

## Growing Community & the Grand List

Both the Boards of Selectmen and Finance have been working diligently on the budget for the coming fiscal year. We have directed departments and commissions to be extra mindful of taxpayer dollars this year due to the financial impacts of the pandemic. A virtual Preliminary Budget Hearing will be held on April 19, when residents may ask questions or make comments. The Preliminary Budget summary will be mailed to every home in town, and the full preliminary budget will be on the Town website following the March Board of Finance meeting. The final Budget will be voted on at the Annual Town Meeting on May 17.

Each year as we convene the budget process it becomes clearer to me that we need to grow and diversify our Grand List. Over the past few years, we have consolidated staff positions and reduced programs. There are very few ways we can make additional meaningful cuts without eliminating services. We need to focus on growing revenue. This is why I have created the 2030 Task Force of business and Town leaders and charged them with finding ways to create a healthier Grand List by 2030. I look forward to their updates and future recommendations.

In addition to increasing the Grand List, one of my goals is to grow and create community through improving our public spaces and holding events. I'd like your opinion on how to improve "the Grove" — the space between the Old Firehouse and the Library. Please use the short survey on the Town website ([woodbridgect.org](http://woodbridgect.org)) to tell us what you'd like to see there. Grant funding will be sought to complete this project, in addition to seeking public private partnerships.

Woodbridge will hold an Earth Day event this year on April 24 which will provide opportunities to reduce and recycle. You may also pick up a compost bin and/or rain barrel then — we are selling these products at a discounted rate through a partnership with the South Central Regional Council of Governments. Details are on the Town website.



Also in April, the Community Council will hold another virtual Welcome Coffee for new residents. At the first coffee, new residents took advantage of the opportunity to feel less isolated during the pandemic, find friendly faces, meet new neighbors and ask questions. Folks who joined us that morning came from as far away as California and as close as New Haven. If you have a new neighbor on your block please welcome them and encourage them to review the "Welcome Guide" on the Town's website under the Community section.

Due to the pandemic Governor Lamont has suspended the reapplication requirement for residents who take advantage of the Additional Veteran Tax Relief Program and the Elderly/Disabled Homeowners Tax Relief Program. Anyone already enrolled in the programs will automatically maintain their benefits until the next reapplication year in 2023. Our Town currently budgets \$190,000 yearly to fund the Town Elderly/Disabled Homeowners Tax relief program. We only distribute 70% of that fund. Details of the program and eligibility requirements are on the Town website on the Assessor's page. The deadline for new applicants is May 15.

The Town Plan & Zoning Commission is continuing hearings to consider an application to amend the Zoning Regulations and the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development to permit multi-family and affordable housing in most of the Town's residential districts. You may view the application and other materials on the Town's website on the Town Plan & Zoning Commission page. The Board of Selectmen has hired a town planning consultant to work with the TP&Z. Additionally, the Board approved the charge for a new committee that will work on a State-required housing plan. The committee will evaluate the data, engage the community, assess housing needs and then submit a report to the Board of Selectmen. Members will be announced at an upcoming Board of Selectmen meeting.

—First Selectman Beth Heller

## Help Create the Town's First Bike Route

The Town of Woodbridge is working to create a bike route and add bike/pedestrian safety amenities around the center of town. The bike route — a five mile on-road route linking several destinations, including Amity Regional High School, the Town Center Campus, Fitzgerald Tract, Beecher Road School, former Country Club of Woodbridge and Pease Place Playground — will be marked by signage and enhanced with bike racks and solar-powered speed awareness signs to help

slow down traffic.

Residents are encouraged to donate to a crowdfunding campaign. If the campaign reaches its \$7,500 goal by its fundraising deadline of April 25, the project will receive a matching grant of \$7,500 from Sustainable CT's Community Match Fund, an innovative funding resource for public, community-led sustainability projects. For project details and to donate, please visit: [Patronicity.com/WoodbridgeBikeRoute](http://Patronicity.com/WoodbridgeBikeRoute).

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# Town News

## Seeking Youth Award Nominations

Consider nominating a Woodbridge youth for the First Selectman's Youth Award. Any youth, 18 or under, who has worked to improve the Town of Woodbridge or assisted its residents is eligible. The nomination form can be found on the Youth Services page of the Town website or call 203-389-3464 for more information.

Principals, teachers, fellow students, neighbors, group leaders, etc. are encouraged to make nomi-

nations. Parents or family members may not nominate a relative. Nominations are due by Monday, April 12.

The winner, chosen by the Youth Advisory Board's selection committee, will receive the honor from First Selectman Beth Heller in the spring. Let's acknowledge the contributions of our younger residents as they are the future of our Town.

## Bulk Pickup

Call the Department of Public Works at 203-389-3420 to schedule an appointment for bulk pickup. Spring bulk pickup will take place by appointment only each Tuesday between 7:30 am - 3:30 pm, March through May. Bulk pickup will be offered again during the months of October and November. Residents are asked to limit use of this service to one time per year to allow everyone to take advantage of this program.

A list of items to be placed curb-side will need to be provided. Items should be large household items that cannot fit in a car trunk such as: large furniture, washing machines, dryers, gas grills, lawn mowers, carpeting, bed frames and the like. Freon based appliances (air conditioners, refrigerators, dehumidifiers) require a \$10 Disposal Fee paid in advance. Please call with any questions, 203-389-3420.

## Need Assistance? Please Call

Town staff are working and available to assist you via phone or email. Please contact the appropriate office for assistance. Most things can be done electronically, by mail or through contact-less pick up or drop off.

### Town Hall

#### -General Number:

203-389-3400

#### -Assessor:

203-389-3416

#### -Building/Zoning:

203-389-3419

#### -Finance:

203-389-3482

#### -First Selectman's

#### Office:

203-389-3401

#### -Registrar of

#### Voters:

203-389-3408/3409

#### -Tax Collector:

203-389-3425

#### -Town Clerk:

203-389-3422/3424

### Center Building

#### -Human Services:

203-389-3429

#### -Senior Center:

203-389-3430

#### -Youth Services:

203-389-3464

### Town Library

#### -Adult Services/

#### Reference:

203-389-3434

#### -Children's Dept.:

203-389-3439

#### -Circulation/

#### General Info:

203-389-3433

### Animal Control:

203-389-5991

### Fire Department:

203-389-3441

### Police Department: (non-emergency):

203-387-2511

### Public Works:

203-389-3420

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bethwoodpest@aol.com

## Human Services

### The Woodbridge Center:

**The Center is for everyone 55+!**

*Please call 203-389-3430 or email [kmoriarty@woodbridgect.org](mailto:kmoriarty@woodbridgect.org).*

**Exercise Zoom classes:** Call to receive a weekly link for *Targeted Strength Training* and/or *YOPA* (a combination of yoga, pilates and stretching). Both classes are for all fitness levels and begin week of Feb. 22. Pro-rated as needed.

New **Mindfulness Class** presented by Dr. Jennifer Botwick to improve focus, sleep, memory, and comfort will begin Wed., Mar. 24, 5-6 pm; 6 weeks for \$30.

Kyle Brandy from Amity Physical Therapy presents **“Fall-proof Yourself While at Home”** in the next *Get to the Point of Health* free Zoom lecture series. Mar. 19 from 11:30 am - 12:30 pm.

**St. Patrick’s Day lunch** drive-thru, generously co-sponsored by *Visiting*

*Angels of Woodbridge*, will feature a traditional holiday meal on 3/17 from 12-1 pm. Fun “goodie bags” provided by Hamden Health and Rehab. RSVP by 3/10. Donations welcome.

**Boredom Busters:** Puzzles and brain games (word searches/crossword puzzles) are available. Call for pick-up.

**Transportation** for medical appointments and local shopping is available for those 60+ or disabled. Call to schedule.

**Meals:** Seniors may reserve frozen meals (\$5/ meal including delivery) by noon on Monday for delivery to your home on Tuesday.

### Human Services:

*Please call 203-389-3429 or email [humanservices@woodbridgect.org](mailto:humanservices@woodbridgect.org) or [jglicksman@woodbridgect.org](mailto:jglicksman@woodbridgect.org)*

Appointments are being accepted for Woodbridge residents to apply for the

**CT Energy Assistance Program** administered by TEAM Inc. Income eligibility requirements must be met. Call department social worker Judi Young.

Please call or email for direction or assistance with **COVID vaccine** appointments.

**VITA** tax assistance program continues, call for updated information.

### Youth Services:

*Please call 203-389-3449 or email [npfund@woodbridgect.org](mailto:npfund@woodbridgect.org) or [youthone@woodbridgect.org](mailto:youthone@woodbridgect.org).*

**Job Bank:** The Job Bank offers jobs to residents (ages 13-18). Most jobs are currently outdoors due to COVID-19. Call or email to join the Job Bank.

Residents who wish to hire teens for outdoor work (with social distancing), may call for more information.

## Scavenger Hunt & Spring Programs

**Woodbridge Recreation Family Scavenger Hunt will begin in March!** Are you looking for a new, exciting, socially distant, outdoor activity for your family? No fear, it is scheduled to begin March 8, weather permitting. You and your family may search for special medallions hidden in Woodbridge. Look under benches, on the side of hiking trail bridges, on trail markers, in playgrounds, and other public areas for a prize. Bring the prize back to the Woodbridge Recreation Department for a special gift. Keep



an eye out for more details on our website or call the Recreation Office at 203-389-3446.

**Spring program registration begins.** It is time to register for spring programs including: basketball, flag football, Hip Hop, Little Scientists, Mimes in Motion, Running Club, stickball, tennis, and Ultimate Team Sports. Most programs begin the week of April 19. Call 203-389-3446, or use the registration link on the Town website.

## Library News & Events

*The library remains closed to the public. Visit our website or call us for updates! Phone numbers are listed on page 2.*

**Park & Pickup Service:** Mon. & Thu., 10 am to 7 pm; Tue./Wed./Fri., 10 am to 5 pm. Pick up your checked out items in the meeting room which can be entered via the side door. Please remember to wait until you hear from us before coming to the library to pick up your order. Your online account is not always accurate! Returns are accepted 24/7. Book drops are available both inside the meeting room and outside of the library to the left of the front door. Phones and emails are answered by staff Mon.-Fri., 10 am to 5 pm to place holds, ask ques-

tions, find out information, and more.

### **Project for ALL ages-Diversity**

**Quilt:** March is Youth Art Month—help the library make a colorful, paper quilt to celebrate and honor diversity. We provide the instructions, quilt pattern and paper in the colors of your choosing. Make it at home, then bring it back and we will create a large paper quilt to be displayed on the wall in our meeting room for all to enjoy. We hope to see entries from everyone!

**Changes to Tax Forms at the Library:** Federal 1040/1040-SR forms and instruction booklets are available (self-service) in the meeting room. **The State of Connecticut is not publicly provid-**

**ing tax forms or booklets this year.**

The library does not have any to give out; all state tax forms and instructions can be found online. Please request paper forms and instructions via the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services at 860-297-5962.

**Thanks from the Friends:** The Friends of the Library are extremely appreciative of the financial support given by Woodbridge residents during the pandemic. Your help will allow the library to plan some really fantastic programming when it resumes. You can also support the Friends by shopping the Tiny Bookstore in the meeting room. Pay what you wish!

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