



Belmont
MASSACHUSETTS
The Town of Homes

From the Office of The Town Administrator

Belmont Bulletin

March 2024 Edition



**March 2024
 Select Board Meetings**

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 Select Board Meeting

**Contact the Town
 Administrator's Office**

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 Belmont, MA 02478

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With the start of this month, a new season approaches—Spring is on the horizon! As we march into the month of March there is a lot happening around Town. Please take a few moments to explore some highlights from the past month and what we have to look forward to this month.

Select Board News and Initiatives:

Announcing Override Impact Calculator:

Belmont staff have developed an Override Impact Calculator to help residents project their FY2025 tax bill for any selected property. The calculator illustrates changes from the proposed Override, Proposition 2½, and financing for the new library and rink. The calculator is available on the [Town Budget Info](#) page of the Town website and can also be accessed by scanning the QR Code below:

**Please Scan Here to
 View Override Impact
 Calculator**



Public Hearing: A Discussion for the Proposed Community Path (Phase 1) Project in Belmont

On March 7, 2024 a public hearing will be held in conjunction with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation at the Beech Street Center, Multi-Purpose Room at 7:00PM to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Community Path – Belmont Component of MCRT (Phase I) project. For more information, please [click here](#) or visit the Town website.

Keep Up with the Select Board



Use the links below to watch the most recent Select Board Meetings on Belmont Media's website.

[February 5, 2024](#)

[February 8, 2024](#)

[February 26, 2024](#)

Find archived Select Board minutes [here](#).

To view a digital version of this month's Bulletin, please scan the QR Code.

Candidate’s Night presented by League of Women Voters of Belmont, Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 7:00PM:

Ahead of the April 2, 2024, Town-wide election, the League of Women Voters of Belmont will present a Candidates’ Night that will be available to attend virtually on Zoom and broadcast by Belmont Media. Short speeches by all Town-wide candidates as well as a Q&A session are on the agenda. Additional information about Ballot Questions will also be available.

Important Reminder from the Treasurer’s Office:

The Treasurer’s Office reminds residents that Motor Vehicle Excise payments are due on March 14th. We encourage everyone to review and pay your bill online at <https://epay.cityhallsystems.com>, and setup an account with our vendor, City Hall Systems (CHS). Having an account allows users to:

- Receive bills electronically, which saves paper, and printing and postage costs.
- View and manage bills electronically.
- Track billing and payment history at all hours of the day, especially helpful when filing federal taxes.
- Setup automatic payments, including for auto excise once each vehicle has been linked to your account.

Online fees are 2.95% for credit card payments and \$0.50 for ACH (direct debit) payments from a checking or savings account. The ACH charge is less than a postage stamp and a 47% reduction from our prior vendor’s fee.

CHS customer service representatives are also available to accept payments over the phone. Simply call 508-381-5455 to make a secure payment or ask for help setting up an online account.

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
OF BELMONT

Presents:

CANDIDATES' NIGHT

Thursday, March 21st, 2024 at 7^{PM}

Viewing Options:

Zoom meeting webinar: 886 6333 2579
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88663332579>

Live broadcast: Belmont Ch 8 (Comcast); Ch 28 (Verizon)
Livestream or on-demand: belmontmedia.org/watch/govtv

We'll start with:

Town Meeting Member Video "Parade"

Followed by:

Short Speeches and Question & Answer with
All Town-Wide Candidates

And Finally:

Ballot Question information

Remember: Town Election Day is Tuesday, April 2nd, 2024



Please Scan Here to pay
Motor Vehicle Excise
bills by March 14th

March 2024

Employee Spotlight

Diana Ekman

Assistant Health Director

Each month, Town Administrator Patrice Garvin highlights a single employee whose hard work and dedication exemplifies what it means to be an employee for the Town of Belmont. In the Employee Spotlight series, we are able to shine a light on incredible employee achievements and provide an opportunity to introduce and recognize Belmont Town employees throughout the Belmont community.

In this month's Bulletin, Town Administrator Garvin would like to recognize Diana Ekman, Assistant Director of the Belmont Health Department. Over her 5 years, Diana has been a friendly face throughout the Belmont community and is an important member of the Health Department's team.

Diana describes her role as working on behalf of the public addressing various areas under the "umbrella of environmental health." Diana often finds herself doing crucial health inspections at Belmont's grocery stores, restaurants, homes and even swimming pools! No matter where she is, she strives to ensure that the projects, events, and food experienced by Belmont community members are healthy and safe.

Belmont Health Department Director, Wes Chin, describes Diana as a "dedicated team player and problem solver," and those who know her are likely to agree. Diana approaches public health with professionalism and determination to work toward solutions and has become a go-to person on topics and concerns of public health.

Diana began working in local public health in Philadelphia, PA and then Framingham, MA. She cultivated a passion for public health policy through everyday interactions with residents. Impacting and implementing local public policy became her goal, and the Assistant Health Director position provides the perfect match.

Diana's position does not come without its challenges. Diana explains, "one of the biggest challenges I face is encountering so many different situations with varying circumstances where there might not always be a good or easy answer." Diana explained that effectively addressing this challenge is a "skill" that is always developing and improving. She approaches these situations with her expertise and knowledge coupled with an ability to communicate and explain the very specific codes, regulations or by-laws that apply to any given situation.



"We want people to know that we are all on the same team of good community members and good neighbors who have a shared goal of moving the ball forward to ensure that Belmont is a healthy and safe place to live and do business."

Diana finds motivation in the challenges that she faces and the new problems to be solved with something new to learn each day. The greatest joy she finds in her work comes from her interactions with business owners and residents. To Diana and the Health Department team, they are just "doing [their] small part to create a healthy community." When considering her accomplishments so far, Diana gives a smile and can't decide on just one but instead sees her work as a mosaic of individual personal stories and memories. She explains, "there are so many examples that might seem like little things if I mentioned them, but they had big impacts for the individuals or businesses and that's pretty special."

Navigating the COVID-19 pandemic was a big accomplishment that Diana credits to the efforts of the entire team at the Belmont Health Department, from organizing community vaccine clinics, to discovering new ways of communicating with the public, to responding to ever unfolding challenges and changing circumstances. The work and coordination of local health departments everywhere played a large part in helping to steer us all toward better conditions.

Looking ahead, Diana is excited about what is to come from expanding services to strengthening existing and expanding new regional partnerships. Additionally, she and the Health Department team are going to continue working on ways to make public health information and best practices more accessible. As Diana says "When things are going well and the community is healthy, public health can be almost invisible, but to keep things that way we need to make sure that we continue to have resources and information available."

Outside of her work for the Health Department, Diana enjoys hiking, cooking and gardening. Beyond getting exercise by enjoying the great outdoors on a scenic hike, Diana is planning on taking part in a road race this May!

Community Updates:

Community Path Project Committee

Mark your calendar! A Design Public Hearing will be held to present the design for the proposed Community Path (Phase I) Project in Belmont, MA. **The Public Hearing will be held at Beech Street Center, Multi-Purpose Room (266 Beech Street, Belmont, MA 02478) starting at 7:00 PM on March 7, 2024.** Please see the information below.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Community Path – Belmont Component of MCRT (Phase I) project.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of a shared use path along the north side of the MBTA Fitchburg Commuter Rail Line tracks and the south side of the abutting properties. The proposed improvements include accessible connections to the Clark St pedestrian Bridge, Belmont Station, Concord Avenue, Channing Road (near #7 Channing Road), and Brighton Street. The proposed path will extend the existing Fitchburg Cutoff trail which extends to the Alewife MBTA Station.

The proposed improvements also include a grade separated crossing via an underpass under the MBTA railroad tracks at Alexander Avenue. This crossing will provide pedestrian and bicycle connections from Channing Road/north side of the railroad tracks to Concord Avenue via Belmont Middle and High School. This connection will allow students to safely access the school without having to make a significant roundabout way. The bicycle accommodations consisting of a Shared Use Path have been provided in accordance with applicable design guides.

To learn more about the Community Path Project, please visit the committee's website by [clicking here](#). Furthermore, the project's website can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

Belmont Public Library

The Belmont Public Library has a new Facebook! Many of you reading this may think, "But I already follow the Library on Facebook." To make sure you stay up to date on all of our programs, services, and important project updates, please go and follow our [NEW Facebook page](#). We would appreciate your help with getting sharing the news your friends and neighbors.

Speaking of new, while the library has moved into our temporary locations, we are still always looking for ways to bring patrons new and exciting services. We are delighted to now offer *PressReader*, the world's best digital newspaper and magazine coverage. The service includes access to The Economist, The Guardian, Newsweek, China Daily, Daily Mail, Der Tagesspiegel, Libération and La Razon. In addition, *PressReader* allows for unlimited access to over 7,000 titles from 120+ countries in 60 languages as soon as they are available on shelves and no limits on downloads. They are yours to keep forever, and accessible via your laptop, tablet or phone with the *PressReader* app. Ask our reference staff about getting set up with *PressReader* today!

Stay tuned as we continue to refine our services and look for opportunities to expand our offerings for patrons of all ages. As a reminder for all, we are fully operational during our construction project. Whenever you see the fence around the construction site don't forget – we are still here for you at both The Benton Library and The Beech Street Center – hours listed [here on our website](#).



Belmont Fire Department



During the month of February, the Belmont Fire Department launched its new website. The site can be accessed through the “Departments” tab in the Town of Belmont site, or at belmontfire.org. Residents can access services from the Fire Prevention Division, child car safety seat installations, and other community programs. In addition, the website provides information on the organization and mission of the fire department and easy access to the fire department’s social media platforms and the ability to subscribe to the website for updates via email.

In addition to hundreds of emergency calls in February, the fire department responded to a reported chimney fire on Trapelo Road. Firefighters sized up the incident and raised the aerial ladder to check the chimney while simultaneously accounting for any occupants of the dwelling and providing a water supply from a nearby hydrant to the pumper. The ability to protect lives and property in a timely manner is made possible by our efficient deployment of resources. We prepare for these scenarios in our training on a regular basis in order ensure safe and successful outcomes.

Also in February, FF Nick Volante finished his probationary period and was presented with a helmet shield identifying his firefighter status. This presentation is an opportunity to thank the mentors that work with our new firefighters as they hone their skills during their first year on the job. It is also an acknowledgement of the completion of a lengthy probationary firefighter task book that verifies their skills and knowledge of department policies. The BFD also offers a program to train new driver/ operators and a mentoring initiative for firefighters on the path to promotion to lieutenant or captain.

Don’t forget to check out the latest episode of **“HOT TOPICS”** with Chief Destefano and Captain David DeMarco available on the Belmont Media Website or by [clicking here](#).



Scan Here to Visit the
New Belmont Fire
Department Website



Council on Aging

With Spring on its way, everyone has a spring in their step when anticipating all the activity at the Beech Street Center! Get ready for another month full of enlightening, engaging and entertaining events! You can visit the [Beech Street Center's website](#) for more information and a complete list of events. Check out some of the highlights below!



Council on Aging Event Highlights:

Virtuosi x Belmont Concert

Tue Mar 12th 5:00pm - 6:30pm

Virtuosi x Belmont is hosting a free casual concert in the Multi-Purpose Room! Come watch and support talented musicians from Belmont High School as they play brilliant renditions of pieces from Tchaikovsky to Bach. No need to dress up - all that's needed is to show up and enjoy! Please call 617-993-2970 to register.

Budget Q&A with Superintendent Geiser

Wed Mar 13th 10:00am - 11:00am

Dr. Jill Geiser, Superintendent of Belmont Public Schools, is returning to the Beech Street Center for another community conversation, this time centered on the budget. Please come with your questions or just to say hello! Please call 617-993-2970 to register.

Envisioning Your Retirement Workshop

Wed Mar 13th 10:00am - 11:00am

Meet weekly with a small, supportive group to envision your life in your retirement. Be prepared to dream, to set short and long-term goals. To think about what actionable steps you need to make to reach those goals. Give and Receive support. Meets every Wednesday from 3/6 to 3/27

Irish Music in America with John Clark

Fri Mar 15th 1:15pm - 2:15pm

With the influx of Irish immigrants to America came a treasure trove of great music, the best of it featured in this program. Some of the songs you'll hear in this program are either traditional Irish ballads or Irish folk songs that tell dramatic and sometimes even violent tales so you'll hear the stories behind songs. Bring out the shamrocks and shillelaghs, pour me a Guinness and don't be forgettin' the wearin' of the green! Please call 617-993-2970 to register. This event made possible by a generous donation by the Friends of the Belmont Council on Aging.

The "Me" Decade - A Cultural Review of the 1970s with Fran Hart

Fri Mar 22nd 1:15pm - 2:15pm

This presentation features live acoustic music and audience sing-alongs, coupled with audio and video clips showing the best (and sometimes the worst) of the 1970s. The decade of the 1970s conjures up images of Watergate, the end of the Vietnam War, the election of a peanut farmer to the Presidency, rampant inflation, the rationing of gas and more. There was no shortage of musicians willing to comment on the cultural happenings of the 1970s. These included Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, Chicago, Simon and Garfunkel, Yes, The Band, Bob Dylan, and others. Please call 617-993-2970 to register.

Stand-up Comedy with David Shrikes

Tue Mar 26th 1:15pm - 2:15pm

Join local senior comedian David Shikes for an afternoon of laughs and good times. Please call 617-993-2970 to register.