



TOWN OF CONCORD

Office of the Town Manager

Operational Status Reports & Departmental Updates

For the Week Ending February 17, 2023

General Administration

Hanscom Air Field Expansion

The Concord Select Board submitted [public comment](#) in response to the Environmental Notification Form for the Hanscom North Airfield Development. Members of the board, staff, and others attended the site visit and public meeting on February 6 and the public comment reflect the observations, comments, and questions gathered from those sessions.

Special Town Election - Unofficial Results

Question 1, related to the additional middle school costs passed. Twenty-eight percent of the town's registered voters voted on the question, with 60% voting in favor.

Police Department

Activity Log February 9 – February 15

Log items	782
Traffic Enforcement	72
Motor Vehicle Stops	115
MV Crashes and/or Paper Exchanges	10
Arrests	3

"Swatting" Incident

- Officers responded to the Middlesex School for a report of an active shooter on campus. It was determined that this call was a hoax, known as "swatting", and was like other calls placed around the state. Middlesex School placed the school on lockdown, and officers responded to the campus with fire personnel and mutual aid departments and conducted a check of all buildings and dormitories to accurately ensure that the call was a hoax.

Training/Professional Development

- Sergeant Michael Burgess attended the Supervisor Leadership Institute training sponsored by the FBI-LEEDA (Law Enforcement Executive Development Association) and hosted by the Municipal Police Training Committee.

Community

- Officers assisted the Concord Players with security during the showing of the play, Indecent.

- Officers assisted Concord Recreation with the Winter Wonderland celebration.

Community Services

- Community Services Coordinator, Bonny Wilbur, attended a **Public Benefits Advocacy Training**, offered by the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, on the end of the extra SNAP (food stamps) emergency allotment benefits created during the pandemic to help individuals and families buy food. Massachusetts residents with a SNAP card will receive their last extra COVID SNAP payment on March 2nd. The state has launched a new website – [Mass.gov/ExtraCOVIDSNAP](https://www.mass.gov/ExtraCOVIDSNAP) to help residents plan for the end of these temporary federal benefits.
- Bonny spoke to the library staff about her role as **Community Services Coordinator**, and about the assistance available to town residents who might be struggling to pay bills, confronting domestic violence, living with mental illness, facing food insecurity, etc. She also discussed the various support programs she manages throughout the year to help Concord families in need.
- Concord residents have begun to register their children for **summer camp**, and many are reaching out to the Community Services Coordinator for assistance. In many households, camp is a necessity and serves as childcare while parents are at work, yet many low-income families struggle to afford the cost. There are many local camp and summer program options, and there is financial assistance with camp fees through the town, and through a camp scholarship program from the Concord-Carlisle Community Chest.

Planning and Land Management

Natural Resources

- **Warner's Pond Community Discussion:** The Natural Resources Division will be hosting a forum on restoration alternatives for Warner's Pond improvements on Thursday, March 2 at the Town House. The purpose of the forum is to provide information on restoration alternatives, and to solicit public feedback. A survey has been developed and will also be distributed to households this week to gather more information on current use and future interest of the use of the pond.



Economic Vitality & Tourism

- Visitor Center staffer, Cindy Keene attended a **Travel Forecast Workshop** sponsored by MOTT (Mass Office of Travel and Tourism). Key takeaways include:
 - 30% of millennials say their vacations are inspired by content creators and 41% of Gen Z uses social media when researching and planning travel.

- A shift to on-the-ground travel – Traveling by train is a trend to watch in 2023 (Amtrak ridership jumped to over 10 million riders last year). This translates to an increase in regional visitors who are looking to explore nearby destinations.
- Family reunion – extended family groups are looking to travel to a convenient central location. Groups are looking to maximize their time together and find activities to please people of all ages.
- Friends trip – splitting costs allows for more luxurious accommodations, group activities, and delectable meals. And it's noted that 88% of Americans attending weddings also participate in at least 2+ bachelor/-ette trips.
- Couples' getaway – looking for special activities curated for two, with many couples doing duo-moon, mini honeymoon followed by a longer trip later.
- "Bleisure" adventure (combining business and travel) – having the flexibility to extend a business trip or combining remote work with options to unwind at night.

Based on this research and other information, the visitconcord.org website will get a refresh this spring to attract these types of travelers.

Planning

- Senior Planner Ann Clifford prepared and submitted, on behalf of the Historical Commission, a grant application to the **Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Program** for \$25,000 to fund a Town of Concord Historic Preservation Plan. Matching funds have been requested from the Community Preservation Committee and will be considered at the Annual Town Meeting in April.
- **West Concord Advisory Committee special meeting on February 15th:** WCAC held a special meeting during the day on February 15th to hear from Todd Benjamin and Julie Creamer about proposed affordable housing development for the land off Winthrop Street owned by the Concord Housing Development Corporation. While the Committee is supportive of affordable housing, with attention to family housing and housing for people wanting to downsize, they requested more information about the proposed design and community impacts before committing to the proposal as presented. The next WCAC meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 6th.

Building Inspections

- **Permit and Inspection updates:** Since January 26th, the Building Inspections division issued 43 building permits, 61 electrical permits, 45 plumbing and gas permits. The Inspectors also conducted 86 building inspections, 81 electrical inspections and 68 plumbing and gas inspections.
- **Record cold impacts sprinkler and water systems:** Over the weekend of February 4th and 5th, a Building Inspector and Electrical Inspector responded to Fire department requests to assess 16 different properties throughout town that were damaged because of burst water and sprinkler pipes.
- On Friday, February 10th at 5:45 pm, Police dispatch requested that a Building Inspector and an Electrical Inspector go to the memory care unit at 80 Deaconess Road. When the Inspectors arrived at the scene at approximately 6:15 pm, they were informed by the Fire Department on-site

that a small electrical fire had broken out in a first-floor closet. The closet sustained only minor smoke damage and residents did not need to be evacuated.

Health

- **Extreme cold impacts two local businesses:** Health Division staff continued to work with businesses affected by the extreme cold. After receiving a proposed plan of action, a follow-up inspection at the Colonial Inn on February 14th resulted in it being reopened for business. Also, while the Concord Cheese shop is open, there continues to be ongoing repairs and clean up in the basement because of a break in a water service pipe.
- **The Board of Health meeting of February 15th:** The Board reviewed the draft Tobacco regulations that integrate the 2014 Concord regulations with 2020 state regulations. The Board plans to hold a public hearing on these regulations in April. All Tobacco Permit holders will receive a draft of the regulations prior to the hearing.
- **The White Pond water quality reports** are under review by the Health Division staff in collaboration with the Division of Natural Resources. The final White Pond report from Higgins Environmental was shared with interested parties and posted on the town website.
- Public Health Director Melanie Dineen met with the DEI director in Medford, Frances Nwajei, to discuss **best practices for DEI work in a community**. Frances shared information on a community preparedness checklist for DEI work which was subsequently shared with the DEI Commission and Town Manager on Tuesday.
- Environmental Health Inspector, Mike Funaiolo, reviewed the existing Concord and Lincoln septic permit files for compliance with Certificate of Compliance issuance. Health Inspector Gabrielle White completed the review of the Middle School kitchen plan and is working to train Mike in accordance to Standard 2 of the FDA Food Retail Program Standards.

Council on Aging



- The Concord COA and the Concord Lions Club are bringing back their annual Spaghetti Luncheon for all Concord residents age 60+ on February 18th. Dormant during the pandemic's closed doors, this popular and tasty event's aroma will fill the air at HWCC beginning at noon on Saturday. Nearly 80 residents will gather for pasta, meatballs, salad, bread, cake, and comradery.
- Preparation Assistance Volunteers certified under the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program will be at the Council on Aging February and March to help prepare Federal and Massachusetts personal income tax returns or to answer tax questions. Residents age 60+ can meet with tax counselors for an hour session. This free service can answer most tax issues faced by low to-middle-income taxpayers, with special attention to those over age 60. The tax counselors will be

holding office hours on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays beginning Tuesday, February 7th. Please call the COA to make an appointment at 978-318-3020.

Minuteman Media

Hometown Media Award Entries

Tory Wesnofske and Matt Beren have entered an industry awards event with 3 entries, good luck guys!



Hometown Media Awards 2023

Project	Category	Deadline
Carlisle Castle Playground Build	Documentary Access Center Professional	Mar 1, 2023
Robbins House: What Were They Fighting For?	Racial Justice and Civil Rights Programming Access Center Professional	Mar 1, 2023
Local Look Episode 4: Suicide Prevention Hotline	Emergency Communications Access Center Professional	



- The Carlisle rebuilds of the Select board and COA main meeting room has been completed. 4 large video monitors and a complete control system was installed. Awesome video and audio quality.
- The Carlisle rebuilds of the Select Board and COA main meeting room has been completed. 4 large video monitors and a complete control system was installed. Awesome video and audio quality.

Recreation Program

Strategic Plan Launch

Concord Recreation, together with design firm Weston & Sampson, is conducting an assessment to understand opportunities and challenges in the town's (not the school's) current recreational facilities. The results of the effort will be a published **Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan** used to guide operational, staffing and budgeting decisions for Concord Recreation and other key town

departments. The study has been funded through Community Preservation Act funds and has a target completion date of late fall 2023.

To best collect resident feedback, we have **created a public survey** that can be accessed [here](#). Available until mid-April 2023, the survey is available in English, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese. Other languages and braille can be made available, by request. The survey will be available in hard copy at various locations including Town Hall, the Concord Public Library, the Beede Swim and Fitness Center, the Council on Aging, and the Hunt Recreation Center to name a few.

Additionally, the Department invites members of the public to gather in the gymnasium at the Hunt Recreation Center on [Wednesday March 8, 2023 from 5:00-7:30pm for an interactive and inclusive open house](#) broken into three parts; first, attendees can visit tables manned by our team to discuss topics such as current recreation facilities and programs, improved accessibility and inclusivity, or water access points to launch a kayak or canoe along the many rivers and ponds in Concord. A short presentation will then follow to introduce the plan and its purpose, share what the planning team has learned to date from site visits and the online survey, and engage residents on what sort of future interventions they might like to see in their community. A Question-and-Answer session will wrap up the evening with additional time provided for any final visits to the topical tables. For parents, guardians, and caregivers of children who wish to attend this open house, childcare will be provided at the Hunt Recreation Center.