



Town of Boxborough

29 Middle Road, Boxborough, Massachusetts 01719

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www.boxborough-ma.gov

2018 Newsletter for New Residents

Board of Selectmen

Susan Bak, Chair
Wes Fowlks
Les Fox
Maria Neyland
Robert Stemple

Town Administrator

Ryan Ferrara

DPW Director

Edward Kukkula

Fire Chief

Randolph White

Library Director

Peishan Bartley

Police Chief

Warren Ryder

BOXBOROUGH FACTS AND FIGURES

Incorporated: 1783

Current Population: 5,000

Area: 10.4 square miles

*Conservation/
Open Space: 1,250 acres
(20% of land area)*

*Median Household Income:
\$101,500*

*Form of Government:
Open Town Meeting.
Annual Town Meeting
starts the 2nd Monday of
May at Blanchard School
gym*

Tax Rate (FY18): \$16.44

*Commuter Rail available in
South Acton and Littleton*

WELCOME TO BOXBOROUGH: A RURAL, ENGAGED COMMUNITY FOR ALL

This newsletter is designed to give new residents useful information about the Town, town government, and some of the resources available to residents and how to access them. We may be small, but we have a wealth of resources to offer our residents, and many opportunities to become involved in the operations of and planning for our town.

Love books and libraries? Visit the Sargent Memorial Library for story hours, events, and a full-service selection of print and digital books and media for you to peruse there, or check out to enjoy at home. Consider joining the Friends of the Library or becoming one of the elected Board of Trustees.

Enjoy communing with nature? Our proud history of land conservation and preserving open space for recreation is evident in the many trails and areas in Boxborough for walking, exercising your dog, or catching up with neighbors. Our Town website, www.boxborough-ma.gov, includes trail maps and GIS mapping for our conservation areas. The Boxborough Land Stewards and the Conservation Commission welcome your participation. For a less strenuous encounter with the outdoors, we invite you to visit our Colonial Herb Garden, which located on the site of the original Town Meeting House, where Middle and Hill Roads intersect.

Boxborough has many elected and appointed boards that govern our town. Residents can offer their time, expertise, and service to any number of boards and committees, from public celebrations, to recreation, to finance. All meetings are posted on our town website and are open to the public.

Boxborough operates under an Open Town Meeting form of government. Town Meeting is the purest form of democracy. All registered voters in Boxborough have a say and a vote in passing our budget and warrant articles that affect your tax rates, and contribute to public safety, our schools, conservation, and more. We encourage you to attend and participate in Town Meetings, which are held at the Blanchard Memorial School, in the gymnasium. Annual Town Meeting begins the second Monday in May. "Special" Town Meetings can take place at any time, as the need arises.

We hope that you find this newsletter to be a handy reference. Please feel free to contact any of us here at Town Hall if you have questions. And also be sure to visit our website www.boxborough-ma.gov for more in-depth information on what is happening in Boxborough.



GUIDE TO TOWN HALL DEPARTMENTS

ASSESSOR

www.boxborough-ma.gov/town-assessor

The Town Assessor is responsible for determining the fair and equitable value of all property within the Town for the purpose of taxation. This includes residential, commercial, industrial and personal property. The Assessor also has the authority to grant abatements on all property tax, including motor vehicle excise tax. Questions pertaining to the assessment on real estate, personal property, or motor vehicle excise, or regarding exemptions available to senior citizens, veterans, and others, should be directed to the Assessor's office. Basic information on the assessment process, excise tax, abatements, as well as forms to change a mailing address or apply for tax relief are available online.

BUILDING INSPECTOR

www.boxborough-ma.gov/building-department

The Boxborough Building Department is responsible for administering Massachusetts General Laws, Building, Electrical, Plumbing, and Gas Codes, Architectural Access Board regulations, and General and Zoning Bylaws of the Town of Boxborough as they relate to demolition, construction, reconstruction, and occupancy of buildings and structures. Many home improvement activities require a permit from the building department before work can begin. If you are unsure if work requires a permit, please contact the Building Department and we will be glad to assist, or check the Building Department webpage for more information.

COMMUNITY SERVICES COORDINATOR

www.boxborough-ma.gov/community-services-coordinator

The Community Services Coordinator offers confidential social work and advocacy services to any Boxborough resident; there are no age or income restrictions for this free service. Residents experiencing crises or unexpected household changes may access follow-up support, as well as information and referral across a broad range of topics including, but not limited to: emergency and ongoing financial assistance, access to healthcare including behavioral health supports, affordable housing, assistance with state/federal program applications such as SNAP, WIC, fuel assistance, and more.

COUNCIL ON AGING COORDINATOR

www.boxborough-ma.gov/council-on-aging

The Council on Aging (COA) and Friends of the Council on Aging (FCOA) share a common mission- to support and enhance the lives of our senior population. Both groups work together to provide a wide range services and information about service options. When the unexpected happens we may be able to provide concrete help. This may come in the form of durable medical equipment, insurance counseling, transportation, information and referral to state/federal agencies or emergency funds. The Council on Aging Coordinator can assist over the phone or arrange a home visit. All information is confidential and we listen with care. If you have a concern about a friend, neighbor or family member, please call the COA office at 978-264-1717.

TAX COLLECTOR

www.boxborough-ma.gov/tax-collector

Tax bills are mailed four times per year and due quarterly. The 1st quarter bills are mailed on or about June 30th and are due on August 1st. The 2nd quarter's are mailed on or about September 30 and are due on November 1. The 3rd quarter's are mailed on or about December 31st and are due on February 1st. The 4th quarter's are mailed on or about March 31st and due on May 1st. Excise tax bills are mailed annually. Bills can be paid by mail, in person, or online through the Online Payment service through the town's website: www.boxborough-ma.gov/home/pages/online-payments.

TOWN CLERK

www.boxborough-ma.gov/town-clerk

The Town Clerk is responsible for keeping and maintaining important records of the town. The Town Clerk implements the annual census, which is mailed to every household during the second week of January. The Clerk is responsible for issuing dog licenses and providing copies of vital records, such as birth, marriage, and death certificates. The Town Clerk manages all federal, state and local elections, as well as voter registration.

TOWN PLANNER

www.boxborough-ma.gov/town-planner

The Town Planner acts as the primary liaison to the public on land use, zoning, and development matters. The Town Planner reviews all development projects in conjunction with the Building Department to ensure they are compliant with the Zoning Bylaw and, if they are not, what type of zoning approvals are required (Site Plan Approval, Special Permit, Variance, etc.). The Town Planner also provides technical assistance and advises Town boards and departments on issues relating to land use regulation, permitting, municipal planning, open space preservation, economic development, and affordable housing.

VETERANS' AGENT

www.boxborough-ma.gov/veterans-services

The Veterans' Services Agent holds office hours each Wednesday from 7:30AM-9:30AM at the Town Hall. The Veterans' Services Officer is also available by appointment. Contact Julie Pratt (978) 264-1726 for an appointment.

GET INVOLVED!

Boxborough provides many opportunities to get involved. Since we are a small town of only 5,000 residents, volunteers willing to give their time and expertise are vital to the smooth operation of the town. Town boards and committees are how things get done in Boxborough. All board and committee meetings are open to the public and attending a meeting is a good way to learn about what's happening in town. The guide below is intended to give you an overview of the major boards and committees in town, some of which are appointed, and others elected at the annual town election in May. A more complete description of each board/committee, their current membership, as well as meeting dates, times, and agendas are posted online at www.boxborough-ma.gov.

GUIDE TO APPOINTED TOWN BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH CULTURAL COUNCIL

The Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council was established in 1980 to promote the arts in the Acton-Boxborough community and to award and administer the Massachusetts Cultural Council grant funds. The council may consist of up to 22 members from Acton and Boxborough. Current membership is 10 members. The Boxborough members of the Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council are appointed by the Boxborough Board of Selectmen to a three-year term.

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

The Agricultural Commission is a 5-member board whose mission is to represent, enhance and sustain agriculture, farming and related activities in Boxborough.

BOXBOROUGH HOUSING BOARD

The Boxborough Housing Board is a five-member board that advocates for the development of affordable housing in Boxborough.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

The Community Preservation Committee is responsible for evaluating proposals for the use of Community Preservation Act funds and for making recommendations to Annual Town Meeting for which projects to fund.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Conservation Commission spends a majority of its time administering the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Boxborough Wetland Bylaw. The Commission is also responsible for managing the Town's conservation lands, including oversight of the twenty-five miles of trails maintained by the Boxborough Land Stewards.

COUNCIL ON AGING

The Council on Aging is a seven-member board that focuses on the needs of Boxborough residents aged 60 and older. The COA publishes a monthly newsletter sent to all seniors detailing the month's activities. The COA also oversees the work of the Council on Aging Coordinator.

ENERGY COMMITTEE

The Energy Committee is a nine-member board that advises the Board of Selectmen on developing and implementing a town energy strategy. Their mission is to help the Town reduce its carbon footprint and to educate residents about energy conservation.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The primary responsibility of the Finance Committee is the preparation of the town budget, which is presented to the voters as the operating budget under Article 5 at the Annual Town Meeting. Ideally, the committee membership is representative of the various town constituencies and serves at the "fiscal conscience" of the town.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The Historical Commission is a three-member board that oversees the preservation, protection and development of historical assets of the town.

PERSONNEL BOARD

The Personnel Board is comprised of five members appointed by the Board of Selectmen to assist and advise the Board of Selectmen and the Town Administrator in matters that relate to Boxborough's non-union personnel.

PUBLIC CELEBRATIONS AND CEREMONIES COMMITTEE

The Public Celebrations and Ceremonies Committee works in conjunction with other town committees and organizations to coordinate certain public ceremonies and celebrations for the town. The three major events are the Memorial Day Parade, Fifer's Day in June, and the Annual Tree Lighting in December.

RECREATION COMMISSION

The Recreation Commission is a seven-member commission responsible for the development and implementation of recreational programs for Boxborough residents of all ages.

STEELE FARM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Steele Farm Advisor Committee is a five-member board established to make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen on the management and preservation of the historic Steele Farm property and buildings at 484 Middle Road.

WELL-BEING COMMITTEE

The Well-Being Committee works with the Community Services Coordinator to identify and address human service needs in Boxborough. The committee looks for ways to improve the health and well-being of all town residents.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is a five-member board, appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The ZBA's primary powers include hearing and deciding applications for Special Permits; to hear and decide appeals or petitions for Variances; to hear and decide appeals from decisions of the Inspector of Buildings; and to hear and decide applications for Comprehensive Permits for the construction of low or moderate income housing.

GUIDE TO ELECTED TOWN BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Some town boards and committees are elected by the registered voters of the town at the Annual Town Election in May. Only registered voters of the town are eligible to run for elected office. Terms of office are typically three years. In order to get on the ballot, candidates must obtain Nomination Papers from the Town Clerk, get the signatures of twenty-five registered Boxborough voters, and return the completed papers to the Town Clerk by the filing deadline.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

The Board of Selectmen is the executive branch of town government and is comprised of five members. The Board of Selectmen oversees the spending of the money which has been appropriated by Town Meeting and is responsible for hiring professional staff. The Board of Selectmen must ensure that the Town follows all state statutes pertaining to town government. The Board particularly focuses on policy matters, leaving execution and details to the paid staff of the Town, most importantly through the Town Administrator. As the chief elected officers of the town, the Board also tries to bridge communications across the other independently elected or appointed offices, as well as community and business groups.

BOARD OF HEALTH

The Boxborough Board of Health consists of three members elected to three-year terms of office. The Board works to ensure, maintain and improve the health and well-being of the residents of Boxborough, in accordance with applicable state and local laws and regulations.

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

The Board of Library Trustees is an elected six-member board that oversees the operation of the Sargent Memorial Library. The Trustees provide support for and oversight of the Library Director, who manages the operations and programming of the Library. The Trustees approve the library's annual operating budget, and present articles for any additional funding needs at Town Meeting. All Trustee meetings are open to the public, and we welcome your input and questions.

PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board is an elected five-member board with a term length of three years. The Planning Board is supported by the Town Planner who offers administrative assistance as well as guidance on the technical and theoretical aspects of planning.

The Planning Board has several different responsibilities involving land use planning and development that cover the following topics as well as other items. The Planning Board administers the Rules & Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land, meaning the Board reviews and makes decisions to determine whether subdivision proposals are approved, approved with conditions, or denied. The Board is the Special Permit Granting Authority for particular items as described in the [Boxborough Zoning Bylaw](#), meaning the Board reviews and makes decisions on applications for certain Special Permits. Additionally, the Planning Board proposes zoning amendments to Town Meeting and plays a role in reviewing proposed amendments before they are put on the Town Meeting Warrant.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Boxborough belongs to the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District, which includes Pre-K- High School. The Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee is elected by the voters to oversee the education of the children of Acton and Boxborough. Typically, the committee meets once a month on Thursdays to review programs and procedures, establish goals for the school system, and develop and monitor the budget. There are four Boxborough and seven Acton members.