

**Town of Bernardston  
Selectboard Meeting Minutes**



**Board Members**

Brian J. Keir

Stanley D. Garland, Chairman

Kenneth R. Bordewieck

***Minutes for the meeting of March 20, 2024***

Meeting held at Bernardston Town Hall  
38 Church St, Bernardston, MA 01337

**Selectboard Members Present:**

Stan Garland  
Ken Bordewieck  
Brian Keir

**Others Present:**

See sign-in roster

Stan called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

**Warrants**

Stan motioned to approve the Payroll Warrant in the amount of \$54,160.45.  
Ken seconded and the motion was approved 3-0.

Stan motioned to approve the Vendor Warrant in the amount of \$117,971.26.  
Ken seconded and the motion was approved 3-0.

**Minutes**

Stan motioned to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on March 6, 2024, and the Special Meeting on March 14, 2024. Ken seconded and the motion was approved 3-0.

**Calendar and Announcements**

Stan read the calendar and announcements as presented on the attached agenda.

**Citizen Concerns:** None

**Appointments:**

- Meg Ryan and Phoebe Walker - Franklin County and North Quabbin Regional Action Plan: The Town of Bernardston has created an action plan for becoming more age-friendly under the criteria established by AARP and has been renewed as a member of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities. As our population ages, it will be increasingly important to make  
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*Selectboard Meeting Minutes*  
*March 20, 2024*  
*(continued)*

decisions at the Town level that take this demographic shift into account. The action plan provides an evidence-informed roadmap for communities in our area to become more age-and dementia-friendly. It offers specific action steps that towns can take as well as collaborative projects that are already underway. Meg Ryan, CPHS Public Health Nurse, Phoebe Walker, Director of Community Health, FRCOG, and Jennifer Reynolds, Director of Council on Aging were invited to discuss the action plan and next steps for our community. Phoebe wanted to gather feedback from the Selectboard on the action plan and to give Jennifer an opportunity to inform the group about all the activities that she has organized that will directly support the action plan.

-Brad Bordewieck - Parking at Pratt Field: Brad provided an update that the recently posted “No Parking” signs, placed in the area of trees, have proven to be ineffective. People are still parking in and around the area of trees that the Tree Warden is trying to protect. Brad spoke to the Chief of Police who stated that the signs do not warrant full enforcement and that the Town would need to pass a bylaw giving the Chief of Police authority to enforce violators in no parking areas. Second, the Chief of Police also suggested adding an explanation to the signs as to why no parking is allowed. These signs would cost approximately \$200 each. A third idea was to create a gravel parking area (80’x80’) at the end of the tree line on the left for 25 to 30 cars to park. The gravel would cost approximately \$3500 and the Highway Department would do the work. Stan recommended that Brad will need to communicate the parking plan with the Fire and Water District and come back at the next regular Selectboard meeting on April 3, 2024. Stan added that the Highway Department needs to be mindful about the entrapment of oils and fluids and that the grass does not need to be mowed every two weeks.

**New Business**

-FY23 Financial Audit: An Engagement Letter from Roselli, Clark and Associates & Clark, CPA, is pending signature and approval by the Selectboard. A financial audit of FY23 ending on June 30th, 2023 will cost the Town \$22,000.00. The objective of the audit is to obtain reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements and activities of the Town are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. The Town Administrator will oversee the audit services.

Ken made a motion to accept the Engagement Letter from Roselli, Clark and Associates for the amount of \$22,000. Brian seconded the motion and it was approved, 3-0.

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*Selectboard Meeting Minutes*  
*March 20, 2024*  
*(continued)*

-2024 FRCOG Traffic Counting Program: The Franklin Regional Council of Governments is now accepting requests for the 2024 Traffic Counting Program. The program offers vehicle volume, classification and speed counts, as well as bicycle and pedestrian counts. All traffic counts are available to member communities at no charge on a first come, first serve basis. The speed counts include detailed reports of vehicle speeding statistics that can help the Town assess citizens' concern, verify if unsafe speeding is occurring and identify the best times of day to conduct effective speed enforcement. The program also offers a capability to collect spot speed data that can be used to evaluate posted speed limits.

Ken made a motion to approve the 2024 FRCOG Traffic Counting Program. Brian seconded the motion and it was approved, 3-0.

-Announcement of the PVRSD Operating Assessment for FY25: The Pioneer Valley School District Committee, at its meeting on February 15th, 2024, voted for an operating budget for FY25 of \$14,816,232.00. The operating budget was based on \$6,000,5567.00 of anticipated receipts, reimbursements or other projected monies; leaving an operating budget assessment of \$8,815,665.00. There were no PVRSD Capital Project Assessment projected for FY2025. The Town of Bernardston's share of the operating assessment for FY2025 is \$3,212,147.00. The operating assessment payments will be due in five (5) equal payments. Assessment payments are due and payable on August 15, 2024, November 15, 2024, January 15, 2025, April 15, 2025, and June 15, 2025.

-2024 Positions for Reappointment: Ken made a motion to approve the one and three year appointments as read. Brian seconded and the motion was approved, 3-0. (A list of the appointments are attached).

-Resignation of Helena Maguire from the Senior Center: The Selectboard has received notice that Helena Maguire, administrative assistant at the Senior Center has submitted her letter of resignation. Brian made a motion to accept the letter of resignation. Ken seconded and the motion was approved, 3-0.

-Letters of Appreciation: Letters of appreciation for Sarah LaValley, Helena Maguire and Christina Slocum-Wysk were read.

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Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
March 20, 2024  
(continued)

**Old Business:**

-BES Dishwasher Replacement and Installation: Jordan Burns sent a summary of the costs for the dishwasher replacement at BES. The total cost of the unit and installation is quoted for \$10,875.69. The Selectboard will pay the vendor directly once we receive a new invoice from the electrician. The electrician's invoice includes a permit fee which needs to be waived. We need to decide if we want to pay the vendor's directly or remit payment to Jordan.

Stan made a motion to approve the Bernardston Elementary School dishwasher replacement and installation for \$10,800.69 and to pay the vendor directly. Ken seconded the motion and it was approved, 3-0.

-Massachusetts AG Approval - Shade Tree Bylaw: The Adjutant General approved Article 3 from the July 26, 2023 Bernardston Special Town Meeting and offer the following comments for the Town's consideration:  
Under Article 3, the Town amended its general bylaws to add a new bylaw, "Public Shade Tree Removal". The bylaw prohibits a public shade tree from being cut, trimmed or removed without a written permit from the Tree Warden after an advertised public hearing. The bylaw establishes the procedure for obtaining a written permit including submitting a written request to the Tree Warden; a public hearing by the Selectboard; inspection of the tree(s) and recommendation by the Tree Warden, and then issuance of the permit for removal of the tree(s) if approved following the hearing. The AG cautions the Town on two points:

1. It is unclear what type of account the Town is referring to in the bylaw's use of the term "Tree Donations special revenue fund". The Town's use of this account must be consistent with G.L. c. 44, Section 53, that requires all money received by the Town to be deposited into the Town's general fund.

2. In addition, the bylaw provides that the donation to the Tree Donations Fund will be in an amount deemed appropriate by the Selectboard. But, the bylaw also states that the reimbursement will be determined by the Tree Warden. It is unclear whether the Selectboard or the Tree Warden will determine the reimbursement amount.

Stan recommends sending the approved bylaw back to Town Counsel to determine if an amendment is needed.

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Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
March 20, 2024  
(continued)

-Request from Elena Cohen, Rural Housing Challenges: Elena Cohen, District Director, Office of Senator Jo Comerford, sent an email to local officials sharing a letter that was sent with Representative partners to advocate changed to the Affordable Homes Act which would strengthen the bill's impact in the 181 rural and geographically isolated communities across the Commonwealth. Senator Comerford's team is working with a graduate student fellow, Mike Fiscella, this semester who is interested in talking with the Bernardston Selectboard to hear our stories about rural housing challenges, state and local barriers, etc. Mike will use the information we provide to draft a letter for the Town to consider sending as part of our advocacy for rural housing priorities. Senator Comerford will use these examples during her floor speech about the Affordable Homes Act and our input will help make her smarter about the ways these issues impact the district she represents. The Selectboard agreed to invite Mike to any regular Selectboard meeting and make his presentation.

**Town Administrator Report:** As read by the Town Administrator

**Other Business Unknown at time of posting**

-Application for Street Entrance Permit: Stan made a motion to approve the application for a street entrance permit for 27C Eden Trail, Bernardston for a fee of \$25.00. Brian seconded and the motion was approved, 3-0.

-Letter of Support - Bernardston Bridge Project: The Town of Bernardston has been asked to provide a letter of support on behalf of MassDOT in support of the Federal Bridge Investment Project grand in Bernardston. The Bridge Project Grant will provide funding for the project in Bernardston that includes two bridges on Route 10, one over Fall River which is being completely replaced and another that is having a deck replacement over I-91. The project will include new and replaced sidewalks which will fill existing pedestrian gaps and buffered bike lanes along the entirety of the project area. The proposed project will provide a cohesive pedestrian corridor with full width sidewalks, ADA accessible ramps and proper sidewalks at all side streets and ramp location. The letter was signed by the Selectboard.

-Louella Atherton Plaque: Louella's children, Lucinda and Chip, would like to hang a small plaque in the PI Museum classroom in Louella's honor. Approval from the Selectboard is required. Upon approval by the Selectboard, the next step will be for the Town Administrator to present the request to the Historical Commission for approval at their meeting on Thursday, March 28th at 5:30pm. The Selectboard decided to defer to the Historical Commission and will support whatever they decide.


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Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
March 20, 2024  
(continued)

**Adjourn**

Stan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Brian seconded the motion and it was approved, 3-0.

Attested by: Karen Kelly, Town Administrator

  
\_\_\_\_\_, Chairman   
Stanley D. Garland                      Kenneth R. Bordewieck                        
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian J. Keir

**Town of Bernardston**  
**Selectboard Meeting Agenda**  
Wednesday, March 20, 2024, 6:00PM



Bernardston Town Hall, 38 Church Street, Bernardston MA

**Board Members**

Brian J. Keir

Stanley D. Garland, Chairman

Kenneth R. Bordewieck

**Call to Order** – 6:00pm

**Warrants**

Payroll and Vendor; weeks ending March 16, 2024

**Meeting Minutes:** Regular Meeting March 6, 2024; Special Meeting March 14, 2024

**Calendar & Announcements**

- Historical Commission Meeting, Thursday, March 28th @5:30 pm, Bernardston Senior Center
- March is Judicial Outreach Month in Massachusetts when judges engage with communities across the Commonwealth about the work of the judicial branch and the importance of an impartial and independent judiciary. Judge Mary Beth Ogulewicz will be at the Senior Center on Thursday, March 21st at 12:00pm. Come with your questions!
- Historians, Actors, Artists and Other Volunteers Wanted! On Thursday, March 28th 4:00PM, the Bernardston Senior Center is planning a cemetery tour of the Old Cemetery under the direction of Ginny Rockwood. We are in the planning stage of a fun, historical tour that includes actors and tells the historical tale of Bernardston and the residents of Bernardston. If you are interested in contributing, volunteering or sponsoring please come to this meeting and help plan this fantastic event! All ages are encouraged to attend!

**Citizens Concerns**

**Appointments**

-Meg Ryan and Phoebe Walker: Franklin County and North Quabbin Regional Action Plan

**New Business**

-FY23 Financial Audit

-2024 FRCOG Traffic Counting Program

-Announcement of the PVRSD Operating Assessment for FY25

-Resignation of Helena Maguire from the Senior Center

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**Old Business**

- BES Dishwasher Replacement and Installation
- Massachusetts AG Approval - Shade Tree Bylaw
- Request from Elena Cohen, Rural Housing Challenges
- Letters of Appreciation

**Town Administrator Report****Other Business Unknown at time of posting****Adjourn**

*This meeting was posted on Friday, March 15, 2024 at 7:00am*





Subject **UPDATE: Bernardston FY23 Financial Audit**  
From Karen Kelly <bos@townofbernardston.org>  
Brian Keir <brkeir@msn.com>, Stan Garland <uped@comcast.net>,  
Ken Bordewieck <ken.bordewieck@comcast.net>  
Cc Jane Dutcher <jdutcher55@hotmail.com>, Treasurer  
<treasurer@townofbernardston.org>  
Date 2024-02-26 11:16



Good morning,

Attached is the quote from Roselli & Clark. Please see details about services and pricing below from Tony Roselli.

On another note, I have called Thomas Scanlon, CPA three (3) times with no return phone call. I will keep trying.

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*Karen A. Kelly*

**Town Administrator**  
Town of Bernardston  
38 Church St., PO Box 504  
Bernardston, MA 01337  
Phone: 413-648-5401

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**RE: Bernardston FY21 Financial Audit  
**Date:**2024-02-26 11:04  
**From:**Tony Roselli <troselli@roselliclark.com>  
**To:**Karen Kelly <bos@townofbernardston.org>

Hi Karen

Thank you for the additional information I requested.

Per my review, I noticed the Town did not get a full GAAP audit in 2021. The three big pieces missing in the financials are:

1. Fixed asset inventory
2. OPEB valuation
3. Pension valuation.

Both the OPEB valuation and pension valuation were included in the footnotes so we could improve the financial reporting by including those in the actual financial statements. However, the fixed asset inventory would be a larger task.

We have a fixed asset inventory including buildings from 2005; the last time we did the audit so we have a baseline with which to work from, however to update it fully to 2023, we would need the department heads to each provide a list of items, with estimated cost and estimated year placed in service and we would also need the Town to provide a list of capital construction since 2005. Roadwork I would be able to obtain from Mass DOT. Once created, it is very easy to maintain from year to year.

Based on this, my proposal for the cost of the audit including everything except fixed assets, which is an improvement over the prior report would be \$22K. If you wanted to include fixed assets it would be an additional charge. I see you have 25K appropriated so the additional 3K could be used towards fixed assets, but I'm not sure if this would cover the entire cost of that extra service until we see what the Town has available for data in that regard.

Also, the pension information we get from Franklin County, however the OPEB information is something the Town would need to obtain from its prior OPEB vendor and would need to be updated thru 2023. The Town uses the alternate under 100 employee approach so it is relatively inexpensive – I think about \$500/year but I would check with the vendor.

Thanks  
Tony

Subject **Fwd: Age-Friendly Action Plan Next Steps**  
From Director <coa@townofbernardston.org>  
To Bernardston Selectboard <bos@townofbernardston.org>  
Date 2024-03-04 12:01



- Action Plan Cover letter.pdf(~122 KB)

See below, LifePath and DPH will be trying to set up a time to meet with the SB to discuss this. I can touch base on just everyone of these domains with action items that we are currently doing or about to do. I would at some point like to discuss a senior tax work off program with the SB. We have so many seniors in town we should offer something like this. In Amherst I oversaw theirs. We had 35 participants and it was very beneficial to the Town Hall, Library and the Senior Center. When I have much more information together I will schedule a date.

Jennifer Reynolds  
Bernardston Senior Center and COA, Director  
PO Box 504  
Bernardston, MA 01337  
[coa@townofbernardston.org](mailto:coa@townofbernardston.org)  
Direct line : 413.648.5413 Mobile: 413.364.6133

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**Age-Friendly Action Plan Next Steps  
**Date:**2024-03-04 9:30 am  
**From:**Lynne Feldman <lfeldman@lifepathma.org>  
**To:**Lynne Feldman <lfeldman@lifepathma.org>

Greetings COA Chairs and Directors and Village Directors,

I wanted to make sure you all saw the latest information about the Age- and Dementia-Friendly project (see newsletter below) and let you know that we have mailed the [action plans](#) to your town administrators. I am attaching a copy of the letter that we sent. If you would please encourage them to take us up on the offer to meet, that would be helpful, and of course we are eager to connect with any of you as well as we work toward becoming more age- and dementia-friendly.

We are interested to know if you are working on a project that supports one of the goals in the action plan. We are tracking them so that we have a sense of how well we are accomplishing the goals. Examples of projects might be:

- New community newsletter (Domain 7, Action item 1)
- New senior tax workoff program (Domain 6, Action item 1)
- New marketing campaign for senior center use (Domain 4, goal 2)
- Etc.

If you are working on a project like this, please let us know by [completing this form](#). For your convenience, I am putting the quick reference list of the action plan below. I am sure some of you are doing some of this work! We hope to feature and highlight activities throughout the region via our [Facebook page](#) and newsletter.

Finally, we have openings on the Age- and Dementia-Friendly steering committee; please contact me for more information if you may be interested.

Thank you!  
est,  
Lynne

**Action Plan Quick Reference**  
**[Domain 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings](#)**

Goal: Improve access in town parks and public facilities for all residents equitably.

1. Provide towns with ADA audits for recreation and public facilities.
2. Improve walkability of local communities by increasing the number of towns engaged in the Complete Streets program.

Work with town recreation committees and open space committees to incorporate age-friendly elements into Open Space and Recreation Plans.

4. Assist towns to implement age-friendly recommendations from Open Space and Recreation Plans to expand access to physical activities, natural areas, and places to gather for all residents equitably.
5. Continue work to assist local COAs to conduct walk audits and develop programs to expand access to walking for all residents.

#### Domain 2: Transportation

Goal: Increase knowledge of existing transportation options and decrease barriers to use, especially for those with lived experience of discrimination, disability, poverty, and food insecurity.

1. Conduct focused outreach to older adults in order to disseminate information on transportation resources.
2. Launch transit ambassador/travel trainer program to disseminate information on transit resources and assist older adults with becoming more comfortable using transit.
3. Add to the current pool of volunteer drivers for FRTA's Med-Ride and LifePath's Ride for Health programs that assists people 60 years and older with transportation for medical appointments.
4. Increase the number of neighbor-to-neighbor transportation programs within communities. Support existing programs by collaborating and advocating for stronger, more sustainable resources that are available to all residents.

#### Domain 3: Housing

Goal: Create accessible older adult housing options with input from older adults throughout the region and increase awareness of current options for all residents, especially for those with lived experience of discrimination, disability, poverty, and food insecurity.

1. Research and distribute information on municipal policy barriers to housing affordability through zoning ordinances in Franklin County.
2. Advocate for zoning that supports more affordable and accessible housing options (e.g., accessory dwelling units, multiple units, conversion of large single-family to duplex or multi-family).
3. Advocate for state funding that supports more affordable housing options in rural areas.
4. Work with towns to create older adult housing or housing that is suitable to older adults.
5. Enhance and support the HomeShare program through grant writing and marketing.
6. Provide education/workshops about age-friendly building for local contractors and trade students.
7. Implement and support home safety and home repair programs that allow people to safely age in place.

#### Domain 4: Social Participation

Goal: Reduce isolation for older adults, especially for those with lived experience of discrimination, disability, poverty, and food insecurity.

1. Create/increase partnerships between older adult and youth organizations (e.g. senior centers/COAs and schools/pre-schools).
2. Create and/or support existing marketing campaigns for senior center and COA use.
3. Create intergenerational community book/discussion groups and other events.
4. Provide and increase use of LifePath's Phone Pal Program, and support the creation of similar town-level companionship programs as well.
5. Support the growth of Village initiatives to collaborate with and complement senior centers and COAs) and to ensure their services are accessible to all regardless of financial means.

#### Domain 5: Respect and Social Inclusion

Goal: Increase awareness and community connections throughout the region by increasing partnerships among existing programs that promote age-friendly businesses, municipalities, and organizations.

1. Provide dementia awareness trainings in community settings.
2. Provide technical assistance regarding age- and dementia-friendly systems, policies, and built environment changes.
3. Provide anti-bias education in community settings.
4. Engage all residents in preventing elder abuse through awareness campaigns and encouraging reporting of suspected abuse.

#### Domain 6: Civic Participation and Employment

Goal: Increase equitable opportunities for civic participation and employment for all older adults, especially for those with lived experience of discrimination, disability, poverty, and food insecurity.

1. Encourage towns that do not currently have a senior tax workoff program to establish one.
2. Encourage towns and community groups to make public meetings as accessible as possible by providing multiple modes of connection, ensuring that speakers are loud enough, and that video is captioned.
3. Provide pathways to meaningful employment for older adults through engaging employers and residents.

### Domain 7: Communication and Information

Goal: Encourage use of multiple information channels, especially town newsletters, that reach all residents and regularly include age-friendly information.

1. Encourage use of town newsletters that reach all residents and regularly include age-friendly information.
2. Identify towns that do not have a town newsletter and provide effective models; encourage towns that use social media to ensure parity in written communication.
3. Work with town municipal vulnerability planning teams to explicitly incorporate age-friendly elements to updated Municipal Vulnerability Plans so that the needs of older adults, especially those most isolated, are highlighted.
4. Create a sustainable stream of high-quality digital devices that are available at low-cost to residents at all income levels.

### Domain 8: Health Services and Community Supports

Goal 1: Increase digital literacy among all older adults in the region.

1. Develop partnerships to provide help to older adults learning to use computers.
2. Advocate for primary care practices to provide support for use of patient portal and other healthcare services such as telehealth.

Goal 2: Increase equitable access to healthcare and supportive services.

1. Use the DPH Community Health Equity Survey to gain up-to-date information on older adults' needs.
2. Encourage towns to adopt programs to identify and support residents with access and functional needs during emergency situations.
3. Create marketing campaigns for local and regional Public Health Nurse services and programming.
4. Increase access to healthcare navigators/medical advocates for older adults. Create a medical advocacy program matching trained volunteers with older adults needing support accessing healthcare.

Lynne Feldman, MBA (she/her)  
Director of Community Services

Planner

LifePath

101 Munson St. Suite 201

Greenfield, MA 01301

413-829-9221 (Direct line)

413-773-5555 (Main line)

Please follow us on [Facebook!](#)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **LifePath** <[lfeldman@lifepathma.org](mailto:lfeldman@lifepathma.org)>

Date: Thu, Feb 15, 2024 at 5:02 PM

Subject: Age-Friendly Franklin County & North Quabbin

To: <[lfeldman@lifepathma.org](mailto:lfeldman@lifepathma.org)>



**AGE-FRIENDLY**

Franklin County & North Quabbin

Winter 2024 Newsletter

An age- and dementia-friendly community is a place that makes it easy for older people to stay connected to people that are important to them. And it helps people stay healthy and active even at the oldest ages and provides appropriate support to

those who can no longer look after themselves. LifePath, together with its partner Franklin Regional Council of Governments, is leading an initiative towards helping the North Quabbin and Franklin County become more age- and dementia-friendly. The **Action Plan**, released last fall is the culmination of three years and hundreds of hours of work by residents and staff to create a roadmap of how our community can be the best place possible to age.



# AGE-FRIENDLY

## Franklin County & North Quabbin

**Regional Action Plan**  
2024-2028



**How LifePath and FRCOG's Regional Action Plan Is Improving  
Our Community for Older Adults**

by Gary Yuhas, MBA Executive Director of LifePath

Have you been or known an older adult who could not find transportation to a medical appointment? Or who needed to find an affordable place to live? How about someone (or yourself) who is having trouble getting to the grocery store, cooking meals, or feels like they could experience a fall or other medical event and no one would know? Perhaps you or someone you know is feeling too isolated? These, and many other challenges in our area, are what LifePath and Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG)'s **Age- and Dementia-Friendly Franklin County and North Quabbin Regional Action Plan 2024-2028** was created to address.

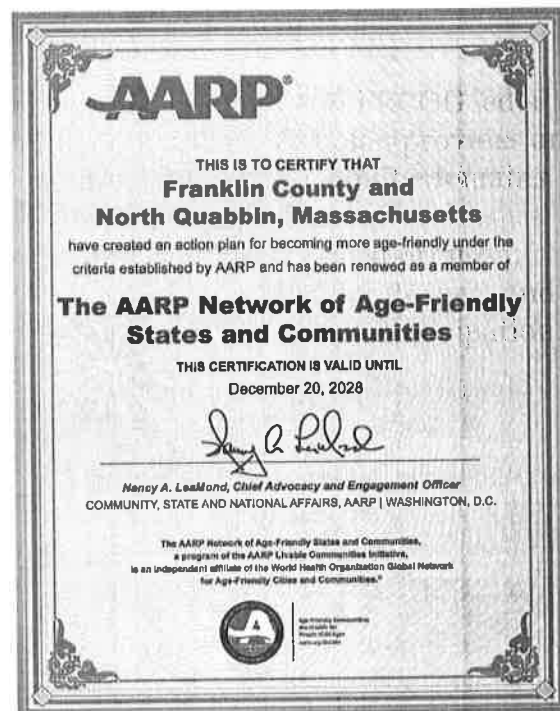
As our communities change and age, national and state models are guiding the work of analyzing needs and setting regional priorities. FRCOG and LifePath partnered to conduct a regional needs assessment for older adults in Franklin County and the North Quabbin region. The survey's final report was issued in fall of 2022 followed by communities discussing their towns' findings and how to act on recommendations.

Based on the survey data and community conversations, LifePath and FRCOG led a steering committee and workgroups to develop the Action Plan. The plan provides an outline to address goals organized by AARP "livability domains." Livability domains are ways to divide necessary work into segments around social drivers of health. These eight domains are Housing, Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Transportation, Communication and Information, Civic Participation and Employment, Respect and Social Inclusion, Health Services and Community Supports, and Social Participation.

Continue reading this article

## AARP Recognition

We are excited to announce that we have received the the official action plan certificates for the 27 individual communities included in the plan and a certificate for the regional as well! We are in the process of sending each certificate out to the town administrators along with a copy of the action plan. The next step is to meet with each selectboard to determine how to apply the action plan in your community. Check in with your town administrator to be alerted when the action plan will be on your town's agenda!





## Funding Alerts

- AARP Community Challenge
- Community Development Block Grants, Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities
- More funding opportunities

### Interrupting Ageism

by Lynne Feldman, Director of Community Services, LifePath

A World Health report on Ageism 2 1/2 years ago found that ageism is a pervasive problem world wide, and permeates systems like the media, healthcare and the legal system. Ageism is associated with a shorter lifespan, poorer physical and mental health and a slower recovery from disability and cognitive decline. I asked Meg Ryan, RN, FRCOG Public Health Nurse, to help us understand how ageism works.

**Lynne:** What is ageism?

**Meg:** Ageism is discrimination against older people due to negative and inaccurate stereotypes.

**Lynne:** How does ageism happen?

**Meg:** It starts with *stereotypes*, which are how we think about something – our internal thoughts and ideas. We all also have *bias* – our gut feelings – present without our intention, created after a lifetime of learning and interacting with the world. Finally, it manifests itself through *discrimination* – actions we take, sometimes without thought, that demonstrate how we think and feel (often unconsciously).

**Lynne:** What are the attitudes we need to watch out for?

**Meg:** Privileging or idealizing of youth – the attitude that youth is better than old age is extremely prevalent in our society. We know from research that adults who are 50 to 80 years old overwhelmingly experience ageism, including against ourselves – 82% experience one or more forms in their day-to day lives, and 36% of us experience internalized ageism.

**Lynne:** How do we stop the cycle of ageism?

**Meg:** Reframing aging and find the positive is important to fight this bias.

To learn more about ageism and how to join the fight against it, **join Meg at an upcoming workshop, "Ageism and Reframing Aging."** Details and registration information below!

# AGEISM AND REFRAMING AGING WORKSHOP



**WHAT:** A positive attitude about aging can translate into a longer, healthier life. Ageist beliefs can directly impact personal health, the ability to age well, and even the economy. In this workshop, we will examine ageism and anti-age bias, look at how our ways of speaking and portrayals of aging in popular culture express our beliefs about getting older, and work on reframing our attitudes about aging. Let's envision a world where being older is a respected advantage!

**PRESENTER:** Meg Ryan, FRCOG Regional Public Health Nurse

**WHO IS INVITED:** Town staff and volunteers who work with or on behalf of the public, and community members interested in ensuring our towns are "longevity-ready."

### **In-person option:**

Thurs. Feb. 29, 12-2pm  
(snow date Mar. 7)

John W. Olver Transit Center,  
Allen Conference room,  
Lunch provided.

Click [here](#) or scan QR code  
to register



### **OR Zoom option:**

Thursday March  
21, 12-2 pm.

Click [here](#)  
or scan QR code  
to register



Register for the Feb. 29 Ageism Session

Register for the March 21 Ageism Session

## Age- and dementia-friendly resources delivered directly to your inbox

Because of the interest and popularity of the age- and dementia-friendly movement, there are tons of resources to wade through. Please find some of those we have found most useful below.



**AARP** has lots of newsletters to choose from. We recommend the **Livable Communities version**, but **click here** to discover the many other resources AARP offers via newsletter.



**Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative** sends periodic updates on funding, trends, and other important news in aging in the Commonwealth. **Click here** to sign up for this local resource.



**American Society on Aging** is a national resource whose programming promotes actionable change in five strategic priority areas: Ageism & Culture, Economic Security, Innovation & Social Impact, Health & Well-being and Equity & Justice.



The  
**John A. Hartford  
Foundation**

**The John A. Hartford Foundation** invests in aging experts and practice innovations that transform how the care of older adults is delivered. Check out their Dissemination Center, where you will find great age- and dementia-friendly resources **here**.



LED BY THE GERONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA  
ReframingAging.org

**The National Center to Reframe Aging** has released a new **toolkit** called "Changing the Conversation" as part of its resources on reframing aging, **as reported by the John A. Hartford Foundation**. Check out more resources from the Foundation **here** and sign up for their newsletter, Caravan, **here**.

## Trainings Abound

We're seeing increased opportunities to become more familiar with topics related to the age- and dementia-friendly movement. Find listed below some upcoming dates and pre-recorded resources.

**Alzheimer's Association New  
England Family Conference,**

**The American Society on  
Aging** offers these webinars:

March 1-2 2024. free, virtual conference for those living with Alzheimer's and dementia and their families. Sessions will feature notable guest speakers and include a panel of persons living with early stage dementia.

Also, see **The John A. Hartford Dissemination Center** for more web-based learning opportunities.

- Feb. 26: Tune into the fourth episode of the **Beyond Generations** podcast series with Edward Jones, on Promoting Healthier Futures to End Alzheimer's.
- Feb. 27: Attend **Launching the Essential Conversations Pilot Program**.
- Feb. 28: Register for a webinar on **Elder Abuse and Neglect**.
- Mar. 6: Register for the **Navigating Ethical Choices in the Care of Older Adults** webinar.
- Mar. 13: Attend the **Beyond Alzheimer's: Identifying and Managing Other Types of Dementia** webinar.

### **Community Health Improvement Plan Released**

The Franklin County/North Quabbin CHIP Network, a 300-member group founded in 2016 and hosted by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), has completed two planning cycles prior to this one. A CHIP is a plan made for a set period of time based on the results of a community health needs assessment. This newest one includes 14 health improvement strategies based on the region's needs.

[More about the CHIP](#)

### **Age-friendly in Action: Universal Access**

DCR's **Universal Access Program** is back at **Wendell State Forest** in Millers Falls on Saturdays, 11:00 am-3:00 pm on February 17 & 24. There will be outdoor hiking, ice skating, cross-country skiing, sit-skiing, gentle sled hockey games, kicksledding, and snowshoeing (depending up on the weather). Pre-registration is required at (413) 584-2052 or [Kailean@alloutadventures.org](mailto:Kailean@alloutadventures.org) . Suggested donation is \$5 per person.

## Enjoy Massachusetts state parks with the Universal Access Program



We offer thanks for the continued dedication from the Age-Friendly Franklin County & North Quabbin project steering committee members:

- Michael Archbald - Foothills Health District
- Heather Bialecki-Canning - North Quabbin Community Coalition
- Jeanne Dodge - LifePath's Rainbow Elders
- Lynne Feldman - LifePath
- Mary Giannetti - Heywood Healthcare
- Cathy Savoy - Athol Council on Aging
- Denise Schwartz - OASIS council at Greenfield Community College
- Meg Ryan - FRCOG
- Rachel Stoler - FRCOG

LifePath, Inc. | 101 Munson Street, Suite 201, Greenfield, MA 01301

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and the



**ROSELLI, CLARK & ASSOCIATES**  
**CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS**

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Woburn, MA 01801

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[www.roselliclark.com](http://www.roselliclark.com)

March 6, 2024

Town of Bernardston, Massachusetts  
Attn: Ms. Karen Kelly  
Town Administrator  
Bernardston, MA

Dear Ms. Kelly:

We are pleased to confirm our understanding of the services we are to provide the Town of Bernardston, Massachusetts for the years ended June 30, 2023.

**Audit Scope and Objectives**

We will audit the financial statements of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information, and the disclosures, which collectively comprise the basic financial statements of Town of Bernardston, Massachusetts as of and for the years ended June 30, 2023. Accounting standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP) provide for certain required supplementary information (RSI), such as management's discussion and analysis (MD&A), to supplement Town of Bernardston, Massachusetts's basic financial statements. Such information, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. As part of our engagement, we will apply certain limited procedures to Town of Bernardston, Massachusetts's RSI in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). These limited procedures will consist of inquiries of management regarding the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We will not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient appropriate evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance. The following RSI is required by GAAP and will be subjected to certain limited procedures, but will not be audited:

1. Management's discussion and analysis
2. Budgetary comparison schedules
3. Schedule of Proportionate Share of Net Pension Liability
4. Schedule of Contributions to Pension Plan
5. Schedule of Changes in Net OPEB Liability and Related Ratios
6. Schedule of Contributions to OPEB Plan
7. Schedule of Investment Returns – OPEB Plan

The objectives of our audit are to obtain reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion about whether your financial statements are fairly presented, in all material respects, in conformity with GAAP; and report on the fairness of the supplementary information referred to in the second paragraph when considered in relation to the financial statements as a whole. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements, including omissions, can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment of a reasonable user made based on the financial statements.

### **Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements**

We will conduct our audit in accordance with GAAS and will include tests of your accounting records and other procedures we consider necessary to enable us to express such opinions. As part of an audit in accordance with GAAS, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.

We will evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management. We will also evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and determine whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation. We will plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement, whether from (1) errors, (2) fraudulent financial reporting, (3) misappropriation of assets, or (4) violations of laws or governmental regulations that are attributable to the government or to acts by management or employees acting on behalf of the government.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, combined with the inherent limitations of internal control, and because we will not perform a detailed examination of all transactions, there is an unavoidable risk that some material misstatements may not be detected by us, even though the audit is properly planned and performed in accordance with GAAS. In addition, an audit is not designed to detect immaterial misstatements or violations of laws or governmental regulations that do not have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, we will inform the appropriate level of management of any material errors, fraudulent financial reporting, or misappropriation of assets that comes to our attention. We will also inform the appropriate level of management of any violations of laws or governmental regulations that come to our attention, unless clearly inconsequential. Our responsibility as auditors is limited to the period covered by our audit and does not extend to any later periods for which we are not engaged as auditors.

We will also conclude, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the government's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

Our procedures will include tests of documentary evidence supporting the transactions recorded in the accounts, tests of the physical existence of inventories (if deemed material), and direct confirmation of receivables and certain assets and liabilities by correspondence with selected customers, creditors, and financial institutions. We will also request written representations from your attorneys as part of the engagement, and they will likely bill you for responding to this inquiry.

We may, from time to time and depending on the circumstances, use third-party service providers in serving your account. We may share confidential information about you with these service providers but remain committed to maintaining the confidentiality and security of your information. Accordingly, we



maintain internal policies, procedures, and safeguards to protect the confidentiality of your personal information. In addition, we will secure confidentiality agreements with all service providers to maintain the confidentiality of your information, and we will take reasonable precautions to determine that they have appropriate procedures in place to prevent the unauthorized release of your confidential information to others. In the event that we are unable to secure an appropriate confidentiality agreement, you will be asked to provide your consent prior to the sharing of your confidential information with the third-party service provider. Furthermore, we will remain responsible for the work provided by any such third-party service providers.

Our audit of the financial statements does not relieve you of your responsibilities.

### **Audit Procedures—Internal Control**

We will obtain an understanding of the government and its environment, including internal control relevant to the audit, sufficient to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to error or fraud, and to design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks and obtain evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinions. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentation, or the override of internal control. An audit is not designed to provide assurance on internal control or to identify deficiencies in internal control. Accordingly, we will express no such opinion. However, during the audit, we will communicate to management and those charged with governance internal control related matters that are required to be communicated under AICPA professional standards.

We have identified the following significant risk(s) of material misstatement as part of our audit planning:

- Completeness of recorded expenditures and revenues
- Proper determination of required Single Audit reporting under Uniform Guidance

### **Audit Procedures—Compliance**

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement, we will perform tests of Town of Bernardston, Massachusetts's compliance with the provisions of applicable laws, regulations, contracts, and agreements. However, the objective of our audit will not be to provide an opinion on overall compliance, and we will not express such an opinion.

### **Other Services**

We will also prepare or assist in preparing the financial statements of the Town of Bernardston, Massachusetts in conformity with GAAP based on information provided by you.

We will perform the services in accordance with applicable professional standards. The other services are limited to the financial statement services previously defined. We, in our sole professional judgment, reserve the right to refuse to perform any procedure or take any action that could be construed as assuming management responsibilities.

You agree to assume all management responsibilities for the financial statement preparation services, and any other nonattest services we provide; oversee the services by designating an individual, preferably from senior management, with suitable skill, knowledge, or experience; evaluate the adequacy and results of the services; and accept responsibility for them.

## **Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements**

Our audit will be conducted on the basis that you acknowledge and understand your responsibility for designing, implementing, and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, including monitoring ongoing activities; for the selection and application of accounting principles; and for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America with the oversight of those charged with governance.

Management is responsible for making drafts of financial statements, all financial records, and related information available to us and for the accuracy and completeness of that information (including information from outside of the general and subsidiary ledgers). You are also responsible for providing us with (1) access to all information of which you are aware that is relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements, such as records, documentation, identification of all related parties and all related-party relationships and transactions, and other matters; (2) additional information that we may request for the purpose of the audit; and (3) unrestricted access to persons within the government from whom we determine it necessary to obtain audit evidence. At the conclusion of our audit, we will require certain written representations from you about the financial statements and related matters.

Your responsibilities include adjusting the financial statements to correct material misstatements and confirming to us in the management representation letter that the effects of any uncorrected misstatements aggregated by us during the current engagement and pertaining to the latest period presented are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial statements of each opinion unit taken as a whole.

You are responsible for the design and implementation of programs and controls to prevent and detect fraud, and for informing us about all known or suspected fraud affecting the government involving (1) management, (2) employees who have significant roles in internal control, and (3) others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements. Your responsibilities include informing us of your knowledge of any allegations of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the government received in communications from employees, former employees, grantors, regulators, or others. In addition, you are responsible for identifying and ensuring that the government complies with applicable laws and regulations.

You are responsible for the preparation of the supplementary information in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP). You agree to include our report on the supplementary information in any document that contains, and indicates that we have reported on, the supplementary information. You also agree to include the audited financial statements with any presentation of the supplementary information that includes our report thereon or make the audited financial statements readily available to users of the supplementary information no later than the date the supplementary information is issued with our report thereon. Your responsibilities include acknowledging to us in the representation letter that (1) you are responsible for presentation of the supplementary information in accordance with GAAP; (2) you believe the supplementary information, including its form and content, is fairly presented in accordance with GAAP; (3) the methods of measurement or presentation have not changed from those used in the prior period (or, if they have changed, the reasons for such changes); and (4) you have disclosed to us any significant assumptions or interpretations underlying the measurement or presentation of the supplementary information.

With regard to the electronic dissemination of audited financial statements, including financial statements published electronically on your website, you understand that electronic sites are a means to distribute

information and, therefore, we are not required to read the information contained in these sites or to consider the consistency of other information in the electronic site with the original document.

In connection with this engagement, we may communicate with you or others via email transmission. As emails can be intercepted and read, disclosed, or otherwise used or communicated by an unintended third party, or may not be delivered to each of the parties to whom they are directed and only to such parties, we cannot guarantee or warrant that emails from us will be properly delivered and read only by the addressee. Therefore, we specifically disclaim and waive any liability or responsibility whatsoever for interception or unintentional disclosure of emails transmitted by us in connection with the performance of this engagement. In that regard, you agree that we shall have no liability for any loss or damage to any person or entity resulting from the use of email transmissions, including any consequential, incidental, direct, indirect, or special damages, such as loss of revenues or anticipated profits, or disclosure or communication of confidential or proprietary information.

### **Engagement Administration, Fees and Other**

We will schedule the engagement based in part on deadlines, working conditions, and the availability of your key personnel. We will plan the engagement based on the assumption that your personnel will cooperate and provide assistance by performing tasks such as preparing requested schedules, retrieving supporting documents, and preparing confirmations. If for whatever reason your personnel are unavailable to provide the necessary assistance in a timely manner, it may substantially increase the work we have to do to complete the engagement within the established deadlines and may result in a delay or inability to complete the engagement within the established deadlines, if such cooperation or assistance is not provided by your key personnel.

The audit documentation for this engagement is the property of Roselli, Clark & Associates and constitutes confidential information. However, subject to applicable laws and regulations, audit documentation and appropriate individuals will be made available upon request and in a timely manner to your regulating agency(ies) or its/their designee. We will notify you of any such request. If requested, access to such audit documentation will be provided under the supervision of Roselli, Clark & Associates personnel. Furthermore, upon request, we may provide copies of selected audit documentation to your regulating agency(ies) or its/their designee. The regulating agency(ies) or its/their designee may intend or decide to distribute the copies or information contained therein to others, including other governmental agencies.

Tony Roselli, CPA is the engagement partner and is responsible for supervising the engagement and signing the report or authorizing another individual to sign it. We expect to begin our audit on a mutually agreeable timeframe and issue our reports by May 31 of the subsequent year.

Our fee for services will be at our standard hourly rates plus out-of-pocket costs (such as report reproduction, word processing, postage, travel, copies, telephone, etc.) except that we agree that our gross fee, including expenses, will not exceed the following **\$22,000**.

The fees above do not contemplate an audit of your federal awards, which is commonly referred to as a Single Audit. A Single Audit is required if you expend more than \$750,000 in federal awards in a fiscal year. Should you require a Single Audit, an additional audit fee will apply. We expect that this fee will range between \$4,000 and \$5,000 for the first federal award subject to a Single Audit and \$1,500 to \$2,000 for each additional federal award subject to a Single Audit. We will promptly notify you in the event it is determined that a Single Audit applies. **We do not anticipate you needing a single audit.**

Our standard hourly rates vary according to the degree of responsibility involved and the experience level of the personnel assigned to your audit. Our invoices for these fees will be rendered each month as work

progresses and are payable on presentation. In accordance with our firm policies, work may be suspended if your account becomes thirty days or more overdue and may not be resumed until your account is paid in full. If we elect to terminate our services for nonpayment, our engagement will be deemed to have been completed upon written notification of termination, even if we have not completed our report. You will be obligated to compensate us for all time expended and to reimburse us for all out-of-pocket costs through the date of termination. The above fee is based on anticipated cooperation from your personnel and the assumption that unexpected circumstances will not be encountered during the audit. If significant additional time is necessary, we will discuss it with you and arrive at a new fee estimate before we incur the additional costs.

### Reporting

We will issue a written report upon completion of our audit of Town of Bernardston, Massachusetts's financial statements. Our report will be addressed to Town of Bernardston, Massachusetts's governing body. Circumstances may arise in which our report may differ from its expected form and content based on the results of our audit. Depending on the nature of these circumstances, it may be necessary for us to modify our opinions, add a separate section, or add an emphasis-of-matter or other-matter paragraph to our auditor's report, or if necessary, withdraw from this engagement. If our opinions are other than unmodified, we will discuss the reasons with you in advance. If, for any reason, we are unable to complete the audit or are unable to form or have not formed opinions, we may decline to express opinions or withdraw from this engagement.

We are to provide you with a copy of our most recent external peer review report and any letter of comment, and any subsequent peer review reports and letters of comment received during the period of the contract. A copy of the peer review report can be viewed and obtained on our website at: [www.roselliclark.com](http://www.roselliclark.com).

We appreciate the opportunity to be of service to Town of Bernardston, Massachusetts and believe this letter accurately summarizes the significant terms of our engagement. If you have any questions, please let us know. If you agree with the terms of our engagement as described in this letter, please sign the attached copy and return it to us.

Very truly yours,



Roselli, Clark & Associates  
Certified Public Accountants

### RESPONSE:

This letter correctly sets forth the understanding of the Town of Bernardston, Massachusetts.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>2024 Position for reappoint</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Position Holder Term in Years</b>
<b>THREE YEAR APPOINTMENTS</b>			
Agricultural Commission Member	Abramson	Wendy	3
Agricultural Commission Member	Pratt	William R.	3
Conservation Commission Member Special Employee	OPEN		3
Conservation Commission Member Special Employee	Rawcliffe	Andrew	3
Friends of Charity Farm Lot Member	Lepore	John	3
Friends of Charity Farm Lot Member	Montiglio	William	3
Friends of Charity Farm Lot Member	Montiglio	Kathleen	3
Green Committee Member	Keir	Brian	3
Green Committee Member	Ribeiro	Frank	3
Historical Commission Member	Gilmore	Mark	3
Historical Commission Member	Pratt	Marsha	3
Local Cultural Council Member	Shedd	Elisabeth	3
Planning Board Member	Fulton	Rawn	3
Planning Board Member	OPEN		3
Registrar*	Raymond	Linda	3
Registrar*	Thacher	Camilla	3
Veterans Memorial Committee Member	Shedd	Daniel	3
Zoning Board of Appeals Member	Deane	Russell	3

<b>2024 Position for reappoint</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Position Holder Term in Years</b>
Animal & Farm Building Inspector	Shedd	Peter	1
BNCTV Board Representative	Fraser	Donald	1
BNCTV Board Representative	Raymond	Robert	1
BNCTV Board Representative	Wysk	Kenneth	1
Chief Procurement Officer	Kelly	Karen	1
E911 Coordinator	Shedd	Peter	1
Emergency Management Committee Member	Grover, Deputy	Lloyd	1
Emergency Management Committee Member	OPEN		1
Emergency Management Committee Member, Deputy	Shedd	Roxene	1
Emergency Management Committee Member, Director	Shedd	Peter	1
FC Solid Waste Representative	OPEN		1
FC Solid Waste Representative	OPEN		1
FRCOG Council Representative	OPEN		1
FRCOG Council Representative Alternate	OPEN		1
FRCOG FCCIP Representative	OPEN		1
FRCOG FRPB Representative/ Planning Board	Wissman-Hoar	Shannon	1
FRCOG FRPB Representative/ Selectboard	OPEN		1
FRCOG REPC Representative	Shedd	Peter	1
Hazardous Material Consultant	Shedd	Peter	1
LEPC - Local Emergency Planning Committee	Shedd	Peter	1
Police Department, Chief	Palmeri, Chief of Police	James	1
Police Department, Police Officer	Chabot	Thomas	1
Police Department, Police Officer	Gale	Darren	1
Police Department, Police Officer	Waldron	Mitchell	1
Police Department, Police Officer	Zukowski	Jordan	1
Police Department, Sergeant	Richardson, Sergeant	John	1
Sexual Harassment Officer	Shedd	Marvin	1
Veterans Agent Representative	Shedd	Marvin	1