarted this community initiative with her pottery

students this past fall. Students and faculty signed up for time slots after school, to be taught by Hopedale students to throw and decorate pottery.

After eight months of planning, creating and advertising to the community, Buchanan dubbed this event as a great success, with over 100 patrons, that was not possible without the dedication of our Hopedale students and faculty.



The Hopedale Empty Bowls Fundraiser surpassed its goal of raising \$1,000 for the Milford Daily Bread Food Pantry. Buchanan and the Empty Bowl students want to thank all who supported the event. They are looking forward to making this an annual event and having an even bigger turn out next year!

Courtesy photos, Mary Margaret Mulrony and Laura Buchanan

## Hopedale receives grant for for school zone speed limit signs

By THERESA KNAPP

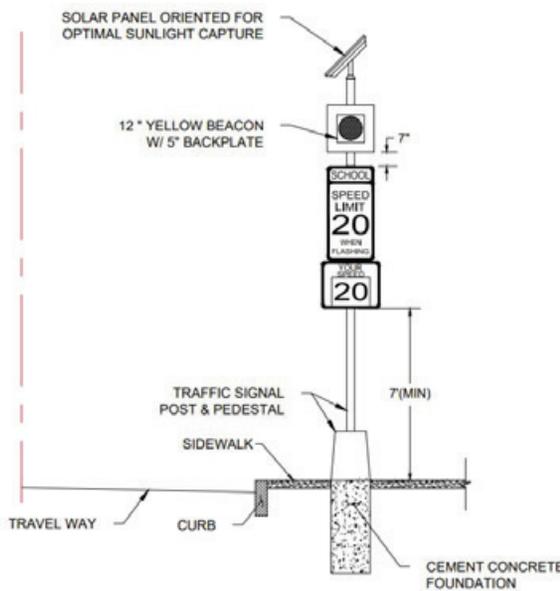
The town has received a grant for two “Combination Dynamic Speed Feedback and School Zone Speed Limit Sign Assemblies” which will be permanently installed and will be solar. They should arrive in time for the start of the next school year.

Police Chief Mark Giovanella said he worked with the school department to apply for a school safety grant for signs.

At the Select Board meeting on March 27, he said the grant is “going to allow us to get two speed signs that will be placed on Adin Street in the school zone.”

The highway department will help install the signs over the summer.

**Hopedale received a grant for two “Combination Dynamic Speed Feedback and School Zone Speed Limit Sign Assemblies” which will be installed on Adin Street. Source: MassDOT**



## Hopedale Cultural Council News

The Hopedale Cultural Council is pleased to announce that the council has been awarded a \$2500 grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council through its Festivals and Grants Program.

The council will use these funds for the 43rd Hopedale Day in the Park on Saturday, Sept. 23, at the Hopedale Town Park.

Plans are underway for a juried art show, a student art show, music, craft vendors, a petting zoo, reptile show, music, and food and game booths from local organizations.

Applications will be sent to previous participants and will

also be available on the town website in June.

Five summer band concerts have been scheduled at the park bandstand starting with Family fun Night featuring DJ Mike on Wednesday, June 21. However, if the override vote does not pass, the three July concerts will likely be canceled.

We are looking for more volunteers to serve on the council to assist with our activities and the awarding of grants. Our next meeting is Tuesday, June 13, at 6:30pm, at the Hopedale Town Hall.

For more information, please contact Billi Manning, Chairperson at 508-478-0929.

Facebook : Hopedale Cultural Council- Community Organization

Email: [hopedaleculturalcouncil@yahoo.com](mailto:hopedaleculturalcouncil@yahoo.com)

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# 13th Annual Hopedale Blue Raider 5K Run/Walk

## Sponsored by the Hopedale Athletic Boosters Association

By JESS ALLEN

The 13th annual Hopedale Blue Raider 5K Run/Walk, sponsored by the Hopedale Athletic Boosters Association, will be held on Saturday, May 20, at the Hopedale Jr-Sr High School at 25 Adin St., in Hopedale. It is expected that over 250 runners and walkers will be making the trek again over the relatively flat course through downtown Hopedale. A Hopedale version of Heartbreak Hill after mile 2 will separate the pack.

The 5k Run/Walk is held annually in memory of Coach Larry Olsen who led Hopedale's Girls Cross Country and Track teams to tremendous success. Coach Olsen, a highly decorated runner, is greatly missed by Hopedale and

the entire running community. It has been wonderful to see the community rally for the past 12 years around this event!

This event is the biggest fundraiser for the Hopedale Boosters and the money raised is used to support the student athletes of Hopedale Junior/Senior High School and many other student body activities. The Boosters provide senior scholarships, donations to senior activities and year book committee in addition to funding requests that support the school athletic teams.

Number pickup and race-day registration will begin at 8:00 AM. The pre-entry fee is \$30; \$20 for ages 21 and younger. A free dry-fit T-shirt will be given to those who register by April

20th. Runners can register online at [www.active.com](http://www.active.com) or by using the QR code shown here. In addition to the race, there will be a variety of raffle prizes to be won that are being graciously donated by local businesses. The 5K race will begin at 10:00AM. Those who are not able to participate may also enter a 50/50 raffle here: <https://go.rallyup.com/hopedaleboosters>

Any person, organization or company wishing to donate raffle items or become an official sponsor should contact the Boosters at [Hopedale5k@gmail.com](mailto:Hopedale5k@gmail.com) as there are many levels of sponsorship available including t-shirts, bibs and signage. No donation is too small to support our student athletes.

Professional timekeeping will be provided by Tri-Valley Front Runners. Medals will be given to the top three male and female runners in each age category. Running or walking with strollers and pets is al-

lowed and encouraged.

Parking, restrooms, complimentary snacks and water and a DJ will be available. Join us on May 20th for a fun filled day of Hopedale Blue Raider pride and community spirit!

## Annual and Special Town Meetings plus special election to be held in May

By THERESA KNAPP

Hopedale's Annual Town Meeting and Special Town Meeting are both scheduled for Tuesday, May 16, at 7 p.m. in the Hopedale Junior-Senior High School auditorium.

The Annual Town Meeting warrant will include an article seeking a contingent budget which will require a Proposition

2 1/2 override in the amount of \$1,350,000. If the article is approved at town meeting, it must also be approved at a special election on May 23 from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The warrants were still open at press time. When finalized, they will be posted at [www.hopedale-ma.gov](http://www.hopedale-ma.gov)

### PROJECT 351

*continued from page 1*

school in making good choices, supporting my classmates when they are struggling, and I try to be there when someone needs help," says Megan.

She says her favorite subject is science and she would like to be an astronomer when she gets older. She describes herself as someone who is very creative; loves dancing, learning and reading; and a Girl Scout. She also likes helping people and enjoys participating in service projects in her free time.

"I have made lunches for the homeless in Woonsocket and made food for the Mustard Seed. I have put together bags with toys and clothing to donate to students in need at our preschool program, and I am in the process

of putting together a webpage to promote careers in STEM specifically for young girls to encourage them to go after their dreams even in a male dominated profession. I've also made pet items and donated them to local animal shelters and I volunteer at the Hopedale library when they need extra help."

This year's Project 351 Ambassadors held their first meeting in January in Boston.

"We met all of the other ambassadors and alumni as well as our service team at Faneuil Hall. It was really fun and I made some new friends that are ambassadors, and we all had a great time."

At that first meeting, the teens were split into service group teams. Megan's group went to La Colaborativa in Chelsea where they made wellness packages, food bags, and blankets to be

given out to the people in need in the Chelsea area."

Megan recently completed her "Spring Service Project" which was a clothing drive for Cradles to Crayons where they collected gently used clothing for children newborn to age 12. She reports, "With the support of the Hopedale community, I was able to collect 14 bags of clothes."

The ambassadors have also completed an Earth Day service project, and will have another project in the fall. During the summer, participants will gather at a leadership reunion where they will be able to reconnect with other ambassadors they met in January. "I am really excited for this summer... We all live all over Massachusetts so we text, but we haven't seen each other in a while."

*For more information on Project 351, visit [www.project351.org](http://www.project351.org)*

## Upcoming elections and town meeting

### Annual Town Election

Tuesday May 9, 2023 • 7am to 8pm  
Draper Gym

### Annual Town Meeting

Tuesday May 16, 2023 • 7pm  
Hopedale Jr/Sr High School Auditorium

### Special Town Election (Override)

Tuesday May 23, 2023 • 7am to 8pm  
Draper Gym

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# Sharon Timlin Memorial Event: A Race to Cure ALS to be held on June 17th to benefit The Angel Fund

## Mike Timlin and family will be on hand for race

This year marks the 20th year for the Annual Sharon Timlin Memorial Event: A Race to Cure ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) which will be held on Saturday, June 17th at Hopkinton High School.

The popular road race and family fun day benefits The Angel Fund for ALS Research and its research at UMass Chan Medical School. The race has raised more than \$2 million for ALS research since its inception.

The event is held in memory of Sharon Timlin, mother of former Red Sox relief pitcher Mike Timlin who was diagnosed with ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis,) a disease better known as Lou Gehrig's Disease, in May 2001. She died less than a year later, in March 2002. The event also recognizes and honors the

Timlin family's commitment to ALS research and The Angel Fund for ALS Research. Mike and his wife Dawn will be guests of honor at the event.

"As a family, we are so thankful to have supported the Angel Fund through the Sharon Timlin Memorial 5K run," Mike and Dawn said. "The support of the town of Hopkinton has meant the world to us and we look forward to seeing you as we continue this fight against ALS. In this time, we have seen the impact of our contributions to Dr. Brown at UMass Chan Medical School in his research. We are just so thankful for all the support we have received over a 20- year period. We hope you will join us on Saturday, June 17th, 2023."

The course is a fully supported USATF certified 5K racecourse, with timed mile markers. The 5K race begins at 8:30 a.m., followed by the family fun day activities with live music, food, games, raffles, and other activities from 8:30 to 12 noon. A Kids Color Run will held as well

Participants can register at <https://sharontimlinrace.org>.



Registration is limited to 1,800 registrants and online registration closes when capacity is reached, or at 11:59pm on June 16, 2023.

The 5K race fee is \$40 for runners who register on or before May 29, 2023. Registration is \$45 after May 29, 2023. Registration for the virtual option is \$25 plus shipping. The first one thousand race participants will receive a commemorative race T-shirt and can enjoy post-race food and Family Fun Day.

Awards will be presented to the top three male and female finishers. The top three finishers in the following age groups will also receive awards: 14 and under; 15 -19; 20-29; 30-39; 40-

49; 50-59; 60-69; 70-plus; male/female 80+, and wheelchair division. There will be no duplicate awards.

Runners and non-runners are encouraged to take part in the Angel Fundraising Challenge, a fun and easy way to go the extra mile and fundraise by setting up their own personalized fundraising page.

"Proceeds from this event benefit The Angel Fund for ALS Research and the UMass Chan Medical School, where world-wide groundbreaking research is being done daily," Rich Kennedy, President of The Angel Fund added."To date, thanks to you, we've raised over \$2 million

for critical research for this devastating disease where there is no treatment or cure."

For information about the Sharon Timlin Memorial 5K Race to Cure ALS, visit the website [www.sharontimlinrace.org](http://www.sharontimlinrace.org)

In addition to the Angel Fundraising Challenge, donations in Sharon Timlin's memory are also welcome and would be greatly appreciated. Donations can be made online at <https://sharontimlinrace.org>, at The Angel Fund website at [www.theangelfund.org](http://www.theangelfund.org), or by sending a check made payable to The Angel Fund and mailed to The Timlin Race, 149 Wood Street, Hopkinton, MA 01748.

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# A Snapshot of Hopedale's Financial Position: April 2023

## What is the schedule for the Town Election, Town Meetings and Special Election to be held at the High School?

The Annual Town Election is on May 9th from 7AM to 8PM. The Annual and Special Town Meetings are on May 16th at 7:00 PM. The Special Election is on May 23rd from 7AM to 8 PM.

## Why will there be a Special Election on May 23rd?

The proposed annual budget has a gap between project revenues and projected expenses of almost \$1,866,000. In order to balance the budget, the recommendation is to reduce the School budget request by over \$1,000,000, close the Library, Senior Center, and Parks programs along with several other reductions in the requested budgets. The Special Election is to consider an Override of \$1,350,000 to restore funding to the School budget and keep the Library, Senior Center, and Parks open.

## How are Hopedale's Annual Revenues Determined?

Property tax revenues are controlled by a 1980 law called Proposition 2 1/2. Generally, it allows property tax revenues to grow by 2.5% per year. Along with other revenues, the average annual total increase in revenues is between 3% - 4% which, in Hopedale's case, is about \$700,000 - \$750,000 per year in additional revenues. The town's proposed Fiscal FY24 annual budget effective July 1 is about \$27,500,000. This is about a \$857,000 increase in revenues over this year's budget.

## Why is There a Gap Between Projected FY24 Revenue and Expenses?

Unfortunately, between the voters using Free Cash to balance this year's budget and the increase in the amount of funds needed to keep the same level of Town and School services for next year, projected FY24 expenses exceed revenues by almost \$1,900,000.

Hopedale is not unique in this matter. Communities across the Commonwealth have faced this issue over and over since 1980.

The other matter that has put Hopedale in this difficult financial position is the fact the town has been balancing its annual budget with "Free Cash". Simply put, these are funds that are left

over from the year before. While using a small amount of Free Cash from time to time may be ok, overall, it is a poor financial practice.

Think of it this way. Your company gives you a bonus that you use to pay your utility bills, next year you don't get the bonus, but you still must pay your bills. In other words, your yearly expenses exceed your yearly income so you did the best you could to get by using the bonus but now you face an even bigger

problem. Something must give. You need to cut some expenses or earn extra income. Hopedale is in the same situation. We have been living off the "bonus" but now is the time to phase out this practice.

## How Should Free Cash be Used?

By using our "bonus" to pay our monthly bills we have not addressed other issues, specifically our capital needs. Just like at home things wear out. The roofs, vehicles, the parks, roads,

and sidewalks, etc. all need to be replaced from time to time. Using Free Cash to replace some of these items is the sound financial approach used by communities across the Commonwealth. In a year we get a "bonus" (Free Cash) we can replace items. In a year we don't we can hold off but still pay our monthly bills.

## What Will be the Result of this Change?

The Town Meeting must adopt a balanced budget. Unfortunately, either cuts must be

made (Schools, Library, Council on Aging, Parks, other budgets) or there must be an increase in income (Override). There are no pleasant choices, but the long-term fiscal health of the community will be better served by either cutting expenses or increasing revenue.

## Why Recommend Cutting the School Budget and

**SNAPSHOT**  
continued on page 6

PAID POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT



## Vote Tim Watson for Select Board

*Dear Residents,*

I am Tim Watson, Manager of the Hopedale Water & Sewer Departments, and am seeking a position on the Select Board. Born and raised in Hopedale, I have lived most of my life here in town. After graduating from Hopedale High School, I served in the Marine Corps before joining the Water Department in 1988 as a laborer. In 1997, I became Superintendent of the Department and soon became Manager of the Water & Sewer Departments.

My wife is employed by the Hopedale Public Schools system. My stepdaughter and two grandchildren are students at Memorial Elementary where our roots continue to grow in our wonderful town.

As a department head, I manage a combined budget over three million dollars. We strive to provide the best possible value for every ratepayer dollar. I am proud of the balanced plans that we submit to Town Meeting and our ability to execute those plans each year. Our entire staff takes great pride in maximizing every ratepayer dollar. We have a long history of performing work in-house at significant savings. For example, a water main piping and booster station project was done in-house, saving the town 1.3 million dollars.

As the Water & Sewer Manager, I work successfully with committees, boards, administrators, and departments to streamline projects and save money. For example:

- ★ *The Highway Department* - drain improvement projects, clearing land for the home leaf pickup operations.
- ★ *The Board of Health* - providing an area and construction assistance for current recycling off Rte. 16.
- ★ *Police and Fire Departments* - assistance with facilities and plumbing issues.
- ★ *Hopedale Public Schools* - spearheading and resolving a bus parking lot issue with Superintendent Karen Crebase and the School Department along with associated lighting and security, saving tens of thousands of dollars in construction costs. We are currently working on a similar project providing much-needed staff parking at Bright Beginnings Center.
- ★ *EPA Storm Water Program* - assisting the town with the EPA storm water program ensuring that Hopedale avoids violations and possible fines due to noncompliance.

My experience as a longtime active participant in town affairs will help Hopedale continue moving forward successfully. Although it has concerned me that Hopedale seems divided on many issues, I know we can reach consensus. I will encourage listening, communication, sharing information and finding solutions, all with respect.

In closing, I support:

- ★ Responsibly curbing spending with a strategic multi-year plan.
- ★ Implementing critically needed improvements to infrastructure, parks and recreational facilities.
- ★ Our schools.
- ★ Business development in Town that improves our financial position and preserves our quality of life.
- ★ An override, but only if partnered with a realistic, balanced, long term plan.
- ★ The fight for West Street for environmental, water supply and quality of life reasons. This has been supported by the residents multiple times. As an elected official, I promise to execute what the residents vote at Town Meeting to the best of my ability.

*Respectfully,*  
**Tim Watson, Candidate for Select Board**  
 TimWatson01747@gmail.com



**VOTE MAY 9th**

**SNAPSHOT**

*continued from page 5*

**Eliminating the Library, Council of Aging and Parks Departments?**

Many of the positions in Town government are required by law. For example, Town Clerk, Treasurer, Assessor, Board of Health, Inspectors, along with the Boards and Committees. These all have very limited staff and further cuts will compromise their ability to correctly do their jobs. The Public Safety departments have minimal staffing as well. If we reduced the Fire Department budget by cutting positions, the revenue generated by the ambulance service would decline, offsetting the savings.

Reducing the Police Department budget would result in only one officer on the streets for some shifts, which is very dangerous for the public and the officer. Alternatively, shifts could be filled with overtime which, of course, is costly.

If we reduce personnel in the Highway Department, there are so few laborers already the only choice would be to lay off the me-

chanic. We would then have to outsource all repairs costing the town more money than we save and compromising the Department's ability to respond during snowstorms or other emergency events if equipment breaks down, as there would be no one on hand to perform repairs.

As a result, this leaves only a few budgets that can be reduced for the Town Meeting to approve a balanced budget.

**Will the Voters Have any Choice in this Proposal?**

Yes. The Annual Town Meeting on May 16th decides on the Fiscal Year 2024 annual budget. There will be two options presented. The first is a Balanced Budget that recommends reductions in the School, Library, Council on Aging, Parks, and many other budgets. There will also be a Contingent Budget presented that restores the Schools, Library, Council on Aging and Parks while leaving other proposed reductions in place to balance the budget.

If the Contingent Budget is approved by the Town Meeting it must also be approved via a Proposition 2½ Override by the voters at the Special Election on

May 23rd. The Override question will request an additional \$1,350,000 of property taxes to maintain the School, Library, Council on Aging and Parks. If the Override is approved by the voters, the Contingent Budget will take effect on July 1. If the voters do not approve the Override, the Balanced Budget will take effect on July 1.

**How Much Will my Property Taxes Increase if the Override is Approved?**

The average home in Hopedale has an assessed value of about \$450,000. It is estimated that the override will increase the average property tax bill by \$562 a year. If your home has a lower or higher assessed value than \$450,000 then your tax increase would be adjusted accordingly. This estimate is for Override only and does not include the average annual increase in your tax bill.

**Can the Town Institute Changes to Help Balance the Budget in the Future?**

The Town can make some changes over time to help the situation, but it will not relieve the Town from facing this problem from time to time. There are some areas to be considered to

Chart 1: PROJECTED INCREASES			
	FY 23	FY 24	Change
Blackstone Valley Tech	\$730,214	\$1,008,525	\$278,311
Debt and Interest	\$326,264	\$345,123	\$18,859
Pension	\$1,318,475	\$1,383,382	\$64,907
Unclassified, Insurance	\$4,560,841	\$4,720,000	\$159,159
Increase in Fixed Costs			\$521,236

Chart 2:			
	FY 23	FY 24 Level	Change
General Government	\$1,199,027	\$1,358,153	\$159,126
Public Safety	\$3,325,540	\$3,679,867	\$354,327
Hopedale School System	\$13,398,523	\$13,970,866	\$572,343
Public Works	\$1,016,326	\$1,176,431	\$160,105
Human Services	\$926,361	\$932,921	\$6,560
Culture & Recreation	\$417,424	\$404,404	-\$13,020
			\$1,239,441

help the long-term financial position of the town including:

- Adopting Fiscal Policies
- Formalizing the budget process
- Annually preparing a three-year fiscal forecast
- Annually preparing a clearly defined five-year capital plan.
- Negotiating a different share of health insurance cost between the employees/retirees and the Town
- Promoting commercial and industrial growth within the overall Master Plan

**What is the bottom line?**

The question for the voters at the Annual Town Meeting on May 16th and the Special Election on May 23rd is to decide is whether to cut expenses to balance the budget or increase revenues to continue to provide the same level of service that you enjoy today.

**Background on the Proposed FY 24 Budget**

This is a summary of the Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Town Budget, focusing on projected Revenues and Expenses, the resulting budget shortfall and associated community impacts.

**Projected Increases In FY 24 Available Revenues:**

The following increases are projected in the three main revenues sources:

- Property Taxes \$604,000
- State Aid – This amount varies based on the Legislature (Preliminary) \$34,000
- Local Receipts – From excise tax, fees, etc. \$119,000
- Sub-Total FY 24 increase in new revenue \$757,000
- Proposed use of Free Cash for FY 24 budget \$100,000
- Total Additional Available Revenue for FY 24 \$857,000
- This represents an increase in Revenues of 3.1% from FY 23

**Projected Increases In FY 24 Expenses:**

The expenses associated with the following budgets are referred to as “fixed costs,” costs that are, typically, legally, or contractually mandated: *See Chart 1.*

Thus, of the \$857,000 in projected additional revenue, only \$335,764 is available for all other Town departments. Yet, anticipated budget increases – just to maintain existing services and staffing levels – far exceed this amount: *See Chart 2.*

Please note that in the FY 24 Level Service budget above, no new employees are proposed except in the water department which is self-funding. Personnel

**SNAPSHOT**  
*continued on page 8*

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# Family-run Affordable Junk Removal takes the stress out of cleanups

By CHRISTIE VOGT  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Whether it's one old fridge in the garage or an entire home of unwanted goods, the team at Affordable Junk Removal offers a cost-efficient, stress-free approach to waste management. "You don't lift a finger," says owner Jason Schadler, who started the company along with his wife Christine in 2005.

The business offers same-day service for both residential and commercial clients across eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island. In addition to junk removal, the company rents 15-yard dumpsters.

As a family-owned and operated company, Schadler says Affordable Junk Removal has lower overhead costs and is more accessible than national competitors. "I answer my phone 24 hours a day," he says. "I was on vacation in Italy and Portugal, and I was still answering my phone on the beach. When you call us, you get me — not an automated machine!"

Schadler says the company has an environmentally friendly approach to disposal in which it recycles items when possible, properly disposes of non-recyclables and resells many items at the Schadlers' secondhand store, Resellables. "We opened that store in Bellingham because we hated to see things thrown away,"



Schadler says. "We have four kids and sustainability is extremely important to us."

During the business's early days, Schadler provided junk removal on nights and weekends when he wasn't busy working at a machine shop. Eventually, the business grew into a full-time endeavor, and the Schadlers invested back into the company with new equipment and techniques. "When I first started, for example, we didn't have any tarps. I'm driving around and things are flying out of my truck," Schadler laughs. "I'm like, 'Oh my god, I need a tarp.'"

Schadler says his wife Christine "was equally as involved" in getting the business off the ground. "She handled the back-end while I did the heavy lifting, all while she was working at EMC," he says. "Fast forward 17 years, and we both work full time managing the company as well

## Business spotlight

as other endeavors. Business is doing great; it has grown tremendously to a fleet of trucks and dumpsters, and we've also been able to buy a pizza place, The Corner Market in Holliston."

In addition to delivering an in-demand service to the community, Schadler is appreciative that Affordable Junk Removal has helped provide a work-life balance that suits his family. "It allows me to be able to do what I like doing and spend time with my kids," he says. "I'm home to see my babies play softball and do all that stuff. We are also able to give back to the communities we serve."

As for Hopedale in particular, Schadler says they are proud



Christine and Jason Schadler, shown here with their children and dog, started Affordable Junk Removal in 2005.

to have many repeat customers and friends in the area. The Schadlers live in nearby Milford and have coached and sponsored many youth sports activities in both Hopedale and Milford.

One of the best parts of his job, Schadler says, is meeting and getting to know new people and developing relationships

with returning customers. "We are really grateful for the repeat business and the chance to form connections with residents across the MetroWest area," he says.

To receive a free junk removal estimate, call 774-287-1133 or visit [affordablejunkremoval.com](http://affordablejunkremoval.com).

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# “Hey, I showed this last year, do something!”, Sincerely Your Tax Returns.



Glenn Brown

I get it, dealing with your taxes can be emotional.

Add the IRS stating that the average tax refund paid out was 9.8% less than 2022. Ugh.

You’ve had some separation, it’s time to return for an honest conversation. Maybe even bring in some outside help.

A CFP’s goal with tax planning is to help clients take proactive steps to save money on

their taxes now and help reduce liabilities in the future. Aspects include lowering your AGI (adjusted gross income), leveraging tax deductions, taking advantage of tax credits, tax deferrals and timing of large purchases, sales and realization of income.

Consider potential ways to make impact for 2023:

**Exercising Restricted Stock Units (RSUs)** - Sold some RSUs and get a large tax bill? Connect with HR to discuss withholding options before your next exercise. Also, learn of the benefits and drawbacks of concentrated positions as well as short-term versus long-term capital gains.

**Adjust your W-4** - If you got a large refund, lower your withholding and do more with your money, like ~4% money market interest. Also, if both spouses work and one is self-employed, consider raising your W-4 withholding to avoid potential penalties for underpaying estimated taxes on a growing small business.

**Track Your Side Hustle** - Government announced Venmo and payment apps report income for goods and services worth \$600 or more annually — a sharp drop from previous \$20,000 threshold. Panic and confusion followed, so the IRS postponed by a year.

Whether you receive a 1099-K form or not, you’ve always been obligated to report income. To help offset, get up to speed on potential deductions including expenses, amortization, and dedicated home office space.

**Revisit Work Benefits** - You can impact your adjusted gross income (AGI) through 401k contributions as well as funding a HSA funding, FSA for dental/vision, FSA dependent care and Commuter Benefits - especially if required to go back into the office.

While some changes can’t happen until open enrollment (and impact 2024), don’t forget if you have a life event - new child, spouse loses or changes job - you have 30 days to revisit and reset

your work benefits.

**Minimize Taxes In Retirement**

Taxes are inevitable with retirement savings, deferred compensation and/or pension income, but consider:

**Before Retirement** - Contribute to Roth 401(k) and Roth IRA (if eligible) now. After age 59 1/2 and owned for at least 5 years, withdrawals are completely tax free. Added bonus is Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) don’t exist for Roth accounts nor are balances in Roth accounts a factor in determining RMDs for your tax deferred accounts.

**During Retirement** - Distribute funds in certain years that you claim large deductions, such as the breaks for medical expenses or charitable gifts that temporarily lower your tax rate.

**Before or During** - Roth Conversion and Backdoor Roth. Yes, pay the taxes now for benefits of Roth later. Consider larger conversions in years of lower income if self-employed and/

or time away from work. Also, when 20% (or more) market corrections occur consider an opportunity to convert investments over to Roth, paying less in taxes and allowing for rebound inside Roth.

Tax planning is complex, but it doesn’t need to be complicated. Work with someone to help you save money, stay organized and reduce liabilities in the future.

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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**SNAPSHOT**

*continued from page 6*

cost increases result from agreed-upon collective bargaining agreements and/or wage increases in the small number of non-union employees. Further, the expense budgets reflect only anticipated cost increases in goods and services.

The FY 24 Level budget increase of \$1,237,441, minus the available revenues of \$335,764, leaves a budget gap of over \$900,000. Further, since the Town used about \$800,000 in

Free Cash to balance the FY 23 budget, the actual FY 24 budget deficit is more than \$1,800,000 (less the use of \$100,000 in Free Cash) for a projected deficit of \$1,766,800. Please exercise your right to vote at the Town meeting and both Elections. It is your government and your choice.

To close this deficit and achieve a Balanced Budget, the following budget reductions will be recommended at the Town Meeting: *See Chart 3*

This balanced budget would have the following impacts on the community:

- School: Loss of teachers,

sports programs, transportation services, and more

- Library: The Library would be closed
- Council on Aging: The Senior Center would be closed.
- Parks Department: No summer programs

Two FY 24 budgets will be presented at the May 16 Annual Town Meeting – one for a balanced budget as outlined above and the other a Contingent budget that will go into effect only if approved at the Town Meeting and a Proposition 2 1/2 Override

**Chart 3:**

	FY 24 Level	FY 24 Balanced	Difference
General Government	\$1,356,153	\$1,266,288	-(89,865)
Public Safety	\$3,679,867	\$3,639,362	-(40,505)
Hopedale School System	\$13,970,866	\$12,928,866	-(1,042,000)
Public Works	\$1,176,431	\$1,093,051	-(83,380)
Human Services	\$932,921	\$803,330	-(129,591)
Culture & Recreation	\$404,404	\$22,945	-(381,459)
			-(1,766,800)

of \$1,350,000 at the Special Election on May 23rd.

The Town Meeting will make the final decision regarding both budgets, and must approve a balanced budget; that is, a bud-

get that does not exceed FY 24 projected revenues. They will also decide if they wish to ap-

**SNAPSHOT**

*continued on page 10*

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# Proposition 2 1/2 Override required to keep Bancroft Memorial Library Open

On Tuesday, May 16th, Hopedale residents will convene for a spring Town Meeting that will

include an override request of \$1,350,000 on the warrant to fund the FY24 Operating Budget. The override is required in order to maintain critical town services. A special town election would be scheduled for approval of the override on May 23rd at the Draper Memorial Gymnasium. If the Override fails to pass, the result will be drastic cuts to the school budget, and closure of the Bancroft Memorial Library, the Council on Aging and the Parks Department. It is estimated that an override of \$1.350M will result in a total increase of \$562 to the average home owner (based on average single family value of \$450,000). This would be in addition to the "average" annual increase in your tax bill of approximately \$268. The total increase for an average homeowner is estimated to be \$830/year (which would

average out to less than \$16 per week).

If the override fails, the Library's historic oak doors will be shuttered on July 1st; accompanied by lost opportunities to promote early literacy, encourage readers to explore fantastical journeys of imagination or intrigue, or better comprehend what is going on in the world we inhabit. If the Library closes, treasures and resources within will no longer be accessible to patrons, but will instead be browsed solely by well-read dust motes lingering amidst the stacks.

Closing the Library will result in an immediate loss of certification in the State Aid to Public Libraries Programs and the Library will lose eligibility for many state and federal grants. Access to shared Libby (Overdrive) collections will be terminated, and patrons will be unable to take advantage of services at other libraries, including inter-library loan privileges. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commis-

sioners has made information regarding State Aid available on its website.

Regaining certification could take several years, as the state Board of Library Commissioners requires libraries to meet minimum requirements for a year before it will reconsider certification. Additionally, certified libraries in other communities

are not required to serve residents of Hopedale. The decision on whether to serve a decertified community is up to each library's trustee board. Hopedale belongs to the CWMars Network, and it is likely that many member libraries will not continue partnerships with Hopedale, citing the lack of reciprocity that would exist due to the Library's closure.

In a quick survey of local libraries, Bellingham, Milford, Blackstone, and Upton are among those which would no longer serve Hopedale residents.

For more information about the FY24 Budget, please visit the Town of Hopedale's Website to View Town Agendas, Meeting Minutes, and Meeting Videos ([www.hopedale.gov](http://www.hopedale.gov)).

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**SNAPSHOT**

*continued from page 8*

prove a contingent budget that would increase the tax revenues by \$1,350,000.

If the contingent budget is approved at the Town Meeting and by the voters at the Special Election, then the contingent budget will go into effect July 1, 2023, as follows:

- The Library budget restored, and Library remains open.
- The Council on Aging budget restored, and COA remains open.
- The Parks Department budget restored, and programs continue.
- The School Department budget increased by \$810,000.

If the Override is not approved the balanced budget goes into effect on July 1, 2023.

Please exercise your right to vote at the Town meeting and both Elections. It is your government and your choice.

*Submitted by Jeff Nutting, Interim Town Administrator*

# Council on Aging programs to be cut, senior center to close if override fails

By THERESA KNAPP

The Hopedale Council on Aging provides services to residents of all ages. They are the “human services department” for the town, says Council on Aging Director Carole Mullen.

But those services could all go away if voters do not pass a proposed \$1.35 million override in May. The override, which includes \$130,000 for the COA, will have to pass at Town Meeting (May 16) and a special election (May 23) to go into effect.

If the override fails, the COA will lose its funding and the senior center (and the town library) would close. In addition, the Park Department would not have summer programs; and the School Department would lose teachers, sports programs, transportation services, and more, according to Interim Town Administrator Jeff Nutting. [See “A Snapshot of Hopedale’s Financial Position” starting on page 5]

“I think it would be a cata-

strophic loss. If we go away, it’s not like there is another town department or employee who can do this work; there’s no one to provide the sorts of services we do,” says Mullen, adding they were open every day during COVID-19 to address residents’ issues. “We have people who come here flabbergasted or hysterically crying” because they are frustrated with a governmental process, a social situation, or another problem with which they need assistance.

There are approximately 1,600 residents over the age of 60 in Hopedale but COA services are available to all residents of the town (est. pop. 6,000). Mullen estimates they are actively providing services to 300 or 400 residents and they field “thousands of phone calls every year” from residents seeking general information, specific referrals, etc. She said many people need

help with more than one issue, and the COA serves as a ‘lifeline’ to those who have no one else to call.

“The services we provide are pretty intense,” says Mullen, noting many residents have a trusted relationship with the COA staff who can help them with an array of issues related to:

- Caretaker support
- Domestic abuse resources
- Food assistance
- Fuel assistance
- Health clinics (including vaccines)
- Home repair Assistance
- Housing/rental assistance
- In-home medical assessments
- Medicare counseling
- Meals on Wheels
- Outreach services

Paperwork assistance

Social activities to encourage mental and physical well-being

Transportation (medical appointments, errands)

The COA also offers social programming at the senior center such as card games and knitting, and lifelong learning classes in areas such as painting and literature. Mullen says these programs help with the “healthy aging process.”

Mullen oversees the “senior citizen real estate tax credit program” in which up to 25 seniors can work in various town departments (including school cafeterias, Town Hall, and the library) to earn up to \$1,000 to offset their real estate property taxes.

Mullen understands the town’s expenses are higher than its revenue this year but worries what the Hopedale community will look like if the proposed cuts are made.

“If we start to eliminate all the things that make Hopedale a special community, who would want to live here? If the quality of our schools diminishes or we have no town library, why would anyone want to live here?”

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Hopedale Senior Center has been housed in the Hopedale Community House for more than 50 years at no cost to taxpayers? The Council on Aging does not have to pay for rent, maintenance, electricity, building staff, etc. All building costs are provided by the Hopedale Foundation.

## Hopedale Students have art on display at Worcester Art Museum

Congratulations to Kylie Coffman, Billy James, Taylor Jerrett and Sophi Machado for participating in the 2023 Worcester Art Museum Youth Art Month Exhibit! Each of these four students

is a Hopedale Jr. Sr. High School senior who has shown dedication to making art, exploring their creativity, and being thoughtful within their artwork.

Each spring the Worcester Art Museum participates in the nationwide Youth Art Month, allowing each K-12 art teacher in Central Massachusetts to choose four student works for this show, this year amounting to over 200 artworks!

The event took place in the Education Wing of the WAM and coincided with the WAM Free Sunday program, allowing the young artists and their friends and families to explore the beautiful museum for free (over 650 people in attendance!).

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# Preliminary injunction against town still stands after judge dismisses four claims from Railroad but allows one

By THERESA KNAPP

A March decision by the US District Court for the District of Massachusetts has left a preliminary injunction in place that prevents the town of Hopedale from taking by eminent domain the forestland at 364 West Street from the Grafton & Upton Railroad.

At a meeting of the Select Board on April 10, special town counsel David Mackey of Anderson Kreiger gave an update on the federal litigation that was argued in August in front of Judge Allison Burroughs.

Mackey said the judge dismissed four of the five claims brought by GURR but the claim the town's effort to take the forestland was preempted by the Interstate Commerce Commission Termination Act (ICCTA).

"She let that claim stand and, in the same opinion, granted the Railroad's request for a preliminary injunction blocking the town from taking the forestland from the Railroad by eminent domain. At the same time, she ordered the Railroad to file a petition in front of the Surface Transportation Board [STB], that's an administrative agency in Washington, DC, to pursue its claim under the [ICCTA]. This order that the town not be able to take the forestland will be in effect at least for the duration of the [STB] litigation down in Washington, DC."

Mackey said the town has the option to appeal the granting of the injunction in favor of the Railroad and will decide how to proceed in the near future.

# Getting Rid of Ants, The Most Common Home Invader

**WPC Pest and Termite Control reminds families that ants are more than a nuisance pest.**

While homeowners across the country enjoy the warm weather and the sights, smells and activities of the season, they also must contend with increased pest activity. This season, WPC Pest Control is reminding homeowners to be on the lookout for one of the most prevalent pests – ants.

Often considered the No. 1 nuisance pest, ants also pose significant health and property risk as they destroy wood and contaminate food items. And with more than 700 types of ant species in the United States, it's not surprising that ants can quickly become a source of disgust, frustration and concern for homeowners.

"Most ants thrive in warm and moist conditions, which is why it's best to eliminate moisture or standing water near or inside the home," says Jim Maz-zuchelli, Owner at WPC Pest and Termite Control. "In some cases, the only way to completely remediate an ant infestation is to call a qualified pest professional who can locate and remove the identified species' nests."

Jim from WPC Pest Control reminds homeowners that the first step to remediation is to properly identify which ant species is present in the home.

Some of the most common home invaders include:

- **Odorous House Ants:** These ants get their name from the unpleasant odor they give off when crushed, often described as smelling like a rotten coconut. They typically nest in wall voids and crevices and prefer sweet foods.
- **Pharaoh Ants:** Pharaoh ants prefer sweets, but also consume grease and even shoe polish. They live in extremely large colonies and keep warm near artificial heating sources like base-board heaters and ovens.

• **Carpenter Ants:** This species hollows out nests in both dry and moist wood, though they prefer the latter. They can be particularly hard to remove since their nests can be more difficult to locate.

• **Fire Ants:** Fire ants can cause severe allergic reactions in addition to structural damage caused by chewing through the insulation around electrical wiring.

Homeowners who suspect an ant infestation should contact a licensed pest professional who can identify ant species and recommend a course of treatment. To learn more about ants, please visit [www.nobugnopests.com](http://www.nobugnopests.com) or call 508-366-1820 to talk with Jim.

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## iStent Inject and Microgoniomy for Glaucoma

By: ROGER M. KALDAWY, M.D.  
MILFORD FRANKLIN EYE CENTER

### What is glaucoma and how is it treated?

Glaucoma is a chronic disease defined by characteristic optic nerve damage. It is a multi-factorial disease with over 300 different anatomic variations and affects over 40,000,000 people worldwide. Glaucoma is a slowly progressive and irreversible disease and, in most cases, causes a painless loss of eyesight. It is, in short, "the silent sneak thief of sight". The damage to the optic nerve is commonly caused by a fluid imbalance, or pressure, in the eye, as well as possible alterations in the blood flow to the optic nerve. It is well established that lowering the intraocular pressure can slow the process of optic nerve damage. The degree of pressure lowering necessary to prevent optic nerve damage is individualized for each person and each optic nerve. The greater

the optic nerve damage, the lower the intraocular pressure is needed to achieve stability and prevent further optic nerve damage and further visual field loss.

If glaucoma is left untreated you may experience vision loss and eventual blindness. Treatment strategies for glaucoma are individualized to achieve the greatest lowering of the intraocular pressure with the least amount of risk to the individual's eyesight and well-being. Commonly, in the United States, topical medications are used as a first line of treatment. In many situations, multiple medications are tried to achieve the desired pressure level. Unfortunately, there can be difficulties with compliance, cost and side effects with many of these medications and laser therapy is commonly substituted as a first line of therapy.

### What is the iStent® trabecular micro-bypass stent?

Minimally invasive glaucoma surgical procedures, so-called

MIGS involve alterations of the drainage area that are performed inside the eye. The iStent® trabecular micro-bypass stent is a surgical therapy for patients who have mild to moderate open angle glaucoma and have been tried possibly on topical medications or laser therapy. It is designed to improve the aqueous outflow to better lower the intraocular pressure and reduce the need for medications. The iStent® is the smallest medical device approved by the FDA to date. It is placed in the eye into the drainage area, so-called Schlemm's Canal through the trabecular meshwork. The iStent® is an elective procedure. The iStent® is potentially beneficial in helping to reduce the number of glaucoma medications and drops needed to control this condition.

### What is microgoniomy surgery?

Microgoniomy surgery (using the iAccess trabecular trephine device from Glaukos) is another type of MIGS. This



procedure provides control of the eye pressure at lower risk than more traditional glaucoma surgeries. It alters the eye's drainage system to lower the eye pressure and reduce the need for medications. Microgoniomy can be done standalone or combined with iStents during cataract surgery in a tissue sparing fashion to improve resistance to outflow in glaucoma. This tissue-sparing procedure can help lower the pressure even more compared to implanting iStent alone. During this procedure and ophthalmologist (Eye MD/ surgeon) will make 3 trephination cuts in a part of the eye's drainage system called the trabecular meshwork. This will allow fluid to leave the eye much easier.

### Benefits (how the surgery can help)

The goal of the iStent and microgoniomy surgery is to lower your eye pressure and help preserve vision. It will not bring back vision already lost from glaucoma. After implantation, many patients are able to better control their eye pressure with fewer medications.

### Risks

As with any surgery, there are risks with the iStent and microgoniomy procedure. The surgery may not lower the eye pressure or control the glaucoma even when it is properly performed. In addition, sometimes there can be complications that do not appear in the early post operative period but may develop days, months or years later. Further treatment or

surgery to treat those complications may be needed. As with any intraocular surgery, there may be loss of vision, blindness, loss of the eye, as well as bleeding, infection and injury to the eye or nearby body parts.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, we use state-of-the-art technology and lasers to diagnose and treat a variety of eye problems, including glaucoma. We offer high-definition optic coherence tomography testing (OCT) that can predict glaucoma before it even happens. We also offer laser treatment when medications alone are not enough. All our offices are equipped with OCT and state-of-the-art computerized visual field testing. We operate in a state-of-the-art surgery center close to home, here at the Cataract and Laser Surgery Center of Milford. Are you still being referred to Waltham and Attleboro for your eye surgery? Call us for a second opinion! We were among the first surgeons in New England to introduce this new technology and we offer stellar outcomes closer to home. With 21 years of established experience and tens of thousands of procedures performed, we are happy to offer state-of-the-art medical and surgical eye care and now the iStent inject /microgoniomy for treatment of glaucoma closer to home than ever before.

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## Hopedale High Students Explore Wonders of Working World

By KYLE MALONEY

On Friday, Jan. 13, the Hopedale Jr-Sr High School held its second annual Career Fair for Freshmen and Sophomore students.

Juniors Kyle Maloney, Camden Parker, and William Adamski (Pictured), organized the Fair under the guidance of Talitha Oliveri, one of Hopedale's business educators and the advisor of Hopedale DECA.

The Career Fair provided Hopedale High's underclassmen with much needed career insight and information through networking and panel discussions with various industry professionals. It also provided students with soft skills through workshops and simulated professional interviews.

The main Career Fair event featured industry booths representing 16 different career clusters, where students could network with over 35 community volunteers and experts to be educated on their respective careers.

Participants were able to ask questions and interact with volunteers at each booth to spark interest in a career, and, more importantly, learn how to pursue that career and better understand the qualifications and pathways to different occupations.

Along with the industry booths, over 100 mock interviews were conducted, which simulated a professional interview setting and exposed participants to a real-life application of soft skills. These interviews, conducted by student volunteers, increased students' confidence and professional capabilities through feedback received based on their performance in the interview. This feedback identified strengths and opportunities for development in the underclassmen's interactions, and provided insight as to how to become more comfortable in a professional interview environment.

The last activity that took place at the Fair was the Executive Panel, where five volunteers from different backgrounds and occupations spoke about their professional lives and the pathways that led them to where they are today. Guided by moderator

Camden Parker, open-ended questions were asked to prompt answers that would benefit a younger audience and provide them with guidance and information to aid them after high school, whether they directly enter the workforce or attend college. Students also had the opportunity to pose their own questions to the Panel.

To organize the Career Fair, the team received a \$3,000 sponsorship from the Innovation Pathways Program at Hopedale Jr-Sr High School. Signage and other materials were purchased to brand the Career Fair and help students easily navigate the event to ensure it ran smoothly.

The Career Fair was a great success. After the event, student and volunteer feedback was gathered to gauge event effectiveness. Over 95% of students indicated they can apply the professional skills gained in the Mock Interviews, 91% of students better understood the qualifications needed to pursue their career interest, and 100% of students found a career path that interested them. All of the volunteers indicated they enjoyed participating at the Fair and were prepared to speak at the event.

As put by Molly Parent, a Backlog Manager at Dell Technologies who volunteered at the Career Fair, "I loved the set-up, super professional and well laid out. I think this is such a great opportunity for students to get out of their comfort zone so early on and potentially explore career paths they may be interested in."

The Career Fair team would like to thank the Innovation Pathways Program at Hopedale High for sponsoring the Career Fair. The event would not have been possible without them!

Additionally, they would like to thank Superintendent Karen Crebase and Principal Derek Atherton.

Special thanks to Ms. Oliveri for her commitment as a DECA Advisor and business educator, and her guidance and help in organizing the Career Fair. Without her, the event would not have been such a success.

## Hopedale considers establishing a public comment policy

By THERESA KNAPP

At the March 27 meeting of the Select Board, Interim Town Administrator Jeff Nutting presented a draft policy related to citizen comments at public meetings. This move was in response to a recent court decision regarding a citizen in Southborough who allegedly used "inappropriate language" that violated the Southborough Select Board's "public comment policy" in 2018.

In March, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled for the plaintiff in Barron vs. Kolenda. The plaintiff claimed the attempts made by a Southborough select board member to quell her speech and eject her from a public meeting were in violation of her rights.

Nutting summarized the decision saying, "In this day and age, it's okay for citizens to be totally rude, non-courteous; you can't threaten a public official but you can pretty much have, according to the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth, public discourse. They give wide latitude to that based on this decision in which a woman berated a select board member going back many years ago, including calling that person 'somebody who was the former head of the Nazi party in World War II' on several occasions, and the court ruled in her [plaintiff] favor."

Nutting suggested Hopedale consider adopting its own public comment policy, noting there is no legal requirement for public comment.

"The only people who have a right to be recognized [are those] at a public hearing. There's no legal obligation to recognize anybody at a meeting, but obviously that's not a good way to relate to your citizens," said Nutting.

Nutting proposed a policy that sets a time limit on citizens' comments to include "up to three minutes" related to an issue on the agenda, and "up to five minutes" on an issue not on the agenda.

The board's initial response was to suggest times closer to two minutes.

The board said it would like to hear from residents regarding the issue, and agreed to revisit the idea at a later time.



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# Sports

## Hopedale Girls' Tennis On The Road Again

By CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

The Hopedale girls' tennis team opened the season with back-to-back games against Uxbridge and Grafton on March 30 and 31.

Unfortunately, once again the Blue Raiders will have to take all of their tennis matches on the road as the town does not have an MIAA approved court for them to play on.

Since 2015, the Hopedale girls have been to seven straight tournaments with the only year they missed out on was the Covid year in which the season was cancelled. Through those seven years, the Blue Raiders had captured three straight Division 3 Central Titles, lost in another championship match and been to the semi-finals, the quarter finals, and the round of 16.

During their three years where they won the Sectionals, Hopedale lost once in the State semi-Finals and twice in the State Championship Match. In the majority of their losses that sent them home for the year, Hopedale usually played tough before eventually being edged out 3-2.

Having lost two girls to graduation and another three to moving away or not returning to the team, coach Art Riffo is looking at a very young team to grace the courts for the Blue raiders this



spring. Despite having a squad of young athletes, the Hopedale Coach is not wavering from his team once again making it to the tournament.

"I don't expect too much from them this year; there are no high expectations. I am looking for

them just to continue to get better each time that they step onto the court," Riffo said. "I hope that they can learn the basics while enjoying the game. If they have fun and find there is not a lot of pressure put on them then they'll want to come back. With that said I am still optimistic that we will be advance into the tournament once again this year."

Coming back to play first singles for the Blue Raiders once again this year is freshman Pia Obrador. As an eighth grader last season, Obrador was Hopedale's top tennis player and unfortunately found the season a little tough having to go up against seniors in that number one spot. With that season under her belt she enters this year with clarity that she is not only the number one player, but now knows what she is up against and ready to take on the upper classmen.

"This year I just want her to relax and don't let the opposition intimidate her," the Hopedale Coach said. "If she goes out and just plays her game, she'll be fine. She is a powerful tennis player, and her serves are tough to re-

turn, we just need to work on her variety of shots to take her to the next level."

Following Obrador at the number one singles, Riffo has yet decided who will play second and third singles. Currently either junior Sydney Hall or freshman Kate Friesema will take the second singles position while the other will play third singles. Neither girls has any singles experience as both played doubles last spring.

"Both girls are consistent, but this will be their first year playing singles. Going from doubles to singles is a very different game where you don't have a partner to rely on, it's all on you," Riffo said. "Both girls have good forehand and backhands and the one that makes the least mistakes will get that number two spot with the other taking third."

Much like the singles circuit, Riffo finds himself with a task at hand after his top doubles tandem. Juniors Callie Constanza and Abigail Aldrich will once again hold down the tops double position. The two juniors played together last season and are

rather familiar with one another and play well together.

At second doubles the Coach is entering uncharted waters having only freshman Gabby Rinehart returning. The freshman saw some action playing doubles last year, but her partner, whomever it may be, will be relatively new to the sport. Riffo has nine or 10 girls battling it out to be that last girl to get onto the court and as of this writing, eighth grader Madison Buttonow has that inside edge. The coach has liked the coordination with her hand and foot movement, as well as her athleticism.

Things will once again be tough for the girls having to travel to each and every game, but Riffo is not going to let that deter them of getting back into the State Tournament. According to the Coach, as long as they are enjoying playing the game then things will fall into place and the Blue Raiders will once again be a team amongst the Division 4 teams to take part in the tournament.

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# Bancroft Memorial Library

50 Hopedale Street, Hopedale  
 Contact: Tricia Perry, Library Director  
 508-634-2209; tperry@cwmares.org

## Memorial Day

The Bancroft Memorial Library will be closed on Saturday, May 27 and Monday, May 29 in observance of Memorial Day.

## Celebrate Literacy Award

Library Director, Tricia Perry, received the annual Celebrate Literacy Award from the Massachusetts Reading Association on April 27. This award recognizes organizations, institutions, and individuals who have made significant contributions to literacy. Special thanks to all of the individuals and community groups who have collaborated with the Library on so many of our shared literacy initiatives.

## Community Conversations Sponsored by Hopedale For Change

You are invited to join us as we embark on explorations of who we are, what we share and what it means to be part of this Hopedale Community. Our monthly conversations will include: Who are our neighbors and what does diversity look like in Hopedale?(Monday, May 8 6:30-7:30pm); Freedom: What does it mean for each of us? Individually and Collectively?(Monday, June 12 6:30-7:30pm) and Hopedale Across the Generations: What can we learn from each other?

(Monday, July 10 6:30-7:30pm).

## Massachusetts Library Collaborative 50+ Job Seekers Networking Group

The free, biweekly skillbuilding and networking group meetings for people 50 years and older looking for a new job, a new career direction, or a Second Act career continue this month on Zoom. Topics this month: May 3/10 Interview Preparation/Strategy and May 17/24 Interview Practice. Please check our website for more information. This program is sponsored by the Friends of the Hopedale Library.

## Helen Symonds Book Group

The Hopedale Book Discussion Group will meet Wednesday, May 3 at 1:00 pm in the Bancroft Memorial Library meeting room. The book group is open to everyone. If you are interested in joining the group, please leave your contact information at the Circulation Desk and ask them to order a copy of the book for you.

Our May discussion book will be Sold on a Monday by Kristina McMorris. "2 CHILDREN FOR SALE. The sign sits on a farmhouse porch in 1931. Struggling reporter Ellis Reed, snaps a photograph of the children, not meant for publication. But when it leads to his big break, the consequences are more devastating than he ever imagined. At the

paper, Lillian Palmer, secretary but aspiring reporter is far too familiar with the heartbreak of children deemed unwanted. As the bonds of motherhood are tested, she and Ellis must decide how much they are willing to risk to mend a fractured family. Inspired by an actual newspaper photograph that stunned the nation, Sold on a Monday is a powerful novel of love, redemption, and the unexpected paths that bring us home." - adapted from CWMARS catalog

## Wednesday Needlework Group

Join us for an evening of needlework every Wednesday night from 6:00pm until 7:45pm. Bring your latest project. No commitment required – come when you can!

## News from The Friends of the Hopedale Library

King Philip's War with Author Michael Tougias

The Friends of the Hopedale Library are pleased to welcome NY Times bestselling author Michael Tougias as he presents a slide presentation about King Philip's War on Wednesday, May 17, at 6:30 pm. Tougias is the author of the acclaimed "Until I Have No Country" (a novel of King Philip's War) and co-author with Eric Schultz of "King Philip's War: The History and Legacy of America's Forgotten Conflict."

The first part of the presentation will discuss the Native American way of life, Colonial settlements, and the events leading up to the War. The second part covers the battles and the strategy during this cataclysmic war, which on a per capita basis was the bloodiest conflict in our nation's history. Slides include battle sites, period sketches, historic markers, maps, and suggestions for visiting roadside history. Tougias also discusses Native American strategy during the war and the challenges of writing a historical novel. The novel includes adventure, romance, and intrigue while staying true to historical facts. A book signing and questions will follow the presentation. Books will be available for sale.

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Hopedale Cultural Council, a local agency that is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. There is no charge for this program. It will take place in the downstairs program room. To reserve your spot, please call 508-634-2209 or stop by the Library during operating hours.

FlowerPower.org Fundraiser - Last Chance!

Please support The Friends of the Hopedale Library by shopping our FlowerPower.org fundraiser through 5/15! You can order flowers, bulbs, and other plants online and have orders shipped directly to you. The Friends of the Hopedale Library earns 50% which goes right back to the Library. Shop at <http://hopedalelibrary.fpfundraising.com>.

## About the Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Hopedale Library, founded in 1983, is an active volunteer, non-profit organization consisting of town-wide membership and a representative executive board. We work with Library staff and the Trustees to support the Library in providing funds for equipment, materials, and programs not covered by the Library's regular operating budget. The Friends of the Library meet the second Wednesday of the month, September through June, at 6:30 pm. New members and ideas are always welcome!

For updates throughout the month, Friend us on Facebook and sign up at [www.wowbrary.org](http://www.wowbrary.org) to discover the Library's newest books, movies and music. Our webpage is <https://www.hopedale-ma.gov/bancroft-memorial-library>.

## MAY 2023 - HOPEDALE SR. CENTER ACTIVITIES (508)634-2208

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:30 pm BINGO	2 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge 3:30 pm Dance Class	3 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 12:30 pm Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage	4 10:00 am Watercolor Class 1:00 pm Tai Chi	5 10:00 am Re-boot Strength & Balance 12:00 pm Senior Center closes
8 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:30 pm BINGO	9 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge 3:30 pm Dance Class <i>Errand Van Available</i>	10 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 9:30 am Nurse Clinic 11:00 am Meditation 12:30 pm Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage	11 9:00 am Volunteer Breakfast (By Invitation) 10:00 am Watercolor Class 1:00 pm Tai Chi	12 10:00 am Re-boot Strength & Balance 12:00 pm Senior Center closes
15 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Senior Center Lunch 12:30 pm BINGO	16 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge 3:30 pm Dance Class <b>ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 7pm HIGH SCHOOL</b>	17 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am No Meditation 12:30 pm No Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage	18 10:00 am Watercolor Class 10:00 am Knitters' Group 12:00 pm Senior Center Lunch 1:00 pm Tai Chi	19 10:00 am Re-boot Strength & Balance 12:00 pm Senior Center closes
22 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:30 pm BINGO	23 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge 3:30 pm Dance Class <i>Errand Van Available</i> <b>SPECIAL ELECTION DRAPER GYM</b>	24 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am No Meditation 12:30 pm No Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage	25 10:00 am Watercolor Class 1:00 pm Tai Chi 1:00 pm COA Board Meeting <i>Errand Van Available</i>	26 10:00 am Re-boot Strength & Balance 12:00 pm Senior Center closes
29 <b>CLOSED</b>  <b>MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY</b>	30 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge 3:30 pm Dance Class	31 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 12:30 pm Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage		

# Real Estate Corner

## Recent Home Sales

Date	Hopedale	Amount
04/18/2023	116 Freedom Street	\$395,000
04/14/2023	30 Mellen Street	\$440,000
04/03/2023	19 Oak Street	\$401,000
03/31/2023	126-128 Greene Street	\$575,000
03/27/2023	13 Lake Street	\$247,000

Source: [www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com) / Compiled by Local Town Pages



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