

THE NEWSletter

The Newsy Little Paper That Supplements Other Media

Volume 34 Number 2 May 2025

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Free Concerts Behind Town Hall

Free concerts are held Wednesdays and Fridays, with occasional Thursdays and Saturdays, from 5:30 to 7:15 p.m. at Grover's Corner Gazebo behind the Great Barrington Town Hall, 334 Main St. All concerts are weather permitting. An updated schedule and weather updates are at [Facebook.com/p/Town-of-Great-Barrington-Summer-Concert-Series-1](https://www.facebook.com/p/Town-of-Great-Barrington-Summer-Concert-Series-1)



Wednesday, June 4	Sunday Strummers Uke Ensemble
Friday, June 6	Playing It Forward GB – Lee Rogers and Friends
Wednesday, June 18	Ken Moore Band
Friday, June 20	Joint Chiefs
Wednesday, June 25	Berkshire Sings
Friday, June 27	Hack Monet
Wednesday, July 2	The Adams Brothers
Wednesday, July 9	Eagles Trombone Band
Friday, July 11	Sixties with a Chance of Rain
Wednesday, July 16	David Reed Duo
Friday, July 18	Aimee Van Dyne Band
Wednesday, July 23	Eric & Frankie
Friday, July 25	The BTU's
Friday, Aug. 1	Brian Murphy & Friends
Friday, Aug. 8	Elizabeth Berliner
Wednesday, Aug 13	Tom Norton - Norto & the Hecklers
Friday, Aug. 15	Lucky Bucket Band
Friday, Aug. 22	Railroad Street Dreamers
Wednesday, Aug 27	Mike Cobb & the Crevulators
Friday, Aug. 29	Bobby Sweet Band
Friday, Sept. 5	Wanda Houston Band



Children's Programs

Programs for children are Saturdays at 10:15 a.m. during July and August.

-Saturday, July 5th Eric Reinhardt performs "David Grover" set

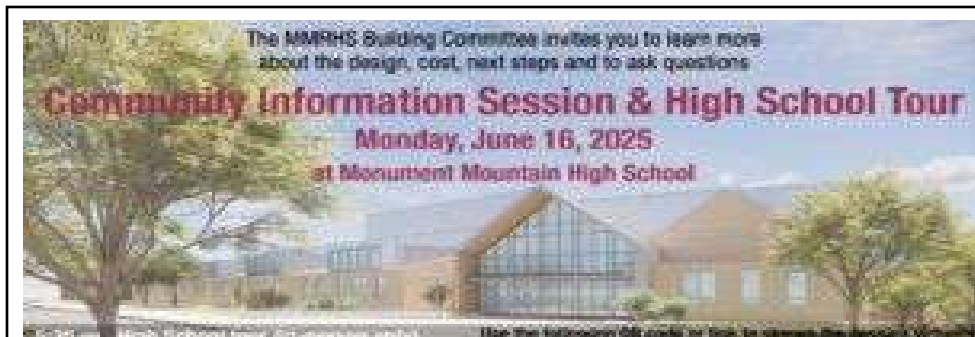
-Saturday, July 26th, August 2nd and 9th. Terry ala Berry

If your face is green or blue or red, please see page 2 about the status of your subscription. People who get THE NEWSletter by email are notified individually.



Pages 3 and 4 have more about the June 16 information session and tour and the Nov. 4 vote on a proposed new high school building.

Shown here is the draft design of the proposed building's entrance.



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HOUSATONIC PARTY IN THE PARK

Saturday
June 14th

12-4PM

Housatonic Commons

Fun for all the family!

Live Music * Food Trucks * Children's Activities



Rain
or
Shine!



partyinthepark.org



MEETING AGENDAS are posted on the town's website at townofgbma.gov (a new address) and sent by THE NEWSletter. The

agendas tell where to attend and provide a Zoom link, if needed.

A meeting held with all members there in person may still be held even if a Zoom link doesn't work, according to the Attorney General's Division of Open Government.

Watch Past Meetings Online

Recordings of many meetings are on Community Television for the Southern Berkshires at ctsbvtv.org, YouTube and the Selectboard's website page. You can watch

on your computer or on Spectrum cable television channels 1301 (public), 1302 (education) and 1303 (government).

Some boards, the Claire Teague Senior Center, town libraries and the Affordable Housing Trust have their own websites, given on their town website pages.

The Berkshire Hills Regional School District's website is at bhrs.org. It, the town, Cultural Council, police and fire departments also have Facebook pages.

The following meeting dates may change and more almost certainly will be added.

JUNE

-Parks Commission meets June 2, 5:15 p.m.

-Health Board meets June 5, 6:30 p.m.

--Selectboard meets June 9 & 23, 6 p.m.

--Berkshire Hills Regional School Committee meets June 12, 6 p.m.

-Planning Board meets June 12 & 26, 6 p.m.

Tour of Monument Mountain Regional High School, June 16, 5:30 p.m., followed at 6 by community forum on plans for new high school building, online and at high school. sponsored by BHRSC's Monument Building Committee.

-Affordable Housing Trust Fund board meets June 17, 6:30 p.m.

-Housing Authority meets June 18, 1 p.m.

-Housatonic Improvement Committee meets June 24, 6:30 p.m.

-Conservation Commission meets June 25, 6:30 p.m.

Libraries, Senior Center, Bus Services, Recycling

THE TOWN'S TWO LIBRARIES' website at gblibraries.org lists programs for many interests and different ages at both libraries. THE NEWSletter sends the libraries' monthly newsletter to its email list.

The New York Times, New York Times Cooking, Berkshire Eagle, Washington Post and THE NEWSletter can be read free online. Anyone with a Massachusetts library card can sign up for a Boston Public Library e-card.

Books, CDs and DVDs can be ordered by calling Mason Library at 528-2403 or emailing masonramsdel@gmail.com or bark.cwmars.org. Wifi is available on both libraries' lawns and Mason's parking lot.

Museum passes are also available.

Mason Library

Mason Library on Main Street, Great Barrington, is closed Sundays and open Monday through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Its phone number is 528-2403.

Ramsdell Library

Ramsdell Library on Main Street, Housatonic, is open Sundays from 1 to 4 p.m., Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 1 to 6 p.m.; closed Thursdays and Fridays,

and open Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Its phone number is 274-3738.

Ramsdell's knitting group meets Tuesdays from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Ramsdell has a loaning Library of Things that includes visual reality goggles, a sewing machine, a staple gun and a button maker.

On June 21 from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Ramsdell, special guest artist March Grabber will teach the basics of comic creation in a workshop for ages 12-18.

* * *

THE CLAIRE TEAGUE SENIOR CENTER at 917 South Main St. offers activities and fitness classes, lunches and help with technology and applications such as SNAP, housing, fuel assistance. and more. Its phone number is 528-1881.

Its website lists lunch menus and is at greatbarringtonseniors.org.

Staff is available Mondays through Fridays to answer calls and offer counseling for SHINE, Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone.

Big Y donations are available Mondays and Wednesdays.

The center's newsletter is Grapevine, which it sends to people who request it.

* * *

SOUTH COUNTY CONNECTOR, fka Tritown Connector, bus service has a new website, socoride.org.

The town transit program provides transportation for people who call 413-591-3826 at least 48 hours in advance.

With a Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation grant, the program offers free service until 11:30 p.m. Fridays for veterans, except for Pittsfield medical rides; and for seniors and people with disabilities needing transportation to local food pantries and free meal sites.

Berkshire Regional Transportation's website is at Berkshirertrta.com.

* * *

THE RECYCLING CENTER on Stockbridge Road, across from Monument Mountain Regional High School, is open Fridays, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Saturdays, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.; and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Its fees are listed at townofgb.org/recycling-transfer-station.

How to Subscribe to THE NEWSletter

READERS: If your budget is increasingly tight, send what you can to subscribe.

THE NEWSletter can make this offer only because some subscribers generously send extra when they renew. Thanks to them, THE NEWSletter can hold off on a rate increase, even as costs have increased.

When to Renew

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If your face is blue, it's time to renew.

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How To Subscribe

Twelve issues (one year) are \$35 for the print version within the 012 zip code or \$30 for the emailed one anywhere.

Cost to get the printed TN by bulk mail outside the 012 zip code is \$40. Cost for first class for a year (12 issues) is \$55.

Cost to get THE NEWSletter in large type is \$40 for 12 issues, plus the annual print subscription.

Checks should be payable to THE NEWSletter and mailed to it at POB 567, Housatonic 01236.

Both the written and emailed versions include free emails — agendas, news updates, forwarded material — sent between issues. Your name and email address are kept confidential unless you're an elected or appointed public official.

You can forward everything to as many people as you want, but having THE NEWSletter send the emails between issues is \$5 a year for each name.

-EWM

Three Towns To Vote Nov. 4 on Funding

School Tour, Forum on Proposed School Are June 16

A TOUR OF MONUMENT MOUNTAIN REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, followed by a community forum, will be **June 16**, sponsored by the Berkshire Hills Regional School Committee's Monument Building Committee.

The tour will start at 5 p.m., followed at 6 p.m. by the forum, which will also be on Zoom. A link should be on the website **Monumentbuildingproject.org**

THE NEWSletter will send the link to people on its email list but here it is to copy and paste from the flyer that is partially reproduced on page 1: <https://tinyurl.com/2bsu9b6j> The meeting number is **824 4625 3398**.

During the forum, the public may ask questions of representatives from Dinisco Design, which is designing the proposed building with William Rawn Architects,

Voters Decide Nov. 4 on Funding

The school district's three towns — Great Barrington, Stockbridge and West Stockbridge — will have elections **Nov. 4** to vote on funding the proposed school.

Special town meetings are not planned.

The ballot for Great Barrington — and presumably from the other two towns — will have a question from the BHRSC about funding a new school and a separate question from the town about approving an override of Proposition 2-1/2.

Those overrides are explained in a Massachusetts Municipal Association statement reproduced on this page. MMA is the professional trade association for municipal officials in the state.

Questions About Override

Subscribers had questions about the process so THE NEWSletter asked them of school district superintendent Peter Dillon. He had the questions answered by school district attorney Kevin F. Bresnahan of Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehan in Braintree.

Question: If a majority of school district voters say "yes" to a new school but a town votes "no" on an override, does that town then have to take the required funds from its available ones OR does that mean the town can opt out of building the school?

Answer: "If a majority of the voters in the district-wide election approve the incurring of debt, then the school committee is authorized to incur the debt and the project will move forward.

"Each member town may locally determine how to fund its share of the debt; however, a Town's failure to pass an override or a debt exclusion will have no effect on the project or the related assessments."

Question: If the town can opt out of building the school, does that mean the town is no longer considered part of the regional district and would the town then have to pay tuition to the district? Or could students attend via school choice?

MMA Explains Proposition 2½

The following is from the Massachusetts Municipal Association.

In Massachusetts, municipal revenues to support local spending for schools, public safety, and other public services are raised through the property tax levy, state aid, local receipts, and other sources. The property tax levy is the largest source of revenue for most cities and towns.

Proposition 2½, approved by Massachusetts voters in 1980 and first implemented in fiscal 1982, limits the amount of revenue a city or town may raise, or levy, from local property taxes each year to fund municipal operations.

The law (M.G.L. Ch. 59, Sect. 21C) places two constraints on the amount of property taxes a city or town can levy:

1. A community cannot levy more than 2.5 percent of the total full cash value of all taxable property in the community (called the levy ceiling).

2. A community's allowable levy for a fiscal year (called the levy limit) cannot increase by more than 2.5 percent of the maximum allowable limit for the prior year, plus certain allowable increases such as new growth from property added to the tax rolls.

Proposition 2½ establishes two types of voter-approved increases in taxing authority:

Overrides: A levy limit override increases the amount of property tax revenue a community may raise in the year specified in the override question and in future years. The result is a permanent increase in taxing authority. The purpose of the override is to provide funding for municipal expenses likely to recur or continue into the future, such as annual operating and fixed costs.

Exclusions: An exclusion increases the amount of property tax revenue a community may raise for a limited or temporary period of time in order to fund specific projects. It does not increase the community's levy limit nor become part of the base for calculating future years' levy limits. The exclusion may be used to raise additional funds only for capital purposes, such as public building, public works projects, land and equipment acquisitions.

Proposition 2½ also allows voters to mandate a reduction in taxing authority. A levy limit underide decreases the amount of property tax revenue a community may raise in the year specified in the underide question and in future years. The result is a permanent decrease in taxing authority.

Answer: "The outcome of the district-wide election will not affect the membership of the District. Withdrawal of a member town from the District may only be accomplished through an amendment to the District's Regional Agreement."

What Might New School Cost?

Cost of a new building and the amount the state's School Building Authority and grants will provide should be known in June.

At the Monument Building Committee's April 9 meeting, Dinisco Design said the

total estimated cost to all three towns would be about \$93,567,000.

Total building costs would be about \$154,452,000 but the state School Building Authority is expected to give about \$59,300,000, with additional grants of at least \$1.5 million.

At the committee's April 9 meeting, Mr. Dillon said he had just prepared an application for perhaps \$5 million from the SBA's Green Schools Program.

(NEWS continues on page 4)

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BHRSD News

Cont. from page 4

MCAS 'Not Worth Time'

Also during the May 1 meeting, Du Bois Regional Middle School principal Jake McCandless commented on MCAS tests.

Massachusetts voters last November approved a ballot question that 10th graders not longer need to pass the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) test in English, math and science to graduate.

Good information is obtained about students, curriculum and the teaching efforts, but the effort needed is out of proportion with the actual value of the test, Mr. McCandless said.

Bill Fields of Great Barrington asked how students would be evaluated without the test.

"As we did the first 150 years of American education — trusting well-prepared educators to evaluate," Mr. McCandless responded.

Richmond Formally Says 'No'

Last August, during an executive session, the school committee voted to invite Richmond to officially join the district.

Richmond's school is for prekindergarten through grade 8. This past school year, it paid \$11,351.77 tuition to BHRSC for each of 21 students to attend MMRHS. Two students attend Du Bois Regional through school choice, or a state-provided \$5,000 each.

Also, for seven years Richmond paid Mr. Dillon to be its acting superintendent and business manager Sharon Harrison to handle that position. Ms. Harrison still does that.

Why BHRSD Invited Richmond

In his Aug. 21 letter to the Richmond selectmen, BHRSC chairman Steve Bannon wrote in part:

"As all of our operating costs continue to increase, we would like to propose engaging in discussions around the possibility of merging our districts. We understand that Richmond has a long history of autonomy and a deep commitment to keep its school open. Our only hope is to explore possible solutions that are mutually beneficial. We propose forming a small group to discuss possibilities and come back to all the elected boards with a draft proposal."

As THE NEWSletter reported in February, Richmond resident at a special selectmen's meeting were cool to the proposal. Some officials said they had been told Richmond would not have to help pay for a new high school.

Why Richmond Said 'No'

On April 30, selectmen chairman Neal Pilson emailed Mr. Bannon and Mr. Dillon:

(NEWS continued on page 6)

Letter Regarding Proposed School

I find that the upcoming decision by the BHRSD to set in motion a plan for approving the construction of a new high school by a simple majority of all three towns collectively in poor taste.

They are doing this to optimize their likelihood of getting enough of votes to proceed forward with the project.

My understanding is that the three towns will need to individually have to pass a Prop 2.5 override in order for the financing to occur.

I find that the School Committee has not been truthful in its claims regarding the mechanics of why the town of Great Barrington should agree to providing nearly 75% of the net assessment when we have only 620 students.

Contrary to their statement, hosting 255 choice-in students is not a net zero sum. The choice-in concept was to fill in infrequent spaces in classrooms without incurring any new costs from staffing. Adding 255 pupils to 620 pupils is far removed from that original concept and costs money.

We are seeing increased staffing over the years despite decreasing enrollment. We are seeing the lowest student-to-teacher ratio in all of Berkshire County due to increased staffing. That is why we spend the most per student of any school in Berkshire County.

The high school is notable for enrollment dropping from 708 in the 1994-95 school year to 431 this current school year.

The teachers are among the highest paid in Berkshire County.

The superintendent is the highest paid when assessed by school district size.

The graduation rate of four-year program in high school is the lowest and below the state average.

The attendance rate is below the state average.

All of these issues in total raise the issue of what are they doing that is wrong and why are they spending so much money for decreasing enrollment. The value is not present. Building a new high school doesn't incur any savings and only worsens our tax rate.

What is needed is a honest assessment of where do we want to be heading with the ever increasing financial burden and how can we improve the situation.

Building a new high school doesn't improve any of the problems of the school district mentioned above. There are too many small high schools in our area.

What would improve the outcome for the students and town would be to stop the current proposal and to work towards creating a Technology-Vocational high school for southern Berkshire County.

The McCann Technical School serves the northern portion of Berkshire County but there is no counterpart in southern Berkshire County.

Students and the three towns of BHRSD would benefit from such a project. Enrollment would have the opportunity to level off and potentially increase. What is needed is an approach unique to our community and not more of the same, which has simply lost its value.

Jan Wojcik
Great Barrington

During the Berkshire Hills Regional School Committee's May 15 meeting, Laura Rodriguez, director of Railroad Street Project's South Berkshire Community Health Coalition, and co-chairs Leslye Bautista Cruz of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District and Mabel Cooney of BHRSD presented a report on the 2025 Massachusetts Prevention Needs Assessment Survey. THE NEWSletter sent the report to its email list. Below is a screenshot from the report given to the school committee.

Berkshire Hills School District Key Takeaways

Risk and Protective Factors:

Family Domain

- Sibling Drug Use- 36% (2025)
- Exposure to Antisocial Behavior- 41% (2025)
- Parent Attitudes Favor Antisocial Behavior 62% (2025)
- Rewards for Prosocial Involvement- 58% (2025)
- Opportunity for Prosocial Involvement- 72% (2025)

School Domain

- Opportunity for Prosocial Involvement- 67% (2025)
- Rewards for Prosocial Involvement- 72% (2025)
- Low Commitment to School- 57% (2025)

Substance use rates in the past 30 days (alcohol, marijuana, nicotine)

- 91% of 8th graders did not consume alcohol (2025)
- 87% of 12th graders did not use E-cigarettes (2025)
- 59% of 10th graders did not consume alcohol (2025)
- 82% of 10th graders did not use E-cigarettes (2025)

Searles School Special Permit; Parks Commission

A SPECIAL PERMIT STILL APPLIES to convert the former **Searles School** on Bridge Street into an 88-room hotel, according to interim town manager Chris Rembold.

When THE NEWSletter asked him about this, since special permits expire after two years if no work is done and this special permit was granted in 2016, he replied:

"I don't have any reason to think the permit for a hotel at 79 Bridge is no longer valid. There has been actual work done: environmental remediation, historic artifact recovery, sewer easement to the town, and demolition of the gym and the annex. But I

would agree it does appear to be in a holding pattern."

* * *

NEW CALENDARS on Great Barrington's new website show what groups use what park facility at what times.

At its May 12 meeting, the Parks Commissioners approved requests to use town parks to:

-Community Busk/Berkshire Busk! To use the gazebo at Giggle Park behind Town Hall for the 50th anniversary screening of "Jaws" **July 4** from 8 to 10:30 p.m.

Also, to use Memorial Park for **15 minutes of fireworks on Aug. 30** starting at

9:30 p.m. Commissioner Julie Anidjar was concerned about the environmental impact of fireworks. She and Paul Gibbons voted no; other commissioners approved it.

-GB Millers, use Memorial Field on Sundays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Thursdays from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. from May 1 **through Aug. 30**, except May 8 when other use has been scheduled.

-Housatonic Improvement Committee, use Housatonic Commons for the third annual **Party in the Park June 14** from noon to 4 p.m.

Angela Lomanto, HIC's chair, said the committee is working with Housatonic the Beautiful and she expects about 1,000 for a family-friendly event.

-GB Community Liaison Project, use **Lake Mansfield June 21** from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for a community gathering.

Joe Aberdale, Department of Public Works superintendent, was concerned that with only two lifeguards on duty, only 50 people would be allowed in Lake Mansfield at one time. Approval is contingent on arranging sufficient lifeguards.

Also, **Berkshire Reign Youth Sports** wanted to use Memorial Field weekdays from 4 to 9 p.m. and weekends from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. through Nov. 1. Commissioners agreed events had already been scheduled a different schedule is needed.

At its April 7 meeting, the commissioners approved requests for:

-Yoga on Lake Mansfield (YOLM), use the **Lake Mansfield** lawn for gentle to moderate yoga sessions Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. in June, September and October and Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 7:30 to 9 a.m. in July and August.

Senta Reis of YOLM noted she has done this for the past 12 years.

-Great Barrington Little League, use minor and major league fields for baseball games and practices through Oct. 30.

-Run It Back 3v3 Tournament, use Memorial Field basketball courts for a tournament May 17.

-Southern Berkshire Babe Ruth, use Memorial Field for youth baseball Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 4 to 9 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. through Nov. 1.

-Great Barrington Land Conservancy, use Lake Mansfield for a fundraiser **June 7** from 3 to 6 p.m. and for **volunteer work days** May 17 and 31 and June 21.

-Rural Recovery and South County Recovery Center, use the Park Street Park for a dog party May 3 and **Giggle Park for Smash the Stigma Sept. 20** from noon to 3 p.m. with a rain date of Sept. 27.

-Railroad Street Youth Project, use Memorial Skate Park for its annual **block party community event June 14** from 1 to 5 p.m.

Commercial Use of Park Space?

Tabled May 12 for discussion at the June 2 meeting was a request by HUHT LLC to

(NEWS continued on page 7)

BHRSC continued from page 5

"As you know, our School Committee voted 5-0 to decline your proposal and our Finance Committee was not able to identify a significant financial benefit to Richmond which would warrant going forward. Our Select Board came to a similar conclusion and I am writing to advise that Richmond is not interested in pursuing such a discussion at this time."

Minutes of Executive Session

Although Mr. Bannon said the executive session was appropriate because it was "negotiations," the draft minutes, reproduced below, do not mention any negotiation — only an offer.

Berkshire Hills Regional School Committee Executive Session

Thursday – August 15, 2024

Executive Session

Minutes

Start 8:28PM

The meeting started with a role call for attendance.

S. Bannon, R. Dohoney, S. Bourla, B. Bonn-Buffoni, B. Fields, W. Vogt, J. St. Peter, C. Sprague, A. Hutchinson, D. Singer (remote), Peter Dillon

Peter shared that he thought it might make sense to reach out again to Richmond about the possibility of joining BHRSD. He shared we get about 40 students a year from Richmond and we appreciate them as students, athletes, musicians, and contributors to Monument.

Rich made a motion to write a letter to Richmond. Jason seconded it.

There was a unanimous role call vote to do so.

S. Bannon, R. Dohoney, S. Bourla, B. Bonn-Buffoni, B. Fields, W. Vogt, J. St. Peter, C. Sprague, A. Hutchinson, D. Singer (remote)

Meeting ended by unanimous consent at 8:37PM.

Parks; Selectboard Hears About Need for Child Care

use Lake Mansfield for a mobile sauna from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily from July 1 through Sept. 30.

Resident Christine Ward questioned whether allowing the use would set a precedent for a commercial use to use public park space, opening the door for others, such as food trucks.

Bill Meier suggested HUHT use parking space at the boat launch but Mr. Aberdale said that area had problems last year and can't lose a spot. He will talk to the town's

insurance agent about allowing a private enterprise on town land, he said.

Park Users Meet Together?

During the April 7 meeting, Mr. Meier suggested that a meeting be held for group users of the parks to learn what was expected of them. Parks' chairman Ilana Siegel said she liked the idea as users would meet each other.

Paul Gibbons said the town manager should make sure groups talk with each other about common concerns.

When people are more connected, they have greater resilience, community liaison Jovanina Pagano observed. Community engagement is a requirement for the grant funding work at Lake Mansfield, interim town manager Chris Rembold noted.

* * *

THREE PROVIDERS OF CHILDCARE described their costs and needs to the **Selectboard** May 19.

The presentation was arranged by the town's community liaison, Jovanina Pagano.

Speakers were Jenise Lucy, Berkshire South Regional Community Center executive director; JP Okin, director of Berkshire Regional School District's Out-of-School-Time Programming; and Cynthia Gray, Greenagers; education director.

Mr. Okin said because of the uncertainty of federal funds, the district hasn't applied again for a grant.

Speakers, including those commenting after the presentation, described providing and affording transportation as a major problem.

Shown on this page are some screenshots from the presentation, which begins about 30 minutes into the recording at **CTSBTV.org**.

As background for the item, the agenda packet stated in part:

"This discussion arises in part pursuant to the Board's strategic planning priority regarding childcare, which drove the formation of the Childcare Committee, and also in part pursuant to conversations that began in earnest with our grant funded Community Liaison work. Through these conversations the

(NEWS continues on page 8)

CHATTER BOX CAFE

Coffee, Conversation, Community

Great Barrington VFW Post
800 South Main Street
Great Barrington

Open Monday, Wednesday, Friday
7 to 11 a.m.

Fresh Baked Goods	3/\$1
2 Eggs, Toast, Home Fries	\$7
Stack of Pancakes	\$7
French Toast	\$7
(add bacon or sausage, \$2)	
Egg Sandwich on Roll	\$5
Breakfast Burrito	\$6
(add cheese, \$1; add bacon or sausage, \$2)	
Coffee	\$2
Tea	\$1
Orange Juice	\$1
Milk	\$2

All proceeds benefit VFW Post 8348

Shown here are screenshots from the presentation on child-care at the Selectboard meeting May 19. The top one is from the BHRSD's Out-of-School-Time Programming, the next one is from Berkshire South Community Center and the last one, Greenagers.

May 19, 2025



- CLEO provides opportunities for community-building, learning, and enrichment for children in grades 1-8 at BHRSD.
- Monday-Thursday in 3 10-week sessions.
- 5 weeks in Summer. Going to 3 weeks this year.
- End of school day to 5:00 PM
- Busing provided.
- All activities are developmentally significant, focusing primarily on social development.



BERKSHIRE SOUTH
REGIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER

May 19, 2025

- Action Adventures provides opportunities for community-building, learning, and enrichment for children in Age 5- 14 @ BSRCC.
- Year-Round After School, Half-Days, In-Service Days, Vacation Weeks, Snow-Days (dismissal-5:30 / 8:30-5:30)
- Summer Day Camp M-F, 8:30-5:00 - June 23-August 21, 2025
- Sunshine Preschool After School - ages 3-5 - limited capacity
- Transportation to BSRCC from school for After-School only
- Sign up on as-needed basis, monthly

Funding & Challenges

Combined Program Budget	
Source	Amount
INCOME	
Grant & Donations Income	\$46,500
Student Fees & Voucher Income	\$311,500
Financial Aid Award	-\$31,500
Total Income	\$326,500
EXPENSES	
Staffing Expenses	\$250,000
Program Expenses	\$65,500
Total Expense	\$315,500
TOTAL EXCESS Before Depreciation	\$11,000

Challenges:

- Staffing!
 - Quantity, quality, consistency
 - Competitive pay rates
- Funding -
 - Long Term / Vulnerability
 - Increased need for funding to increase financial aid or lower overall cost to families
- Higher need students with increased direct-care needs
- After-school spots for 3-4 year olds

You belong here

The Town of Great Barrington welcomes you and your family to the....

LAKE MANSFIELD SUMMER CELEBRATION

SATURDAY, JUNE 21ST, 2025

11:30AM-1:30PM

FREE FOOD & ACTIVITIES!



ARTS & CRAFTS



BILINGUAL NATURE WALKS



SWIMMING

PARKING IS LIMITED!

Carpool or walk if you are able

FREE rides are available to and from points in GB

Please get in touch if you need transportation or have questions:

GBCommunityLiaison@gmail.com or text Sylvana Proaño: 413-404-7913



*La ciudad de Great Barrington le da la bienvenida a usted
y a su familia a....*

CELEBRACIÓN DE VERANO EN EL LAGO MANSFIELD

SÁBADO 21 DE JUNIO DE 2025

11:30 A. M. - 1:30 P. M.

¡COMIDA Y ACTIVIDADES GRATIS!



ARTES Y MANUALIDADES



PASEOS BILINGÜES POR LA NATURALEZA



NADAR

¡EL ESTACIONAMIENTO ES LIMITADO!

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Hay viajes GRATUITOS disponibles desde y hacia puntos en GB
Por favor, póngase en contacto con nosotros si necesita transporte o tiene preguntas:

GBCommunityLiaison@gmail.com o por mensaje de texto
Sylvana Proaño: 413-404-7913



MVP

Mansfield Volunteer Project



Selectboard cont.; Affordable Housing Trust

Town is learning that quality childcare for all ages of children is not only critical to the social, physical and emotional development of a child, it is also fundamental to our town's economic health ... Without access to affordable childcare, it can be impossible for some parents and caregivers to hold jobs, making it more difficult for employers to hire qualified workers."

Meeting Translated Into Spanish

The Selectboard meeting was simultaneously translated into Spanish by Language Justice Solutions Berkshires, paid through the community liaison budget.

Several licenses and permits were given during the May 19 meeting and on April 28, including for:

-Party in the Park June 14 from noon to 4 p.m. at the Housatonic Commons, offered by Housatonic Improvement Committee. Selectman Eric Gabriel abstained from voting on the request, which he presented as an HIC member.

-After Hours Hospitality LLC for a one-day beer and wine license at Ward's Nursery **June 7** from 5 to 8 p.m.

-One-day beer-and-wine licenses for the Guthrie Center's Troubadour Concert

Two More Releases!

NEW MARLBOROUGH MEETING HOUSE and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education have been added to the list of news releases that NEWSletter subscribers can receive.

Interested? Just let me know at thenewsletter@gmail.com. This is part of your NEWSletter subscription. There's no added cost.

You can sign up for everything or selected ones. Once you're on a list, you can get off.

Also on the list are:

-Berkshire, BEAT, Berkshire Agricultural Ventures, Berkshire Black Economic Council, Berkshire Bounty, Berkshire Community Land Trust, Chamber of Commerce, CHP;

-W.E.B. Du Bois Freedom Center, Community Development Corp., Construct, Cultural District;

-District Attorney, Dewey Hall, Great Barrington Historical Society;

-RSYP, Schumacher Center for a New Economics, releases from area schools including Berkshire Hills and Southern Berkshire; Claire Teague Senior Center, and Volunteers in Medicine.

Feel free to suggest more. Some of those listed, such as the Chamber of Commerce, issue weekly releases; some issue them only once or twice a year.

Also available are minutes of Great Barrington town boards and obituaries.

Everyone gets information about town libraries and the Attorney General's Division of Open Government. That's because the libraries serve all ages and the Division oversees the Open Meeting Law, which helps ensure government transparency.

series at 2 VanDeusenville Road Saturday evenings from May 31 through Aug. 23 and Friday, Sept. 19.

-Library Board of Trustees for liquor license for poetry series at Mason Library from 3 to 8 p.m. July 26, Aug. 16, Sept. 27 and Oct. 25.

-One-day entertainment license to W.E.B. Du Bois Sculpture Project for its unveiling ceremony July 19 from noon to 2 p.m. at Mason Library.

-One-day entertainment and one-day liquor licenses to Mahaive Performing Arts Center gala July 13 from 4 to 11 p.m.

-Farm Winery Farmers Market licenses to Berkshire Cider Project and Nine Pin Ciderworks LLC for sale and sampling at the Farmers Market on Church Street Saturdays from May 10 through Nov. 15 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Two Named to Screening Committee

Former selectmen Ed Abrahams and Peter Fish have been appointed to the Town Manager Screening Committee for its second round of determining finalists as town manager.

They succeed Jovanina Pagano and Tom Blauvelt, who resigned.

On April 28, Deb Phillips and Peter Fish, both former selectmen, were nominated but Mr. Elliott favored members with "broader experience." Resident Michelle Loubert agreed.

Mr. Gabriel said they were selectmen a long time ago and their experience is valuable. Board chairman Bannon noted that if they were appointed, the screening committee would have four former selectmen and three members who had not been.

Selectman Garfield Reed and resident Doug Robbins said they want someone who's been here a long time. Mr. Garfield did not vote for Mr. Fish but the other three selectmen did.

Resident Betlin Young-Taft was appointed but then wrote that she lacked the time. Mr. Abrahams was appointed instead at the May 14 meeting.

Committee members are Erik Bruun, Fred Clark and Marie Ryan, plus former selectmen Mr. Abrahams, Mr. Fish, Kate Burke and Sean Stanton.

Noise Limit Change for DPW Work

The selectmen agreed April 29 that for six months, contractors working for the DPW are allowed to make construction-related noise Mondays through Fridays "from 6:45 a.m. to facilitate a 7 a.m. start of construction activities."

The Town Code regarding noise — Chapter 115 Section 115-3 — limits the start to 8 a.m.

The selectmen rejected the DPW's request for a 6 a.m. start time "for activities such as paving, road crossings or critical activities that need to be completed in one work days' time frame."

Projects affected are:

-Mason Library steps and bench;

-Infrastructure work on Hart, Kirk, Oak, North Fairview and Prospect streets in Housatonic; Gilmore, Cottage, Anderson and Hillside in Great Barrington; and length of North Plain Road/Route 41;

-Housatonic Rail Trail Extension off Van Deusenville Road, Housatonic;

-Affordable housing project, including North Plain Road and Main Street, Housatonic.

Some Other Actions

After a public hearing, the selectmen agreed two Norway maples on town property at Anderson Street and Gilmore Avenue could be cut.

Annalynn LaCombe was named to the Cultural Council.

Steve Bannon was re-elected Selectboard chairman with, also re-elected, Mr. Gabriel as vice chairman.

THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST board is considering a schedule that would develop a predesign package followed by a community meeting for development of its former **Rising ballfield property on Route 183/Park Street.**

That's according to a draft schedule that co-chairman Fred Clark presented at the board's meeting May 20.

He noted in the memo to the board that the property, at 255 Park St., Housatonic, is a three-acre site acquired by the Great Barrington Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) last December for future affordable housing.

Property Described

"The funding source for the purchase was the Community Preservation Act and thus it will be required to be permanently affordable," Mr. Clark, a retired architect, wrote.

"The site is in an established neighborhood of one- and two-family houses on route 183. It has a 410' frontage by 305' +/- deep and is on the bus route.

"The AHTF had done a phase one environmental study completed which revealed no issues. Sewer, water, electric, and internet utilities are available in the street. The site is on a bus route. A current survey is available.

"The AHTF would like to hold one or more community meetings to solicit input on what shape housing should take and seek out other concerns."

During July and August, a predesign package should be provided with project and site information, photos, aerial views, transportation routes and zoning, he wrote.

Community Meeting in September

Then, in September, perhaps on a Saturday, one or more community meetings would be held to solicit input on what shape housing should take and seek out other concerns.

"The goal of the AHTF is to come out of the meeting with a sense of the design considerations and issues," he wrote, noting that a facilitator would make sure the community is heard.

(NEWS continues on page 9)

AHTF, Fire District, Conservation Commission, HIC

During the fall, a feasibility study would develop the predesign information and community input, reviewing engineering concerns, traffic, site circulation and zoning limits. The study would be shared with potential developers as supporting documentation.

In the winter or in spring 2026, a public hearing would be held on a proposed request for proposals. The AHT board would review proposals and "if any are deemed responsive," award project development rights.

Possible Facilitators

A possible facilitator might be Deb Phillips, outgoing director of Rural Health Network, or Jenn Goewey, the new director.

During the meeting, they told the AHT board they want to engage the community to create "a culture of health."

Also at the May 20 meeting, board members agreed with Bill Cooke's suggestion that they accept either a bank's verification of income or IRS returns. Before the vote, only IRS returns had been accepted.

The board's next meeting will be **June 17** at 6:30 p.m. and include a budget review.

All members attended the May 20 meeting

TWENTY-FIVE PEOPLE attended the **Great Barrington Fire District's annual meeting** May 12.

The meeting began at 7 p.m. At 7:14 p.m., all 14 articles had been passed unanimously, according to the minutes.

Walter F. Atwood III had 25 votes for reelection to a three-year term on the Prudential Committee and Board of Public Works. According to the district's website, he has been on the committee since May 8, 1998.

The Prudential Committee oversees district operations between membership meetings. The district supplies about 1,725 service connections and serves 4,254 people. It also supplies water to about 322 fire hydrants and 59 sprinkler systems.

THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION approved on April 30 a notice of intent for the **Great Barrington Fire District Prudential Committee's exploratory wells project** on Berkshires Natural Resources Council land at 280 State Road, provided the state Department of Environmental Protection issues the required permit.

A Tighe & Bond engineer told the commission the project includes installing up to two wells and drilling down perhaps about 600 feet to evaluate the site's potential as a drinking water source.

Other Permits

Commissioners also approved a notice of intent with conditions for a new single-family

house overlooking the Green River at 374 Maple Ave.

They continued to their August meeting a restoration proposal for remediation of unpermitted topping of several trees with a buffer zone and mapped Scenic Mountain Regional next to Mansfield Pond at 3 Knob Hill Road.

They agreed that a resident may not cut trees on town property — specifically the McAllister Wildlife Refuge — but may on his property at 4 Highland Drive.

Dead trees are good for animals, commissioner Andrew Mankin observed.

They discussed with Alex Jacopino of Four One Tree & Landscape LLC and his lawyer violations of the state Wetlands Protection Act and the town's wetland bylaw at 263 and 249 Long Pond Road.

Commissioner Andrew Didio called the violations "egregious."

Only 3 Unexplained Absences?

They also agreed to discuss a requirement that a commissioner may not have more than three unexplained absences in a year.

Applications Approved May 28

Commissioners at the May 28 meeting approved several applications for work in resource areas.

Approved with conditions were:

-Notice of intent to build a single-family house in the outer 50-foot of the buffer zone to a bordering vegetated wetland at 177 Division St.

-Notice of intent for landscape improvements at 300 Blue Hill Road. This includes a wood deck addition, driveway realignment, redevelopment of landscape gardens, hard-scape walls and walkways, invasive plant control and wetland replication planting.

-Notice of intent to build a single-family house with drive, well, septic and related site work at 275 Division St.

-Removal of a dead ash tree and two dead hemlocks at 317 Long Pond Road, plus pruning and reducing several trees "that have a significant impact on views of the ridgeline," according to the agenda.

-Certificate of compliance for work at Stone Path Development.

-Certificate of compliance for work at 353 State Road. The order of conditions was issued in 2008.

Other Actions Taken May 28

An enforcement letter will be sent to the owner of property on Ramsdell Road for removing trees without approval.

Continued to the **June 25** meeting was a request for a determination of applicability to add to a house and rework the septic system at 321 Long Pond Road.

Present at the May 28 meeting were members Michael Lanoue, Ashlee Van-Deusen, Mr. Mankin and Mr. Didio, who presided.

Absent were chairman Kate Van Olst, Tom Ferris and David Shanahan, who was the only member not at the April 30 meeting.

THE HOUSATONIC IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE is considering suggestions to

the Planning Board for its review of the town's Master Plan.

At HIC's May 27 meeting, chairman Angela Lomanto presented a draft with 10 items, including:

-Redeveloping the mills, "supporting where possible, the coordinated efforts of the building owners, particularly regarding access to the river and shared parking.

-Improving the village quality of life by installing traffic calming features, extending sidewalks, safe crossing over Route 41 at Main Street.

-Upgrading the grounds, swimming area and beach at Old Maid's.

-Assessing the village for areas that can be developed into canoe and kayak launches.

-Installing broadband access.

-Improve the playground within the Housatonic Commons by installing larger trees for shade or an awning.

Member Eric Gabriel suggested small manufacturing be encouraged.

New member Sara Parker suggested several items, including a business incubator and an enterprise fund. Louise Goldsmith proposed community gardens.

The board members said they will discuss this again June 24, which Ms. Lomanto said will be her last meeting as a committee member.

New Committee Member

Sara Parker, who moved to Housatonic last year was recently appointed to the committee. She has a degree in political engagement and attachment theory from New York University's Gallatin School of Individualized Study.

Her company, Nantahala Strategies, focuses on values-driven storytelling and community engagement.

The committee agreed to continue looking for more members. Also present May 27 were vice chairman Scott Shortt. Absent were Ben Elliott and Beverly Nourse.



402 Park Street
P.O. Box 547
Housatonic, MA 01236
housatonicrealestate.com
413.274.5065

Real Estate Next Month

Recent real estate transactions will return next month. Building permits will return when someone can provide them, according to the building department.

Every Article Passes at Town Meeting, Attended by 340 Voters on a Saturday

THREE-HUNDRED AND FORTY VOTERS attended this year's annual town meeting on May 3. That's 87 more than last year but 110 short of April 17's special town meeting regarding Housatonic Water Works and Great Barrington Fire District.

Not known is whether having the meeting on a Saturday afternoon rather than a Monday evening caused the increased attendance or whether particular articles attracted people, such as for a temporary bridge replacement across the Housatonic River on Brookside Road and the Planning Board's proposed overlay district for the Simon's Rock campus.

All articles — including those two — passed. The meeting began at 2 p.m. and ended at 5:27. A brief report follows.

Anyone wanting more information could watch the recording on CTSB. Its website address is on page 2. A list of warrant articles was in the last NEWSletter and the warrant is available on the town website, town-ofgbma.gov (a new address).

The first three articles — approving revolving fund limits, selectmen's salaries and appropriation of Conservation Commission and cemetery care funds — passed unanimously within two minutes.

Questions on Operating Budget

The fourth article — the operating budget of \$16,692,744 — took longer.

Jim Bailly questioned why an employee already working in Town Hall would get a \$1,000 stipend for providing Spanish translation. The town shouldn't have to pay, he said. Interim town manager Chris Rembold said the stipend had been cut from \$2,000.

John Breasted questioned the cost of defending the town from a lawsuit brought by a former Berkshire Hills Regional School District teacher and the book "Gender Queer." Insurance covers the cost, Mr. Rembold explained.

The budget passed with about two people opposed, moderator Michael Wise said at 2:38 p.m.

Capital Budget Passes

The capital budget needed a secret ballot vote and approval by two-thirds of the voters, Mr. Wise explained. Ananda Timpane and Charles Williamson sought information on three items and the article passed, 266 yes to 41 no.

Requests for the wastewater treatment plant were approved.

BHRSD superintendent Peter Dillon presented the school assessment, including a report on what the district has been doing.

His statement that "No phones bell to bell," referring to the prohibition of cell phones during school hours, was applauded.

Jan Wojcik said the budget is up but the student population is down and the district is subsidizing students who attend through school choice.

The district pays the most per student," with less students per teacher than anyone else around, he stated.

"The school choice kids we bring in don't cost us a dime" because the district already has the teachers and the building, Rich Dohoney, school committee vice chairman and finance subcommittee chairman, asserted.

In other districts, oftentimes, they're "town employees so their benefits are on the town ledger," he said.

School Employees Always Listed

(THE NEWSletter called the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to learn if that statement was correct. It is not, according to two officials; all payments for school employees are paid by a school, whether the system is a regional district or part of a city or town.)

If people want the town to shrink, don't invest in schools, Kate van Olst said, to much applause.

BHRSD's assessments of \$22,184,337 for operating and \$25,211 for capital passed on a show of cards at 3:10 p.m.

Out-of-district vocational tuition and transportation payment also passed, as did \$304,909.11 to support operation of the Southern Berkshire Ambulance.

Funding for the town's unemployment trust fund was approved, as was funding to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund from short-term rental special revenues.

Temporary Brookside Road Bridge

DPW superintendent Aberdale explained that too many unknowns exist to repair the Brookside Road bridge and a temporary bridge is needed, resulting in Article 13, a request to appropriate \$3 million.

"It's not about the detour — it's about safety," Merle Kalais of Brookside Road explained.

Paul Isserles, director of the Eisner Camp on Brookside Road, noted that about 550 campers come in summer, with retreats year-round. Five others also spoke, including a mother whose young child had a health emergency.

Police Chief Paul Storti asked voters how they would feel if lack of access happened to them. Fire Chief Scott Turner said response time to a medical emergency or a fire went from five to 10 minutes to 30.

The measure passed overwhelmingly.

The next four articles involving past financial articles passed unanimously.

Election Doesn't Fill One Position

No one was on the ballot for a four-year position on the Housing Authority board and no one had more than one write-in vote.

Ten individuals had one vote each. That included one vote for "Trump" and one for "Musk." Four people filled in the bubble to show their votes but didn't provide any names.

Thus, the Selectboard will advertise for applicants and appoint someone to the position.

The board will also advertise and then appoint someone to succeed Phil Ornstein on the Finance Committee. He resigned after he was elected to the Selectboard.

Everyone on the ballot was elected. Election results are reproduced in this issue.

Community Preservation projects totaling \$906,800 passed at 4:15 p.m.

Accepting property tax exemptions for seniors passed, as did a payment plan for properties in tax title, accepting a general law regarding abandoned funds, and increasing the fee for a common victualler license from \$25 to \$100.

Substituting a residential cluster development for a Planned Unit Residential bylaw passed by the required two-thirds vote.

Fred Clark proposed eliminating wording that two abutting units be no more than 20 feet apart. Planning Board member Malcolm Fick said that would eliminate the "cluster."

Changes Sought To Campus Overlay

The campus overlay district intended to enable re-use of the Simon's Rock campus also passed.

Mr. Clark sought to change the special permit granting authority from the Planning Board to the Selectboard, noting the planners would still have site plan review. Planning Board vice chairman Pedro Pachano said planners are more experienced. Selectman Eric Gabriel felt alignment with voters would be better with the amendment.

However, the change failed, as did a motion to postpone the article to enable more discussion with abutters.

At 5:20, the motion received the required two-thirds vote.

Also getting the required two-thirds vote were, at 5:22, changes to some requirements for multi-unit buildings received the two-thirds vote; at 5:24, acquiring easements for Housatonic Rail Trail extensions did; at 5:25, acquiring land at the former fairgrounds on South Main Street for utility and access easement; 2:26, acquiring rights-of-way for the Division Street bridge; and, 5:27, discontinuing Ramsdell Road.

There were no citizens' petitions so Great Barrington's 264th annual town meeting then ended.

TAG SALES need a \$5 permit from the town clerk's office. Great Barrington and Housatonic residents may have two tag sales a year. Property renters need a letter from the owner stating it's OK.

Police Report for April

GREAT BARRINGTON POLICE can be reached by calling 911 for an emergency or 528-0306. Police handle ambulance dispatch.

The station is at 465 South Main St.

The department's website is greatbarringtonpolice.com and its Facebook page is facebook.com/GBPDMA/

The department's website page includes a listing for ICE (federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement) activity. The years 2019 through 2024 show "None Reported."

Police Chief Paul Storti told THE NEWSletter that 2025 will be entered at the end of the year but the police department "does not get involved with ICE so we do not have official involvement activity to report. I expect the number of involvement activity to be zero again."

More about this is on page of the Trust Policy, reproduced in this issue.

Police officers wear cameras to help document investigations and incidents.

The department participates in the state Disability Indicator Program. Forms are at mass.gov/doc/disability-indicator-form.

April Police Report

The following is from the month's police report. It does not include all police actions. Police respond when the fire department is called. Those calls are reported in the Fire Report elsewhere on this page.

Ten collisions involving two-vehicles were reported in April, including a hit-and-run and resulting in one arrest.

A deer and vehicle collided on North Plain Road and on State Road.

Police stopped 26 vehicles, resulting in 25 citations/warnings being issued.

Radar Used on 14 Town Streets

Radar was run four times on Old Stockbridge Road; three times each on East Street and North Plain Road;

Also, twice each on Main and South Main streets, State Road and Route 183/ Park Street; and once each on Hurlburt, Stockbridge and Egremont Plain roads, Taconic Avenue, and Main Street and Wyan-tenuck Street, Housatonic.

Police unlocked 14 vehicles.

Other Police Actions

People requested, and police made, 11 welfare checks. The co-responder visited with seven people.

Police responded to seven reports of disturbances.

Two drug overdoses were reported.

Emotional Distress?

Text 988, the suicide and crisis lifeline. Free and confidential emotional support is available 24/7.

Veterans can press 1 and for Spanish, press 2.

Chat and more information are available at 988lifeline.org/chat.

THE NEWSletter makes a great gift!

Want to meet Archer, the police department's comfort dog? Just call the station at 528-0306 for an appointment.



Nine cars were unlocked.

Archer the comfort dog visited with children at Muddy Brook Regional Elementary School.

Someone reported finding a possible human arm bone on the rail tail. It was a deer leg, police determined.

Bunnies and Bears

A bear cub was reported stuck in a tree on Park Street all night. In the morning, the mother bear apparently came for her baby.

A black bear was reported in a dumpster on Hillside Avenue. It was moved along, the police report stated.

A bunny's owner reported it lost on Elm Street. An injured rabbit was seen on East Street.

Arrests During April

THE NEWSletter identifies people who are arrested but not those who receive a summons.

-Victoria Ann Wagner of Egremont, age 44, operating a motor vehicle under the influence of liquor.

-Carolyn P. Estes, Great Barrington, 75, violation twice of harassment-prevention order.

-Cameron Lawrence Gennari, Great Barrington, 34, three charges of drug possession.

-Mehrez Chalhoub, Great Barrington, 66, unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle.

-Kady Jean Derrick, Pittsfield, 29, leaving the scene of property damage.

-Cole S. Barnum, Ashley Falls, 30, violation of abuse-prevention order.

-Jose Emmanuel Robles, Great Barrington, 18, assault with a dangerous weapon, domestic assault and battery, false identification provided to law enforcement.

-Myles William Brownson, Great Barrington, 30, protective custody.

EMSCO Honors Four for Work

A LOCAL FIREFIGHTER and four Southern Berkshire Ambulance Squad personnel were honored at the Emergency Medical Services of Berkshire County's annual awards dinner May 16.

According to an account on the Fire Department's Facebook page, firefighter and EMT Chris Laramie responded Jan. 4 at Ski Butternut "where an individual believed to be in their 40s collapsed and went into cardiac arrest. Chris took over CPR from bystanders and played a critical role in sustaining life until care could be transferred to the arriving ambulance team."

Also honored at the dinner for their roles in the incident were Zachary Cochrane-Handerek, Alan J. Anderson, Crystal Marcantel and Andrew Albert of the ambulance squad.

Fire Report

GREAT BARRINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT'S headquarters at 37 State Road, Great Barrington, is open from 8 to 11:30 a.m. weekdays. Its telephone number is 528-0788.

Its website page is www.townofgbma.gov/332/Fire-Department and its Facebook page is at www.facebook.com/gbfiredpt

Firefighters responded to 112 calls in April. The State Road station responded to 110 and the station at Front Street, Housatonic, answered two.

Calls included mutual aid for a brush fire in New Marlborough and extinguishing a grass fire at Searles Castle.

Firefighters helped extinguish unauthorized burning on Hemlock Hill and reminded the homeowner of burning regulations.

They also responded to two cooking fires confined to the container. A chimney fire was confined to the chimney.

They helped EMS crews 82 times.

Eight calls were for false alarms for release of hazardous materials or carbon monoxide or fire alarms activated because of malfunction or unintentionally.

SBVAS Report

SOUTHERN BERKSHIRE AMBULANCE SQUAD is based at Fairview Hospital and serves Alford, Ashley Falls, Egremont, Great Barrington, Housatonic, Monterey, Mount Washington and Sheffield, with mutual aid agreements with six other municipalities.

Great Barrington police handle dispatch at 911. The SBAS number is 528-5559. The SBA website is sbvas.com/

Operations chief Kevin Wall noted that "staffing increased significantly over the last six to nine months, which has allowed us to

staff three ambulances three to five times a week. Prior to the increased staffing, we were struggling to maintain two fully staffed ambulances several days a week."

Calls During April

Total calls for its coverage area during April were 239, which included 139 emergency (911) and 65 facility-to-facility transports.

Canceled calls or patients refusing transport: 35

Of those calls, Great Barrington had 127 emergency and 56 interfacility transfers.

THE NEWSletter unfortunately lacks the space to include all details and all survivors. It emails obituaries when it receives them to subscribers who requested them.

Anne Marie Comerford

Anne Marie Comerford, 72, of Great Barrington died April 26 at Fairview Commons.

She graduated in 1969 from Monument Mountain Regional High School and in 1974 from the University of Tennessee at Martin with a degree in physical education. She received her master's degree in 1976.

For many years, Ms. Comerford was a special education coach and teacher. She also coached the girls' varsity soccer team and won several awards from 1977 to 1990.

She taught swimming for more than 50 years and, for more than 30 years, was one of three event directors for Special Olympics.

Ms. Comerford leaves several cousins. She was predeceased by her brother, James J. Comerford Jr., and her parents, James J. and Catherine Comerford.

Birches-Roy Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to St. Peter's Restoration Fund, Special Olympics or Hospice Care in the Berkshires.

Rosemary 'Midge' Crine

Rosemary "Midge" Crine, 81, of Great Barrington died April 23 at Craneville Place in Dalton.

Mrs. Crine leaves her children, Victor Toreres, Derek Crine and Nicole Crine; seven grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and her brother, Raymond Keefner.

She was predeceased by her husband of 30 years, Robert J. Crine Sr., in 2002. She was also predeceased by her parents, Raymond and Rosemary Keefner Sr.; her sister, Joan Blodgett; and her brother, Ed Keefner.

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Joseph Bernard Forfa

Joseph Bernard Forfa, 69, of West Sand Lake, N.Y., died Jan. 14 at Albany (N.Y.) Medical Center.

Mr. Forfa graduated with high honors in 1973 from Monument Mountain Regional High School. He joined his father as a third class stationary steam engineer at Kimberly Clarke Corp., later Schweitzer-Mauduit.

After the mill closed, he was an engineer supporting operations at Onyx Paper, Cooley Dickinson Hospital and Berkshire Medical Center.

A member of Hope Church in Lenox, he traveled to Ecuador in 1988 to build a church and to New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina to help rebuild devastated neighborhoods.

Mr. Forfa leaves his wife of 41 years, Mary J. Dagrue Forfa, and their children, Michaela Forfa and Aaron Forfa; and his siblings, George F. Forfa, Arlene VanDeusen, Loretta Malin, Charlotte Wilson, Helen Arnold, Nancy Cronin, Ann Martin, Robert Dagrue and Terri Dagrue.

Birches-Roy Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research through the funeral home.

Obituaries

Bernard F. Gibbons Jr.

Bernard F. Gibbons Jr., 66, died April 29 at Hillcrest Commons in Pittsfield.

The son of the late Bernard F. and Rosemary Graham Gibbons Sr., he graduated in 1976 from Monument Mountain Regional High School.

He worked for the Great Barrington Fire District in the mid 1980s and as a landscaper, house painter, snowmaker and at a lumber yard.

Mr. Gibbons leaves his son, Dennis Graham Gibbons; his sister, Ann Gibbons; and his former wife, JoAnn Cahill.

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to the Berkshire Humane Society's Purradise through the funeral home.

Susan F. Holcomb

Susan F. Holcomb, 77, of Housatonic died April 26 at home.

The daughter of Frank and Anna Pellegrini Simonelli, she graduated from the former Searles High School.

She had worked for Pioneer Credit, Whitaker Auto Sales and Great Barrington's tax and town clerk's offices.

Mrs. Holcomb leaves her husband, Edwin Holcomb; her son Victor of Housatonic; daughter Stephanie Holcomb of Sheffield; two brothers, Paul Simonelli of Housatonic and David Simonelli of Virginia Beach, Va.; and three grandchildren.

Birches-Roy Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Donald L. Johnson

Donald L. Johnson, 77, of West Stockbridge died at home May 24.

He graduated from high school in 1966. During his high school years he was a mechanic at the former Yellow Coach Bus Lines in Pittsfield.

He enlisted in the Navy in 1968 as an engine mechanic and was honorably discharged in 1972.

He was a mechanic for Williams' Paving while studying to get his plumbing license. In 1978, he started Don Johnson Plumbing & Heating.

He retired in 2022. In his spare time, he ran a small machine shop.

Mr. Johnson leaves his wife of 12 years, Erin; his sister Barbara Schmidt of Atlanta, Ga.; his in-laws, Robert and MaryEllen Gray of Housatonic, and his brother-in-law, Robert Gray of West Stockbridge.

Birches-Roy Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to the Berkshire Humane Society through the funeral home.

Robert F. Keefner

Robert "Bob" F. Keefner, 56, of Nassau, N.Y., died May 16 at Saint Peter's Hospital in Albany.

He attended Great Barrington schools and for many years was a paper maker for Mohawk Paper Co. in Cohoes, N.Y. He was also a

member of S.T.A.R (Senior Tour Auto Racing) and the Nassau Volunteer Ambulance.

Mr. Keefner leaves his wife, Kimberly; two brothers, Joseph and Benjamin, both of Housatonic; and his twin sister, Shirley Lentz of Nassau.

Birches-Roy Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to the Nassau Volunteer Ambulance through the funeral home.

Roberta A. Nussbaum

Roberta A. "Bobbie" Nussbaum, 90, of Egremont died May 12.

She graduated from Walton High School in The Bronx, N.Y. Her family had spent summers in the Berkshires until moving here full time in 1962.

Ms. Nussbaum recently received a citation from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for more than 50 years of volunteer service to the community.

She had been a receptionist for Dr. Stephen Moore and a secretary for the town of Great Barrington. She had also worked at the former Cornwall Academy, where she enjoyed traveling to Europe with the students.

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to the American Cancer Society through the funeral home.

Leonard 'Lenny' Ohman

Leonard "Lenny" Ohman, 75, of Egremont, died May 2.

He had been a school custodian for more than 35 years, including at New Marlborough Central School.

He was a member of the 34th Battalion Virginia Calvary Confederate black powder competition shooting team for more than 50 years and had participated in several Civil War re-enactments.

Mr. Ohman leaves his wife of 39 years, Airlie; and his oldest brother, Conrad Ohman.

He was predeceased by his parents, Conrad and Madalene Ohman; his brothers, John and Kenneth Ohman; and his sister, Ruth Bergdorf.

Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to Friends of Gettysburg Foundation or American Battlefield Trust through the funeral home.

Susan Ann Zucco

Susan Ann Zucco, 67, of Stockbridge died May 22 at home.

The former Susan Ann Osak, she graduated in 1975 from Monument Mountain Regional High School.

She worked for many years as a human resource officer for G.T.E. in Stamford, Conn., and as an estate manager in Egremont.

Mrs. Zucco leaves her mother, Mary Louise Osak; her daughter, Amanda Zucco; her brother, Stanley J. Osak Jr. of Stockbridge; her sister, Mary Jean Jarvis of Becket; and four grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her father, Stanley J. Osak.

Birches-Roy Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Memorial donations are suggested to Rural Recovery through the funeral home.

Sean A. Stanton, Chair
Stephen C. Bannon
Daniel Bruce Bailly
Edward D. Abrahams
William F. Cooke



Town Hall, 334 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230

Telephone: (413) 528-1619 x2900
Fax: (413) 528-2290

TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON MASSACHUSETTS

SELECTBOARD

Trust Policy Great Barrington, Massachusetts

WELCOMING AND SAFE COMMUNITIES ARE POSSIBLE IF WE ARE INCLUSIVE AND IF WE TRUST

Values Statement

Considering that we the people of Great Barrington acknowledge the value for our Town of our diverse population as an integral part of our labor and cultural force and that we recognize the need to provide a safe community for all residents and to keep our families together regardless of their immigration status.

Considering that the Great Barrington Police Department has stated in previous resolutions and through their positive community policing and accreditation efforts their commitment to build and maintain positive relations within the community in which inclusivity and protection to all of our residents goes hand in hand with their mission of guaranteeing public safety and security for our community.

Considering that in our system we are all accountable under the rule of law, including the government, its officials and agents as well as the individuals and private entities that are part of our community and, in order to guarantee a sense of safety and accountability the laws should be clear, just, publicized, applied evenly and enforced in a way that reflects the community served.

We as residents of Great Barrington hereby publicly designate the Town of Great Barrington as a safe, inclusive and welcoming community, with its commitment to the following principles, policies and procedures to be followed uniformly throughout our Town:

Great Barrington Trust Policy Principles

1. Great Barrington will continue to ensure civil liberties of all and enforce protection from discrimination for all residents regardless of their race, skin color, national or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, immigration status, religious, political or social affiliations, professed beliefs, homed or homeless status and any other demographic characteristics.
2. Great Barrington police will equally enforce the laws, promote safety and serve the Great Barrington community without consideration of individuals' immigration status or other demographic characteristics.

3. Great Barrington will not participate in enforcement of federal immigration law or aid in the detention, transfer or deportation of residents for civil immigration purposes.
4. Great Barrington police and any other Town agencies will not profile groups, i.e. not contact, detain, or arrest based only on demographic characteristics, including immigration status.
5. Great Barrington will not use Town funds or resources to assist in federal immigration detention and arrest processes, except in criminal cases.
6. Great Barrington will follow public record laws and will not, except as required by law, collect, keep or distribute information about any individual or group based on demographic characteristics, including immigration status for any other purpose.
7. Great Barrington will provide training to Town employees regarding these policies and practices in alignment with accreditation requirements and serving the purpose of our Trust Policy.

Great Barrington Trust Policy Protocols

1. No Town participation in U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) holds, arrests, detentions, or raids, or use of town resources to facilitate said activities, except in cases where ICE demonstrates a criminal warrant signed by a judge and based on probable cause.
2. No responding to ICE requests seeking information outside of a criminal warrant, or providing access to local records and databases.
3. Any individual subject to an immigration hold, administrative warrant, notification request, or contact with ICE, where Great Barrington law enforcement acquiesces to the ICE request, shall be provided with a copy of the ICE request and any other documentation pertaining to their case that is presented to the law enforcement agency.
4. In furtherance of the US Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act, Town of Great Barrington law enforcement shall consider and sign a U Visa certification request if an individual is:
 - a. The victim of a qualifying crime, and
 - b. Has been, is being, or will likely be helpful in the investigation/prosecution of that crime.
5. Make reports publicly available of ICE activity in Town including but not limited to holds, reimbursements, and removals.
6. Develop a formal process for addressing violation of Trust Policy Commitments at Selectboard meetings and in collaboration with a proposed Residents' or Human Rights Commission to be established at a later time.

About the Great Barrington Trust Policy

The Trust Policy was adopted almost unanimously at the 2017 annual town meeting. More about it is at greatbarringtontrustpolicy.com.

Police Chief Paul Storti told THE NEWSletter:

“Our **Safe Community Trust Policy** was created to ensure that everyone in our city feels safe coming forward to report crime, serve as a witness, or seek help in times of need—without fear of deportation or immigration consequences. Public safety is best achieved when there is open, two-way communication between the police and the community we serve. To honor the Trust Policy, our department does not assist with ICE enforcement activities, therefore we do not have any official involvement activity to report. Absent of a criminal warrant signed by a judge and based probable cause, I expect the number of ICE involvement activity to be zero again this year.”

**MAY 13th, 2025
Annual Town Election
TOTAL TALLY**

OFFICE	Precincts				TOTAL
	A	B	C	D	
MODERATOR (1 FOR 1 YEAR)					
BLANKS	8	17	6	13	44
Michael Owen Wise	54	56	30	56	196
WRITE-INS	0	3	1	1	5
TOTAL:	62	76	37	70	245
SELECTBOARD (2 FOR 3 YEARS)					
BLANKS	31	55	19	43	148
Stephen Craig Bannon	51	48	24	44	167
Philip Nathaniel Orenstein	39	42	29	46	156
WRITE-INS	3	7	2	7	19
TOTAL:	124	152	74	140	490
BOARD OF HEALTH (1 FOR 3 YEARS)					
BLANKS	13	23	10	21	67
Michael D. Lanoue	49	50	27	47	173
WRITE-INS	0	3	0	2	5
TOTAL:	62	76	37	70	245
FINANCE COMMITTEE (2 FOR 3 YEARS)					
BLANKS	32	58	19	52	161
Milena Cerna	46	43	28	43	160
Madonna T. Meagher	46	46	27	42	161

WRITE-INS	0	5	0	3	8
TOTAL:	124	152	74	140	490
HOUSING AUTHORITY (1 FOR 4 YEARS)					
BLANKS	56	73	33	69	231
WRITE-INS	6	3	4	1	14
WRITE-INS					0
TOTAL:	62	76	37	70	245
HOUSING AUTHORITY (1 FOR 5 YEARS)					
BLANKS	17	28	9	21	75
Maureen E. Meier	45	46	28	48	167
WRITE-INS	0	2	0	1	3
TOTAL:	62	76	37	70	245
LIBRARY TRUSTEES (2 FOR 3 YEARS)					
BLANKS	35	44	15	46	140
Ruby Chang	42	49	27	42	160
Lauren E. Clark	47	57	32	52	188
WRITE-INS	0	2	0	0	2
TOTAL:	124	152	74	140	490
PLANNING BOARD (2 FOR 3 YEARS)					
BLANKS	29	52	19	43	143
Jeremey Koji Higa	49	44	26	45	164
Brandee K. Nelson	46	52	29	51	178
WRITE-INS	0	4	0	1	5
TOTAL:	124	152	74	140	490

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS (2 FOR 5 YEARS)					
BLANKS	12	24	9	18	63
J M Brodeur	50	51	28	51	180
WRITE-INS	0	1	0	1	2
TOTAL:	62	76	37	70	245

BALLOT QUESTION: 1

Capital Outlay Expenditure Exclusion (G.L. c. 59, § 21C (i)(2)):

Shall the Town of Great Barrington be allowed to assess an additional \$90,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of purchasing a drone and electronic bicycle for the Police Department; two transit vehicles, a technology file server with applicable accessories and/or software, a mower, and construction mats for the Department of Public Works; and funding additional capital improvements and equipment for Town parks for the fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2025?

	A	B	C	D	TOTAL
Blanks	1	7	4	6	
YES	39	40	22	41	142
NO	22	29	11	23	85
TOTAL:	62	76	37	70	245

BALLOT QUESTION: 2

Debt Exclusion (G.L. c. 59, § 21C (k)):

Shall the Town of Great Barrington be allowed to exempt from the provisions of Proposition Two and One-half, so called, the amounts required to pay for the bond issued in order to purchase two police cruisers, 25 handheld radios and 9 on-board apparatus radios (fire trucks and response vehicles) for the Fire Department; a large field mower, dump truck freightliner, excavator, Ford F-350 pickup truck, and utility van for the Department of Public Works; to fund capital projects at the following Town buildings: the Courthouse, Great Barrington Libraries, as well as any emergency repairs and/or improvements, architectural and engineering services related to any Town facilities, including improvements and equipment for Town parks; and to fund expenses for capital improvement projects for Town streets, bridges, culverts, and related engineering costs?

	A	B	C	D	TOTAL
BLANKS	0	7	4	8	
YES	45	42	24	45	156
NO	17	27	8	17	70

TOTAL:	62	76	37	70	245
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BALLOT QUESTION: 3

Debt Exclusion (G.L. c. 59, § 21C (k)):

Shall the Town of Great Barrington be allowed to exempt from the provisions of Proposition Two and One-half, so called, the amounts required to pay for the bond issued in order to pay costs related to the construction and installation of a temporary bridge on Brookside Road over the Housatonic River, and/or for the construction of temporary emergency services facilities on or near Brookside Road, and for the payment of all other costs incidental and related thereto?

	A	B	C	D	TOTAL
Blanks	0	6	1	2	
YES	51	41	31	59	182
NO	11	29	5	9	54
TOTAL:	62	76	37	70	245

TOTAL REGISTERED VOTERS:	5,287
TOTAL VOTED:	245
% THAT VOTED:	4.6%

Respectfully Submitted,

Joshua Risen

Town Clerk

To: BHRSD School Committee
From: Peter Dillon
Re: School Choice
Date: 4.28.2025

Each year questions about the efficacy of school choice surface. This memo addresses misconceptions and concerns and makes a case for our continued participation.

There are four basic ways that students can move around in Massachusetts schools, all governed by state law. Each is tied to the political context when that mechanism was enacted.

1) The first is school choice. Students in any town in Massachusetts can apply to transfer to another school and if accepted their sending town pays \$5,000 plus any additional special education costs. Massachusetts General Laws ch. 76, Section 12B(4)(f) states, “Said tuition amount shall be equal to seventy-five percent of the actual per pupil spending amount in the receiving district for such education as is required by such non-resident student, *but not more than five thousand dollars.*”

2) Students in towns without upper middle school grades or a high school can apply through tuition agreements. Their town pays roughly \$11,000-\$13,000 depending on the locally negotiated agreements. Most agreements are 3-5 years. We have agreements with Richmond and Farmington River (Otis and Sandisfield). Our agreement with Richmond provides for 4% annual increases and is up in 2026. Our agreement with Farmington River is up in 2028 and initially increased at around 5% per year but now increases at 3% per year. The last few

times these agreements come up for renewal, we have successfully negotiated increases and expect to do so in the future.

3) Students interested in vocational or CVTE programs may apply to transfer to a school with approved programs. We both send and receive students for vocational opportunities. The cost is roughly \$18,000 plus transportation. Sending towns cover this cost directly, it is not part of the District's budget.

4) Students interested in virtual or charter schools may apply. The cost of those programs is \$13,000-\$25,000 and the cost is covered by the sending district.

A lot of the misconception around the impact of school choice and tuition on our finances comes from a lack of appreciation of the concept of incremental cost. You probably are already well versed in the concept but incremental cost is simply the additional cost of producing one extra unit of output

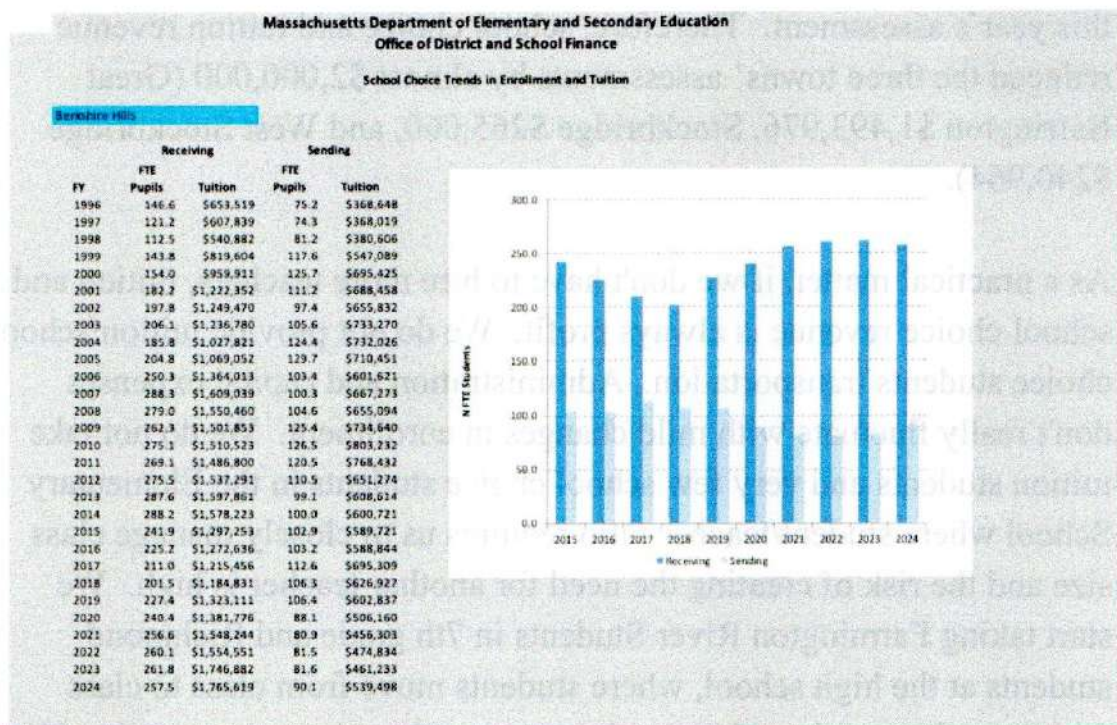
(<https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/accounting/incremental-cost/>). In this case, the cost of educating one more student which is the best measure when assessing school choice and tuition costs. To put it simply, after the District has provided all the teachers, staff, transportation, infrastructure and PPE necessary to educate all the students that live in the District we then measure the additional cost of adding one more student from outside the district. When managed correctly, this incremental cost can and should be zero. Historically, the incremental cost the District has often been zero and, in all cases, has been well below the amount charged under our two tuition agreements and the state mandated school choice rate. Because the revenue from tuition exceeds the **incremental cost** of educating an out of district

student, the tuition and school choice payments represent revenue and, in fact, the sending districts end up subsidizing BHRSD, not the other way around. Last year we realized about \$1,250,000 in school choice revenue and about \$725,000 in tuition revenue and applied that to offset this year's assessment. Therefore, school choice and tuition revenue reduced the three towns' assessments by almost \$2,000,000 (Great Barrington \$1,493,976, Stockbridge \$265,060, and West Stockbridge \$240,964).

As a practical matter, if we don't have to hire more teachers, tuition and school choice revenue is always profit. We do not provide tuition/school choice students transportation. Administration and capital expenses don't really fluctuate with mild changes in enrollment. We do not take tuition students and very few school choice students in the Elementary School where student/teacher ratio requires us to closely manage class size and the risk of creating the need for another teacher is high. We start taking Farmington River Students in 7th grade and Richmond students at the high school, where students move from class to class without stringent class size requirements so there is never a need to hire new teachers. If we were to forgo the \$2,000,000 in revenue from out of district students, the only mechanism we would have to offset that would be to lay off approximately 24 teachers (average teacher salary is \$85k). We could not do that and still have enough teachers to teach our in-District kids so the assessments to the towns would increase.

The table below summarizes 30 years of choice enrollment trends and revenue, though the chart only covers the past 10 years, the table includes 30 years of data. The trends are clear. We are sending fewer students out and attracting more students. The revenue from those

students helps subsidize our costs and has little impact on our fixed costs. In two grades, 6th and 8th this year, the impact is break even. In all others, we come out way ahead.



In addition to the financial argument, school choice affords students opportunities. Those opportunities support both students choicing in and our existing students all who benefit from learning from each other, from having expanded opportunities, and the critical mass to engage in deep work together.

Again my recommendation is that we continue with deliberate and thoughtful school choice and carefully monitor where and how many students we accept based on capacity and if taking one more student would push us to hire an additional teacher. The high school model is slightly different as students are distributed differently.

At the same time, I will advocate and work with the School Committee to lobby for an adjustment in school choice tuition at the state level and to negotiate aggressive and fair tuition contracts going forward. Additionally, the expansion of our vocational programs should drive additional tuition revenue while reducing tuition expenses. Please reach out to me if you have any questions.

**TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON
MASSACHUSETTS
SELECTBOARD**

**RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING MAY 17, 2025 RAILROAD STREET YOUTH PROJECT DAY
IN THE TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON**

Whereas, May 2025 marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Railroad Street Youth Project;

Whereas, the Railroad Street Youth Project has provided a positive outlet and guidance to the youth of the community;

Whereas, the Railroad Street Youth Project has established apprenticeship programs such as its Culinary Arts Program, providing youth with a first hand opportunity to prepare superb five-course meals under the tutelage of renowned area chefs;

Whereas, the Railroad Street Youth Project has established a mentoring program with local business leaders aiding youth in reaching their academic, career, and personal goals;

Whereas, the Railroad Street Youth Project has consistently partnered with the Town of Great Barrington to provide programming and mentoring for youth at town parks, to reduce substance use and misuse through its South Berkshire Community Health Coalition, and to create public art honoring the life and legacy of W.E.B. Dubois;

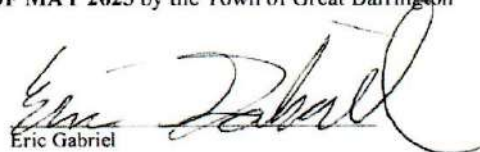
Whereas, the Railroad Street Youth Project has empowered youth to meet the complex and systemic challenges that face our town, creating a life affirming community to tackle issues like substance abuse, isolation, neglect, and intolerance;

Whereas, the Town of Great Barrington recognizes the significant contributions the Railroad Street Youth Project has made over the last 25 years providing positive direction for the community's youth;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town of Great Barrington Selectboard that it hereby proclaims May 17, 2025 as Railroad Street Youth Project Day in the Town of Great Barrington and encourages the entire community to participate in the 25th anniversary celebration of the Railroad Street Youth Project.


PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 14TH DAY OF MAY 2025 by the Town of Great Barrington Selectboard


Stephen C. Bannon


Eric Gabriel


Garfield C. Reed


Ben Elliott


Philip Orenstein