

A photograph of a rustic wooden barn with a red roof and a large wooden wheel in the foreground. The barn has dark wooden siding and a red door with two small windows. A large, rusty wooden wheel is in the foreground, partially obscuring the barn. The background shows green trees and a clear blue sky.

# TOWN OF STERLING

**ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

# Town of Sterling

Incorporated in 1781

## OFFICERS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

President ..... Joseph R. Biden  
Vice President ..... Kamala D. Harris  
U.S. Senators in Congress –  
    Elizabeth A. Warren ..... 202-224-4543  
    Edward J. Markey ..... 202-224-2742  
U.S. Representative in Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> District – James P. McGovern ..... 202-225-6101

## STATE OFFICIALS

Governor – Charles D. Baker ..... Governor's Office: 617-725-4005  
Lieutenant Governor Karyn E. Polito ..... Governor's Office: 617-725-4005  
Secretary of the Commonwealth – Will Francis Galvin ..... 1-800-392-6090  
Attorney General – Maura Healy ..... 617-727-2200  
Treasurer – Deborah B. Goldberg ..... 617-367-6900  
Auditor – Suzanne M. Bump ..... 617-727-2075  
State Senator – Anne Gobi ..... 617-722-1540  
State Rep. – Meghan Kilcoyne, 12<sup>th</sup> Worcester District ..... 617-722-2396

## COUNTY AND DISTRICT OFFICIALS

Worcester County District Attorney – Joseph D. Early, Jr. .... 508-755-8601  
Sheriff – Worcester County – Lewis G. Evangelidis ..... 508-854-1800  
Register of Deeds – Worcester District – Kathryn Toomey ..... 508-798-7717  
Register of Probate – Worcester County – Stephanie Fattman ..... 508-831-2200

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## DEDICATION

Irene E. Camerano



Irene passed away on May 13<sup>th</sup> after a brief illness. She was 95  $\frac{3}{4}$  years old. Irene was the youngest of three children. She and her family lived in Worcester until they moved to Sterling in 1936 when she was ten years old. Her father Homer, a master carpenter, built their house on Redemption Rock Trail. Irene's job was to bang straight the damaged, crooked nails he would bring home from this job in Worcester, as a steeple-jack for E.J. Cross. She would also collect fresh eggs from their chickens until the rooster bit her one too many times and a 2X4 was too close to resist.

Irene walked to school in West Boylston daily. It was during those treks that Irene's tendency to find "stray" animals blossomed. Her mother Blanche patiently heard "But Mom, it followed me home". It could be anything from dogs, cats, to two infamous brown and white goats that were soon named "Dot" and "Dash". Her mother lost all of her rose bushes and flowers within the first week. Her father's car was dimpled with hoof marks as Dot and Dash loved not only the hood but the roof and the trunk of that Dodge, as well. Irene's love of animals was well known to all and continued throughout her life.

Irene met her first love, a neighbor, Mario Camerano. When they married they built a home next to her parents. A few years later, when that house was struck by lightning and burned, they chose to rebuild on the same location.

Irene also loved Sterling, it's rural beauty, it's peaceful lifestyle and its convivial people. She had great pride in Sterling and demonstrated that through her varied civic involvement, staffing booths at Saint Richard's Apple Fiesta or serving coffee at Military Whist events in the church hall; assisting her husband when he played music at the American Legion Hall; proudly being a member of the town's Democratic Committee, working in the Town Clerks office and as an Election Official for over 30 years, including Warden.

## DEDICATION



**Kenneth A. Day**

Kenneth died peacefully on October 5th. He was 105 years old. Kenneth graduated from High School and went on to earn an Associate's Degree from Dartmouth College. He managed Pinecrest Duck Farm in Sterling for 40 years before retiring in 1978. He owned his photography business and took photos for the Town of Sterling and weddings for many years. He was a member of the First Church in Sterling and enjoyed photography. Kenneth also enjoyed spending time at the Sterling Senior center and was member of the WII bowling league there.

### In Memoriam

**Raymond C. Louchart**, 74, passed away on January 2. After graduating high school, Ray immediately enlisted in the United States Air Force and served his country honorably for 4 years. He was a talented welder and horse trainer as well as a lover of music. Ray went to teach for his wife's family business, the Sterling Nursery School, where he would have an immensely positive impact on the youth of greater Sterling for over 25 years.

**Paul M. Johnson**, 83, passed away on February 19. After college, he served active duty as a First Lieutenant in the United States Army as an Intelligence Officer and then as a reservist. Paul was an active supporter of Sterling youth sports coaching both soccer and baseball for his sons' teams. He was one of the first coaches of Sterling Youth Soccer and in its early years could often be seen mowing the Town soccer fields.

**Robert J. Cormier**, 90, passed away on March 11. After graduating from Worcester Boys Trade School, Bob enlisted into the U.S. Navy. He served with the Pacific Fleet on both the USS Midway and the USS Belle Grove for Operation Castle. He was a machinist at Wyman Gordon Company in Worcester for many years before retiring. In his leisure, Bob was an avid sportsman and enjoyed hunting, fishing, and the great outdoors.

**Patrick A. Stevens**, 72, died peacefully at home on March 14. After graduating high school, he proudly served his country in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War. Patrick, who was a Master Mason, loved the outdoors, whether on the golf course, hunting or riding his Harley.

**Stephen J. Wentzell**, 79, passed away peacefully on March 22. Stephen lived in Sterling for the last 45 years. After he graduated from high school, he honorably served his country in the United States Army. As a young man, Steve worked at the family dairy, S.H. Wentzell & Sons Pioneer Dairy, and Slattery Spa, both in Worcester. After a 32-year career at Shell Oil Company, where he first drove a truck and then worked as a Pipeline Operator, he enjoyed 20 years of retirement.

**Johnston A. Gamblin**, 87, passed away on March 31. John proudly served in the National Guard for several years. He enjoyed a long career with ITT Suprenant, retiring as a Quality Control Manager after 33 years of dedicated service. He was an avid reader and spent countless hours at the Sterling Conant Library where he had many friends. John enjoyed the outdoors, watching and feeding the birds, fishing and hunting with his close friends. Known to many as “The Tomato Man”, John took great pride in his garden and loved sharing his harvest with friends and neighbors.

**Stephen R. Jablonsky Jr.**, 80, passed away peacefully on April 20. After graduating high school, Steve enlisted in the United States Air Force and honorably served his country during the Vietnam War. He worked many years as a computer specialist at Digital, Compaq, and later Hewlett Packard. He enjoyed playing pool at both the Sterling and West Boylston Senior Centers.



**Judith A. (Karvoski) Muckenstrom**, 79, died on May 12. Judith graduated from Hudson Catholic High School, and then Ward Business School, as a Medical Secretary. Employed, many years, at the Clinton Hospital, UMass Campus and Hahnemann Hospital. Judy enjoyed working in the yard, bus trips, rides to Wells Maine, dining out, and dancing with her husband John. She was an honored member of The Whale Watch's Society. For many years she enjoyed operating the ballot box during elections and would do an all-day schedule.

**David Edward Malo**, 56, died peacefully at home on June 7. David graduated from Wachusett Regional High School in 1984. He was proud to work as a truck driver for the Town of Sterling Department of Public Works. He was an avid outdoorsman and particularly enjoyed trout fishing in the local streams and camping. David never met a stranger and was known for his story telling and gift of gab. Most important to David was spending time with his family and encouraging his children in their endeavors.

**Thomas A Freel**, 78, passed away peacefully on June 23. Tom was in the Army and served in the Vietnam War. Tom and his wife raised their family in Sterling, becoming well known residents in town. He worked for over 40 years in the printing department at State Mutual Insurance and part-time at the former Outdoorsman Store in West Boylston for many years. Tom enjoyed hunting and fishing with his friends and family and his family vacations to Lake Champlain in VT and was an active member of The Eight Point Sportsmen's Club.

**John M. Ljoie**, passed away peacefully on August 10. After high school, John enlisted in the US Airforce, served 6 years, and was the number 1 player on the USAF European Golf Team, before his honorable discharge. John's number one priority and passion was his family. His second passion was his career as a Private Investigator, which he started in 1989 and it grew from a one-man operation into one of the most successful PI agencies in Massachusetts.

**Henry H. Morse**, 84, died peacefully on September 14. After graduating high school, Henry proudly served in the U.S. Navy aboard the U.S.S. Wilson. Upon returning home, he started his own gas station, Henry's Service Station, which he ran for many years. He then formed Henry's Garage, which partnered with MW Clark Excavation doing heavy equipment repair. He taught his sons the trade and one of his sons continues to carry on his legacy owning his own heavy equipment repair business. Henry rounded out his career as a truck driver in his later years.

**Janet E. (Russell) Baker**, 84, died peacefully at home on October 14. Janet served several terms as a trustee, and later Director, of the Conant Public Library, where she initiated and managed several major modernization, renovation and expansion projects. Janet was a talented artist, avid reader, gardener and doting grandmother. She was active in both library and community affairs, particularly the Sterling Garden Club, serving many years as treasurer and First Church in Sterling where she served as chair of the Operations Leadership Team and member of the Governance Board.

**Eugene W. "Pete" Petterson**, 89, passed away on November 29. Pete graduated from North High School in Worcester in 1951 and immediately enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He honorably served his country during the Korean War. After four years of active duty he attended Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston, earning a degree in engineering. Pete then served 29 years in the Navy Ready Reserves advanced to the rank of Chief Petty Officer, and subsequently became a commissioned officer and engineering & hull specialist. He retired as a Lieutenant Commander. He was the Central Massachusetts U.S. Naval Academy recruiting and information officer for 37 years.

**Robert W. "Bob" Gordon, Sr.**, 79, passed away peacefully on December 20. Bob served as a proud member of the Sterling Fire Department and was employed with the Sterling Department of Public Works, both for 33 years. He enjoyed spending time outdoors, hunting and cutting wood. Bob also enjoyed clog dancing and playing the drums.

## ELECTED OFFICIALS - TOWN OF STERLING

### TERM EXPIRES

#### **BOARD OF ASSESSORS (3 year term)**

Hannah E. Miller..... 2023  
Donlin K. Murray ..... 2024  
Richard A. Sheppard..... 2025

#### **BOARD OF HEALTH (3 year term)**

Catherine L. Martin..... 2023  
Anne Marie Catalano ..... 2024  
Allen Hoffman ..... 2025

#### **SELECT BOARD (3 year term)**

John F. Kilcoyne ..... 2023  
Maureen Cranson ..... 2024  
David A. Smith ..... 2025

#### **CONSTABLES (3 year term)**

James E. Hartnett ..... 2023  
Nicholas J. Finizio ..... 2025

#### **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS BOARD (3 year term)**

Blaine D. Bershad..... 2023  
Andrew Parker ..... 2024  
Deane S. Day..... 2025

#### **LIBRARY TRUSTEES (3 year term)**

Heide M. Martin ..... 2023  
Lisa Akerson ..... 2023  
Amanda Sayut ..... 2024  
Matthew J. Scannell..... 2024  
Albert J. Carlin ..... 2025  
Sara Petullo ..... 2025

### TERM EXPIRES

#### **MODERATOR (3 year term)**

Jennifer Scalice-Mullett ..... 2024

#### **PLANNING BOARD (5 year term)**

Carl Corrinne ..... 2025  
Valmore Pruneau..... 2026  
John J. Santoro ..... 2027  
Kirsten Newman ..... 2023  
Patricia A. Page..... 2024

#### **STERLING HOUSING AUTHORITY (5 year term)**

Robert E. Kneeland..... 2023  
Laurel Barrett..... 2027  
Eleanor Gates ..... 2026  
Carolyn Heimberg..... 2026

#### **STERLING MUNICIPAL LIGHT BOARD (3 year term)**

Brian Pierce ..... 2023  
Eric H. Darlington..... 2024  
Joseph Curtin..... 2025

#### **WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL CMTE. (3 year term)**

Jeanne Derosa ..... 2023  
Deidre Shapiro ..... 2023  
Sue Valentine..... 2024  
Linda Helen Woodland..... 2025

## APPOINTED OFFICIALS - TOWN OF STERLING

### A.D.A COORDINATOR

Matthew S. Marro

### ANIMAL CONTROL ADVISORY BOARD

Anne Marie Catalano  
Cynthia Miller  
Theresa E. Sadler  
Elaine Armstrong

Edith McNamara  
Kathleen Nickerson  
Frances Simonds

### ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

Kelly Jones

### ANIMAL INSPECTOR

Emma Massa

### BUILDING COMMISSIONER

Tony Zahariadis

Alternate: Jim Salmon

### CABLE TV ADVISORY BOARD

Richard H. Maki

Gregory Billings

### CAPITAL BUDGET COMMITTEE

Everett W. Heller  
Paul Austin  
Christina Lashua  
Christopher Paquette  
Joseph Ring

Elizabeth Pape  
Lynn Sheppard  
Robert Brown  
Mary Cliett

### CONSERVATION AGENT

Matthew Marro

### CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Michael E. Pineo  
Scott Michalak  
Steven Pavlowich  
Christopher O'Neil

Connor Emsley  
Barbara Roberti  
Sue Valentine

**COUNCIL ON AGING**

Joseph LaGrassa  
Kevin Beaupre  
Nancy Castagna  
Susan Protano  
Meg Chase

Debra MacLennan  
David Cosgrove  
Elizabeth Pape  
Gail Bergeron

**DPW SUPERINTENDENT**

Ryan Mouradian

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Paul Cathcart, Jr.  
Maureen Cranson  
James Patacchiola  
Rosanne Mapp

Keith Cordial  
Richard H. Maki  
Michael Pineo  
Mark Stover

**ELECTION OFFICERS**

Bonnie Lee Alfke  
Lisa Belmain  
Jane Brunetta  
Anne Marie Catalano  
Judith Doherty  
John Farrell  
Laura Giard  
Paul Austin  
Cheryl Koleshis  
Marjorie Long  
Heide Martin  
Anita E. McKenney  
Joe King

Jessica Baer  
Blaine Bershad  
Fred Borchelt  
Constance Cleary  
Deborah Dupuis  
Kevin Flannery, Warden  
Judith Glasier  
Carolyn Heimberg  
Ashley Dupuis Zorn  
Rosanne Mapp  
Kerry Bart Raber  
Marina Meehan  
Ann Marie Muckenstrom

Kristin Newman  
Beth Stephenson

Robert Nickerson, Jr.  
Joyce Cutler

**ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR**

(John) Gary Harrington

Alternate: Curt Bjorkman

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR**

David C. Hurlbut

**ASSISTANT EMERGENCY MGMT. DIR.**

James Emerton

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Everett W. Heller  
Christina Lashua  
Christopher Paquette  
Paul Austion

Mary Cliett  
Elizabeth Soutter  
George Handy  
Lynn Sheppard

**GAS INSPECTOR**

Robert Janda

Alternate: Jeremy Pierce

**HEALTH AGENT**

David Favreau

**HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

David Gibbs  
James Carroll  
Lindsey Van Gieson

Catherine Harragian  
James French  
Kim Toigo

**LIBRARY DIRECTOR**

Betsy Perry

**OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE**

Robert Protano  
James Wilkinson  
Peder Pedersen  
Paul Lekberg

Charles Plaisted  
Geoffrey Caldwell  
Jeffrey Keay  
Sue Valentine (ConComm Liaison)

**PLUMBING INSPECTOR**

Robert Janda

**POLICE CHIEF**

Sean Gaudette

**RECREATION COMMITTEE**

Bonnie Pulda

Jo-Ann Cummings

Heidi Grady

Andrew Parker

Glenn Donaldson

Mark Hryniewicz

**REGISTRAR OF VOTERS**

Christine Arsenault

Melissa Chalmers

Richard Barriere

Kathleen Farrell

**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (WRSD)**

James M. Reilly, MS, Ed.D

**TOWN ACCOUNTANT**

Fred Aponte

**TOWN CLERK**

Kathleen K. Farrell

**ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK**

Michelle Boyce

**TOWN COUNSEL**

Kopelman & Paige

**TOWN TREASURER / COLLECTOR**

Victoria Smith

**ASSISTANT TOWN TREASURER**

Elizabeth Clemence

**ASSISTANT TOWN COLLECTOR**

Theresa Murray

**VETERANS' AGENT**

Richard Voutour

**VETERANS' GRAVE OFFICER**

Robert Temple

### **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS (5 year appointment)**

Matthew CampoBasso  
Diana Baldarelli  
Gail Bergeron

Joseph Curtin  
Patrick Fox  
Everett Pierce

### **1835 TOWN HALL COMMITTEE**

Ronald Pichierri  
John (Jack) Chandler  
Christine McCarthy

Carol Stuart-Grinkis  
Carl Corrinne

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

### **AGRICULTURE COMMISSION**

David Grinkis  
Michael E. Pineo

Robert Nickerson, Jr.  
Diane Melone

### **CULTURAL COUNCIL**

Rosanne Mapp  
Beth Stephenson  
Patricia Ward  
Julia Doherty-Meehan

Margaret Spaulding  
Diane Pedersen  
Judith Doherty  
Christine Corff

### **REGIONAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Sean Gaydette  
David Favreau (BOH Rep.)  
David C. Hurlbut, Jr. (Emergency Management Director)  
Peter MacDonald

James Emerton (CERT Rep.)  
Donald Hamilton

### **WACHUSETT FUND COMMITTEE**

Sean Gaudette  
Peter MacDonald

David C. Hurlbut, Jr.

## **Office of the Town Administrator**

2022 has been a year with significant changes in the Town of Sterling. For one, there is a new Town Administrator. I am William Caldwell, Sterling's Town Administrator since April 2022. I come from the Town of Becket where I was the Administrator for over three years. I have enjoyed my first several months here. I would like to thank the interim Town Administrators Kama Jayne and Fred Aponte for what they did to keep the town running before a new administrator was hired. The Select Board should also be thanked for their dedication and additional meetings during the transition.

My first week included the Annual Town Meeting where several items were approved including the fiscal year 2023 budget and capital plan. The Select Board, Finance Committee and Capital Committee did a great job working on their recommendations with the Town Accountant for the budget. Although there were some larger than normal increases, the investment in the town shows. Sterling is a great community with incredible public services.

A good portion of the Town Administrator's position includes procurement and project management. Several projects have been approved and for one reason or another had been delayed due to COVID-19, supply chain issues, inability to find contractors, etc. It has been a goal of this office to get many of these projects moving. Some of these include the design, bidding and eventual replacement of the Town Hall roof, Flooring replacement at the Houghton and Chocksett Schools, the Playground at Houghton Elementary, and the beginning of the ADA compliant walking path around Peg's Pond. Other departments have their own projects and equipment purchases. One of the most notable projects is the repaving of several roads in town with state and local funds with more to come in 2023 thanks to Ryan and the DPW Board.

After several iterations and even more years, we are beginning to make progress on the improvements to the Town Center. Partially this is a beautification project, but more importantly, we are looking to improve roadway safety, pedestrian safety, improve our infrastructure, and increase parking and accessibility to the downtown businesses. The hopes are to encourage businesses to open in the Town Center District and support the existing businesses. The Town has invested significant funding for the design, engineering, and preparation for the work to be completed. Some of this will be funded with a grant received for \$135,000.

In the fall we were happy to hear from the Division of Local Services that the Town's Free Cash from closing out FY22 just over \$2 million. This will allow the Town to improve its savings for future projects or during economic downturns. This will also leave funds to cover snow and ice deficits and to fund projects for the upcoming year(s).

In closing, I would like to thank the Town staff from all departments, the Boards and Committees for their work in keeping Sterling running. I hope we can all continue to make positive improvements to the Town over the coming years.

## **Select Board Annual Report 2022**

2022 was the year that opened up for most Boards & Committees after Covid 19 eased up for the Community. We were able to interact more successfully with our constituents as well as each other.

We remain grateful to volunteers, employees, boards, and committees for ensuring municipal services continued with little interruption during some challenging times. The Select Board's goals and priorities have remained consistent. Many of the Board's goals are obviously ongoing endeavors that will require continuous focus and support.

Any goals can *only* be completed with the aid of all Boards, Committees, Volunteers and our municipal employees.

### **Ongoing:**

- Provide exceptional service to taxpayers by improving communication between boards, committees, and departments.
- Increase tax revenue through the economic development of Sterling's industrial areas, downtown and beyond.
- We continued our support of the Master Plan initiative and its citizen committee. This fluid document has been completed and now it is the task of each Board and Committee to carry it forward.

### **COMPLETED PROJECTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUPPORTED BY SELECT BOARD:**

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- This year saw the Board bring on some new and talented Leadership in the Town Administrator's Office, Library, Recreation, Accounting, Planning Dept.
- Successful Auction of the blighted property known as the Sterling Inn
- Contracted Weston & Sampson to continue w/ Downtown Renovation design and implementation
- With grant monies, supported the redesign and construction of sidewalks on Maple Street from Main to Bird
- Continue to oversee the distribution of our ARPA Funds with requests from various departments being considered
- Completed a Compensation Study and updated job descriptions, classification and updated grades
- Completed new Playground @ Houghton & Chocksett Schools with State Grant monies
- Signed contract for repairs to Town Hall roof
- Participated in swearing in of new Fire Dept Personnel
- Said good bye to our beloved Police Chief Gary Chamberlain
- Welcomed and swore in long time resident and policeman Sean Gaudette as our new Police Chief
- Swore in and promoted several of our Police personnel

## **ON-GOING PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED:**

- Town Center Renovation in conjunction with SMLD, DPW, EDC and citizens representation
- 1835 Town Hall Septic System and Use Plan partnered with 1835 Committee, Recreation, Facilities
- Sought easements for the ability to connect 1835 septic to Fire Station
- In conjunction with DPW entered into an agreement with Mass Dot for maintenance and landscaping of Rte. 12 medians for aesthetics and safety
- Library Repairs and Upgrade
- SMLD's Fiber Network continues its' expansion from municipal to resident
- Municipal Technology & Innovation Upgrades
- Select Board continues to strive to assist other boards and committees in their efforts to rewrite and improve town by-laws, and ultimately reducing/eliminating legal costs associated with existing and inefficient by-laws
- The Board remains committed to building more cohesive groups through collaboration and liaisons

## **FINANCE & BUDGET ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- A balanced budget for the past four years with an increase of approximately 3.4% per year approved at Annual Town Meeting.
- Average tax rate increases of just \$.16 per thousand or less than 1 percent at .95%. This helped offset the overall tax increase of 4.9% due mainly to an average valuation increase of \$14,400, or 3.96%.
- Maintained account balances in Free Cash, Stabilization, and the Capital Investment Fund as recommended by Financial Policies Manual.
- Adopted former replenishment funding policy for Stabilization, OPEB for the next six years.
- Maintained Moody's financial bond rating of Aa2 (third strongest rating), confirmed by independent auditors Roselli, Clark & Company.
- Attained grants over \$250k through the efforts of the 1835 Town Hall, Town Planner, Affordable Housing Committee, Council on Aging, Cultural Council, Fire, Police, and Library.

To all our residents and businesses, we thank you for your continued support of the Select Board and in the future of Sterling's vitality. Sterling is a strong and welcoming community. We look forward to an exciting and bright future for all.

Maureen Cranson, Chair

John Kilcoyne, Vice Chair

David Smith, Clerk

## **THE OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK**

The Town Clerk's Office is staffed by Kathleen Farrell, Town Clerk, and Michelle Boyce, Assistant Town Clerk. We have several essential associate support staff, through the tax work off program, as well as an amazing group of election officials who are trained and up to the task of insuring the integrity of our elections.

The Board of Registrars consists of the Town Clerk Kathleen Farrell, Christine Arsenault, Richard Barriere, and Melissa Chalmers.

The Annual Town Meeting was held at the Chocksett Middle School on Monday, May 2nd, and was the only Town Meeting held in Sterling in 2022. The votes taken and minutes of that meeting, along with results of the Annual Town Election of Monday, May 9th, can be found in the pages following this report.

In June 2022, Governor Baker signed the VOTES Act into Law. An Act Fostering Voting Opportunities, Trust, Equity, and Security or the VOTES Act, is the largest expansion of voting access in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in years. The VOTES Act made several changes to Massachusetts' election laws, including: allowing voters to vote by mail without an excuse; expanding early voting options; making sure that eligible voters who are incarcerated are able to request a mail ballot and vote; ensuring that the Commonwealth joins the 30 state Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) to keep voter registration rolls up to date; and more. The law also reduces the voter registration deadline prior to an election from twenty days to ten.

Voters were able to use the mail and early voting options for the September 6<sup>th</sup> State Primary Election and the November 8<sup>th</sup> General Election. The results of these elections follow this report.

The goals/ responsibilities of our office include:

- Conducting Elections; including registration of voters, testing of voting equipment, training of Election Officials, and compliance with campaign finance regulations
- Registering Voters at Town Meeting, Recording Minutes and votes taken, submitting bylaw changes to the Massachusetts Attorney General, as well as General Code updating
- Preparation and administration of the Annual Town Census, and production of the Annual Street List

- Preparation and administration of the Annual Town Report
- Qualifying elected officials and appointed board and committee members, posting meetings and agendas, annual distributions including the Open Meeting Law and Conflict of Interest information to all employees and board and committee members
- Recording and issuing vital records; birth, marriage and death certificates
  - 2022 Marriages 31
  - 2022 Births 65
  - 2022 Deaths 118
- Filing applications and decisions by the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, and issuing certificates and information regarding appeals
- Responding to requests for public records, and fulfilling or coordinating the fulfilment, of these requests
- Maintenance of the Town website, vault storage, and official records
- Processing of Business Certificates, Fuel Storage Registrations, and Dog Licenses
- Provide Notary Public Services

Town Election May 9, 2022 OFFICIAL RESULTS					
			PREC 1	PREC 2	TOTALS
Total votes cast in each precinct			116	131	247
BOARD OF ASSESSORS (3yrs)					
Richard Alton Sheppard			91	91	182
Total Write-ins			2	5	7
Blanks			23	35	58
TOTAL			116	131	247
BOARD OF ASSESSORS (1yr)					
Hannah E. Miller			104	108	212
Total Write-ins			0	0	-
Blanks			12	23	35
TOTAL			116	131	247
BOARD OF HEALTH (3yrs)					
Allen H. Hoffman			95	108	203
Total Write-ins			4	3	7
Blanks			17	20	37
TOTAL			116	131	247
SELECT BOARD (3yrs)					
David A. Smith			90	91	181
Total Write-ins			14	13	27
Blanks			12	27	39
TOTAL			116	131	247
CONSTABLE (3yrs)					
Nicholas J. Finizio			96	104	200
Total Write-ins			0	3	3
Blanks			20	24	44
TOTAL			116	131	247
DEPT. OF PUBLIC WORKS BOARD (3yrs)					
Deane S. Day			94	104	198
Total Write-ins			2	1	3
Blanks			20	26	46
TOTAL			116	131	247
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES (3yrs)					
Sara J. Petullo			102	106	208
Albert J. Carlin			10	10	20
Total Write-ins			2	3	5
Blanks			118	143	261
TOTAL			232	262	494

PLANNING BOARD (5yrs)					
			PREC 1	PREC 2	TOTALS
John J. Santoro			74	88	162
Mark D. Stodolski			30	34	64
Total Write-ins			0	3	3
Blanks			12	6	18
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>116</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>247</b>
STERLING HOUSING AUTHORITY (5yrs)					
Laurel A. Barrett			7	7	14
Total Write-ins			4	10	14
Blanks			105	114	219
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>116</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>247</b>
STERLING HOUSING AUTHORITY (4yrs)					
Eleanor M. Gates			4	11	15
Total Write-ins			1	7	8
Blanks			111	113	224
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>116</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>247</b>
STERLING MUNICIPAL LIGHT BOARD (3yrs)					
Joseph J. Curtin			97	108	205
Total Write-ins			0	2	2
Blanks			19	21	40
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>116</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>247</b>
WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (3yrs)					
Linda Helen Woodland			94	105	199
Total Write-ins			2	4	6
Blanks			20	22	42
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>116</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>247</b>
WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (2yrs)					
Sue Valentine			1	4	5
Total Write-ins			8	11	19
Blanks			107	116	223
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>116</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>247</b>
Total Registered voters each PRECINCT			3,098	3,264	6,362
Total Votes Cast in EACH Precinct			116	131	247
Voter Turnout %			4%	4%	4%
All candidates are required to submit campaign finance forms 30 days after the election to the Town Clerk. The candidate may otherwise be subject to penalties.					

9/6/2022 STATE PRIMARY OFFICIAL RESULTS					
Total votes cast in each precinct			PREC 1	PREC 2	TOTALS
<b>DEMOCRATIC PARTY</b>					
<b>GOVERNOR</b>					
Sonia Rosa Chang-Diaz			35	59	94
Maura Healey			358	403	761
Total Write-Ins			1	1	2
Blanks			3	7	10
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>397</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>867</b>
<b>LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR</b>					
Kimberley Driscoll			170	192	362
Tami Gouveia			86	111	197
Eric P. Lesser			126	150	276
Total Write-ins			0	0	0
Blanks			15	17	32
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>397</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>867</b>
<b>ATTORNEY GENERAL</b>					
Andrea Joy Campbell			170	181	351
Shannon Erika Liss-Riordan			135	178	313
Quentin Palfrey			80	99	179
Total Write-ins			1	1	2
Blanks			11	11	22
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>397</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>867</b>
<b>SECRETARY OF STATE</b>					
William Francis Galvin			301	357	658
Tanisha M. Sullivan			92	112	204
Total Write-ins			0	0	0
Blanks			4	1	5
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>397</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>867</b>
<b>TREASURER</b>					
Deborah B. Goldberg			345	421	766
Total Write-ins			0	3	3
Blanks			52	46	98
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>397</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>867</b>
<b>AUDITOR</b>					
Christopher S. Dempsey			170	178	348
Diana Dizoglio			206	261	467
Total Write-ins			0	0	0
Blanks			21	31	52
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>397</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>867</b>
<b>REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS</b>					
James P. McGovern			365	431	796
Total Write-Ins			1	4	5
Blanks			31	35	66
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>397</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>867</b>
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>					
Paul M. DePalo			338	400	738
Total Write-ins			0	2	2
Blanks			59	68	127
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>397</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>867</b>
<b>SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT</b>					
Anne M. Gobi			346	409	755
Total Write-ins			0	3	3
Blanks			51	58	109
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>397</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>867</b>
<b>REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT</b>					
Meghan K. Kilcoyne			355	425	780
Total Write-ins			1	2	3
Blanks			41	43	84
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>397</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>867</b>
<b>DISTRICT ATTORNEY</b>					
Joseph D. Early, JR			346	402	748
Total Write-ins			0	4	4
Blanks			51	64	115
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>397</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>867</b>
<b>SHERIFF</b>					
David M. Fontaine			327	383	710
Total Write-ins			3	3	6
Blanks			67	84	151
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>397</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>867</b>

9/6/2022 STATE PRIMARY OFFICIAL RESULTS				
Total votes cast in each precinct		PREC 1	PREC 2	TOTALS
<b>REPUBLICAN PARTY</b>				
<b>GOVERNOR</b>				
Geoff Diehl		172	176	348
Chris Doughty		171	147	318
Total Write-Ins		1	0	1
Blanks		5	1	6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>673</b>
<b>LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR</b>				
Leah V. Allen		113	129	242
Kate Campanale		226	182	408
Total Write-ins		0	0	0
Blanks		10	13	23
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>673</b>
<b>ATTORNEY GENERAL</b>				
James R. McMahon, III		271	260	531
Total Write-ins		1	3	4
Blanks		77	61	138
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>673</b>
<b>SECRETARY OF STATE</b>				
Rayla Campbell		265	257	522
Total Write-ins		1	4	5
Blanks		83	63	146
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>673</b>
<b>TREASURER</b>				
Total Write-ins		18	15	33
Blanks		331	309	640
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>673</b>
<b>AUDITOR</b>				
Anthony Amore		262	256	518
Total Write-ins		0	2	2
Blanks		87	66	153
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>673</b>
<b>REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS</b>				
Jeffrey A. Sossa-Pquette		262	252	514
Total Write-Ins		1	2	3
Blanks		86	70	156
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>673</b>
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>				
Gary Goalonek		251	250	501
Total Write-ins		2	3	5
Blanks		96	71	167
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>673</b>
<b>SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT</b>				
James Anthony Amorello		266	257	523
Total Write-ins		0	3	3
Blanks		83	64	147
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>673</b>
<b>REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT</b>				
Michael A. Vulcano		257	252	509
Total Write-ins		1	4	5
Blanks		91	68	159
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>673</b>
<b>DISTRICT ATTORNEY</b>				
Total Write-ins		39	34	73
Blanks		310	290	600
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>673</b>
<b>SHERIFF</b>				
Lewis G. Evangelidis		284	274	558
Total Write-ins		3	4	7
Blanks		62	46	108
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>673</b>
Voter Registration		PREC 1	PREC 2	TOTALS
*Total Registered Voters each PRECINCT		3169	3333	6502
Total voted		746	794	1540
Voter Turnout %				23.69%

11/8/2022 STATE ELECTION OFFICIAL RESULTS					
Total votes cast in each precinct			PREC 1	PREC 2	TOTALS
<b>GOVERNOR AND LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR</b>					
Diehl and Allen			989	1024	2013
Healey and Driscoll			1020	1060	2080
Reed and Everett			28	32	60
Total Write-Ins			1	1	2
Blanks			13	13	26
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>2051</b>	<b>2130</b>	<b>4181</b>
<b>ATTORNEY GENERAL</b>					
Andrea Joy Campbell			961	1003	1964
James R. McMahon, III			1046	1079	2125
Total Write-ins			0	1	1
Blanks			44	47	91
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>2051</b>	<b>2130</b>	<b>4181</b>
<b>SECRETARY OF STATE</b>					
William Francis Galvin			1130	1192	2322
Rayla Campbell			859	851	1710
Juan Sanchez			33	54	87
Total Write-ins			1	1	2
Blanks			28	32	60
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>2051</b>	<b>2130</b>	<b>4181</b>
<b>TREASURER</b>					
Deborah B. Goldberg			1181	1246	2427
Cristina Crawford			596	614	1210
Total Write-ins			12	15	27
Blanks			262	255	517
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>2051</b>	<b>2130</b>	<b>4181</b>
<b>AUDITOR</b>					
Anthony Amore			1030	1042	2072
Diana Dizoglio			821	880	1701
Glori A. Caballero-Roca			30	46	76
Dominic Giannone, III			32	27	59
Daniel Riek			50	44	94
Total Write-ins			1	0	1
Blanks			87	91	178
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>2051</b>	<b>2130</b>	<b>4181</b>
<b>REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS</b>					
James P. McGovern			1074	1120	2194
Jeffrey A. Sossa-Paquette			924	935	1859
Total Write-Ins			0	1	1
Blanks			53	74	127
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>2051</b>	<b>2130</b>	<b>4181</b>
<b>COUNCILLOR</b>					
Paul M. DePalo			1009	1066	2075
Gary Galonek			949	965	1914
Total Write-ins			1	0	1
Blanks			92	99	191
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>2051</b>	<b>2130</b>	<b>4181</b>
<b>SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT</b>					
Anne M. Gobi			969	1039	2008
James Anthony Amorello			1012	1026	2038
Total Write-ins			0	1	1
Blanks			70	64	134
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>2051</b>	<b>2130</b>	<b>4181</b>

REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT					
Meghan K. Kilcoyne			1116	1190	2306
Michael A. Vulcano			871	878	1749
Total Write-ins			2	1	3
Blanks			62	61	123
TOTAL			2051	2130	4181
DISTRICT ATTORNEY					
Joseph D. Early, JR			1386	1422	2808
Total Write-ins			61	77	138
Blanks			604	631	1235
TOTAL			2051	2130	4181
SHERIFF					
Lewis G. Evangelidis			1387	1399	2786
David M. Fontaine			592	652	1244

11/8/2022 STATE ELECTION OFFICIAL RESULTS					
Total votes cast in each precinct			PREC 1	PREC 2	TOTALS
Total Write-ins			1	3	4
Blanks			71	76	147
TOTAL			2051	2130	4181
Question 1					
YES			809	897	1706
NO			1210	1210	2420
Blanks			32	23	55
TOTAL			2051	2130	4181
Question 2					
YES			1276	1345	2621
NO			750	758	1508
Blanks			25	27	52
TOTAL			2051	2130	4181
Question 3					
YES			842	947	1789
NO			1147	1132	2279
Blanks			62	51	113
TOTAL			2051	2130	4181
Question 4					
YES			868	922	1790
NO			1135	1172	2307
Blanks			48	36	84
TOTAL			2051	2130	4181
Question 5					
YES			920	949	1869
NO			898	940	1838
Blanks			233	241	474
TOTAL			2051	2130	4181
Question 6					
YES			1450	1524	2974
NO			373	366	739
Blanks			228	240	468
TOTAL			2051	2130	4181
Voter Registration			PREC 1	PREC 2	TOTALS
*Total Registered Voters each PRECINCT			3199	3364	6563
Total voted			2051	2130	4181
Voter Turnout    %					63.71%



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
TOWN OF STERLING

May 2, 2022

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

At 6:30 pm, on Monday, May 2, 2022, the Town Moderator, Jennifer Scalice-Mullett, opened the Annual Town Meeting held at the Chocksett Middle School, 40 Boutelle Road in said Town of Sterling. There was a quorum present; 194 voters attended the meeting.

Town Moderator, asked all to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Moderator recognized the Chair of the Select Board, Maureen Cranson to read a list of fellow townspeople who are no longer with us:

Donald E. Wilson

Samuel D'Angona

James D. Temple

Normand J. DesRoche

Patricia A. (Korp) Booth

David N. Adoretti

Ronald S. Thompson

Frank C. Heinemann

Ronald A. Nelson, Jr.

William Bird, Jr.

Hector J. Lirette

Town Moderator, Jennifer Scalice-Mullett reviewed logistics of participation including use of the vote counting devices. She explained the Consent Calendar used to save time, and how to address the meeting. The Moderator began by calling for a vote on the long-standing history of dispensing of the reading of the Warrant.

**DISPENSE WITH THE READING OF THE WARRANT AND THE CONSTABLE'S RETURN:**

**Motion Made by Maureen Cranson**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

----- CITIZENS PETITIONS -----

**ARTICLE 1. CITIZENS PETITION - PROTECTIVE BYLAW**

**Motion made by Susan Aldrich** that the Town vote to amend the Protective Bylaws of the Town as follows:

Section 2.3.1. Table of Principal Uses, E. Industrial, Wholesale or Extensive Uses, by adding:

**Earth Removal.**

Section 6.2 Board of Appeals, by adding Section 6.2.2.2.a.4:

In RR or NR Districts, no earth shall be removed from the premises except to facilitate grading for a proposed building for which a variance or a building permit has been granted, or to serve an established agricultural operation or an extension thereof. Removal of less than 3,000 cubic yards of earth from any premises does not require a variance, nor does removal of soil necessary for building the infrastructure of a Definitive Subdivision Plan approved by the Planning Board. Removal of earth in an amount greater than or equal to 3,000 cubic yards will require that a variance be approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals. **TWO THIRDS VOTE**

Susan Aldrich, 2 Great Pond Way, submitted an amendment to the motion changing the amount of cubic yards referenced in the Article from 3,000 cubic yards to 1,500 cubic yards.

**MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion to Amend Article 1 passed by majority vote as declared by the Moderator**

Discussion on Article 1 as Amended **TWO THIRDS VOTE**

**Motion did not carry, Article 1 defeated as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 2. CITIZENS PETITION - EARTH REMOVAL**

**Motion made by Susan Aldrich** that the Town vote to amend the General Bylaws of the Town as follows:

Article 47, Chapter 63-2 Definitions by revising the definition of “Quarrying or Mining” as follows:

**Quarrying or Mining**

“Quarrying or mining” shall mean earth removal for the purpose of extracting soil, loam, sand, gravel, clay, rocks, minerals, or other earth material, including establishments engaged in operating sand and gravel pits and in washing, screening, or preparing sand and gravel for construction or industrial uses. “Quarrying or mining” shall exclude grading of a lot in preparation for the construction of a structure or associated variance granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals pursuant to Section 6.2.2.2.a.4 of the Protective Bylaws of the Town.

Article 47, Chapter 63-6 Submission and Plan Requirements, by adding the following sentence to the end of the section:

The rules and regulations for application for an earth removal permit require that the PGA will only consider applications that document adherence to Chapter 63-7 Earth Removal Operation Criteria; and Chapter 63-8 Site Standards, Requirements and Operations.

**MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion did not carry, Article 2 defeated as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 3. CITIZENS PETITION - EXPANDING SELECT BOARD**

To see if the town will vote, in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 2, to amend General Bylaws, Establishment of Board, as follows:

Article IV, Section 1-10, Establishment of Board

There shall be a Select Board composed of five members elected for terms of three years each. **MAJORITY VOTE**

*Submitted at the request of Susan E. Aldrich and others*

Before entertaining a motion, the Moderator deferred to Town Counsel for a legal position of Article 3 as written. Brian Maser, Town Counsel, explained that there were two statutes at play: MGL c.41 §2 which generally allows a Town to increase the number of elected boards but not the number of individuals on a Select Board; and MGL c.43B §13 which states that the composition of the Select Board can only be changed by Charter or a Special Act of Legislation.

**Motion Made to indefinitely postpone Article 3. MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion Made to Move the Question** by Michael Pineo, 41 Tuttle Road **TWO THIRDS VOTE**

**Motion to move the question did not carry** discussion returned to the original Article

Robert Dumont, 7 Great Pond Way, submitted an amendment to the motion to request that the Select Board petition the General Court to increase the number of Select Board members from three to five.

**Motion to Amended Article 3 passed by majority vote as declared by the Moderator**

-----END OF CITIZENS PETITIONS -----

Finance Committee Chair, Everett Heller, gave a brief overview of the budget describing it as prudent and responsible.

----- GENERAL FUND OMNIBUS BUDGET -----

**ARTICLE 4. FY2023 TOWN OPERATING BUDGET**

**Motion Made** that the Town vote to **raise and appropriate** the sum of **\$12,084,259.62** and to transfer the additional sum of **\$735,744.38** from the additional sources identified in the Warrant under Article 4 for a total appropriation of **\$12,820,004** to be expended as shown in the municipal operating and Omnibus Budget as printed at the back of the Warrant. **MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 5. WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ASSESSMENT**

**Motion Made** that the Town vote to **raise and appropriate** the sum of **\$12,524,610** to be expended as printed in the Warrant under Article 5 and as shown in the municipal operating and Omnibus Budget as printed at the back of the Warrant. **MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 6. MONTACHUSETT VOCATIONAL REGIONAL SCHOOL ASSESSMENT**

**Motion Made** that the Town vote to **raise and appropriate** the sum of **\$975,792** to be expended as printed in the Warrant under Article 6 and as shown in the municipal operating and Omnibus Budget as printed at the back of the Warrant. **MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**\*ARTICLE 7. SNOW & ICE DEFICIT** *(Consent)*

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, that the Town transfer from Free Cash, **\$174,616.82** or any other sum, to the Snow and Ice Account to cover any deficit in the snow and ice budget for the current fiscal year.

**\*ARTICLE 8. ELECTED OFFICERS COMPENSATION** *(Consent)*

It was voted, by Consent Calendar, that the Town fix the salaries and compensation of all elected officers of the Town as provided by Chapter 41, Section 108 of the General Laws [MGL Ch. 41 §108] as follows and as presented in Article 4 of the Warrant.

Select Board Member: \$1,500 per year

Board of Assessors Member: \$1,500 per year

Board of Health Member: \$300 per year

Planning Board Member: \$300 per year

Department of Public Works Board Member: \$600 per year

Town Moderator: \$500 per year

Law and Conflict of Interest information to all employees and board and committee members

- Recording and issuing vital records; birth, marriage and death certificates
- Filing applications and decisions by the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, and issuing certificates and information regarding appeals
- Responding to requests for public records, and fulfilling or coordinating the fulfilment, of these requests
- Maintenance of the Town website, vault storage, and official records
- Processing of Business Certificates, Fuel Storage Registrations, and Dog Licenses
- Provide Notary Public Services

Results of all 2021 elections are provided below followed by the Minutes of the June, 2021 Town Meeting

**ARTICLE 18. WATER METER REPLACEMENT**

**Motion Made** that the Town vote to appropriate **\$200,000** or any other sum from Water Retained Earnings, to upgrade the current water meter system by purchasing and installing new meters and associated equipment and anything incidental or related thereto, and to authorize the Town to enter into such agreement and take other action as necessary to effectuate the purposes of this article, said sum to be expended by the Department of Public Works Board with the approval of the Select Board and Town Administrator/Chief Procurement Officer.

**Majority Vote**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 19. NEW WATER SOURCE**

**Motion Made** that the Town vote to appropriate **\$150,000** or any other sum from Water Retained Earnings, to fund planning, engineering, drilling, installation, pumping, analysis and permitting of a new water supply well on Town-owned land off Crowley Road, and anything incidental or related thereto and to authorize the Town to enter into such agreement and take other action as necessary to effectuate the purposes of this article, said sum to be expended by the Department of Public Works Board with the approval of the Select Board and Town Administrator/Chief Procurement Officer. **Majority Vote**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 20. WATER CORROSION UPDATES**

**Motion Made** that the Town vote to appropriate **\$50,000** or any other sum from Water Retained Earnings, to update the Water Corrosion report or anything incidental or related thereto, and to authorize the Town to enter into such agreement and take other action as necessary to effectuate the purposes of this article, said sum to be expended by the Department of Public Works Board with the approval of the Select Board and Town Administrator/Chief Procurement Officer. **Majority Vote**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 21. WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT**

**Motion Made** that the Town appropriate \$1,300,000 to be expended for the replacement of certain Town water mains as recommended by the Finance Committee and the Capital Planning Board, including all costs incidental and related thereto; and that to meet this appropriation the Treasurer with the approval of the Select Board is authorized to borrow said sum under G.L. c.44, §8(5) or any other enabling authority; and that the Treasurer and the Select Board are authorized to execute all documents and take such actions as may be necessary to effectuate the purposes of this vote, and to contract for and expend any federal or state aid available for the project.

**TWO THIRDS VOTE**

**Motion passed by two thirds vote as declared by the Moderator**

----- **END OF WATER ENTERPRISE ARTICLES** -----

----- **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN** -----

*The Fiscal Year 2023 Capital Improvement Plan was presented as two (2) warrant articles. Based on the respective funding sources, the articles were grouped to provide Town Meeting with a complete picture of the Town's capital expenditures.*

**ARTICLE 22. SPECIAL PROJECTS – TRANSFER FROM FREE CASH**

**Motion Made** that the Town vote to transfer from free cash or any other available funds, **\$489,423** or any other sum, to be expended for the items listed below, as recommended by the Finance Committee and the Capital Budget Committee:

<i>Article:</i>	<i>Description:</i>	<i>Amount:</i>
22A	1835 Old Town Hall Rehabilitation, Improvements and Maintenance	62,200
22B	Butterick Masonry	19,000
22C	Compensation Study Increase	75,000
22D	DPW Brush Removal / Tree Removal	9,500
22E	DPW Cemetery Roads	12,000
22F	DPW Equipment Trailer	10,200
22G	DPW Facilities Study	12,000
22H	DPW Portable Radios	7,100
22I	Fire Oil Transfer Pump Replace	30,000
22J	Fire SCBA Air Pack Replacement	16,600
22K	Fire SUV/Pickup Additional Costs	21,000
22L	Historical Headstones	8,000
22M	Historical School House	11,000
22N	IT Various Projects, Replace Servers, Fiber	85,000
22O	Pegs Pond	55,823
22P	Police HVAC	40,000
22Q	Police Computers	5,000
22R	Police Radio Licenses	10,000
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$489,423</b>

Said amounts shall be for the purposes stated and all costs incidental or related thereto. Appropriated funds to be administered under the direction of the requesting department.

**Majority Vote**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**ARTICLE 23. SPECIAL PROJECTS - TRANSFER FROM THE CAPITAL FUND**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from the Capital Investment Fund, or any other available funds, **\$516,000** or any other sum, to be expended for the items listed below, as recommended by the Finance Committee and the Capital Budget Committee:

<i>Article:</i>	<i>Description:</i>	<i>Amount:</i>
23A	Butterick Roof Repairs	100,000
23B	DPW 6 Wheel Drive Vehicle, purchase and equip	45,000
23C	DPW Campground Road Culverts	29,000
23D	DPW Pick Up with Plow, purchase and equip	55,000
23E	Fire SCBA Bottles	35,000
23F	Police Vehicle, purchase and equip	52,000
23G	School Houghton Flooring	100,000
23H	School Chocksett Flooring	100,000
	<i>Sub-Total Town Assets &amp; Facilities Improvements:</i>	
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$516,000</b>

Said amounts shall be for the purposes stated and all costs incidental or related thereto. Appropriated funds to be administered under the direction of the requesting department; or take any action in relation thereto. **TWO THIRDS VOTE**

**Motion passed by two thirds vote as declared by the Moderator**

----- **END OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN** -----

----- **PERSONNEL & HUMAN RESOURCES** -----

**ARTICLE 24. ACCEPT CREDITABLE SERVICES REGULATION - CALL FIREFIGHTERS**

**Motion Made** that the Town vote to accept the provisions of the third sentence of G.L. c. 32, § 4(2)(b) allowing a reserve or permanent-intermittent or call fire fighter retiring from the Town to receive, in addition to the five years of credit allowed pursuant to the preceding sentence of the statute, one day of full-time service credit for each day in any year which is subsequent to the fifth year following said appointment and on which a reserve or permanent-intermittent or call fire fighter assigned to and actually performed duty as a reserve or permanent-intermittent or call fire fighter; provided, however, that such service as a reserve or permanent-intermittent or call fire fighter shall be credited only if such fire fighter was later appointed as a permanent member of the fire department. **MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

-----GENERAL AND PROTECTIVE ZONING BYLAW UPDATES -----

**ARTICLE 25. CHAPTER 18 ANIMAL CONTROL GENERAL BYLAW**

**Motion Made** that the Town vote to amend the Town's Animal Control Bylaws: Chapter 18-3 Licensing and Rabies Vaccination, Chapter 18-4 Special Permits and Kennel Licenses, and Chapter 18-6 Owner Responsibility, relative to Penalties for Violations, with deletions shown in ~~striketrough~~ and additions shown in **bold/underline**, or take any action in relation thereto.

§ 18-3 Licensing and rabies vaccination.

H. Fees.

(1) For each individual dog in the Town of Sterling, over the age of six months, an annual fee will be charged by the Town for the issuance of dog licenses as follows:

- (a) Spayed females: \$8.
- (b) Neutered males: \$8.
- (c) Companion pet license: \$6 per dog.
- (d) Intact females: \$12.
- (e) Intact males: \$12.

**(f) Late Fee for dog licensed after April 15 or more than 30 days after establishing residence or dog reaching six months of age: \$25.**

I. Penalties for violation(s) of § 18-3 shall be:

(1) ~~Fine for failure to vaccinate for rabies: \$25 per dog (may be in addition to other fines).~~

~~(2) Fine for late licensing (after April 15): \$25 per dog (may be in addition to other fines and fees).~~ **Fine for the first offense committed by a person shall be \$50.**

~~(3) Fine for unlicensed dog: \$25 per dog, per week (may be in addition to other fines and fees).~~ **Fine for a second offense shall be \$100.**

**(4) Fine for a third offense shall be \$300.**

**(5) For a fourth or subsequent offense, the fine shall be \$500.**

§ 18-4 Special permits and kennel licenses.

C. A kennel license and/or kennel renewal license, respectively, shall be issued upon receipt of a completed kennel application, accompanied by payment of applicable license fees, not including other fees. No fee to license a kennel shall be charged to any kennel owner(s) age 70 years old or older.

[Amended 5-3-2014 ATM by Art. 38, approved 8-20-2014]

(1) Kennel I: up to and including four dogs (initial and renewal application): \$40.

(2) Kennel II: five and up to 10 dogs (initial and renewal application): \$50.

(3) Kennel III: 11 or more dogs (initial and renewal application): \$60.

**(4) Late Fee for initial or renewal application after April 15: \$25.**

- G. Penalties for violations of § 18-4 shall be:
- (1) ~~Fine for failure to obtain a kennel license (after April 15): \$25.~~
  - (2) ~~Fine for unlicensed kennel: \$50 per week.~~ **The fine for the first offense committed by a person shall be \$50.**
  - (3) ~~Fine for failure to maintain, on-site, current rabies documentation for each dog: \$25 per dog.~~ **The fine for a second offense shall be \$100.**
  - (4) The fine for a third offense shall be \$300.**
  - (5) For a fourth or subsequent offense, the fine shall be \$500**

18-6 Owner responsibility.

F. Enforcement; penalties for violation.

[Amended 5-7-2018 ATM by Art. 33, approved 8-13-2018]

- (1) The Animal Control Officer of the Town shall be empowered to enforce provisions of this bylaw.
- (2) In addition to the remedies set forth in this bylaw and in MGL c. 140, §§ 136A to 174E, inclusive, including but not limited to MGL c. 140, § 157A, or any other applicable provision of law, this section may be enforced through any lawful means in law or in equity, including, but not limited to, noncriminal disposition pursuant to MGL c. 40, § 21D. If noncriminal disposition is elected, then any person who violates any provision of this section shall be subject to the following penalties **for offenses for which no specific penalty is prescribed elsewhere in this bylaw:**

(a) ~~Penalties for violation and repeat offenders.~~ Any person violating the terms of this ~~section~~ **bylaw** or rules and regulations promulgated pursuant thereto shall be subject to the following fine schedule:

- [1] ~~For offense not involving incidence of biting by a canine first offense, \$10; second offense, \$30; third and subsequent offenses, \$60.~~ **The fine for the first offense shall be \$50.**
- [2] ~~For offense involving incidence of biting by a canine first offense, \$30; second offense, \$50; third and subsequent offenses, \$100.~~ **The fine for a second offense shall be \$100.**
- [3] ~~For all other citations deemed necessary by the Animal Control Officer which occur, first offense, \$10; second offense, \$30; third and subsequent offenses, \$60.~~ **The fine for a third offense shall be \$300.**
- [4] For a fourth or subsequent offense, the fine shall be \$500.**

(b) Each day or portion thereof may constitute a separate offense. If more than one, each condition violated may constitute a separate offense. A separate offense is not limited to an offense within a calendar year from the first offense.

(3) The Town may enforce this section or enjoin violations thereof through any lawful process, and the election of one remedy shall not preclude enforcement through any other lawful means.

(4) The Animal Control Advisory Board may review all incidents subsequent to the third offense at a duly noticed public meeting for which the offender shall be provided with notice at least seven days prior thereto and an opportunity to appear before the Board and explain the circumstances of the repeated violations. The Animal Control Advisory Board may make recommendations concerning actions that can be taken to prevent future violations. Nothing in this bylaw is intended to limit or restrict the authority of the Select Board to act in accordance with MGL c. 140, § 157. **MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

#### **ARTICLE 26. STORMWATER – GENERAL BYLAW**

**Motion Made** that the Town vote to amend the General Bylaws, Chapter 164 Stormwater Water Management, as shown below with additions in **bold/highlight** and deletions in ~~striketrough/highlight~~; or take any action in relation thereto.

#### **Chapter 164 Stormwater Management**

##### **§ 164-1 Purpose.**

- A. The purpose of this bylaw is to protect the public health, safety, environment and general welfare by establishing requirements and procedures to manage stormwater runoff, promote groundwater recharge and to prevent water pollution from new development and redevelopment. This bylaw seeks to meet that purpose through the following objectives:
- (1) Establish regulations for land development activities that preserve the health of water resources;
  - (2) Require that the amount and quality of stormwater runoff from new development is equal to or better than pre-development conditions in order to reduce flooding, stream erosion, pollution, property damage and harm to aquatic life;
  - (3) Establish stormwater management standards and design criteria to control the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff;
  - (4) Encourage the use of low-impact development practices, such as reducing impervious cover and preserving greenspace and other natural areas;
  - (5) Establish maintenance provisions to ensure that stormwater treatment practices will continue to function as designed and pose no threat to public safety;

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- B. Nothing in this bylaw is intended to replace the requirements of the Town of Sterling Floodplain District, the Stillwater River Protection District, the Aquifer and Water Resource Protection District or any other bylaw that may be adopted by the Town of Sterling. Any activity subject to the provisions of the above-cited bylaws must comply with the specifications of each.

### **§ 164-2 Definitions.**

Definitions of this bylaw shall apply in the interpretation and implementation of the bylaw. Terms not defined shall be understood according to their customary and usual meaning. Additional definitions may be adopted by separate regulation.

### **ALTER**

Any activity, which will measurably change the ability of a ground surface area to absorb water or will change existing surface drainage patterns.

### **BETTER SITE DESIGN**

Site design techniques that can reduce environmental impacts, such as protecting existing vegetation, reducing impervious areas, and using natural drainage ways for stormwater management.

### **COMMON PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT**

**A contiguous area where multiple separate and distinct construction activities may be taking place at different times on different schedules under one plan.**

### **HOTSPOT-LAND USES with HIGHER POTENTIAL POLLUTANT LOADS**

Land uses or activities with higher potential pollutant loadings, such as auto salvage yards, auto fueling facilities, fleet storage yards, commercial parking lots with high-intensity use, road salt storage areas, commercial nurseries and landscaping, outdoor storage and loading areas of hazardous substances, or marinas. **Land uses with higher potential pollutant loads are defined in the DEP Stormwater Handbook (see Ch.1 V.1 Standard 5 for definition), which definition, as may be amended from time-to-time, is incorporated herein.**

### **IMPERVIOUS AREA/IMPERVIOUS COVER**

A material or a structure that prevents water from entering the underlying soil, such as paved parking lots, paved roads, sidewalks, and buildings.

### **LOW-IMPACT DESIGN**

Low-impact practices allow for the reduction of impervious areas that result in smaller volumes required for stormwater storage. These site design techniques can reduce the size and costs of stormwater collection systems and detention basins.

### **MASSACHUSETTS STORMWATER MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The policy issued by the State Department of Environmental Protection, which provides performance standards to prevent water pollution and control the amount of runoff from new development.

## **PERSON**

Any individual, group of individuals, association, partnership, corporation, company, trust, estate, a political subdivision of the commonwealth or the federal government, to the extent subject to the bylaws of the Town of Sterling.

## **POLLUTANT**

Dredged spoil, solid waste, incinerator residue, filter backwash, sewage, garbage, sewage sludge, munitions, chemical wastes, biological materials, heat, wrecked or discarded equipment, rock, sand, cellar dirt, construction wastes and residues including discarded building materials, concrete truck wash out, chemicals, litter, and sanitary wastes and industrial, municipal and agricultural waste discharged into water.

## **POST-DEVELOPMENT**

The conditions that reasonably may be expected after completion of the land development activity on a specific site or tract of land. Post-development does not refer to the construction phase of a project.

## **PRE-DEVELOPMENT**

The conditions that exist at the time that plans for the land development of a tract of land are submitted to the Planning Board. Where phased development or plan approval occurs (preliminary grading, roads and utilities, etc.), the existing conditions at the time prior to the first plan submission shall establish pre-development conditions.

## **REDEVELOPMENT**

Any construction, alteration, or improvement exceeding land disturbance of 10,000 square feet, where the existing land use is commercial, or institutional.

## **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PERMIT (SMP)**

A permit issued by the Conservation Commission, which protects the streams, lakes and water supplies in the Town from the adverse effects of uncontrolled and untreated stormwater runoff.

## **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

Structures and techniques that prevent flooding, reduce pollution, and protect local rivers, streams, lakes and water supplies.

## **§ 164-3 Authority.**

This bylaw is adopted under authority granted by the Home Rule Amendment of the Massachusetts Constitution, the home rule statutes, and pursuant to the regulations of the Federal Clean Water Act found at 40 CFR 122.34.

## **§ 164-4 Administration.**

- A. The Conservation Commission shall administer, implement and enforce this bylaw. Any powers granted to or duties imposed upon the Conservation Commission may be delegated in writing by the Conservation Commission to its employees or agents.
- B. Stormwater regulations. The Conservation Commission may adopt, and periodically amend, rules and regulations relating to the terms, conditions, definitions, enforcement, fees (including application, inspection, and/or consultant fees), procedures and administration of this Stormwater Management Bylaw by majority vote of the Conservation Commission, after conducting a public hearing to receive comments on any proposed revisions. Such hearing

dates shall be advertised twice at intervals of at least seven days prior to the hearing date in a newspaper of general local circulation. After public notice and public hearing, the Conservation Commission may promulgate rules and regulations to effectuate the purposes of this bylaw. Failure by the Conservation Commission to promulgate such rules and regulations or a legal declaration of their invalidity by a court shall not act to suspend or invalidate the effect of this bylaw.

- C. Stormwater management handbook. The Conservation Commission will utilize the policy, criteria and information, including specifications and standards, of the latest edition of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Stormwater Handbook for execution of the provisions of this bylaw. This Handbook includes a list of acceptable stormwater treatment practices, including the specific design criteria for each stormwater practice. This Mass DEP Handbook may be updated and expanded periodically, based on improvements in engineering, science, monitoring, and local maintenance experience. Unless specifically altered in the Sterling bylaw regulations, stormwater management practices that are designed, constructed, and maintained in accordance with these design and sizing criteria will be presumed to be protective of Massachusetts water quality standards.
- D. Actions by the Conservation Commission. The Conservation Commission may take any of the following actions as a result of an application for a stormwater management permit as more specifically defined as part of stormwater regulations promulgated as a result of this bylaw: approval, approval with conditions, disapproval, or withdrawal without prejudice.
- E. Appeals of action by the Conservation Commission. A decision of the Conservation Commission shall be final. Further relief of a decision by the Conservation Commission made under this bylaw shall be reviewable in the Superior Court in an action filed within 60 days thereof, in accordance with MGL c. 249, § 4.
- F. Stormwater credit system. The Conservation Commission may adopt, through the regulations authorized by this Stormwater Management Bylaw, a stormwater credit system. This credit system will allow applicants the option, if approved by the Conservation Commission, to take credit for the use of stormwater better site design practices to reduce some of the requirements specified in the criteria section of the regulations. Failure by the Conservation Commission to promulgate such a credit system through its regulations or a legal declaration of its invalidity by a court shall not act to suspend or invalidate the effect of this bylaw.

#### **§ 164-5 Applicability; stormwater management permit.**

- A. This bylaw shall apply to all new development and redevelopment, including, but not limited to, site plan applications, subdivision applications, land grading applications, or land use conversion applications. This bylaw shall also apply to other activities that will increase the amount of stormwater runoff or pollutants from a parcel of land, or any activity that will alter the drainage characteristics of a parcel of land, unless exempt pursuant to **§ 164-5D** of this bylaw. All new development and redevelopment under the jurisdiction of this bylaw as prescribed in this bylaw shall be required to obtain a stormwater management permit.
- B. At the discretion of the Conservation Commission, redevelopment projects **within non-MS4 areas** are presumed to meet the stormwater regulations of the Town of Sterling if the total impervious cover is reduced from existing conditions. Where site conditions prevent the reduction in impervious cover, stormwater management practices shall be implemented for the site's impervious area. This combination of impervious area reduction and stormwater management practices will be used for redevelopment projects to improve existing site conditions.
- C. An alteration, redevelopment, or conversion of land use to a **Land Use with Higher Potential Pollutant Loads**, ~~such as auto salvage yards, auto fueling facilities, fleet storage yards, commercial parking lots and other land uses with higher potential pollution loads~~ shall require a stormwater management permit.

**D. This Bylaw shall apply to all construction activity or land disturbance that individually or as a part of a Common Plan of Development results in disturbance of land in excess of 10,000 square feet.**

E. Exemptions. No person shall alter land within the Town of Sterling without having obtained a stormwater management permit (SMP) for the property with the following exceptions:

- (1) Any activity that will disturb an area less than 10,000 square feet, **unless it is part of a larger Common Plan of Development.**
- (2) Normal maintenance and improvement of land in agricultural use as defined by the Wetlands Protection Act regulation 310 CMR 10.04 and MGL c. 40A, § 3;
- (3) Timber harvesting under an approved forest cutting plan as defined by the Forest Cutting Practices Act regulation 304 CMR 11.00 and MGL c. 132, §§ 40 through 46.
- (4) Maintenance of existing landscaping, gardens or lawn areas associated with a single-family or two-family dwelling;
- (5) Repair or replacement of an existing roof of a single-family or two-family dwelling;
- (6) Construction of a single-family or two-family dwelling **that will disturb an area less than 1 acre (43,560 square feet)**, where "approval is not required" (ANR), as defined in the Subdivision Control Act. Persons constructing a single-family or two-family dwelling are encouraged to use the stormwater practices and site planning methods, which will be described in the Town of Sterling Best Development Practices Guidebook;
- (7) Repair or replacement of an existing septic system;
- (8) The construction of any fence, stone wall or property boundary demarcation that will not alter existing terrain or drainage patterns;
- (9) Construction of appurtenances to a single-family or two-family dwelling **that will disturb and area less than 1 acre (43,560 square feet)**, including a deck, patio, retaining wall, shed, swimming pool, tennis or basketball court;
- (10) Construction of utilities (gas, water, electric, telephone, etc.) other than drainage, which will not alter terrain, ground cover, or drainage patterns;
- (11) Emergency repairs to any stormwater management facility or practice that poses a threat to public health or safety, or as deemed necessary by the Conservation Commission;
- (12) Any work or projects for which all necessary approvals and permits have been issued before the effective date of this bylaw.

#### **§ 164-6 Procedures.**

Permit procedures and requirements shall be defined and included as part of any rules and regulations promulgated as permitted under **§ 164-4** of this bylaw.

#### **§ 164-7 Enforcement.**

The Conservation Commission or an authorized agent of the Conservation Commission shall enforce this bylaw, regulations, orders, violation notices, and enforcement orders, and may pursue all civil and criminal remedies for such violations. Enforcement shall be further defined and included as part of any stormwater regulations promulgated as permitted under **§ ~~134-4~~ 164-4** of this bylaw.

#### **§ 164-8 Severability.**

The invalidity of any section, provision, paragraph, sentence, or clause of this bylaw shall not invalidate any section, provision, paragraph, sentence, or clause thereof, nor shall it invalidate any permit or determination that previously has been issued. **MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

## **ARTICLE 27. PROTECTIVE BYLAW – KENNEL DEFINITIONS**

**Motion Made** that the Town will vote to amend the Town’s Protective Zoning Bylaws, Article 5, Section 301-5.4, Definitions, relative to kennels, as set forth below, with deletions shown in ~~striketrough~~ and additions shown in **bold/underline**.

Delete:

~~KENNEL, COMMERCIAL – One pack or collection of dogs on a single premises, whether maintained for breeding, boarding, sale, training, hunting, or other purposes, and including any shop where dogs are on sale, and also including very pack or collection of more than four dogs, three months old or older, owned or kept by a person on a single premises regardless of the purposes for which they are maintained or kept.~~

Add:

**ANIMAL BUSINESS – Any pet shop, grooming shop, or boarding facility, animal day-care facilities, pet sitting enterprise, except this term shall not include animal shelter, veterinary medical facilities, licensed research facilities, facilities operated by government agencies, or licensed animal dealers regulated by the USDA under the provision of US Public Laws 89544 and 91579.**

**ANIMAL CLINIC OR VETERINARY HOSPITAL– A facility where animals or pets are given medical or surgical treatment and the boarding of animals is limited to short-term care incidental to the clinic or hospital use.**

**APPROVED ANIMAL FACILITY– Any animal facility published by the Massachusetts Departments of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) as a “Massachusetts approved shelter and resource organization” and listed as “out of states,” meaning facilities listed as such have approved isolation facilities.**

**COMMERCIAL BOARDING OR TRAINING KENNEL – An Establishment used for boarding, holding, day care, overnight stays or training of animals that are not the property of the owner of the establishment, at which such services are rendered in exchange for consideration and in the absence of the owner of any such animal; provided, however, that “commercial boarding or training kennel” shall not include an animal shelter or animal control facility, a pet shop licensed under MGL c. 129, 39A a grooming facility operated solely for the purpose of grooming and not for overnight boarding or an individual who temporarily, and not in the normal course of business, boards or cares for animals owned by others.**

**COMMERICAL BREEDER KENNEL – An establishment, other than a personal kennel, engaged in the business of breeding animals for sale or exchange to wholesalers, brokers or pet shops in return for consideration.**

DOMESTIC CHARITABLE CORPORATION KENNEL – A facility operated, owned or maintained by a domestic charitable corporation registered with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources or an animal welfare society or other nonprofit organization incorporated for the purpose of providing for and promoting the welfare, protection and humane treatment of animals, including a veterinary hospital or clinic operated by a licensed veterinarian, which operates consistent with such purposes while providing veterinary treatment and care.

PERSONAL KENNEL – A pack or collection of more than four dogs, three months old or older, owned or kept under single ownership, for private personal use; provided, however, that breeding of personally owned dogs may take place for the purpose of improving, exhibiting or showing the breed or for use in legal sporting activity or for other personal reasons; provided, further, that selling, trading, bartering or distributing such breeding from a personal kennel shall be to other breeders or individuals by private sale only and not to wholesalers, brokers or pet shops; provided, further, that a personal kennel shall not sell, trade, barter or distribute a dog not bred from its personally-owned dog; and provided, further, that dogs temporarily housed at a personal kennel, in conjunction with an animal shelter or rescue registered with the department, may be sold, traded, bartered or distributed if the transfer is not for profit.

PET SHOP – Every place or premises where birds, mammals or reptiles are kept for the purpose of sale at either wholesale or retail, import, export or barter, exchange or gift.

RESEARCH INSTITUTE – An institution operated in the United States or by the commonwealth or a political subdivision thereof, or any school or college of medicine, public health, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary medicine or agriculture, medical diagnostic laboratory or biological laboratory, hospital or other educational or scientific establishment within the commonwealth above the rank of secondary school, which, in connection with any of its activities, investigates or gives instruction concerning the structure or functions of living organisms or the cause, prevention, control or cure of disease or abnormal conditions of human beings or animals.

VETERINARY KENNEL – A veterinary hospital or clinic that boards dogs for reasons in addition to medical treatment or care; provided, however, that “veterinary kennel” shall not include a hospital or clinic used solely to house dogs that have undergone veterinary treatment or observation or will do so only for the period of time necessary to accomplish that veterinary care. TWO THIRDS VOTE

Motion passed by two thirds vote as declared by the Moderator

## **ARTICLE 28. PROTECTIVE BYLAW – KENNELS – TABLE OF USES**

**Motion Made** that the Town vote to amend the Town's Protective Zoning Bylaws, Article 2, Section 2.3.1, Table of Principal Uses, Commercial Uses, relative to kennels, as set forth below, with deletions shown in ~~strike through~~ and additions shown in **bold/underline**.

Principal Uses		Districts				
		RR	NR	C	TC	LI
<del>10.</del>	<del>Commercial Kennel, animal hospital, veterinarian's office</del>	<del>SP</del>	<del>N</del>	<del>SP</del>	<del>SP</del>	<del>N</del>
10. a.	<b><u>Animal Business, Animal Clinic or Veterinary Hospital, Approved Animal Facility, Commercial Boarding or Training Kennel, Commercial Breeder Kennel, Domestic Charitable Corporation Kennel, Pet Shop, Research Institute, Veterinary Kennel.</u></b>	<b><u>SP</u></b>	<b><u>N</u></b>	<b><u>SP</u></b>	<b><u>SP</u></b>	<b><u>Y</u></b>
10. b.	<b>Personal Kennel</b>	<b><u>Y</u></b>	<b><u>SP</u></b>	<b><u>Y</u></b>	<b><u>N</u></b>	<b><u>Y</u></b>

**Motion Made** by Anne Marie Catalano to add personal kennel type 3. **MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion to Amend Article 28 passed by majority vote as declared by the Moderator**

Discussion on Article 28 as Amended **TWO THIRDS VOTE**

**Motion did not carry, Article 28 defeated as declared by the Moderator**

-----ZONING BYLAWS-----

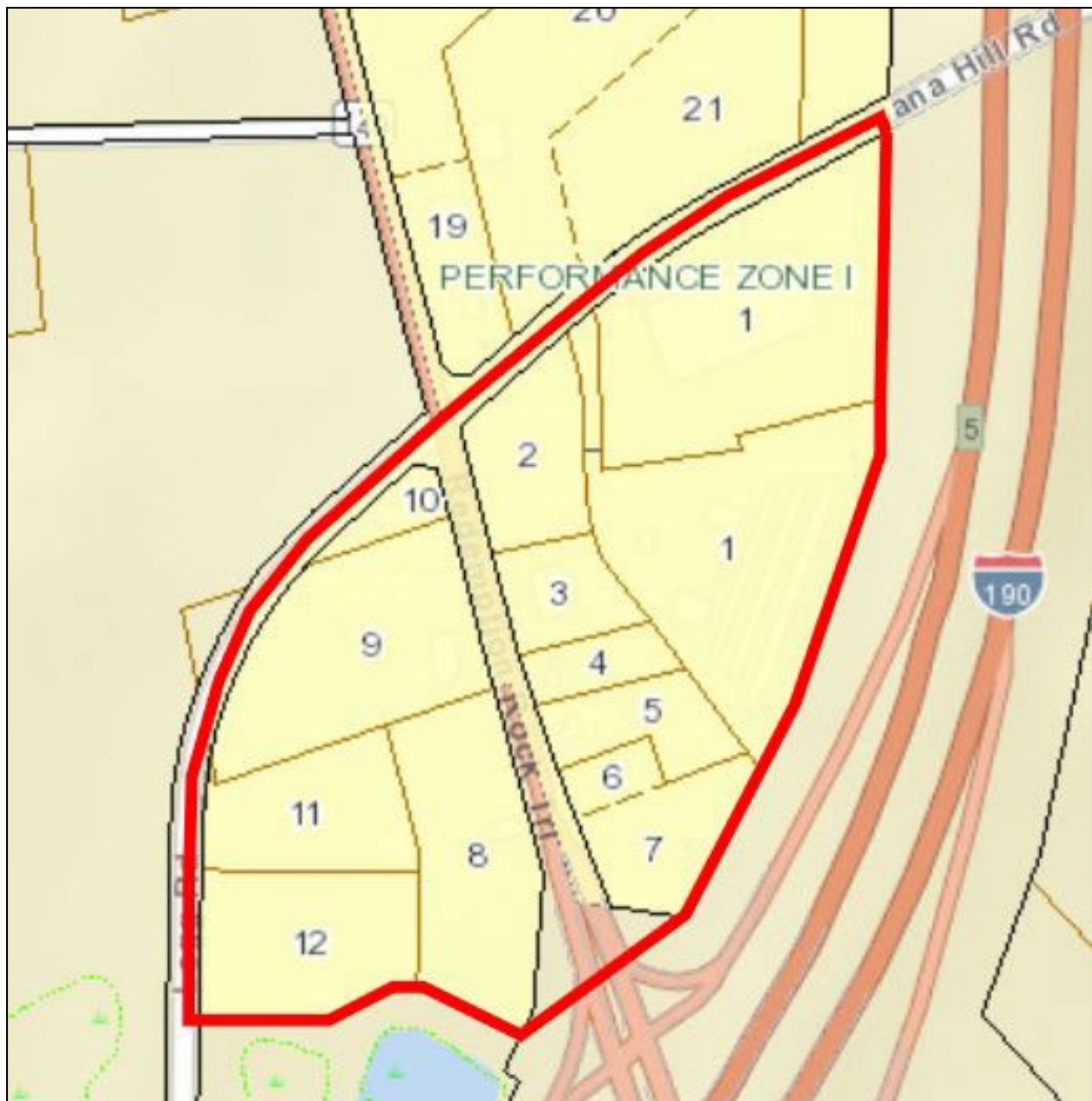
**ARTICLE 29. AMEND ZONING MAP: PERFORMANCE ZONE TO COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT**

**Motion Made** that the Town vote to amend the Protective Bylaws and Zoning Map by rezoning the following 13 parcels, currently zoned Performance Zone 1, to be included entirely within the Commercial (C) zoning district:

<b>Parcel #</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Area</b>
144-1	11 Dana Hill Road	5.24 acres
159-1	9 Dana Hill Road	5.45 acres
159-2	43 Redemption Rock Trail (Cemetery)	1.6 acres
159-3	41 Redemption Rock Trail	1.0 acres
159-4	37 Redemption Rock Trail	0.65 acres
159-5	35 Redemption Rock Trail	1.1 acres
159-6	Redemption Rock Trail	0.42 acres
159-7	Redemption Rock Trail	1.4 acres
159-8	32 Redemption Rock Trail	3.091 acres
159-9	44 Redemption Rock Trail	3.6 acres
159-10	0 Redemption Rock Trail	0.44 acres
159-11	4 Legg Road	2 acres
159-12	6 Legg Road	2.58 acres
Total Parcels: 13		28.57 acres* exclusive of road centerline

**TWO THIRDS VOTE**

**Motion did not carry, Article 29 defeated as declared by the Moderator**



#### **ARTICLE 30.      PARKING & LOADING**

**Motion Made** that the Town will vote to amend Town’s Protective Zoning Bylaws, relative to parking and loading requirements, as set forth in this article, with deletions shown in ~~strike through~~ and additions shown in **bold/underlining**, or take any action in relation thereto.

1. Amend Article 3.2.3 Table of Parking Requirements by deleting the row starting with “Restaurant, drive-in” and replacing with a new row “Restaurant, Fast Food, Drive-in

Establishment” and by changing the calculation for the number of parking spaces required for such establishments. Additionally, add a footnote below the table for minimum parking requirements for “Restaurant, Fast Food, Drive-in Establishment”, all as shown below:

Principal Use	Minimum Number of Parking Spaces
<del>Restaurant, drive-in</del>	<del>1 per 100 sf of gross floor area, plus stacking lane spaces as required in §301-3.2.4, Subsection 7</del>
<b><u>Restaurant, Fast Food, Drive-in Establishment*</u></b>	<b><u>1 per 75 sf of gross floor area, plus 1 per 2 employees on largest shift, plus stacking lane spaces as required in §301-3.2.4, Subsection 7</u></b>

Add below Table 3.2.3 the following:

**\*Restaurant, Fast Food, Drive-in Establishments which do not provide indoor seating for at least 20 customers shall be required to have a minimum of 10 parking spaces, plus at least one space for each two employees**

2. Amend the first sentence of Article 3, Section 3.2.3, Subsection 6, to update the reference to the Architectural Access Board, so that the sentence reads: “Parking facilities shall provide specially designated parking stalls for the physically handicapped in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Architectural ~~Barriers~~ **Access** Board of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts ~~Department of Public Safety~~ or any agency superseding such agency.”
3. Amend Article 3, Section 3.2.7, Subsection 1, to add the words “expansion of” so that the section reads: “Adequate off-street loading facilities and space shall be provided to service all needs created by construction whether through additions, change **or expansion** of use, or new structures. **TWO THIRDS VOTE**

**Motion did not carry, Article 30 defeated as declared by the Moderator**

----- LOCAL ACCEPTANCE STATUTES -----

**ARTICLE 31. MUNICIPAL CHARGES LIEN**

**Motion Made** that the Town will vote to accept the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 58 with respect to unpaid fines assessed in connection with the following types of violations: (1) the Town's General Bylaws; (2) the Town's Zoning Bylaws; (3) Regulations and Orders of the Board of Health; (4) Regulations and Orders of the Conservation Commission; (4) building code violations and (5) fire code violations; and further to accept the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Sections 42A through 42F, with respect to unpaid water system usage fees, so as to establish a lien on real estate of any property owner who does not pay the types of charges specified and authorizing the collection of such unpaid fines and fees as part of the real estate tax bills for subject properties; and further, to direct the Town Clerk to file a certificate of such acceptance in the Registry of Deeds.

**MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

----- REAL ESTATE -----

**ARTICLE 32. 1835 TOWN HALL SEWER LINE**

**Motion Made** that the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to acquire, by gift, purchase or eminent domain, permanent easements for a sewer line and related appurtenances, said easements shown as Easement Parcel #1, containing 3,068 square feet, more or less, Easement Parcel #2, containing 333 square feet, more or less, and Easement Parcel #3, containing 1,838 square feet, more or less, on a plan entitled "Easement Acquisition Plan Proposed 1835 Town Hall Sewer Project Sterling, MA," dated December 26, 2018, said plan on file with the Town Clerk; and, further, to authorize the Select Board to sign all documents and take all actions necessary or convenient to carry out the purpose of this article. **MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

### **ARTICLE 33. NITROGEN LOADING RESTRICTION**

**Motion Made** the Town vote to change the purpose of a certain parcel of land (the "Credit Land") from general municipal purposes to general municipal purposes and the purpose of providing nitrogen credit land for the improvements at the 1835 Town Hall, which Credit Land is a 1.181 acre portion of the Town-owned property located off Clinton Road and described in a deed recorded with the Worcester South Registry of Deeds in Book 6050, Page 84 (Assessor's Parcel 92-86), and to authorize the Select Board to grant a Title 5 nitrogen loading restriction and easement on the Credit Land for said purposes; or take any action in relation thereto.

#### **TWO THIRDS VOTE**

**Motion passed by two thirds as declared by the Moderator**

### **Article 34. Weighted Vote/Attrition Model Amendment for WRSD Agreement**

To see if the Town will vote to approve the Wachusett Regional School District Committee's proposed amendment to Section 1 of the Amended Wachusett Regional School District Agreement, in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 14E, changing the language of Section 1 from the following:

#### **Section 1 MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

- 1.1.1 The Wachusett Regional District School Committee, hereinafter referred to as "the Committee", shall consist of members from each Member Town, each such member to be a registered voter of the town such member represents. The Member Town with the smallest population as determined in accordance with paragraph I. shall be entitled to elect two members to the committee, and the other Member Towns shall be entitled to elect members to the Committee on the following basis:

Proportion of Town's Population Number of Committee to that of Smallest  
Town Members

1.0 to 1,499	2
1.5 to 2.599	4
2.6 to 3.699	6
3.7 to 4.799	8
4.8 to 5.999	10
6.0 to 6.999	12
7.0 to 7.999	14
8.0 to 8.999	16

For every digit after 9.999, a Member Town shall be entitled to elect one additional member to the Committee. In 1994 and every year thereafter, members shall be elected to serve on the Committee at the annual town meeting of the Member Towns. The method of nomination and election of the members to the Committee from a particular Member Town, shall be the same as if they were candidates for an elective office in such Member Town.

- 1.1.2 All members elected thereafter, except as provided in paragraph 1.1.4, shall be elected for a three (3) year term.
- 1.1.3 The population of the Member Towns shall be determined every five (5) years in accordance with the towns' annual census with the next five (5) year review to be conducted in calendar 2021 and certified by the respective town clerks. Any increase in membership resulting from population changes shall be elected at the annual town meeting following the review year.
- 1.1.4 In the event of a population change in a Member Town resulting in an increase in the number of members to be elected to the Committee, such increase shall be effective at the annual town meeting following the certification of the census. Initial terms of office shall be established by the Committee so as to equalize the number of expirations for each Member Town per year and secondarily, to equalize the number of expirations each year on the Committee.
- 1.1.5 In the event of a population change in a Member Town resulting in a decrease in the number of members to be elected to the Committee from a Member Town, such decrease shall be effective upon the earliest expiration of the term of office of the Member Town's representation of the Committee.
- 1.1.6 If a vacancy occurs on the Committee, or if there is a failure to elect, the Select board of the Member Town to which the vacancy relates shall fill such vacancy by appointment. The person so appointed shall be a registered voter of such town and shall perform the duties of the office until such town's next annual meeting and a successor is qualified; at such annual meeting a successor shall be elected to fill the balance of the unexpired term.

To the following:

Section 1. MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

- 1.1 The Wachusett Regional District School Committee, hereinafter referred to as "the Committee," shall consist of a total of sixteen (16) members, each member hereinafter referred to as a "Member." Each Member shall be elected at their respective Member Town elections as detailed in Section 1.1.1. below, and in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, s. 14E (4). Six (6) Members of the Committee shall be residents of the Town of Holden, three (3) Members of the Committee shall be residents of the Town of Rutland, three (3) Members of the Committee shall be residents of the Town of Sterling, two (2) Members of the Committee shall be residents of the Town of Paxton, and two (2) Members of the Committee shall be residents of the Town of Princeton. As used in this Agreement, a person shall be deemed to be a "resident" and/or to meet the "residency" requirement for a particular Member Town only if such person is properly registered to vote in the respective Member Town.
- 1.1.1 The decreasing of the size of the School Committee shall occur as follows, commencing at the 2023 town elections. Just one (1) Member from the town of Sterling whose term is to expire in 2023 shall have their seat abolished at the conclusion of their term in 2023. The two (2) Members from the town of Holden whose terms are to expire in 2023 and who have received the least, and second-to-least elective votes shall have their seats abolished at the conclusion of their terms in 2023. The two (2) Members from the town of Holden whose terms are to expire in 2024 and who have received the least, and second-to-least elective votes shall have their seats abolished at the conclusion of their terms in 2024. The Member from the town of Rutland whose term is to expire in 2024 and who received the least elective votes shall have their seat abolished at the conclusion of their term in 2024. The Committee shall recalculate the weight of each Member's vote, pursuant to Section 1.2, every time the number of Members on the Committee changes at any time for any reason.
- 1.2 To ensure compliance with federal, state, and regulatory laws, the weighted vote of all Members shall be recalculated by the Committee every five (5) years, or recalculated every time the number of members on the Committee changes, based upon Member Town population data taken from most recent Member Town census data, as certified by the Member Town Clerks, and shall be, as nearly as possible, in direct proportion to the population of the member town compared to the population of all member towns combined so that the actual weighted vote

- 1.3. Commencing at the Reorganizational Meeting occurring on or after May 2023, all individual Committee votes, including Subcommittee votes, shall be based upon the allocation of proportional (weighted) votes of individual Committee Members, as detailed in Section 1.7.
- 1.4 Each Member must reside in the Member Town which she or he represents, as described in Section 1.1. Each Member must be elected consistent with the process for the election of Member Town officials in said Member Town and will be elected to open seats during the annual election or a special election in said town. The term of each elected member will begin on the first business day after their election and after being sworn in by the respective Town Clerk. A member who has not otherwise vacated their seat will continue to serve until their successor is elected and sworn.
- 1.5 Except as otherwise stated in Section 1.1.1. in the year first following the acceptance of this Amended Regional Agreement by all Member Towns and the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, hereinafter referred to as the “Commissioner,” each member will serve a three (3) year term after being duly elected to a three-year seat at the Member Town’s Annual Election.
- 1.6 If a vacancy on the Committee occurs for any reason, the Select board from the Member Town involved shall appoint a Member to serve until the next annual town election, at which election a successor shall be elected to serve the balance of the unexpired term, if any. This Section 1.6 shall apply to all Member seats, including those Member seats that are vacated prior to being abolished pursuant to Section 1.1.1.
- 1.7 Commencing at the Reorganizational Meeting occurring on or after May 2023, each Member’s vote shall be weighted, as nearly as possible, in direct proportion to the population of the member town compared to the population of all member towns combined so that the actual weighted vote of each individual member is as nearly equal to one (1) as possible. For example, and for illustrative purposes only, if the 2020 Town census figures were used in calculating weighted voting for the sixteen (16) Member Committee, this 2020 data would result in the following weighted voting factors:

<b>Individual Member Weighted Factor per Member Town</b>	<b>Census Population</b>	<b>Percentage of Combined Population</b>	<b>Committee Members</b>	<b>Total Voting Weight</b>
<b>Total 5 Towns</b>	<b>45,438</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOLDEN</b>	19,905	43.81%	6	7.01
1.16/Member				
<b>PAXTON</b>	5,004	11.01%	2	1.76
0.88/Member				
<b>PRINCETON</b>	3,495	7.69%	2	1.23
0.62/Member				
<b>RUTLAND</b>	9,049	19.92%	3	3.18
1.06/Member				
<b>STERLING</b>	7,985	17.57%	3	2.82
0.94/Member				

1.8 The quorum for the transaction of Committee business shall be a majority of the total vote value (i.e., 16.0) of all of the Committee Members as defined in Section 1.7 above. A weighted vote total less than a majority may adjourn but may take no other action.

1.9 The quorum for the transaction of each Subcommittee's business shall be a majority of the total vote value of all of the appointed Members to the respective Subcommittee. A weighted vote less than a majority as defined in this Section may adjourn but may take no other action.

1.10 Except where otherwise provided by statute, regulation, or by the terms of this Agreement, actions by the Committee will be taken by the weighted vote pursuant to Roberts Rules of Order's protocols that correspond to the particular type of vote being taken.

1.10.1 In order to approve the District's annual budget, to approve the incurring of debt, or to apportion among the Member Towns the amounts necessary to be raised in order to support the budget, or any other vote requiring a two-third majority vote by statute or regulation, a combined total of weighted votes equal to or exceeding 66.67% of the weighted vote of the entire Committee (i.e., not merely two thirds of the weighted vote of those present) shall be required.

1.11 Except where otherwise provided by statute, regulation, or by the terms of this Agreement, actions by a Subcommittee will also be taken by weighted vote total pursuant to "Roberts Rules of Order's" protocols that correspond to the particular type of vote being taken. For these purposes, a majority vote shall mean an affirmative vote by more than half of the weighted vote total of the Members present at a properly called meeting of the respective Subcommittee for which a quorum is present.

#### **MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

#### **ARTICLE 35. ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION**

**Motion Made** by Maureen Cranson that the Town vote to elect by ballot on Monday, June 21, 2020 from 12:00pm to 7:00pm at the Houghton Elementary School Gym on 32 Boutelle Road, the officers as listed and printed in the Warrant under Article 35.

#### **MAJORITY VOTE**

**Motion passed by majority as declared by the Moderator**

**8:19pm Annual Town Meeting Adjourned**

## FINANCIAL REPORTS

### BOARD OF ASSESSORS

The tax rate came down this year by \$0.95 per thousand of valuation for FY23, with a tax rate set at \$14.30. That significant drop represents a continued effort on the part of town departments to keep their budgets in check. Valuations are another matter altogether, as they have continued to rise due to sales in the real estate market per the last few years. Assessments must be maintained at or near their market valuation as per DOR guidelines. They are based on a “full and fair cash value” of the property as of Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, preceding each fiscal year.

On our recommendation, the Selectboard also voted to maintain a single tax shift factor of 1.000 with a corresponding CIP shift of 1.000. In layman’s terms, this means we will continue to have a single tax rate for all property in town, including commercial, industrial, and personal property.

Sterling will be undergoing its 5-year cyclical revaluation process this Fiscal Year 2023. A revaluation is an update of all assessments within the community conducted by the Board of Assessors under the direction of the Department of Revenue. The assessors of each community are responsible for developing a reasonable and realistic program to achieve the fair cash valuation of property in accordance with constitutional and statutory requirements. The nature and extent of that program will depend on the assessor's analysis and consideration of many factors including but not limited to, the results of an in-depth sales ratio study and the accuracy of existing property record information. Every 5 years the assessors must submit property values to the Department of Revenue for review and certification. More information on the revaluation process can be found on the Sterling website under the Assessors Department tab.

<https://www.sterling-ma.gov/assessors-office/pages/revaluation-year-information>

Arguably, the most important role of the Board is to generate equitable assessments. To that end we continually strive to maintain an accurate property database and refine valuation tables and formulas that reflect both impartial and justifiable assessments.

Respectfully Submitted by:  
Board of Assessors 2023  
Donlin K. Murray — Chairman  
Richard A. Sheppard — Clerk  
Hannah Miller — Member

## **Fiscal Year 2022 Assessments and Property Tax Revenue Summary**

<u>Property Class</u>	<u>Levy %</u>	<u>Valuation by Class</u>	<u>Tax Rate</u>	<u>Tax Levy</u>
Residential	87.7853	\$1,176,865,441	\$16.52	\$17,947,197.98
Commercial	3.8050	\$51,009,959	\$16.52	\$777,901.87
Industrial	4.6773	\$62,704,200	\$16.52	\$956,239.05
Personal Property	3.7324	\$50,037,651	\$16.52	\$763,074.18
<b>TOTALS</b>	100.0000	\$1,340,617,251		\$20,444,413.08

### **Valuation and Tax History**

<u>Fiscal Yr</u>	<u>Tax Rate</u>	<u>Total Valuation</u>	<u>Accounts</u>	<u>Tax Levy</u>	<u>Change%</u>
2022	\$16.52	\$1,340,617,251	3,747	\$20,444,413.08	0.555
2021	\$16.81	\$1,230,724,667	3,752	\$20,331,571.49	2.434
2020	\$17.27	\$1,180,751,255	3,738	\$19,848,429	2.078

### **Abstract of Assessments**

<u>Property Class Code &amp; Description</u>	<u>Accts</u>	<u>Class Valuation</u>	<u>Avg. Value</u>
101 Residential Single Family	2,553	\$1,047,828,600	\$410,430
102 Residential Condominiums	199	\$54,078,100	
Miscellaneous Residential	21	\$9,248,500	
104 Residential Two Family	90	\$30,309,500	
105 Residential Three Family	6	\$2,992,600	
111-125 Apartments	9	\$9,930,800	
130-132 & 106 Vacant Land	340	\$17,013,100	
300-393 Commercial	73	\$42,841,600	
400-452 Industrial	107	\$62,330,700	
501-552 Personal Property	157	\$50,037,651	
600-821 Chapter 61, 61A, 61B	191	\$3,824,900	
012-043 Mixed Use Properties	22	\$9,807,700	
<b>TOTALS</b>	3,747	\$1,340,617,251	
Exempt	281	\$138,863,300	

### **Assessors' Account for Exemptions and Abatements**

<u>Description</u>	<u>FY2022</u>	<u>FY2021</u>	<u>FY 2020</u>
Assessors' Overlay	\$108,727.08	\$99,782.49	\$120,930.94
Charges through 6/30	\$95,260.18	\$60,462.02	\$77,494.37
Overlay Bal. through 6/30	\$200,463.78	\$243,162.12	\$224,892.64
Potential ATB Liability	\$412,113.34	\$373,021.92	\$306,672.23

### **New Growth Revenues**

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Added Valuation</u>	<u>Tax Rate</u>	<u>New Revenue</u>
2022	\$13,796,465	\$16.52	\$227,918
2021	\$16,967,231	\$16.81	\$285,219
2020	\$10,004,172	\$17.27	\$172,773

## **Finance and Capital Budget Committee Report**

The following is the Finance and Capital Budget Committee's (FinCom/CBC) report and budget recommendation for FY2023 beginning July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023.

Each year, FinCom/CBC begins its meeting series in November (2021) to plan budget and capital recommendations for the upcoming FY2023. A FinCom/CBC liaison is assigned to each Department, Board or Committee that has a budget. Meetings are scheduled with each department head or chair to discuss needs and priorities for both Capital and Budget funding for the upcoming fiscal year. Department and Committee Capital and Budget requests are submitted in the January time frame to the Town Administrator and shared with FinCom/CBC.

In late January and early February, recorded public meetings are conducted to allow departments, boards, or committees to present and justify their budget and capital requests to the FinCom/CBC, Town Administrator, Town Accountant, Select Board members and any interested citizens. Presenters answer any questions from attendees. School budgets are developed by WRSD and Montachusett Regional VoTech and reviewed separately in the same time frame. 2022 was challenging since we did not have a Town Administrator during this budgeting process and the Town Accountant stepped in to take responsibility for the Town Administrator's budget responsibilities. A special thanks goes out to Fred Aponte and Kama Jayne for the extraordinary effort they expended in covering the Town Administrator role.

Once all inputs had been received, budget and capital deliberations began, its goal to create a fiscally sound and balanced plan to meet Sterling's needs, identifying funding sources for each budget and capital spending item, while minimizing the tax levy impact.

This process resulted in a FinCom/CBC budget recommendation of \$26,320,406 (including schools) for FY2023, a 3.50% increase over the prior year. We believe the budget presented was both prudent and fiscally sound. This budget was voted on and approved at the May 2, 2022 Annual Town Meeting.

### **Wage Adjustments and Employee Additions:**

At May 2021 ATM, the town voted to fund a professional Classification and Compensation Plan Analysis for non-union employees (2021 ATM A#22). At the May 2022 ATM, the town voted to reserve \$75,000 (2022 ATM A#22C) to fund salary and wage adjustments based on the findings of this study and the Select Board approved implementation plan. These adjustments came out of this reserve fund for FY23 but will be reflected in department budgets for FY2024 onward.

### **Preventive Maintenance:**

The purpose of the Capital Plan is to maintain Sterling's infrastructure and protect the value of its capital assets. Preventive maintenance is critical to providing reliable town services and maximizing the useful life of buildings, equipment and other infrastructure. Our town had fallen behind on maintenance of two key infrastructure areas: our roadways and culverts and our town water infrastructure.

In FY2023, increased funding to catch up and improve our maintenance of these key assets has been appropriated. A DPW pavement management plan has been developed to prioritize our road repairs and \$250,000 of additional funds has been included in the DPW operating budget in order to supplement state provided Chapter 90 funds for highway maintenance.

Sterling also approved appropriation for water meter replacement (2022 ATM A#18) and borrowing to continue water main replacement projects (2022 ATM A#21). We expect that future funding/borrowing will be required to continue this important maintenance effort. Water infrastructure maintenance and associated debt service is paid out of the Water Enterprise, which may impact the water rate, but not Sterling real estate taxes.

**Capital:**

The Finance and Capital Committees approved a capital budget expenditure of \$995,423 in FY23, funded by a combination of our Capital Investment Fund, certified free cash, and transfers of unexpended funds from prior year appropriations. The Capital Investment Fund had a balance of \$3,136,591 as of 2/14/2023.

**Capital Projects:**

Sterling is in the evaluation and planning phase of several potentially significant building projects which will require citizen support and input in the upcoming year(s):

- Athletic Field Complex Design
  - 2020 ATM A#7C: \$70,000 funded
  - Status: No action taken to date
- Route 140 & 62 Intersection
  - FY23- 25% of Design (require for initial meet with MRPC & TIP number assignment) – ARPA funds allocated: \$250,000
    - Status: complete, have met with MRPC, TIP number assigned
  - Future milestones / projected costs
    - FY24- 100% design completion, \$335,000
    - FY25- PS&E presentation for Mass Dot approval, \$40,000, construction bids
    - FY26-27 If approved, construction costs would be paid by MassDot, (\$2-3M est), Town responsible for Design, Right of Way, and Permitting Costs
- New DPW Facility
  - FY23- feasibility/requirements, \$12,000 funded (2022 ATM A#22G)
    - Status: complete
  - Future milestones / costs
    - FY24 proposed - Land sampling, building/location evaluation/options, \$50,000
    - FY25 - Design Phase: Est. \$2.02M
    - FY26 -28 – Contractor Bid/Construction: \$ TBD (est. \$20-\$30M)
- Water Enterprise
  - New Water Source – Crowley Road
    - FY23- Drill well: \$150,000 funded (2022 ATM A#19)
      - Status: drill and test complete, insufficient flow
    - Future milestones/costs
      - FY24 proposed - consider 3 wells in targeted area: \$115,000
  - West Sterling Well improvements
    - Future costs:
      - FY24 proposed – install Variable Drive and Generator: \$700,000

**The Finance Committee recommended and the town approved the following Fund transfers:**

- \$202,500 was transferred from Free Cash to the Town's Other Post-Employee Benefits ("OPEB") Trust Fund (2022 ATM A#14). As of 2/14/2023, the OPEB Fund had a balance of \$1,154,121 against an outstanding liability of \$15M.
- \$100,000 was transferred from Free Cash to Sterling's Reserve Fund (2022 ATM A#15) to provide for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures. The Reserve Fund receives a yearly allocation which does not roll from year to year.
- \$225,000 was transferred from Free Cash to Sterling's Stabilization Fund (2022 ATM A#12) to be used for any future purpose with 2/3 town meeting vote. As of 2/14/2023, the Stabilization Fund had a balance of \$928,673 – moving toward a target balance (per Sterling Finance Policy) of 5% of Operating Budget (~ \$1.3M).

Last, we thank volunteers, departments, boards, committees, taxpayers and voters for their continued contributions and support of our efforts to provide a balanced budget which affordably meets the needs of Sterling residents.

Respectfully Submitted;

The Town Finance and Capital Budget Committees

Christopher Paquette, FinCom Chair, CBC Member  
Joseph King, FinCom Vice Chair, CBC Member  
Paul Austin, FinCom Member, CBC Member  
George Handy, FinCom Member  
Christina Lashua, FinCom Member, CBC Vice Chair  
Lynne Sheppard, FinCom Member, CBC Chair  
Liz Pape, CBC Member

**TOWN OF SERLING**  
**REPORT OF THE TREASURER/COLLECTOR**  
**TAX COLLECTIONS**

<b>Real Estate Taxes</b>	<b>TAXES COMMITTED</b>	<b>ABATE/ EXEMPT</b>	<b>TRANSFER to TAX TITLE</b>	<b>COLLECTIONS less Refunds</b>	<b>BALANCE</b>
Levy of 2023	\$20,880,659.04	\$17,785.50	\$0.00	\$9,927,970.65	\$10,934,902.89
Levy of 2022	\$19,771,048.92	\$94,810.82	\$0.00	\$19,529,164.63	\$147,073.47
Levy of 2021	\$19,635,087.48	\$82,391.95	\$133,901.93	\$19,418,793.60	\$0.00
Levy of 2020	\$19,122,617.63	\$77,735.62	\$98,044.30	\$18,946,837.71	\$0.00
Levy of 2019	\$18,634,924.66	\$79,572.02	\$92,386.17	\$18,462,966.47	\$0.00
Levy of 2018	\$17,865,191.08	\$89,709.40	\$133,995.40	\$17,641,486.28	\$0.00
Levy of 2017	\$17,113,786.30	\$80,977.28	\$87,155.63	\$16,945,653.39	\$0.00
Levy of 2016	\$16,760,234.35	\$91,773.67	\$90,035.90	\$16,578,424.78	\$0.00
Levy of 2015	\$15,576,819.78	\$55,401.16	\$69,080.96	\$15,452,337.66	\$0.00
Levy of 2014	\$15,005,223.52	\$58,478.46	\$129,228.60	\$14,817,141.53	\$374.93
Levy of 2013	\$14,586,299.93	\$55,500.37	\$124,619.44	\$14,406,180.12	\$0.00
Levy of 2012	\$14,339,236.77	\$59,784.49	\$96,665.40	\$14,182,786.88	\$0.00
Levy of 2011	\$14,077,243.42	\$75,384.60	\$83,838.00	\$13,918,020.82	\$0.00
Levy of 2010	\$14,082,290.52	\$60,062.05	\$68,711.35	\$13,953,517.12	\$0.00
Levy of 2009	\$14,116,679.40	\$51,584.01	\$58,470.21	\$14,006,625.18	\$0.00
Levy of 2008	\$13,461,501.69	\$44,339.99	\$39,432.99	\$13,377,728.71	\$0.00
Levy of 2007	\$12,709,130.84	\$43,202.82	\$30,136.98	\$12,635,791.04	\$0.00
Levy of 2006	\$12,567,052.89	\$52,248.07	\$36,848.81	\$12,477,625.70	\$330.31
Levy of 2005	\$11,416,727.35	\$35,263.94	\$46,155.08	\$11,335,038.39	\$269.94
					<b>\$11,082,951.54</b>

<b>Personal Property Taxes</b>	<b>TAXES COMMITTED</b>	<b>ABATE/ EXEMPT</b>	<b>COLLECTIONS less Refunds</b>	<b>BALANCE</b>
Levy of 2023	\$800,707.68	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$800,707.68
Levy of 2022	\$772,581.08	\$449.36	\$765,318.82	\$6,812.90
Levy of 2021	\$721,041.05	\$1,880.34	\$713,527.61	\$5,633.10
Levy of 2020	\$745,662.09	\$1,146.97	\$738,623.52	\$5,891.60
Levy of 2019	\$727,334.61	\$4,119.02	\$722,772.69	\$442.90
Levy of 2018	\$731,389.21	\$3,208.06	\$725,583.01	\$2,598.14
Levy of 2017	\$768,382.98	\$580.53	\$765,208.27	\$2,594.18
Levy of 2016	\$799,941.37	\$1,479.13	\$795,825.96	\$2,636.28
Levy of 2015	\$727,451.88	\$2,182.96	\$722,681.16	\$2,587.76
Levy of 2014	\$722,268.09	\$3,670.85	\$715,960.96	\$2,636.28
Levy of 2013	\$604,838.65	\$8,928.11	\$591,168.34	\$4,742.20
Levy of 2012	\$592,766.33	\$9,140.67	\$583,328.30	\$297.36
Levy of 2011	\$538,892.36	\$10,300.06	\$528,409.80	\$182.50
Levy of 2010	\$455,688.60	\$6,989.49	\$448,331.17	\$367.94
Levy of 2009	\$422,388.42	\$39,637.34	\$382,564.91	\$186.17
Levy of 2008	\$372,158.68	\$5,216.71	\$366,809.99	\$131.98
Levy of 2007	\$307,746.94	\$966.10	\$306,660.55	\$120.29
Levy of 2006	\$301,777.76	\$787.52	\$300,884.55	\$105.69
Levy of 2005	\$352,972.23	\$947.97	\$351,989.08	\$35.18
				<b>\$838,710.13</b>

## TAX COLLECTIONS - December 31, 2022

<b>Motor Vehicle Excise</b>	<b>TAXES COMMITTED</b>	<b>ABATE/ EXEMPT</b>	<b>COLLECTIONS less Refunds</b>	<b>BALANCE</b>
Levy of 2022	\$2,800,831.10	\$40,139.77	\$2,689,836.78	\$70,854.55
Levy of 2021	\$1,593,981.98	\$38,177.30	\$1,540,105.79	\$15,698.89
Levy of 2020	\$1,567,999.90	\$34,281.17	\$1,523,702.58	\$10,016.15
Levy of 2019	\$1,546,649.52	\$40,661.28	\$1,501,724.76	\$4,263.48
Levy of 2018	\$1,503,072.10	\$40,113.79	\$1,459,792.11	\$3,166.20
Levy of 2017	\$1,465,357.67	\$44,288.02	\$1,419,356.69	\$1,712.96
Levy of 2016	\$1,356,733.43	\$35,875.95	\$1,318,917.06	\$1,940.42
Levy of 2015	\$1,280,992.50	\$26,775.89	\$1,252,074.31	\$2,142.30
Levy of 2014	\$1,252,073.05	\$27,581.89	\$1,222,645.96	\$1,845.20
				<b>\$111,640.15</b>
<b>Taxes Liens/Tax Title</b>				<b>\$372,968.30</b>
<b>Tax Foreclosure</b>				<b>\$90,803.71</b>

## DEBT - June 30, 2022

<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Bond Matures</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Original Bond</b>	<b>FY22 Interest</b>	<b>FY22 Principal</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Fire Station	2005	5/15/2025	4.00%	\$1,950,000.00	\$16,102.50	\$95,000.00	\$285,000.00
Water Mains	2005	5/15/2025	4.00%	\$660,000.00	\$5,085.00	\$30,000.00	\$90,000.00
Water Well and UV #1	2007	7/15/2027	2.00%	\$806,740.00	\$5,972.85	\$43,039.00	\$277,123.00
Senior Center	2015	4/15/2035	3.00%	\$2,530,000.00	\$60,937.50	\$125,000.00	\$1,625,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>\$88,097.85</b>	<b>\$293,039.00</b>	<b>\$2,277,123.00</b>
Victoria Smith Treasurer/Collector							

## TRUST FUNDS - December 31, 2022

	Non-Expendable Funds	Expendable Funds
<b>Account</b>	<b>PRINCIPAL</b>	<b>EARNINGS</b>
JACOB CONANT (FUEL FUND)	\$2,200.00	\$3,795.97
EMILY WILDER (FUEL FUND)	\$1,500.00	\$2,984.32
CLARISSA A. FREEMAN (NEEDY)	\$5,000.00	\$3,130.37
MARTHA ROPER (NEEDY WOMEN)	\$500.00	\$1,293.63
ALBERT FARWELL (FUEL FUND)	\$1,000.00	\$960.50
HENRY STEPHENSEN (NEEDY)	\$2,000.00	\$4,469.77
ALBA COFFIN (ELDERLY)	\$1,000.00	\$1,807.81
TPA (NEEDY)	\$0.00	\$1,953.07
J. HOUGHTON (NEEDY WOMEN)	\$52,664.36	\$10,854.59
BUTTERICK (LIBRARY)	\$11,000.00	\$811.45
ELI KILBURN (LIBRARY)	\$3,250.00	\$410.79
CONANT (LIBRARY)	\$500.00	\$31.06
WAITE (LIBRARY)	\$3,000.00	\$382.83
PUTNAM (LIBRARY)	\$2,000.00	\$253.17
W. C. KENDALL (LIBRARY)	\$500.00	\$105.62
CHARLES PLACE (LIBRARY)	\$2,450.00	\$320.87
E. CONANT (LIBRARY)	\$1,200.00	\$183.86
MADALINE MILLER (LIBRARY)	\$1,000.00	\$129.19
HELEN HOUGHTON (LIBRARY)	\$5,726.87	\$459.88
JUNE WILLIAMS (LIBRARY)	\$76,198.95	\$5,357.72
ALLEN FUND (LIBRARY)	\$0.00	\$270,505.40
FLOWER FUND	\$4,530.00	\$6,878.39
ELI KILBURN PARK	\$1,300.00	\$2,001.31
FANNIE STEVENSON	\$1,000.00	\$1,862.35
PERPETUAL CARE	\$260,181.58	\$69,182.90
FLORENCE HOUGHTON TREE FUND	\$3,434.46	\$5,365.39
ROSAMUND FANNING (SCHOLARSHIP)	\$1,000.00	\$284.99
BUTTERICK SCHOOL FUND (SCHOLARSHIP)	\$10,000.00	\$922.83
CONANT H. S. FUND (SCHOLARSHIP)	\$15,000.00	\$818.40
IACOBUCCI (SCHOLARSHIP)	\$6,300.00	\$850.18
MARIA HOUGHTON (SCHOLARSHIP)	\$52,664.36	\$2,243.47
WACHUSETT AREA EMERGENCY FUND	\$0.00	\$175,830.86
CULTURAL COUNCIL	\$0.00	\$10,902.73
G & M RECREATION FUND	\$5,000.00	\$5,051.65
CONSERVATION FUND	\$0.00	\$66,954.39
CHOCKSETT CROSSING MITIGATION	\$0.00	\$43,287.55
GENERAL FUNDS	\$0.00	\$833,825.56
OPEB	\$0.00	\$1,154,120.88

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$533,100.58</b>	<b>\$2,690,585.70</b>
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<b>CAPITAL &amp; STABILIZATION FUNDS - December 31, 2022</b>	
STABILIZATION FUND	\$928,672.83
CAPITAL STABILIZATION FUND	\$3,136,590.54
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,065,263.37</b>

## GROSS WAGES - CALENDAR YEAR 2022

Select Board			Town Clerk		
Cranson	Maureen	\$1,500.00	Farrell	Kathleen	\$68,428.20
Kilcoyne	John	\$1,500.00	Boyce	Michelle	\$47,176.90
Smith	David	\$750.00			<b>\$115,605.10</b>
Sonnenberg	Arden	\$750.00			
		<b>\$4,500.00</b>			
Administration			Election Workers/Registrars		
Caldwell	William	\$80,126.72	Arsenault	Christine	\$117.00
Jayne	Kama	\$73,036.37	Austin	Paul	\$128.25
		<b>\$153,163.09</b>	Baer	Jessica	\$263.63
			Barriere	Richard	\$88.50
Accountant			Bart-Raber	Kerry	\$85.50
Aponte	Alfredo	\$57,365.63	Belmain	Lisa	\$299.25
		<b>\$57,365.63</b>	Borchelt	Earl	\$235.14
			Boyce	Mason	\$99.75
Assessors			Brunetta	Jane	\$591.39
Dreyer	Deborah	\$52,535.32	Catalano	Irene	\$103.00
Miller	Hannah	\$1,500.00	Cleary	Constance	\$541.51
Murray	Donlin	\$1,500.00	Cutler	Joyce	\$220.88
Sheppard	Richard	\$1,500.00	Doherty	Judith	\$1,111.50
		<b>\$57,035.32</b>	Dupuis	Deborah	\$726.75
			Dupuis-Zorn	Ashley	\$299.25
Treasurer/Collector			Farrell	John	\$370.50
Smith	Victoria	\$83,390.20	Flannery	Kevin	\$1,153.00
Murry	Theresa	\$59,409.08	Glasier	Judith	\$777.75
Clemence	Elizabeth	\$60,127.68	Hartnett	James	\$930.25
		<b>\$202,926.96</b>	Heimberg	Carolyn	\$434.64
			King Jr	Joseph	\$178.13
			Koleshis	Cheryl	\$541.51
			Mapp	Rosanne	\$958.51
			Martin	Heide	\$384.75

## GROSS WAGES - CALENDAR YEAR 2022

### Election Workers/Registrars (Con't)

McKenney	Anita	\$662.63
Meehan	Marina	\$256.50
Muckenstrom	Ann	\$185.25
Newman	Kristen	\$898.52
Nickerson Jr	Robert	\$413.25
Stephson	Beth	\$762.38
		<hr/>
		\$13,818.87

### Conservation

Petrie	Anna	\$5,526.00
Marro	Matthew	\$15,029.52
		<hr/>
		\$20,555.52

### Planning

Wallace	Stephen	\$11,264.00
Carrine	Carl	\$300.00
Pruneau	Valmore	\$300.00
Santoro	John	\$300.00
		<hr/>
		\$12,164.00

### Facilities

Fullhart	Patrice	\$35,484.38
Goodwin	Matthew	\$1,477.12
Spinazola	Joseph	\$2,970.00
		<hr/>
		\$39,931.50

### Police

Gaudette	Sean	\$134,460.15
Chamberland	Gary	\$59,238.76
Blakeney	Scott	\$25,766.00
Bourque	Brian	\$98,073.58

### Police (Con't)

Chase	John	\$137,385.21
Dame	Benjamin	\$76,068.45
DiPietro	Andrew	\$51,802.48
Feller	Tomas	\$11,308.80
Ferguson	Ryan	\$128,411.28
Fugere	Steven	\$122,852.59
Johnson	Scott	\$156,710.35
Lamb	Kevin	\$832.00
McNally	John	\$4,732.00
Metcalfe	Dawn	\$52,014.16
Mucci	Steven	\$112,574.26
Norberg	Michael	\$108,891.44
Plouffe	Timothy	\$111,801.32
Pomeroy	Craig	\$122,072.36
Pomeroy	Lane	\$97,385.97
Porcaro	Michael	\$31,134.50
		<hr/>
		\$1,643,515.66

### Dispatch

MacArthur	Debra	\$83,475.65
Bracconnier	Michelle	\$57,861.45
Carlton	Nathan	\$2,141.45
Cortese	Alexander	\$769.58
Galeski	Jaine	\$5,912.06
Johnson	David	\$68,668.02
MacArthur	Garrett	\$65,162.49
Sargood	Robert	\$80,111.33
Serewicz	Beatrice	\$4,218.72
Smith	Wendy	\$6,231.97
Thebeau	Kim	\$448.26
		<hr/>
		\$375,000.98

## GROSS WAGES - CALENDAR YEAR 2022

Fire			Fire (Con't)		
Hurlbut Jr	David	\$147,998.56	Martin	Craig	\$388.84
Ares	Erik	\$103,367.87	Matthews	Edmoth	\$906.08
d'Entremont	Phil	\$107,899.32	McNamara	Emily	\$10,391.18
Emerton	James	\$120,229.32	Niemi	Todd	\$408.81
Kokernak	Thomas	\$140,343.80	Patterson	Jason	\$3,495.00
Nickerson III	Robert	\$108,980.53	Pierce	Paul	\$2,248.05
Baker	Charles	\$44.90	Piscione	Sarah	\$5,988.70
Baker	Christopher	\$3,393.74	Rainford	Emily	\$22,702.20
Bristol	Lisa	\$26,232.81	Rothenberg	Allyson	\$1,221.23
Brosque	Steven	\$98,417.96	Santos	Felipe	\$60,092.47
Casper	Ryan	\$4,928.59	Shea	Jamieson	\$50,177.56
Culliane	Erin	\$39,924.91	Shosey	Corey	\$31.06
Day	Deane	\$4,847.47	Smith	Brendan	\$187.70
Day	W David	\$41,016.61	Smith	Daniel	\$17,058.78
DiVirgilio	James	\$1,543.75	Smith	Stephanie	\$2,000.00
Dziokonski	Norman	\$6,834.88	Tamulen	Joshua	\$28,261.16
Finzio	Nicholas	\$15,856.08	Todorov	Emily	\$7,834.17
Gaudette	Daniel	\$14,922.03	Todorov	Shawn	\$15,825.27
Gianos	Sarah	\$353.28	Wilbur	Connor	\$16,778.44
Goulding	Katie	\$4,665.41			<hr/>
Grebinar	Kevin	\$13,552.29			\$1,319,223.52
Greenwood	David	\$12,388.26			
Hamilton	Brandon	\$13,133.45	<b>Building/Inspectors</b>		
Hoyt	Jennifer	\$2,128.19	Zahariadis	Anastasios	\$60,225.60
Johnson	David	\$10,673.62	Salmon	James	\$1,650.00
Kinahan	George	\$4,735.28	Page	Patricia	\$74,865.44
Laitala	John'	\$7,453.67	Pierce	Jeremy	\$600.00
Lutes	Steven	\$9,530.87	Janda	Robert	\$16,650.00
Lyons	Connor	\$6,693.73	Bjorkman	Curt	\$2,800.00
Maloney	William	\$1,135.64	Harrington	Gary	\$14,850.00
					<hr/>
					\$171,641.04

## GROSS WAGES - CALENDAR YEAR 2022

Animal Control			Light		
Massa	Emma	\$6,570.98	Borge	Darren	\$144,803.28
Jones	Kelly	<u>\$27,819.45</u>	Hamilton	Sean	\$55,358.43
		\$34,390.43	Fitzgerald	Brian	\$74,399.01
			Pierce	Brian	\$1,500.00
Public Works/Water			Provonsil	Brian	\$141,119.26
Mouradian	Ryan	\$131,608.64	Darlington	Eric	\$1,500.00
Armstrong	Daniel	\$34,231.57	Duhanel	Gavin	\$42,851.55
Coughlin	Nathan	\$6,082.80	Nordquist	John	\$129,133.67
Day	Devin	\$63,813.03	Curtin	Joseph	\$1,500.00
Donohue	Geoffrey	\$75,593.81	Hallen	Joshua	\$74,654.75
Elliot	Jennifer	\$43,729.50	Stapel	Kalyn	\$41,440.00
Genereux	Susan	\$52,447.12	Lewis	Karl	\$67,077.74
Gerardi	Paul	\$106,217.44	Flynn	Kerry	\$22,620.00
Gonsorcik	Evan	\$199.50	Ronan	Kevin	\$25,521.19
Hagberg	Andrew	\$27,909.10	Sanford	Kevin	\$121,212.23
Harvey	Robert	\$52,113.36	Hendley	Meggin	\$63,428.95
Johnson	David	\$5,992.65	Forigone	Nancy	\$74,413.45
Kokernak	Thomas	\$9,310.30	Wirzbicki	Phillip	\$33,628.89
Lucht	Noah	\$6,588.00	Peterson	Ross	\$141,482.70
Madden	Patrick	\$1,080.00	Gray	Tmothy	\$155,717.89
Pineo	Michael	\$1,575.00	Undrhill Jr	William	<u>\$106,855.70</u>
Rembestsy	David	\$68,383.92			\$1,520,218.69
Shepard	Walter	\$76,288.27	Board of Health		
Sherman	Kenneth	\$48,999.86	Favereau	David	\$72,449.56
Staples	Matthew	\$51,627.66	Hoffman	Allen	\$103.00
Tata	Eric	\$77,077.76	Martin	Catherine	\$103.00
Tomaio Jr	Michael	\$78,704.90	Heller	Elaine	\$5,287.86
Topper	Daniel	\$345.24	Nickerson	Kathleen	\$42,636.80
Watson	Alex	<u>\$73,945.53</u>	Moore	Robert	<u>\$12,792.50</u>
		\$1,093,864.96			\$133,372.72

## GROSS WAGES - CALENDAR YEAR 2022

Council on Aging			Library		
Buckley	Veronica	\$71,637.40	Grebinar	Alexandra	\$61,357.65
Decker	Bonita	\$1,339.50	Iannucci	Alisa	\$34,519.15
Lowe	Charles	\$13,273.50	Khan	Alyssa	\$3,868.20
Anderson-Felton	Claire	\$19,285.90	Perry	Betsy	\$88,934.60
Sousa	Diane	\$19,651.92	Orr	Deborah	\$58,610.43
Hill	Gary	\$338.52	Broderick	Ian	\$39,445.60
Ash	James	\$21,781.61	Sullivan	Kristen	\$13,197.34
Houck	Kim	\$2,740.75	Brooks	Leah	\$20,280.89
Chignola	Linda	\$9,783.98	Gold	Marjorie	\$17,697.56
Neitlich	Marlene	\$5,277.84	Gold	Philip	\$14,593.45
Harden	Natasha	\$1,054.50			<u>\$352,504.87</u>
Boardman	Nicole	\$9,557.31			
Dell	Pamela	\$26,752.84	Recreation		
Seidel	Robert	\$6,015.94	Gonsorcik	Shari	\$61,560.88
Protano	Robert	\$9,734.93	Belair	Jacquelyn	\$121.13
Hall	Ruby	\$16,143.50	Carney	Megan	\$4,914.50
		<u>\$234,369.94</u>	Croce	Emma	\$3,562.74
Senior Workoff			Donaldson	Broderick	\$3,397.99
Alfke	Bonnie	\$2,141.26	Gibson	Abigail	\$3,778.63
Chalmers	Melissa	\$1,223.82	Gibson	Andrew	\$3,694.74
Handy	Valerie	\$1,500.00	Golen	Saige	\$4,510.12
Hudson	Sheila	\$1,219.31	Golen	Summer	\$4,443.12
Larson	Marion	\$363.38	Gonsorcik	Andrew	\$4,790.91
Lein	Barry	\$1,500.00	Grady	Dylan	\$5,730.50
O'Connor	Mary	\$1,189.88	Grady	Luke	\$195.75
Somma	Enid	\$1,191.01	Hanchett	Benjamin	\$7,799.25
Warren	Melissa	\$1,500.00	Hare	Lauren	\$3,134.26
		<u>\$11,828.66</u>	Harewood	Shanne	\$4,337.13
Public Works-Board Members			Hauver	Shea	\$3,599.62
Parker	Andrew	\$600.00	Hitzrot	Xavier	\$2,977.00
Bershad	Blaine	\$1,198.51	Layton	Ellen	\$3,818.51
		<u>\$1,798.51</u>	Lungren	Tistan	\$4,197.50
			Mailberg	Jack	\$3,988.25
			Potter	Victoria	\$1,962.75
			Pulda	Mac	\$4,153.38
			Puterbaugh	Theodore	\$2,966.51
			Welsh	Evangeline	\$3,189.76
					<u>\$146,824.93</u>

<b>TOTAL GROSS WAGES FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2022</b>	<b><u>\$7,715,620.90</u></b>
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## BOARD, COMMITTEE AND DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Animal Control Officer Kelly Jones and back up Animal Control Officer Emma Massa attended the Animal Control Officers Association of Massachusetts (ACOAM) ACO Academy this year, graduating in October as Certified Animal Control Officers.

In 2022, Animal Control received 491 calls with 619 animals involved. Of the 619 animals involved, 454 were domestic animals and 165 were wildlife animals.

The Sterling Animal Control Officer issued 170 citations this year, 27 of which were warnings. These citations were issued for the following offenses: 145 for unlicensed dog, 23 for loose dog, and 2 for unlicensed kennel.

ACO Jones submitted 40 Criminal Complaints through the Clinton District Court for unpaid citations and unlicensed dogs. Of these, 6 were issued, 1 was continued, 22 were dismissed (licenses were obtained and citations were rectified prior to court appearance) and 11 are pending. Of the complaints issued, one went for arraignment and resulted in a bench warrant due to the party failing to show.

Two rabies clinics were held again this year. The spring clinic brought in 25 cats and 73 dogs for 98 total and the fall clinic brought in 23 cats and 32 dogs for 55 total. In total, 153 animals were vaccinated through these clinics this year.

Dog owners licensed 1,586 dogs, leaving only 21 dogs unlicensed; this is 98% of known dogs in town licensed in 2022. Licensing enforcement was increased this year through email, telephone, and mail contact with owners, citations, and court action. The numbers for this year show a large increase in compliance from 2021 as a result of these efforts.

The number of intake animals this year was 38; 33 domestic animals and 5 wildlife animals. These animals include strays that are picked up, injured wildlife that are transported to vets or rehabbers, and pets that are found and held until the owner is located.

Visit [www.sterling-ma.gov/animal-control](http://www.sterling-ma.gov/animal-control) to see the complete 2022 Year End Animal Control report.

Respectfully Submitted by Animal Control Officer Kelly Jones

**TOWN OF STERLING  
2022 ANNUAL REPORT  
BOARD OF HEALTH**

Massachusetts Boards of Health are responsible and have statutory obligations under Mass General Laws, for state and local regulations, disease prevention and control, health and environmental protection, and promoting a healthy community. The main purpose of the Board of Health (BOH) has been to enforce Title V of the State Environmental Code, which is the minimum standard for the design and installation of subsurface disposal systems for sanitary sewage in the Town of Sterling. In addition, the Sterling Board of Health has issued supplemental regulations to the Title V Code (Sterling Board of Health Subsurface Disposal Regulations, updated 12/9/2022), as well as to local Well Regulations. The intent of these regulations is to protect and improve the public health and welfare of the citizens.

The Sterling Board of Health consists of a three-member Board that meets the second Thursday of each month in the Butterick Municipal Office Building at 1 Park Street. The Department consists of the Health Agent, David Favreau and the Associate Health Agent, Kathleen Nickerson who, between them, handle the day-to-day activities. Additionally, Emma Massa performs the duties of the Animal Inspector; Robert Moore is an additional Food and Septic Inspector; and Elaine Heller manages the Board Meeting Minutes, plus additional administration work. All are reached through the BOH office at 978-422-8111 X2305.

The Board would like to congratulate Emma Mass, Sterling's new Animal Inspector on her first successful year on the job.

In 2022, all operations of the Sterling Board of Health were carried out as required. Results from all permits and licenses issued include the witnessing of 122 percolation tests, 244 deep hole tests (soil testing), 113 Title V inspections, 55 food establishment inspections, 2 pool inspection, 21 camp inspections, 8 samples taken from the public beach for water testing and inspections, etc. Animal inspections in 2022 associated to rabies consisted of 25 (2 cats and 23 dogs) quarantines for possible rabies...all negative; 4 bats were tested...all negative; and barn inspections resumed in 2022 as they were suspended in 2020 due to Covid19. Twenty-Seven stables were inspected along with 21 barns with farm animals. In addition, the BOH is also responsible for responding to nuisance complaints and housing complaints that amounted to 35 complaints in 2022.

Actual Permits/Licenses issued by the Board of Health for 2022 were Camp Permits 1; Septic Construction Permits 58; Food Establishment Permits 81; Stable Permits 27; Funeral Home Permit 1; Septic Hauler Licenses 17; Septic Installer Licenses 41; Pool Permits 2; Private Well Permits 9 and 1 Beaver Permit.

Living with Covid19 through 2022 was far less stressful than in 2021. In this third year of Covid19 and its variants, there was far less stress in the system as Sterling Residents could more easily find test kits, including those provided by the State through the BOH office...distributed by the Senior Center, the Library and the BOH Office. This combined with more knowledgeable information on the disease and responses from the State, resulted in less questions and complaints flowing through the Board of Health Office. The disease is still keeping everyone very busy.

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Public Health Emergency Preparedness is a major part of the Board's responsibilities, working alongside the Fire Department, the Police Department and DPW to be prepared for emergency situations which have a health-related component. There were a number of related activities in 2022:

- The Board of Health is host to Massachusetts Department of Public Health regional assets: a satellite phone for emergency communications and an AM Advisory Radio Station. The latter is housed in the Emergency Operations Center at the Fire Station. This equipment is made available if requested by other local boards of health.
  - The satellite phone capability is tested quarterly.
  - The AM Advisory Radio station can be used to transmit emergency or advisory information to the public during emergency or public safety incidents. It broadcasts on AM radio channel 1670 (MHz).
- The Sterling Board of Health provides a cache of pet crates and a pet-shelter set-up kit from the PHEP Coalition (Public Health Emergency Preparedness). The supplies are housed with the Sterling Fire Department and can be used when an emergency pet shelter is needed near a human shelter. Details of the cache have been shared with the Animal Control Officers and Animal Control Advisory Board.
- Sterling public health volunteers participated in deployment call-down drills with the Wachusett Medical Reserve Corps, operated out of Hubbardston and the Worcester Regional Medical Reserve Corps out of Worcester.
- The Wachusett Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) operates out of Hubbardston and serves 17 communities in Northeastern Central Massachusetts. WMRC volunteers serve a vital role by assisting their communities with ongoing public health needs. This is accomplished through community health profiles that identify needs, developing educational programs, providing screening clinics and

working with the local health officials as a resource for public health initiatives that they may target as important to their specific community. The role of the healthcare community in disaster preparation is to identify resources applicable to physical, social and psychological effects of a disaster, to identify population groups that are at the greatest risk during a disaster, to provide disaster education in advance of the event, and to take responsibility for the health of the community following a disaster. Part of our role in disaster planning is to support community disaster planning, assist in determining community health hazards, and assist to determine existing measures and resources that aid and reduce the impact of a given hazard. The WMRC members are not the planners, they are a resource for the planners with volunteers who have been screened for skills and credentialed per MRC guidelines.

Health professionals (current, retired, or otherwise employed) and others with backgrounds such as clerical, childcare, legal, accounting, clergy are invited to join our MRC to use their skills in many areas such as Clinical Medical Services, Counseling/Social Services, Education, Food and Board Services, Financial Assistance, Administration, Advisory Boards, and as a Legal Consultants to help the organization to grow and shape its future to meet the needs of the communities of northern Worcester County

- Some staff, board members, and volunteers participated in the following events, trainings and exercises:
  - Participate in monthly meetings of the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition Steering Committee and serve on ad hoc committees.
  - Participant in organizational meetings of Wachusett Medical Reserve Corps
  - Participated in After Action Report activities for 72 regional communities. Result was a booklet and presentation made to 80+ local participants.
  - Because of the COVID-19 pandemic in-person courses were limited. The following were held later in the year:
    - \* "Cyber Security in Public Health" (Zoom)
    - \* "After Action activities for COVID" Clinic activity
    - \* "Central Mass. COVID After-Action Summary" PHEP presentation
    - \* "Tabletop exercise of Tornado scenario" with Wachusett Medical Reserve Corps and Leominster EMD.
- A total of 155 Flu shots were provided to seniors, employees and public safety personnel by CVS at the Senior Center with the assistance of members of the local Community Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.).

STERLING BOARD OF HEALTH



## Town of Sterling Conservation Commission

1 Park St, Butterick Municipal Bldg- Room 207.

Sterling Massachusetts 01564

Tel 978 422 8111 ext 2321

Email [apetire@sterling-ma.gov](mailto:apetire@sterling-ma.gov)

### STERLING CONSERVATION COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT for 2022

Respectfully Submitted By: Barbara Roberti, Michael Pineo, Sue Valentine, Steve Pavlovich, Scott Michalak, Matthew S. Marro Associate, Christopher O'Neill, Anna Petrie as Agent

The Sterling Conservation Commission is a seven-member municipal authority dedicated to the protection of Sterling's Wetlands and other natural resources. The Commission enforces the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act MGL. Ch 131 s 40 as amended. The Commission processed Notices of Intent, request for determinations as well as pursued enforcement and continued its efforts on storm water regulation. The continuing covid-19 pandemic continued to provide challenges and the commission in response has offered a zoom hybrid option for those not yet comfortable with going to the commissions in person meetings.

The Commission also was active on other agencies as well with members serving on the Earth Removal Board, The Open Space and Recreation Committee and the Chapter 40 B review Committee. The Commission works hand in hand with the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Commission's office agent also conducted site inspections for building permit applications and compliance inspections for existing conservation permits. The agent is also providing technical assistance in grant applications and implementations of awarded grants. This Year as of June 1, 2022, Matthew Marro retired as agent after 22 years. He is still working with the commission as an associate member. We welcome Anna Petrie as the commission agent.

The Conservation Commission, in 2022, continues it's planning for the implementation of a trails system to promote the use of the land in a manner consistent with the goals of open space and recreation and is pursuing a second phase of trails work in the Swett Hill/Hall Ave area. The Commission was awarded a trails grant for a connector trail for the Hall Ave Conservation Area to the former Mudgett Orchard which will allow residents to walk from the Mudgett, to the Hall Ave parcel ending at the town beach.

The Commission has enacted prior forest stewardship planning with the goal of managing conservation-controlled forest land for ecosystem health and examination as a sustainable source of some revenue via Timber harvesting. Planning and bidding for lumber management at the Commission property at Hall Ave and Park Street due to be implemented for calendar year 2022. This has been facilitated by the retention of Gary Gouldrup, certified forester to aid the commission in planning and bidding. The Park Street area was severely damaged during the ice storm of 2008 and the harvesting will also result in clean-up of storm damage and re-establishment and enhancement of the trail network.

The Commission looks forward to another productive year in working towards the continued implementation of the open space plan and the implementation of its recently completed forest stewardship plan.

# **Council on Aging**

## **2022 Annual Report**

Adjusting to new standards of procedure in the wake of the COVID pandemic, the Sterling Senior Center fully resumed in-person programming during 2022. Regular review of COVID data and protocols guided delivery of programs and services to ensure that our most vulnerable would be able to safely participate. This enabled the Sterling Senior Center to continue to meet its mission to maintain the health and well-being of the Sterling seniors and to assist them in maintaining their independence.

The Senior Center continued to provide assistance for online enrollment for vaccines and boosters as well as ensuring that seniors were able to access their vaccine records. The Center became a regular source for COVID test kits, distributing over 650 tests. Additional assistance in the form of outreach, education and transportation also was provided.

Other outreach services, including well checks, telephone assurance, application assistance, case management, home care referrals, health benefit counseling, medical equipment loans, food pantry assistance and delivery, SNAP benefits, fuel assistance, Emergency Broadband Benefits, and more were provided to 626 seniors during the year. Essential services such as the Elder Keep Well Clinic and Foot Care Clinic were provided regularly to 78 older adults. The annual flu clinic was provided to 150 residents in October utilizing the successful drive-through format.



The COA/MART accessible vans provided 4570 trips for seniors and those of any age with a disability. This marked a 110% percent increase from 2021. Masks were required on the vans throughout the year. Limited-seat shopping and cultural trips returned. The Sterling Senior Center continued year 2 of a pilot project with MART to utilize ride software technology to provide more rides to more people.

Volunteers delivered 4028 Meals on Wheels to our homebound. The weekday congregate meal was fully re-instated, serving 5543 congregate lunch meals throughout the year. Evening Dinner events returned. Occasional Grab n Go events provided another meal option. New ServSafe regulations continued to ensure a pleasant and safe dining experience.



Exercise, social / recreational programming, and support groups transitioned to onsite programs with expanded room size or constraints on group sizes to encourage adequate social distancing. Several programs, including yoga, ukulele club and Parkinson's support continued to offer zoom options with the in-person programs. 316 older adults participated in our exercise programs, 40 in our support groups and 555 in our regularly scheduled social and recreational programming. The newsletter, a 12-page color publication, was mailed or emailed to Sterling residents 60 years of age and older each month.



In terms of special programming, the annual car show made a successful return to its original format in the Senior Center parking lot. Our Veteran's Day meal event featured a lunch or dinner option in order to accommodate 100 veterans and their guests. The annual COA holiday party changed to an open house format to safely accommodate a larger crowd. Art displays from area artists once again adorned the walls of the Senior Center with bi-monthly artist receptions.

Our volunteers continued to be the backbone of our organization. 113 individuals provided over 8185 hours of service in the kitchen, on reception, delivering meals, assisting with events, friendly visiting and programming. Volunteer involvement not only meets the service needs of the Senior Center, but it also provides the community spirit, vibrant energy and acceptance-of-all attitude that is vital to achieving our mission. The Senior Center extends a heartfelt thank you to all our volunteers who participated this year.



The COA Board worked with the Director to support strong COVID safety guidelines and goals for participation throughout the year. The support, recommendations and guidance of the Board was invaluable in determining how to move forward each month. Additionally, the COA Board worked with the Director to develop a five-year beautification / landscaping plan to enhance curb appeal and increase participants' use of outside areas and the patio.

The Friends of Sterling Seniors (FOSS) continued their advocacy and fundraising efforts, including the monthly pancake breakfast and a raffle; and the annual holiday cookie sale and craft fair made a successful return. By the fall of 2022, FOSS was at pre-COVID level of financial support to the Senior Center. This included support of our coffee bar, breakfast options, themed meals and more.

In 2022 the Senior Center and Recreation Department co-chaired the Age and Dementia Friendly (ADF) Sterling Workgroup as the process continued to implement the Action Plan accepted by AARP and Dementia Friendly Massachusetts. Outreach continued to promote the Take Me Home Program, a voluntary registration program for

those with dementia, autism or any cognitive concern. The ADF Facebook page was created, ADF transportation and signage were implemented into the Sterling Fair, and plans to formulate community awareness were developed. The ADF work group meets the last Tuesday of each month at 6pm at the Senior Center. The public is encouraged to attend.

The Council on Aging / Senior Center would like to thank all the various organizations and businesses that partnered with us throughout the year: Sterling Fire Department, Sterling Police Department, Sterling DPW, Conant Library, Recreation Department, Board of Health, FOSS, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Wachusett Rotary, Veterans' Services, Grange, Garden Club, Sew What Club, Sterling Village, Sunrise Assisted Living, Growing Places, And Away We Go Travel. The Center would also like to thank all our local farmers who donated fresh produce and more throughout the growing season and all the residents and organizations who generously gave donations to support our meals and other programming.

Respectfully Submitted,

Veronica Buckley, Director  
Sterling Senior Center



**Sterling Cultural Council  
One Park Street  
Sterling, MA 01564**

*Where Art & Culture Meet the Community*

## **Sterling Cultural Council**

The Sterling Cultural Council (SCC) strives to fund applications which will bring cultural events to as many residents of Sterling as possible. To this end, the council attempts to fund a broad spectrum of applications which appeal to all ages and interests. We continue to promote the SCC to the community and communities around us to provide the most equitable distribution of State and Town funds to promote the arts.

### **Sterling Annual Report:**

The Sterling Cultural Council (SCC) is the local extension of the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) and is responsible for administering grants to fund cultural activities that benefit Sterling and local residents. The SCC is comprised of 6 members; appointed by the Select Board of Sterling. In the past, the majority of the Council's responsibilities were accomplished between December and January. The Sterling Cultural Council meets and operates within the guidelines of the established by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

This year, 2023, we were able to fund most requests that met the State and local requirements. As a rule total funding does not meet the need for full funding of Grants submitted. We were able to support the Sterling requests, but not all. We, Sterling Council Members, strive to provide the best programs that will be of interest to Sterling Residents and easy access to venues.

As an outreach to the Community, required by the Massachusetts Cultural Council guidelines, we surveyed local people asking what they would like to see. They stated they would like to see; Art lessons for preteens and teens, Storytelling, Rock and Roll band, Singing bands, The Moth Radio Hour, A Talent show, Slam poetry, Human Library, Monthly Coffee House, PLP, Hold Art in the Park in Winter or Spring in church.

We have received applications from: The Conant Public Library, Sterling Senior Center, Sterling Recreation Department, Sterling Arts Collaborative, Virginia Thurston Healing Garden, Sterling Community Theater, Classic Movie Nights, etc. 31 Grant requests in total, 18 funded. We are very pleased to see a variety of new submissions from previous years. This is an increase of 15 Applications.

In 2022 we established the second "Art in the Park" event! Another success. This year (2023) it is our intention to sponsor an Art event and further boost the interest in the Arts in our community. We aspire to continue to promote the various artists (of all genres) in our community. We were delighted by musical artists from various groups, and wowed by the many disciplines of art on display.

Respectfully submitted: Rosanne Mapp, Chair; Patricia Ward, Secretary; Christine Corff, Treasurer; Judith Doherty, Member; Julia Doherty, Member; Sean Boyle, Member.

## 2022 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS ANNUAL REPORT

The Department of Public Works is responsible for the planning, design, operations and management of the Town's public works infrastructure and assets and provides professional technical and management expertise to other municipal departments and town officials. Sterling's infrastructure includes:

- roads
  - sidewalks, bridges, guard rail, street signs
- stormwater
  - road drainage, catch basins, culverts, outfalls
- cemeteries
- parks and playgrounds
- the closed town landfill
- town-wide fleet and equipment maintenance
- public water supply
  - pumping, storage, distribution
- winter snow & ice operations
- management of the curbside trash & recycling program
- management necessary to provide safe and reliable transportation systems for each of our municipal public safety operations, residents, businesses and visitors.

### *Personnel*

2022 marked a more stable workforce for the DPW than 2021, despite the global workforce climate. For the entirety of the summer months, the DPW was fully staffed with both full time staff and seasonal workers, allowing for a productive season in all aspects of the DPW's work.

### *General Operations*

2022 brought stability to the DPW both in terms of workforce and workload. The Department has put a focus on using a systematic and well thought out approach to both day to day work as well as more involved projects. The Department was able to catch up on regular maintenance activities, completing street sweeping on all Town roads along with roadside mowing across most of the town. These two tasks were long overdue, however going forward they should be more efficient with the attention and time that was dedicated to them in 2022.



*The DPW held its first annual open house on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The event was well attended and we look forward to hosting it in future years.*

The Town took delivery of its new six wheel dump truck which was approved at the FY22 annual Town Meeting. The truck was immediately put into service as Truck 7 and has been a welcome addition to the DPW fleet.

### ***Roadway Maintenance***

The DPW responded to numerous requests for work along and adjacent to the Town's roadways.

The road above the twin culverts on Sterling's portion of Fairbanks Street was excavated and re-constructed with proper backfill material after the road began to sink. New concrete end walls were formed and poured by DPW staff and the road was re-paved.



*The Fairbanks Street culvert ready for new pavement.*

Twenty-four catch basins and manholes were re-built at various locations. The re-builds typically include removing pavement around the grates and making necessary repairs such as replacing block, frames and covers, adding proper backfill, re-cementing the frame and grate to the structure, and re-paving the area. A select few re-builds included complete structure replacement with pre-cast concrete structures.

Using the town's recently completed pavement management plan, the DPW supported the roadway paving operations in a big way in 2022, replacing upwards of eleven roadway culvert crossings and replacing or repairing four drainage structures. After the road paving was completed, the DPW worked to back up the edge of the new pavement with material generated at the Town's sand and gravel pit. This work will continue in the Spring of 2023.

Below is a list of the roadway paving projects completed in 2022:

### **2022 – Roadway Paving**

<b>Street</b>	<b>Pavement Treatment</b>	<b>Linear Feet</b>
Kendall Hill Road	Reclaim & Pave	7,500'
Osgood Road	Reclaim & Pave	2,300'
Beaman Road	Reclaim & Pave	500'
Clinton Road	Mill & Pave	500'

In summary, the DPW completed a total of 2.04 miles of public road surface improvements in 2022, representing approximately 2-percent of the total miles of public roads in Sterling. Additional to the roads listed above, the DPW has secured contracts for 2.95 additional miles of surface improvements, that are expected to begin in the Spring of 2023.



*Binder course being laid on Kendall Hill Road*

In addition to the re-surfacing projects, the DPW executed a contract to have approximately 15 miles of road crack sealed. Crack sealing is a quick and economical way to prolong the life of a road. The DPW plans to put out a crack sealing contract annually to “keep good roads good”.

Using the metric generated by the pavement management plan, the completed paving and crack seal work brought the Town’s pavement condition index from a score of 71 out of 100 to a score of 74 out of 100 based on updates to the plan. This is a dramatic increase considering the average score is made up of all 90 miles of Town owned roadways.

It was discovered early in the year that there were upwards of ten miles of Town owned and maintained roads that was not included in the Town’s Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MADOT) roadway inventory. The MADOT roadway inventory is used to assign state aided roadwork funds to the towns of the Commonwealth. All of these roads were surveyed by Town staff, and submitted to be added to the roadway inventory. Additionally, a pavement management survey was completed on these roads, as they had been excluded initially. We expect these additional miles of road to increase our chapter 90 allotment from the state going into 2023

During fall of 2022, Sterling expressed interest to the MADOT about their “municipal paving program” which uses state funds to pave town owned, state numbered routes. We are happy to report that the state selected Route 62 from Old Princeton Road East to Reed Road and Route 140 from Crowley Road to Dana Hill Road as part of this program. The roads will be paved using state funds and state resources, and will not tap into any local funds or Chapter 90 funds. This work is expected to take place in 2023.

### ***Snow & Ice***

Snow and ice remediation remains a top priority of the DPW, in order to provide the safest possible road and sidewalk conditions during the winter months. This task is undertaken by the combined efforts of all DPW employees including a small number of outside contractors.

To provide reliable, safe and timely snow plowing and salting services - the DPW reminds Sterling residents not to plow, shovel, or snow blow snow onto the public ways. Depositing snow onto a public way is a violation of a Sterling "by-law" and fines may be assessed to violators. To assist our equipment operators during plowing operations and to minimize damages to private property - residents are advised to install snow stakes at the edge of the street to identify walls, fences and/or other related private assets covered by snow.



*Town trucks ready to plow the roads*

It is also recommended that mailboxes be secured and set back from the roadside to prevent damage from the snow that is displaced during the snow plowing operations. The majority of resident mailbox-related damage can be avoided if residents make necessary repairs and secure their mailboxes prior to the commencement of the winter season. Similarly, it is the property owner's responsibility to clear snow in front of their mailbox and at the end of their driveways. Property owners are also advised to place snow on the roadside end of their driveways on the downward side of the travel lane of their driveway aprons to reduce large deposits of snow resulting from snow plowing operations.

Members of the DPW have many years of experience dealing with winter weather conditions. During snow events it is important to note that when traveling - residents and commuters alike - can assist our snow plow equipment operators and avoid collisions/minimize windshield damages - by keeping a safe distance of at least three hundred (300) feet behind Town-equipment at all times. Our trucks make frequent stops and turns to provide safe and reliable public roads (and sidewalks) for our residents and businesses. Your patience, courtesy, and stopping to think goes a long way in making winter driving safe for all.

### ***Brush and Leaf Disposal***

The leaf composting and brush facility was staffed during various times throughout the year by DPW staff. This service is a very popular operation for the residents of Sterling. The materials generated from this program are processed by the DPW and used on numerous town-wide DPW projects. For winter use by residents, the DPW maintains a small quantity of winter sand/salt mix at our 171 Worcester Road facility.

### ***Vehicle Maintenance***

The DPW in-house mechanics maintain all DPW, and assists with Municipal Light, Fire, Police and general municipal vehicles– to assure that all equipment is ready, reliable and safe for day-to-day and emergency-related use. The work completed this year included numerous large scale repairs to various DPW vehicles in addition to providing day-to-day preventative maintenance and/or repairs.

The activities of the mechanics in 2022 included:

- The conversion of truck 15, a 6 wheel dump that typically had the dump body removed annually to be replaced with a sander. Instead, the truck was modified so the sander slides into the dump body this making this a usable dump truck year round.
- Went through all vehicles to ensure inspection readiness and completed inspections on both large and small vehicles.
- Completed numerous fabrication and metal working projects to better ready our fleet for both the summer and winter months.

### ***Trash and Recycling***

The DPW is responsible for managing the curbside trash and recycling contract with the contracted vendor. In June of 2022, The Town and Casella Waste Management executed a new three year contract for “automated” trash and recycling in Sterling. At the end of September, 2022, Casella started delivering 65 gallon trash totes and 96 gallon recycling totes to qualifying residents in the Town. September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 marked the first day of the new program.

In 2022, Casella picked up and disposed of 2,198 tons of trash and 895 tons of recycling.

Sterling continued to be one of the top users of the Wachusett Recycle Center located off Raymond Huntington Highway in West Boylston. Residents are encouraged to use the center for bulk items and anything that is not accepted by the curbside trash and recycling program.

### ***Cemeteries***

The DPW maintains 6 cemeteries; Hillside Cemetery, Oakhill Cemetery, Chocksett Cemetery, Legg Cemetery, Fairbanks Cemetery and Cookshire Cemetery. These cemeteries are mowed frequently to keep a neat appearance and checked regularly for branches and downed trees.

In 2022, seventeen (17) cremation burials and fourteen (14) full burials occurred.

The cemeteries received their usual special attention ahead of the Memorial Day holiday, with numerous flowers being planted and the beds being mulched. Regular mowing occurred as needed the rest of the year.

A new water line was started at Hillside Cemetery in anticipation of creating several new cemetery sections in 2023. Cemetery lots are selling quickly, and these new sections will add over one hundred new lots to the cemetery.

### ***Parks and Fields***

The DPW staff maintains the various parks and fields located around Town. Athletic fields include the Griffin Road Fields, Muddy Pond Fields, Redstone Hill Fields and the West Sterling Fields. Parks include Sholan Park at Lake Waushacum and Memorial Park located behind the fire station.



*Sholan Park with newly generated and graded beach sand*

This past year with the assistance of state funds, the DPW purchased new screens for its material screening plant, to make a more fine sand using material from the sand pit to spread at the beach. This work was part of the upgrades taking place at Sholan Park to ensure this valuable Town resource is being used to its potential. Additionally, the DPW with the assistance of the Fire Department re-built the swimming raft with new floats to replace the water logged existing floats.

Memorial Park was mowed and trimmed as needed, and all beds in the center of town were mulched ahead of the Memorial Day holiday. Throughout the year maintenance was performed on an as needed basis at the request of the recreation department on various fields and at the beach.

The fields were regularly maintained with the help of numerous seasonal laborers. The dry weather had a significant impact on the grass growth during the peak of the summer, but the fields rebounded nicely during the fall months.



*The Memorial Park ahead of the annual Memorial Day Events*

## ***Water Department***

Sterling produced 227.912 million gallons of water in 2022 from our own water sources. The breakdown of the sources are as follows:

### Route 12 (Worcester Road) Wells

Well 2A	36.931 million gallons	16%
Well 2B	<u>22.316 million gallons</u>	<u>10%</u>
Total	59.247 million gallons	26%

### Redemption Rock Wells

Well 3	57.205 million gallons	25%
Well 4	51.895 million gallons	23%
Well 5	<u>59.565 million gallons</u>	<u>26%</u>
Total	168.665 million gallons	74%

**Total Produced                      227.912 million gallons 100%**

The Town currently operates five (5) groundwater wells and three (3) water storage tanks.

The Town's water supply sources include the Route 12 wells, also known as the Worcester Road wells and the Redemption Rock Wells, also known as the West Sterling wells. The Route 12 wells consist of wells 2A, 2B and 2C. Well 2C was found to have elevated levels of per and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and has been shut down since 2021. Repeat and regular testing at wells 2A and 2B have shown minimal or no levels of PFAS. These wells are located on Worcester Road across from Muddy Pond Road.

The Redemption Rock Wells consist of wells 3, 4, and 5 and are the Town's largest water producer. These wells are located off Route 140 in West Sterling.

All wells are treated with potassium hydroxide that raises the naturally low pH of the groundwater to make the water less corrosive and UV light for disinfection which kills any naturally occurring bacteria. In the summer, sodium hypochlorite is also added to the water as an additional barrier for disinfection.

This year 16 new water customers were added to the system, bringing the total to 2,487.

The water department staff took on a number of projects during 2022 on top of the regular station checks and maintenance that occur 365 days per year.

Investigation continued into a new water source for the town off Crowley Road. An 8-inch diameter test well was drilled and preliminary pumping tests were conducted. Unfortunately we did not see the results we were hoping for, and will be altering our plan going into 2023 to attempt to get the volume we desire out of multiple small wells instead of one larger one.

The Town took delivery of its long awaited new water meter reading system, and will begin rolling them out in the Spring of 2023. These new water meters and readers will read using the same system as the Sterling Municipal Light Department, giving us a reliable meter reading system and significantly reducing missed or estimated water reads.

For the first time in several years, the Department borrowed significant money approved at Town Meeting for the replacement of water mains. A \$1,300,000 borrowing authorization was approved at the May 2022 Town Meeting, and engineering was started on water main replacement on Redstone Hill Road from Route 62 to the Lancaster Town Line. Construction on the first half of this project is expected to take place in 2023.

In closing, we would like to thank the staff of this DPW for their hard work in continuing to make Sterling a great place to live.

Respectfully submitted:

Deane Day, Chairman, DPW Board  
Blaine Bershad, Member, DPW Board  
Andrew Parker, Member, DPW Board  
Ryan Mouradian, P.E., DPW Superintendent

## Economic Development Committee 2022

To some degree the EDC works quietly to achieve levels of economic growth in Sterling. They endeavor to work with other Boards and Committees to move our Town forward.

Since its inception the EDC (2012) has worked in several arenas to promote growth while keeping eyes on maintaining a proudful rural character for Sterling.

A few initiatives the EDC has worked on and continue to push forward:

- Proponents of agreement to work with MassWorks so to better position Sterling for potential grants
- Aided in completing Sterling's Master Plan
- Works closely with MRPC, Town Planner and local Boards while looking at our zoning and possible roadblocks for business
- Actively seeks new business by contacting possible 'clients'. Emma's Cafe is prime example of Committee soliciting new business for vacant spaces
- Completed a 'how to' business guide in conjunction with Building Dept which is available in digital and hard copy
- EDC continues to work on improving Sterling's assets knowing that to attract new business we need to highlight what we have to offer i.e.
  - Downtown Renovation working with Town Administrator, DPW and SMLD
  - Lake upgrades and safety initiative with Conservation and Recreation
  - Worked diligently with Mass Dot and DPW to improve the access to center via Rte 12 beautification (islands)
  - Support of 1835 renovations so to use the building for business, entertainment etc.
  - Lead the Sterling wide Clean up Day and encouraged other entities to participate i.e Garden Club, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and general public
  - Saw the installment of cameras on Rte 12 bridge overheads to inhibit graffiti on bridges in conjunction with Police, State Officials



*Recognition/ribbon cutting of new business with our EDC members and State Reps*

- EDC established a Business Recognition Program...recognizing and showing appreciation for the business's contribution to Sterling, both new and old. Visited the businesses and awarded certificates w/State Reps to that end
- Continue to seek out properties for commercial and industrial uses
- Extended knowledge of the EDC by writing and publishing updates in our Local paper. Looking to extend that knowledge via a Web Site

As a Committee we are appreciative of the funding the Taxpayers have afforded us. We are presently working with the Town Planner on a Visitor's Guide for our commercial and retail businesses. We have also worked with the Planner to have Sterling be part of the North Central Mass 'Johnny Appleseed' publication. We are revisiting our 'Why Sterling' brochure.

All of these efforts strive to bring Sterling and their businesses to the forefront. We endeavor to attract not only new business, but visitors to our Historic little town to support that which we have!

In order that Sterling enjoy a robust economic base we need to continue to support and recognize all of our existing businesses as well as endeavoring to attract new!

Let's keep Sterling in business!

Respectfully,

Jim Patacchiola Chair

Roseann Mapp

Paul Cathcart

Richard Maki

Keith Cordial

Maureen Cranson

## The Sterling Fair Committee

For the Sterling Fair Committee, 2022 marked the great return of the Fair after a 2-year hiatus related to Covid.

The theme of our Fair was "Seeds of Hope 2022", and that theme was very appropriate. The Sterling Fair Committee faced a lot of challenges before our 2022 Fair, including the lingering Covid pandemic. We faced uncertainty of whether our vendors, our carnival, and our fair goers would return after we were forced to cancel our 2021 Fair only 12 days before that Fair. Our biggest challenge was the surprise of a new insurance policy just days before the Fair, and the cost was significant.

As always, the wonderful volunteers of the Sterling Fair Committee overcame every challenge presented to them, and we had the most successful Fair to date. We were blessed with perfect weather and great attendance. Again, I owe much gratitude to the Fair Committee members who spent many hours making the virtual Fair triumphant.

For 2022, we were fortunate to recruit a number of volunteers that added vitality and a new spirit to the Fair and the Fair Committee.

As of this writing, the Sterling Fair Committee has already started preparing for 2023. Our biggest challenge for 2023 will be the added insurance cost that has been quoted for at least double the price of 2022, if not more.

We are always looking for anyone who is interested in becoming a volunteer and/or a Committee Member. If interested, please contact us at [www.sterlingfair.org](http://www.sterlingfair.org)

Respectfully submitted,

*Doug Downey*

Sterling Fair Committee Chair

**ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022**  
**Sterling Fire Department & Fire Department Ambulance**  
**Sterling Emergency Management Agency**

I am pleased to submit the annual report for the Sterling Fire Department and Sterling Emergency Management Agency for calendar year 2022.

**The Department**

The Sterling Fire Department is a combination department with both full-time and on-call personnel. Currently the department has nine full-time personnel including the fire chief, and the administrative assistant who manages the office, ambulance billing, incident reporting and scheduling inspections. We have a fire prevention and code enforcement lieutenant who works weekdays, four firefighter / paramedics who work alternating 24-hour shifts and two firefighter / paramedics that alternate working four 12-hour day shifts. In addition to our full-time staff, there are thirty-five on-call and per-diem personnel that provide response to the community throughout the year based on their availability with job, school, and family commitments.

We operate out of a single fire station built in 2005, located in the center of town. Our response apparatus includes, a command vehicle, two engines, one aerial ladder, one rescue, two advanced life support ambulances, one paramedic intercept vehicle, three forestry trucks, a boat, and three support trailers including a hazardous materials trailer, an off-road ATV trailer, and emergency management response trailer. We also have members that respond as part of the Fire District Regional Dive Team and Technical Rescue Response Team. Sterling is a member of Mutual Aid Fire District 8, which encompasses 33 cities and towns within Central Massachusetts.

**Mission Statement**

The Sterling Fire Department is committed to providing the highest level of public safety services for our community. We protect the lives and property of our residents and visitors through fire suppression, emergency medical response, disaster management, fire prevention and public education.

**Vision Statement**

Deliver a quality, high level service to our customers. Promote the personal and professional growth of our members. Minimize the impact of loss through our prevention efforts including inspections, code enforcement and pre-fire planning. Provide public safety education to our community and promote the health and safety of our citizens. Work seamlessly with our public safety partners.

**Emergency and Service Calls**

Fire Department personnel responded to a total of 2,151 incidents (*calls for service*) in calendar year 2022. This was an increase of 198 incidents compared to 2021, this represents a 9.2% increase in call volume, and an increase of 1,120 incidents since 2012, ten years ago. There were over 400 instances of simultaneous calls in 2022.

The department responds to a variety of incidents including, medical emergencies, alarm investigations, brush fires, carbon monoxide investigations, motor vehicle accidents, chimney fires, structure fires, mutual-aid and service calls including house and vehicle lockouts. Our department responds mutual aid to our bordering communities, and we receive mutual aid from these same communities for fires, car accidents and medical emergencies as needed. There were three major loss house fires in 2022, resulting in no injuries or deaths.



MVA with Entrapment  
Leominster Road

House Fire  
Griffin Road

Additional staffing is provided throughout the year for major weather events, such as snowstorms, severe thunderstorm threats, and other severe weather.

The summer of 2022 posed some unique challenges throughout the State with some major wildfires due to the extreme dry conditions. Sterling firefighters staffed forestry task forces that responded to Marlborough, and a structural task force that responded to Ashby as a result. EMS crews saw another spike in COVID-19 responses and transports in late 2022.



Engine 4 Drafting from Pond in Ashby  
Part of District 8 Structural Task Force

In addition to incident response, there are many hours spent conducting continuing education and training. Sterling Fire Department members train the first three Wednesdays of the month. This does not include the special skills training that our paramedics are required to attend annually. In addition, our dive and tech rescue team members participate in monthly skills training throughout the year.

Department members provide Fire and EMS details throughout the year. Typical details include sporting event coverage, like Pop Warner youth football details, commercial welding details, and other special details as requested. We also assist the Recreation Department and DPW with the annual deployment of the raft and buoys at the Town Beach.

### **Permits and Inspections**

The Fire Department Inspection and Code Enforcement Bureau is headed by Lieutenant Thomas Kokernak. There were 490 inspections performed in 2022, an 18% increase compared to 2021. There was a total of 78 inspections that required corrective action. In addition, 334 burn permits were issued in 2022. Inspection types include smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, oil burners, oil tanks, LP gas tanks, tank removals, blasting, and fire suppression systems. Many of them require a minimum of one site visit to confirm that the work has been done properly and installed per fire and life safety codes, and to verify the equipment operates safely. In addition to daily permit inspections, annual inspections are conducted at commercial and industrial sites as well as annual liquor license inspections completed in conjunction with the building inspector.

There were several new building projects in 2022 that required several inspections and code enforcement follow-ups. Projects included the completion of Northgate Meadows apartment building on Meadows Drive, as well as the start of the second building in that complex. The building of several new homes on Justice Hill Road, and Turtle Way, and a new street with housing on Millie's Way.

Any questions regarding permits, fees, or for scheduling an inspection call the fire department business line or access the information on-line via our website.

### **Fire Prevention and Public Safety Education**

Fire prevention and public safety education continues to be a large priority of the department. Our team is coordinated by Firefighter Fil Santos and the programs are conducted for our grammar school and pre-school children by department members.

The department conducts several educational programs supported by the S.A.F.E. (**S**tudent **A**wareness of **F**ire **E**ducation) program. In addition to the educational programs conducted in the elementary and pre-schools the department also provides station tours, and other public safety events as requested.

In 2022 the department received \$5,858 in State Grant Funding. This program also supports Senior SAFE initiatives and provides training to local businesses and Civic groups.

In 2022, the following Fire Prevention Outreach Programs were conducted:

Preschool classroom visits	6	
Elementary school classroom visits	42	
Scheduled station tours		3
Home fire safety visits	19	
Smoke detector installations (for elderly)		30

### **Community Service Activities**

The department provided several community service activities in 2022 that the department members and volunteers from our C.E.R.T. (Community Emergency Response Team) assisted with. These activities include medical standby and rehabilitation for road races, and other community and civic functions including the Davis Farmland Public Safety Weekend, and the Cub Scout registration day behind the fire station.

Several members of the department are certified to teach Community C.P.R., first aid, and Stop the Bleed programs. Programs are provided to Little League coaches, town employees, local businesses, doctor's office staff, and the schools just to name a few.

### **Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Detectors**

The largest percentage of fire deaths in the home occur at night while people are asleep. Therefore, a working smoke alarm can provide an early warning that can make the difference between life and death. A smoke alarm should be part of an overall home fire safety strategy that also includes preventing fires by adopting fire safe behavior and developing and practicing a home fire escape plan. In a fire, escape time may be very limited. Therefore, escape plans are a critical aspect of a home fire safety strategy.

Carbon monoxide (CO) alarms have been required since March of 2006. What is Carbon Monoxide (CO)? Carbon Monoxide is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless poison gas that can be fatal. CO can be produced when burning fuels such as gasoline, propane, natural gas, oil, or wood. Do you have an emergency generator at your house? There create high incidences of CO poisoning because of poor location and ventilation of a generator during use. CO is the product of incomplete combustion. If you have fire, you have CO. A carbon monoxide detector is a device that detects the presence of carbon monoxide (CO) gas to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

Special consideration should be given to the fact that smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors have effective useful lives to them – like a car battery. It is recommended that a smoke detector be replaced every ten years and a carbon monoxide detector every five to seven years. Requirements for replacing your detectors can be found on our website or the manufacturers' website for your detectors.

## **Emergency Management**

Emergency Management continues to play a vital role in town, especially with the continued challenges of weather-related, Homeland Security, and most recently, pandemic related events. Often our emergency management functions are activated because of severe weather.

One of our most active missions within emergency management is that of our Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). The CERT Program, managed and coordinated by Assistant Emergency Management Director Jim Emerton, educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact our area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and through conducting exercises, CERT members can assist others following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members consist of a group of volunteer citizens including students, teachers, retirees, ex-military, engineers, and business professionals. The team trains and responds on a regional level along with volunteers from Boylston, Holden, and West Boylston.

In addition to a regional CERT team, Sterling continues to be part of a Regional Emergency Planning Committee (REPC) along with Boylston, Holden, and West Boylston. The South Wachusett Regional Emergency Planning Committee has representation from all four communities and represents the major disciplines of emergency planning working closely with M.E.M.A. (Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency) regarding hazard mitigation.

## **Social Media Notifications**



To keep our citizens informed, the fire department issues posts of department training, incident response, and important information notifications through social media utilizing Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. It is important to us that the citizens we serve see the things that we do.

## **Fire Department Website**



[www.sterlingfd.net](http://www.sterlingfd.net)

Lieutenant Thomas Kokernak administers the Fire Department website. The website is linked to several sources of real time information. Please visit our website to learn more about the Sterling Fire Department, our history, our equipment or as a reference to fire codes and regulations. This is where you will also find the links to our online permitting systems.

## **Be Ready**



Plan to protect yourself and your family. Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes so it is important to plan how you will get to a safe place, how you will contact one another, how you will reunite with each other, and what you will do in different situations. For additional reference on personal and family preparedness you can log in to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

## **Closing Narrative**

In closing, I would like to thank the town and the citizens of Sterling for their continued support of the fire department. Because of this support, we're able to maintain the apparatus and equipment that is vital to our emergency response. In August we took delivery of a new paramedic intercept vehicle, Medic 28. In October work began to build our new Squad truck which will replace Rescue 1, a 30-year old vehicle. The town also approved capital expenses to replace the Jaws of Life in Rescue 1 and the oil transfer pump for the fire station.

We are fortunate that our firefighters, EMT's and Paramedics are committed to providing dedicated service to our community. Our members are well-trained and outstanding at what they do. The citizens of Sterling should be proud of our dedicated responders, and the members of the Sterling Fire Department should be recognized for their continued commitment and dedication to the department and the community.

Our success is based on our active call members who respond to incidents to supplement the on-duty staff over and above their full-time jobs and family commitments. Like most departments across the country, we continue to struggle to maintain an active on-call firefighting and E.M.T. force that is available to respond to incidents. To do this effectively, we need people who are willing to join the department and be trained as on-call personnel. Many of our call members have moved on to become full-time firefighters, emergency medical technicians and paramedics in other communities.

We are lucky to have strong and valuable working relationships with all the public safety departments in town and as a result work seamlessly at major incidents that occur. Several times throughout the year, incidents will require several of the public safety departments to work in a coordinated manner to manage the issue at hand.

In 2022 we added three additional call members to the department, Norm Dziokonski, Sarah Piscione, and Stephanie Smith. Sarah also completed recruit firefighter training and graduated in November. We welcomed a new fulltime Firefighter / Paramedic Erin Cullinane who was promoted from the call department as she replaced Firefighter Paramedic Jamison Shea who had served the department for over 10 years. Our longtime Administrative Assistant Lisa Bristol retired in June after serving over 11 years in that role. She was replaced with our new Administrative Assistant Emily Rainford.

The Sterling Fire Department is located at 5 Main Street in the center of town. The station is staffed 24-hours a day and general business hours are from 8:00AM to 4:00PM Monday through Friday's.

Wishing everyone a safe and healthy 2023!

Respectively submitted,

David C. Hurlbut, Jr.  
*Fire Chief / Emergency Management Director*



West Sterling Schoolhouse

This year at the Sterling Historical Commission we have made progress for preservation in Sterling. We have continued our work on restoring the West Sterling Schoolhouse. At this time, the town has voted to fix the portico on the front of the West Sterling Schoolhouse. Continued preservation of the Schoolhouse is going to be in the hands of the voters as a warrant item for the next town meeting. Restoration of 20 broken headstones at the Chocksett cemetery were completed this year. As mandated by the Sterling Masterplan the Historical Commission have refocused our efforts on planning or updating inventories of historical properties in Sterling. This will include increased planning for an updated inventory of the Sterling historical District. The Historical Commission thanks the townspeople for their continued support for historical preservation. The Commission also looks forward to working with all town boards and ILCTV to promote preservation of our unique historical assets.

## **Sterling Housing Authority Annual Report 2023**

The Sterling Housing Authority was founded in 1968 and is chartered to oversee, manage and develop State-Aided housing within the Town. Within this charter, the Authority, in participation with other community leaders, also has responsibility to assure adequate sources of affordable private housing for Sterling. The Authority currently manages 40 subsidized apartments for the elderly under Chapter 667, known as Sholan Terrace. There are no family units at Sholan Terrace.

The Sterling Housing Authority is currently managed under a Management Agreement with the Leominster Housing Authority. Under this agreement the Sterling Housing Authority utilizes the staff of the Leominster Housing Authority with the exception of a local Maintenance Mechanic who is a direct employee of the Sterling Housing Authority. The relationship has been in place since 1998.

The Authority has maintained its membership in the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO). Participation in NAHRO helps assure that the Authority is up-to-date with programs and funding sources available for use within Sterling.

Applications for state-aided housing may be obtained at <https://publichousingapplication.ocd.state.ma.us>, [ncmhousing.org](http://ncmhousing.org), by visiting 41 Sholan Terrace, or by calling (978)-537-5300. To be eligible for elderly housing, applicants must be at least 60 years old at the time of application or be a qualified disabled applicant and at least 18 years of age. The Authority will grant a preference for applicants that are Sterling residents or employed in Sterling. Veterans that qualify will also receive a preference. Rent is based on your household's annual adjusted gross income. Elderly residents will pay 30% of their adjusted income.



## **Annual Report 2022**

### **Governance**

The citizens of Sterling elect a 6-member board of trustees to govern the town free public library, as outlined in Massachusetts General Law. Two members are elected each year in rotation. The trustees meet the second Monday of every month and everyone is welcome to attend.

In May, Sara Petullo and Albert Carlin were re-elected to the board. At their June meeting, the board elected Sara Petullo chairperson and Matthew Scannell secretary.

In October the board elected Amanda Sayut as secretary following Matthew Scannell's resignation. In December, Dan Flaherty was appointed to fill the vacant board seat.

### **Mission**

The Conant Free Public Library provides equal access to cultural, educational, and technological information and resources to support patrons in their engagement of reading and pursuit of lifelong learning. The library offers space and opportunities for people to gather and connect, knowledgeable and friendly staff to help, and the tools to grow and thrive in a constantly changing world.

### **Services**

The library is open 45 hours a week – Monday through Thursday from 10 am to 8 pm. On Saturday the library is open from 10 am to 3 pm. From July 1st to Labor Day, the library is open from 10 am to 1 pm on Saturday.

In addition to books in print form, the library provides audiobooks, popular movies and full-season TV series, magazines, newspapers, electronic materials, and high-speed Internet (direct and wireless) - all at no charge. This year jigsaw puzzles and Memory Kits were introduced to the collection, as was our first Break-In Bag (similar to an Escape Room, but you have to break in rather than break out!). The library also offers copy, fax, scanning, and printing services.

In 2022 the library created its Strategic Plan for FY23-27. A committee of townspeople, staff and trustees participated in discussions, while focus groups and surveys were also undertaken. Key findings included the library's staff as its greatest strength, while inadequate parking was the greatest complaint.

By the end of 2022, the library was well on its way to accomplishing many of the goals created during the Strategic Plan. Educational programs for both children and adults were held, focusing on nature, science and art; staff were trained in CPR and AED use, and our AED was mounted in a public space. The library has also continued to increase the diversity of its materials as well as its collection of works by local authors.

Working with the Sterling Senior Center, the library provides materials to Sterling seniors who are homebound. Interested town residents can call the Senior Center to get started with the service.

Our website, [www.sterlinglibrary.org](http://www.sterlinglibrary.org), offers online access to library services at any time. Patrons can order or renew library materials and download e-books, e-audiobooks, magazines and videos. Registrations for programs can be completed on our website, and our bimonthly newsletters can be read.

## **Annual Benchmarks**

Children's programming included weekly story hours, music circles and a Lego club as well as weekly crafts, library mini golf, Explorer's Clubs, book clubs for all ages and a week-long Escape Room. During a summer concert the library enjoyed a visit from Blades, mascot of the Boston Bruins. Teen programs included write nights, volunteer opportunities and a succulent planting party. Adults participated in monthly crafts, yoga, cookie decorating and a monthly Cookbook Club. Lectures included topics on nature, paranormal activity, needle felting and holiday décor and food.

In October, the Library Director resigned from the library. The Board of Trustees named Alex Grebinar the Acting Director, and Deborah Orr became the library's Acting Assistant Director. Leah Brooks left the library for another position in November.



The Conant Public Library's Children's Room  
Photo taken by Leah Brooks



Open 45 hours a week

260 new library  
cards issued



4842 people attended  
325 library programs

77,210 physical items &  
15,721 electronic items  
checked out



33,765  
items in the collection

7472 interlibrary loans sent  
12,434 items received



## The Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Conant Library continue to generously support many library programs and initiatives. This year those programs included a very popular yoga program, led by Sterling resident Sharyn Hocurscak, a paranormal evening, and our annual gingerbread house decorating program for adults and teens. The Friends supported the annual Youth Summer Reading Program by providing prizes and gift books for every reader, as well as providing prizes for our annual 100 Books of Summer Challenge. The Friends continued to support the library's museum pass program this year by providing discounted passes to a number of local attractions. The Friends have also contributed significant funds to increase downloadable books and audio books in the Library's OverDrive collection, as well as supporting our subscriptions to Ancestry.com, Wowbrary, and BookPage.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Board of Trustees of the Conant Free Public Library

Sara Petullo, Chair  
Lisa Akerson  
Albert J. Carlin

Daniel Flaherty  
Amanda Sayut  
Heide Martin

## **Sterling Master Plan Committee**

To the Residents of the Town of Sterling,

The Sterling Master Plan Committee is pleased to present the Sterling Master Plan, which is the result of several years of work by the committee members, consultants, and Sterling residents. You can view the plan in its entirety on the Town website.

Our work has been guided by the vision statement that was created early on during the committee meetings:

*Sterling is a community that values its natural beauty, agricultural history, and can-do spirit. We envision a sustainable and equitable future that protects our town legacy, purposefully promotes growth and development, embraces our ages and abilities, and encourages community engagement to enhance the quality of life for our diverse residents.*

Here's what we learned from the several surveys we conducted over the course of building this Master Plan:

Over two-thirds of survey respondents want Sterling's leaders to:

- Work with the Sterling Municipal Light Department to deliver low-cost renewable energy to the Sterling community.
- Revitalize the town center to provide and/or allow for more sidewalk and outdoor dining.
- Make neighborhoods, especially the town center, more pedestrian friendly.

Sterling survey respondents also support in large numbers some of the recommended actions that address the Master Plan goals. Two goals rose to the top, with five or more recommended actions garnering the support of over 33% of the respondents:

- Implement effective strategies to preserve and protect the Town's water resources and unique ecological habitats.
  - Six recommended actions for this goal received the support of 33% or more of survey respondents, the highest number of recommended actions for one goal.
  - Recommended actions included: fix dams, establish green corridors, maintain/improve biodiversity through forest management, assess level of conserved lands, reduce salt use on major highways, and address nutrient loading to Lake Waushacum.
- Expand pedestrian, bicycle and trail networks inter- and intra-Sterling.
  - 5 recommended actions received over 35% support.
  - Recommended actions included: make neighborhoods more pedestrian friendly, establish a Regional Trail Network and pursue grant funding for trail development, improve pedestrian mobility of rural roads, and fill in gaps in the sidewalk network.

Sterling and its residents are facing multiple challenges: changing demographics, the need to incorporate resilience and sustainability in our public services, the effects of climate change on our natural resources, and evolving to address multiple needs while maintaining what makes Sterling a livable and safe community.

We hope this Master Plan provides some insight into how Sterling residents want to address those issues and guide the Town's growth in a meaningful way. Sterling residents have a choice to make: 1) support transformative actions to support the goals of this Master Plan, 2) implement action plans that tinker at the edges of the issues described in this plan, or 3) ignore the issues and maintain the status-quo.

The Sterling Master Plan is a living document that should be used to guide strategic planning. It is our hope that the Sterling community and its leaders will continue the work needed to fulfill the Master Plan's vision. Sterling's future relies on strong community engagement and residents who are inspired to lead and serve. We call on all residents to get involved and help build a sustainable community for all, volunteer to serve on a board or committee, participate in defining the priorities and goals for Sterling, and most importantly, learn about the issues facing our Town and come out to vote at Town Meetings.

Thank you to the Town of Sterling residents and the team of dedicated volunteers that saw this through to the end.



## **PLANNING BOARD**

To the Honorable Select Board and the Citizens of Sterling:

The Planning Board consists of the following members:

Carl Corrinne (Chairman)  
Patty Page (Vice Chairman)  
Kirsten Newman (Clerk)  
Val Pruneau  
John Santoro

The responsibilities of the Planning Board consist of reviewing and endorsing Approval Not Required (ANR) plans, Subdivision plans, Site plan reviews, various Special Permits and development/review of various zoning bylaw amendments.

In 2022, the Planning Board approved two Site Plans:

- New industrial building (7,500 square feet) at 150 Clinton Road for Storage Solutions on January 17, 2022.
- New industrial building (9,680 square feet) at #9 Chocksett Road for Eban Realty Trust. Approved on November 17, 2022.

The Planning Board endorsed three ANR plans (Approval Not Required). Lots were located on Justice Hill Road, Tuttle Road, and Newell Hill Road.

In June, the Planning Board adopted the Town's Updated Master Plan.

In July, the Planning Board approved a revision to a Definitive Subdivision Plan for Primrose Lane. The Board approved the As-Built plan for Primrose lane in October.

In September, the Planning Board approved the As-Built plan for 333 Redemption Rock Trail for NEADS.

Public Hearing for Zoning Bylaw Amendments:

- In April and May, the Planning Board held public hearings for two proposed zoning amendments:
  1. Change the Performance Zone to Commercial (301-4.7).
  2. Update the Zoning Bylaw's parking calculations (Section 301-3.2).

Late October saw the arrival of new Town Planner Stephen Wallace. Mr. Wallace has 34 years of experience as a professional planner and spent the last 11 years as the Planner for the Town of Westminster, MA.

The Board continues to work closely with the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission for technical assistance and grant opportunities.

## **Police Department and Dispatch Center**

### **Personnel:**

2022 was a significant year for the Sterling Police Department in that both our highest-ranking officer, Chief Gary Chamberland, and our longest serving officer, Detective David Johnson, both retired from the Department. Chief Chamberland came to us from the Woonsocket RI Police Department and served with us for 18 years as the Chief of Police. His love of the job after 40+ years in police work was unquestionable and possibly second only to Detective Johnson's own calling to serve. Detective Johnson leaves us with over 30 years of service to the Town of Sterling in both Patrol and the Detective's position. Both men would have been seen as "outsiders" at the start of their careers with us but became fixtures within the community. The Sterling Police Department and the Town of Sterling are both better for having had these officers serving them.



With Chief Chamberland's and Detective Johnson's retirement we needed to hire two new officers. We were fortunate to first re-hire Andrew Dipietro. Dipietro had worked for us as a part-time and full-time dispatcher for several years before leaving for the Rutland Police Department as full-time officer. Dipietro, a native of Sterling, welcomed the opportunity to come back and serve the community he grew up in. Additionally, similar to 2021, we were able to hire a veteran Princeton officer. Officer Michael Porcano served

I, Sean Gaudette, was promoted from Sergeant to Chief of Police after Chief Chamberland's departure. I have served the town since 1992 and was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 2005.

With my promotion to Chief, an immediate open promotional opportunity for an officer to the vacant Sergeant's position was available. Additionally, as part of my promotional process, I secured a commitment from the Selectboard to fill the Lieutenant's position that had been created in 2003 and left vacant. This meant 3 promotional opportunities were now available within the department, 1 Lieutenant and 2 Sergeant's positions. A substantive Sergeant's promotional process was conducted and a candidate list was generated. This promotional process included a written test, an assessment center and a chief's review.

As a result of the Sergeant's testing process Ryan Ferguson was recommended for promotion to the rank of Sergeant. Ferguson was hired in 2008 and in 2022 was assigned to the Detective position after David Johnson's retirement.

The promotion of Ferguson to Sergeant left a vacancy in the Detective's position and Officer John Chase was selected to fill this role.

Next a hiring process for a Lieutenant's position was conducted and Sergeant Steven Fugere was recommended for the position. Fugere has been with the Department since 2006 and was promoted to Sergeant in 2018.

Fugere's promotion to Lieutenant created one last Sergeant's position to be filled to complete the command staff changes. Drawing from the previously mentioned Sergeant's candidate list, Officer Timothy Plouffe was recommended for promotion. Plouffe, a life-long resident, has been with the Department since 2001 and had started with us as a part-time Dispatcher.

The Department's personnel should be stable for several years to come at this point, notwithstanding any unforeseen circumstances or departures.

### **Operations:**

Overview:

In custody arrests were up 48 vs 37 (+11) from 2021, a 33% increase.  
Criminal complaints referred to court were up 108 vs 102 (+6) from 2021, a 6% increase.  
Motor vehicle accidents were up 154 vs 106 (+48) from 2021, a 32% increase.  
Officers responded to 6780 calls up from 6150 (+630), a 10% increase.  
Incidents requiring reports were up 429 from 358 (+71), a 17% increase  
Restraining orders up to 31 from 14 (+17), a 55% increase.  
309 traffic citations were issued.

#### Criminal investigation statistics:

Arson	1
Forcible rape	3
Forcible sodomy	1
Aggravated assaults	4
Simple assault	6
Intimidation	5
Burglary, breaking and entering	8
Theft from a building	4
Theft from a motor vehicle	1
All other larceny	14
Motor vehicle theft	1
Counterfeiting	3
Swindle	6
Credit card offenses	1
Impersonation	12
Stolen property offenses	1
Property damage, vandalism	19
Drug narcotics violations	4
Pornography/Obscene material	1
Disorderly conduct	1
Driving under the influence	6
Drunkenness	3
Liquor law violations	4
Trespassing	3
All other offenses	69
By-law violations	179

Lieutenant Fugere was able to obtain a grant from EOPSS for the Municipal Road Safety Grant in the amount of \$19,925. This grant allowed the department to purchase an additional Solar Speed Board and implement targeted traffic enforcement throughout the year. This Traffic Safety Enforcement Campaign involves Winter Impaired Driving, Distracted Driving, Click it or Ticket, Speed enforcement and Summer Impaired Driving.

#### **Detective:**

The Detective is responsible for investigating more substantial criminal offenses that occur in the Town of Sterling. Along with these criminal investigations, the Detective is also assigned to the position of Court Officer, School Resource Officer (SRO), Juvenile

Officer, Narcotics Investigations, Elder Affairs Officer, and maintaining the integrity of the Evidence Room.

Some of the more unique cases handled were:

- Detective Ferguson and Officer Mucci assisted the Massachusetts State Police in executing a search warrant and subsequent arrest of an individual for possession/distribution of child pornography.
- Detective Ferguson conducted an audit of the evidence room where all property and evidence in Sterling Police custody was all accounted for.
- Detective Ferguson and Officer Dame legally destroyed over 30 years of drug related evidence from the evidence room after their respective cases were resolved.
- Sterling Police, Leominster Police, Fitchburg Police, Gardner Police, and Concord Police executed a search warrant and subsequently arrest of a suspect for the smash and grab burglary at the Sterling Deli.
- Assisted the Massachusetts State Police Fire Marshalls Office and Bomb Squad investigate a threat to the Sterling Fair.
- Assisted the Chocksett Middle School Principal investigate an alleged assault and battery.
- Detective Chase conducted an investigation for open and gross lewdness and indecent exposure at the Sterling Crossing Complex and subsequently arrested a suspect for the same offense.
- Detective Chase assisted with an investigation with the ATF (Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Division) at 3000 Meadows Drive for illegal possession of a firearm.
- Detective Chase conducted all (10) ten liquor license compliance inspections for the Town.

### **Specialty operations:**

Elder affairs - Sergeant Pomeroy continues to have outreach with the Senior Center and their Dementia Friendly Sterling program. Additionally, the Department still maintains the "Take Me Home" program started under Chief Chamberland. "Take Me Home" is a database for people who may need special assistance if they are alone or in times of emergency. This kind of assistance may be required if the person is unable to speak or properly identify themselves, or if they become disoriented or act in a manner that could be misinterpreted by first responders.

Car Seat Installations: Sergeant Ferguson and Officer Mucci, certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians, continue to successfully grow their child seat installation program. In 2022 Sergeant Ferguson and Officer Mucci conducted 37 installations/inspections. These inspections ranged from first time parents looking for reassurance to grandparents wishing to install their car seats for visiting grandchildren. They were also able to assist parents in emergency circumstances with prematurely born children and able to provide new grant funded car seats to parents and caretakers in need.

RAD - Officer Mucci continued his successful Rape Aggression Defense program. The RAD System is a comprehensive course for women that begins with awareness, prevention, risk reduction and avoidance while progressing on to the basics of hands-on self-defense training. In 2022 Officer Mucci hosted two classes, graduating 19 participants. In addition, Mucci offered a 2-hr women's self-defense seminar where 26 women attended. As Chief I have been overwhelmed by touching emails sent on Officer Mucci's behalf. I can say without a doubt that Officer Mucci and his team have changed lives through their participation in this program.

### **Training:**

The Sterling Police Department works hard to be the standard that other departments look to in regards to training. In 2022, some of the training Officers of the Sterling Police Department attended were:

We completed the required 40 hours of yearly In-service training. Topics this year included classes such as de-escalation and use of force, legal updates, officer wellness, responding to emergencies of those with a mental illness, and CPR/First responder.

The Department held our annual firearms qualifications and added an additional instructor to our firearms training department increasing it to 4 certified instructors. All of these instructors have recently attended a 24-hour Tactical Instructor Development training and remain up-to-date on all instructor certifications through the state.

Leadership training is an important, but often neglected, piece to any training program within a police department. We were fortunate to have had the opportunity to attend a number of leadership training classes. Many of our officers have attended trainings such as Servant Officer, Intentional Leadership, and Master Leader and Presenter taught by one of the most sought-after instructors in the country Dean Crisp. Some

Some additional trainings that officers have completed this year included Mental Health First Aid Instructor from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing, Suicide prevention and intervention, stress and resiliency, and ALICE and ASHER active shooter training.

Finally, promotions and assignments come with their own required trainings. Detective Chase has been attending classes to hone his craft in his new assignment and Sergeants Ferguson and Plouffe will be attending the required 40-hour Sergeants training and additional frontline leadership classes as they learn their new roles within the Department.

### **Dispatch:**

Dispatch staffing of full-time employees continues to be stable. Part-time dispatch candidate applications and subsequent retention continues to be difficult. The pool of individuals interested in the part-time positions is small and the workload and responsibility level is high. Open shifts are often filled by full-time employees or cross-trained police officers.

Long gone are the days of the Dispatcher just answering a telephone and sending a responder. Today's dispatcher must be a master of multitasking and stress resolution. At minimum, Dispatchers are required to be certified in NG911, a 40-hr Telecommunicators course, Emergency Medical Dispatch, and CPR. In addition to these certification requirements dispatch personnel are required to be very familiar with our in-house records management system(IMC), our windows-based radio systems, NCIC/CJIS(state and national criminal records), RAPIDSOS, our telephone system, emergency court contact procedures, light department and DPW emergency notification procedures, animal control officer contact procedures, and finally our roadways and residents.

Dispatch call volume, which consists of Police, Fire, EMS, DPW, Light, and ACO, was up some 6% from 10794 calls in 2021 to 11370 (+576). These numbers have gone up significantly the past few years as primary 911 call answering responsibilities have been shifted from a State level to more locally. Calls on I-190, for instance, previously routed to the main State 911 Center now come into the Sterling Dispatch center.

Sergeant Pomeroy once again secured the statewide department 911 support and incentive grant. This grant provided us with \$26,666 to offset Telecommunicator personnel salary costs and additional \$7,737 for new mobile data terminal to be installed in a police cruiser for a total of \$34,403.

Submitted by Chief Sean Gaudette

\*This report was completed with the assistance of the Head-Dispatcher MacArthur, Executive Assistant Metcalf, Lieutenant Fugere, Sergeant Pomeroy, Sergeant Ferguson, Officer Mucci, and Detective Chase.

## **The Recreation Departments Report: Highlights for 2022**

Throughout the year the Recreation Department has remained committed to its mission of providing affordable, quality recreational programs that enhance the quality of life for all residents. This year has been a year of regrowth and rebuilding of our programs after the last few years of Covid-19 related obstacles. Some programs were modified to accommodate health restrictions at that time, but we were still able to gather and participate in activities.

The community had an opportunity to participate in over thirty-five programs which were provided year-round and are self-funded. Child-oriented programs included basketball, cooking, music, swimming lessons, art, sewing, sports adventure, multi-sports, yoga, skiing/snowboarding, pickleball, beach volleyball as well as indoor volleyball. Adult residents had the opportunity to participate in fitness, art, cribbage, pickleball and tennis classes. The community came together over music at the Summer Band Concerts and at the Town Beach.

Although we were unable to provide a bus to the mountain, many residents enjoyed skiing/snowboarding with friends at Wachusett Mountain. Twenty-four residents gathered at the 1835 Old Town Hall for one five-week session of cribbage, while 20 other residents enjoyed early morning yoga in the upstairs Great Hall.

Sterling Recreation participated in the town Halloween Spooky Walk, where it is estimated more than 500 children “spooked” our down town for the evening. More than 225 residents enjoyed holiday music provided by the Sterling Strummers, free cookies and coco at our Cookie Kick Off before heading out to tour the Holiday Lights of Sterling!

Utilizing some of our town’s beautiful outside spaces, the Easter Bunny hopped into town and hid 2,000+ eggs for residents 1-9 years of age to scurry and find! Memorial Park was also the perfect setting for our infant to five-year-old Music Together class. More than forty residents gathered at the Griffin Road Complex to participate in our annual Road Race in person this year. On Saturday mornings, our youngest residents enjoyed multi-mini sports and soccer at the Houghton fields. The tranquil setting of our town beach, hosted beach yoga to 20+ residents June to October before the weather sent us indoors at the 1835 Old Town Hall.

The Recreation Department was able to offer, with great success, the *Summer Concert Series 2022*. This event offered town residents the opportunity to gather safely and enjoy music, family and the beautiful summer evenings. ***Sterling Lancaster Cable*** filmed some of the concerts and ran them on the local cable channel for viewers to enjoy all year long. In addition, the Sterling Recreation Department received a grant for \$1,500.00 from ***The Sterling Cultural Council*** for the Summer Concert Series 2022.

The Cultural Council is committed to building a central place for the arts, sciences, and humanities in the everyday lives of communities across the Commonwealth.

We were lucky enough to see one of our most popular programs, the Summer Lake Program, back to its original format this year! This included tradition camp activities in the morning and off-site field trips in the afternoon for our full day participants! Our Recreation Tennis program was offered for three weeks this summer giving our younger players an opportunity to gather and work on their skills. Our adult residents were able to get into the action with lessons twice a week for a month. Both Basketball programs were filled to capacity, utilizing the gym and outside courts at Chocksett We added beach and indoor volleyball this year, both were very well attended for first year programs!

Our more artistic residents enjoyed cake decorating with our Cake Wars program, a variety of crafts at Let's Get Crafty and performed in Annie through our Center Stage program during our summer months. While Sewing Creations After School got creative during the school year making bowl cozies and wallets.

Our basketball program was modified for the 2021-2022 season with the wearing of masks during play and coach refereed scrimmages instead of games. Our DIV V, high schools and men's leagues, all enjoyed pick up style play. Just over 190 residents enjoyed being together and working on their skills!

This year the Recreation department teamed up the Senior Center to host Pickleball For the Ages. Our local pickleball pros volunteered to teach residents of all ages how to play the game. This event was free to all who registered and was well attended for a first-year effort by kids and adults alike!

We made improvements to both the Babe Ruth Field behind the Chocksett school and the water quality of Peg's Pond at the Sterling Greenery Park. All of which could not have been done without the coordination and hard work of the Sterling DPW. The raft at our town beach receive new floatation pontoons to keep it afloat with special thanks to the Sterling Fire Department with assistance in locating and delivering the product in a timely manner and the Sterling DPW for executing the repair.

We appreciate the time and dedication of other town departments, program instructors, summer staff, lifeguards, volunteer ski chaperones, school administrators, school custodians, and sponsors. With this network of supporters, we are able to provide top notch events for the community. Close to 1,600 individuals participated in the Recreation Department's events and programs in 2022, and we thank you for your constant support throughout the year.

The Sterling Recreation Department and Sterling Recreation Committee would like to Thank Jo-Ann Cummings for your enormous contribution to the Sterling Recreation

Department. Jo-Ann was a part of the original Sterling Recreation Committee when it was formed in 1976/1977. She has spent many years making sure there were a variety of fun, cost effective programs for all ages in the Sterling community. She especially dedicated her time to the recreation basketball league, the summer swim program and events that involved the whole community such as the band concerts and holiday celebrations. Jo-Ann resigned from her position of Recreation Committee Chairperson in April 2022.

The Recreation Department will continue to work to improve the quality of Recreational facilities, programs, and services. Your feedback is important to us, please contact the Recreation Department at 978-422-3041, e-mail [recreation@sterling-ma.gov](mailto:recreation@sterling-ma.gov) or stop in at our office currently located at 1 Park St. For listings and descriptions of programs and events, visit the web site: [SterlingRec.com](http://SterlingRec.com) or [sterling-ma.gov/recreation](http://sterling-ma.gov/recreation)

**Respectively submitted,**

Heidi Grady- Chairperson Recreation Committee

Mark Hryniewicz

Bonnie Pulda

Glenn Donaldson

Jo-Ann Cummings- Chairperson Recreation Committee-Resigned

## SCHOOLS

### Montachusett Regional Technical School

In 2022 Thomas R. Browne became Superintendent-Director. Students and staff returned to daily in-person instruction, off-campus construction projects, and skills competitions. Staff developed new skills in infusing technology into lessons, collecting assignments via Google Classrooms, conducting quick learning assessments via apps and assigning group learning projects using Google Slides and Docs.

Approximately 200 students learned in local shops and businesses through the school's co-op program. Eight businesses submitted letters of support to Commonwealth Corporation attesting to Monty Tech's training programs, agreeing to interview program completers and highlighting Monty Tech graduates currently on staff. A \$600,000 grant award to provide no-cost training for young adults in our area resulted. Through the Career Technical Initiative, we have been able to extend training opportunities beyond the school day, helping adults train for high wage, high skills jobs that remained unfilled.

Applications to attend Monty Tech on the rise. We work with local school leaders to establish practices and programs that will ensure as many students as possible are admitted from each sending community. On June 1, 2022, student enrollment at Monty Tech included 1,379 students in grades nine through twelve, ***61 from Sterling.***

For fiscal year 2022, state and federal grant sources provided the school with \$2,927,860.

Monty Tech ensures students are job ready after graduation. Several of the school's vocational training programs prepare students for advanced education and training in high-wage, high-skill careers in engineering, allied health, business, education and computer sciences that demand a bachelor's and even master's degree. As such, it is imperative that the school also prepare those students for college level coursework.

During the Spring of 2022, 10th grade students took the MCAS examination in English and Mathematics. Students performed well across all subject areas, with a passing rate of 100% in English, 97% in Mathematics.

To expand STEM opportunities for students in FY22, Monty Tech applied for a Massachusetts Life Science Center grant, developed in collaboration with our post-secondary partners at Fitchburg State University. Using the \$110,000 award, Monty Tech instructors will work collaboratively to align course expectations with FSU's Anatomy & Physiology class, laying a foundation for a first-ever articulation agreement with FSU.

Monty Tech established another new science course in FY22, Microbiology. Instructors developed the new curriculum and travelled to Texas to participate in the National Science Teaching Association Annual Conference, while school officials renovated a science lab to replicate a biomedical facility. All new course materials, equipment and technology were purchased.

In May of 2022, 120 students participated in AP Exams. Those 120 students took 162 AP Exams collectively. An impressive 82 of the 120 students were eligible to receive college credit for qualifying scores of 3+. That is a 68.33% pass rate, a significant increase from the previous school year.

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Students and staff across the twenty-one different vocational-technical education programs gladly returned to the important work of building homes, reconstructing damaged properties, repairing service vehicles, making walkways more accessible, and performing countless community services. The school restaurant reopened, and cosmetology students demonstrated their talents on live clientele. Vocational educators aimed to provide practical, hands-on learning experiences for our students, while helping to improve our communities in the following areas:

Advanced Manufacturing, Auto Body Repair, Automotive Technology, Welding/Metal Fabrication, Business Technology: enrollment: 52; Cabinetmaking: enrollment: 63  
CAD/Drafting & Design, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Dental Assisting,  
Early Childhood Education, Electrical, Engineering Technology, Graphic Communications,  
Health Occupations, House Carpentry, HVAC & Property Maintenance, Information Technology,  
Masonry, Plumbing, Veterinary Science

Monty Tech combines classroom instruction with on-the-job-training. All students are eligible to participate in the Co-op Program, provided they satisfy state and school grade, attendance and performance requirements, and all Co-op students have completed the OSHA recognized Career Safe online health and safety course prior to being placed in a work environment.

The Cooperative Education Program is beneficial for both student and employer. For the student, it is a chance to gain on-the-job training that improves both their technical proficiency and employability skills. They make industry connections enhancing post-graduate employment opportunities. Students earn while they learn.

Employer benefits include addressing workforce needs in an efficient manner.

Coop students provide a pool of trained potential employees and reduce employer training costs.

Coop work hours may also be tailored to suit the needs of partnering employers. Approximately 100 area employers participate in Cooperative Education, providing valuable experience to almost 200 students.

During the 2021 - 2022 school year, Junior Marine Corps ROTC Cadets participated in more than 2000 hours of community service and volunteerism.

## STUDENT SUPPORTS

Department of Student Support Services focused on students' social and emotional wellness, community partnerships, new initiatives, tiered supports and breaking the stigma of mental health. We understand that everyone will require help at some point. School-based counseling services, a collaboration with LUK, Inc. and the Department of Public Health provides services to at-risk students and their families. The district also partnered with LUK to create a direct pipeline for telehealth referrals and increased access to counseling supports. Programs such as the HOPE Squad; a peer to peer suicide prevention program, Project AMP; a program to address prevention of substance use among youth ages 13-17, and Students Taking A New Direction (STAND); a program to support students displaying at-risk behaviors have all been implemented.

Yoga and Meditative Art, Visual Arts, Directed Studies with Social Emotional Learning lessons are all part of the efforts to ensure we address students' needs and support their individual growth. Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School District provided specialized services to approximately three hundred students – measuring progress of over two hundred students on Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and approximately one hundred students adhering to individualized Section 504 plans.

The Student Support Services department includes: a full-time nursing staff, a full-time school social worker, a full-time psychologist, a full-time speech language pathologist a full-time adjustment counselor and part-time school psychologist.

#### TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS

- 1.Monty Tech is moving away from Aspen X2 and into Powerschool.
- 2.The school implemented Performance Matters, a software program to track and analyze student outcomes.
- 3.The Business Technology program received new computers with updated software for their students' use.
4. The CAD/Drafting Technology program got robust new computers and associated software.
5. Graphic Communications department received long-awaited, high capacity copiers.
6. The school invested in a Dell EMC Virtual server solution.

#### EVENING PROGRAMS

The Monty Tech School of Continuing Education had an exciting FY22, receiving more than \$600,000 in training grants. School leaders applied for and received a generous Career Technical Initiative Grant, which provided the funding needed to rollout new training programs, offered to qualified unemployed or underemployed participants at no charge.

New training programs in Welding and HVAC were developed and saw their first cohort enroll. Students completed 250 hours of training, both in person and virtual, and left with industry-recognized credentials that include Hot Work Certification, OSHA 10 Hour Certification, and an American Welding Society (AWS) Endorsement. Upon completion, students were assisted, in partnership with MassHire North Central Career Center, in job placement.

The School of Continuing Education works closely with the MassHire North Central Career Center to determine specific training programs that are most in-demand. The Cosmetology program was able to reopen their nighttime salon, providing services to clientele during the evening hours, while electrical and plumbing programs were able to resume, and students were back in the classroom, learning from experienced and licensed professionals.

Graduates from our evening medical programs continue to be in high demand. Programs such as: Certified Phlebotomy Technician, Certified Clinical Medical Assistant, Certified EKG Technician, Certified Nurse Aide and Certified Home Health Aide help close noted workforce shortages.

Serving more than 1,000 community members annually, the Monty Tech School of Continuing Education strives to provide an accessible and supportive learning environment to an adult population seeking workforce training that will lead to high-wage, high-skill jobs.

The Monty Tech Practical Nursing Program prepares graduates to practice safely in a caring manner for patients in diverse health care settings. On June 23, 2022 a graduating class of 16 students completed the Practical Nursing Program and entered the nursing profession. The class has thus far achieved a pass rate of 95% on the NCLEX-PN exam (National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses). Program graduates are currently employed in the health care profession throughout Massachusetts, working in various health care settings, such as long-term care, sub-acute care, mental health/substance abuse facilities, physicians' offices and correctional medicine.

The Monty Tech Practical Nursing Program continues to strengthen the "LPN to BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) Bridge" relationship with Fitchburg State University (FSU). Former graduates have successfully transferred into seats in the LPN to BSN Bridge program at FSU and will continue their education to a Bachelor's of Science in Nursing. Many class applicants cited their attraction to Monty Tech as the opportunity to complete a ten-month accelerated program and then bridge to Fitchburg State University. In the seven -year history of the Bridge Program, all of Monty Tech's Practical Nursing graduates reaching graduation at FSU have passed their NCLEX-RN exam. These former graduates have gone on to work in hospital settings including Heywood Hospital, Beth Israel, and Baystate Medical Center, while others have pursued advanced degrees as Critical Care Nurse Practitioners, Nurse Educators, and Family Practice Nurse Practitioners.

Monty Tech Practical Nursing students were asked to complete patient scenarios in the Sim Labs in Terms 2 and 3. Expanded content better prepares students for Nursing Acceleration Challenge Exam success at Fitchburg State University. Students participate in simulation scenarios involving substance abuse and mental health clients, to help to prepare our graduates to work in a substance abuse clinical setting.

Farm-to-table instruction and increased access to healthy foods: With a first-ever grant award from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Monty Tech looks forward to the establishment of an on-site farm, housed in a shipping container.

Grant funding to improve and expand training programs: Monty Tech has applied for and received eight Skills Capital Grants, totaling more than \$2.5M.

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*Thomas R. Browne, Superintendent-Director*  
*Dayana Carlson, Principal*

*For a complete annual report contact:*

**Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School 1050 Westminster Street**  
**Fitchburg, MA 01420**  
**(978) 345-9200**  
[www.montytech.net](http://www.montytech.net)

## **Wachusett Regional High School**

March 2023

Dear Residents of Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, and Sterling

It is an honor to write on behalf of the Wachusett Regional School District to thank our member towns for their continued support. This year has included several significant transitions in leadership as we welcomed four new principals to the district: Joy Wilde at Dawson Elementary, Carla Squier at Mayo Elementary, Kristina Pelczarski at Naquag Elementary, and Ace Thompson at the Thomas Prince School. In addition to myself, three district administrators: Jon Krol, Director of Social and Emotional Learning & Equity, Pamela Rutkowski, Director of Human Resources, and Michelle Gris , Director of Business and Finance also joined our central office team. I am thankful for the energy, professionalism, and perspectives that all of these individuals have demonstrated in their new roles.

The focus of our work this year has been to provide an honest and transparent accounting of where we stand in terms of our student experience as well as the management of the district as a whole. In both of these areas we still have much to accomplish. We are striving to make each of our schools a welcoming, safe, and supportive environment where all of our students belong and get the support they need. We will also continue to prioritize school safety - not only training our staff and students, but advocating for improvements to our facilities. Nearly all of our capital improvement requests this year focus on addressing the security infrastructure of our buildings by the addition of upgraded entry systems and cameras.

In terms of district management, there is a dire need to update and correct many of our operational systems. This includes our budgeting process, which has not provided a true accounting of what it costs to run the district or properly advocated for student needs. We have placed a particular emphasis this year on following School Committee guidance on appropriate class size. This is essential as we try to support all our students placed at increased risk due to the disrupted learning of the past three years.

I would like to thank our families, teachers, staff, and community members for their continued support and dedication to the children of the Wachusett Regional School District. I know we all share the goal of providing our students with a quality education that will prepare them to pursue their dreams.

James M. Reilly, MSW, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools



***Sterling Municipal Light Department***

50 Main Street  
Sterling, Massachusetts 01564-2135  
Tel: (978) 422-8267  
Fax: (978) 422-8054  
**www.energysterling.com**

**2022 Annual Town Report**

***Respectfully submitted, the one hundred and twelfth report of the Sterling Municipal Light Department (SMLD).***

in 2022 we continued a collaborative effort between the SMLD line crew and the ***Local Area Municipal Broadband (LAMB) Department*** in the installation of the fiber internet backbone and connecting services to residents and businesses throughout the town of Sterling. This project has created an opportunity to provide the businesses and residents of Sterling with the next generation internet through a fiber optic system, offering faster speeds and highly competitive pricing.

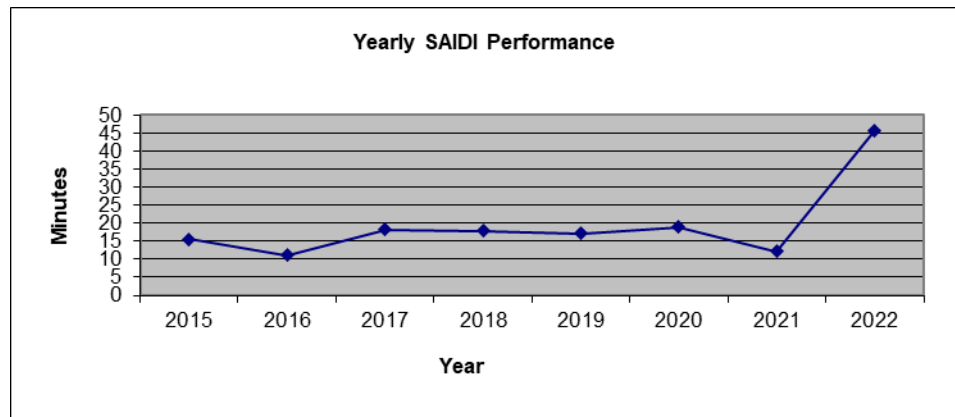
***Power***

***As of December 31, 2022, the SMLD's customer base has 4,005 accounts.***  
3,565 Residential, 13 Large General Service (LGS), 135 Medium General Service (MGS), 290 Small General Service (SGS), 1 Wholesale and 1 Streetlight.

A total ***of 65,301,082 kilowatt hours (kwhrs) of electricity were sold*** during the calendar year 2022. This represents an increase of 1,230,048 kwhrs from the 64,071,034 kwhrs sold in calendar year 2021. Sterling's hourly peak demand was 13.643 MW set in August of 2022.

The SMLD uses reliable indices to monitor the performance of our distribution system and measures our response time to system interruptions. The 2022 ***Average Service Availability Index (ASAI)*** of electricity for Sterling residents was 99.999%. The 2022 ***Customer Average Interruption Duration Index (CAIDI)*** numbers represent the average time required to restore service to a customer per sustained outage was 45.724 minutes. Reduced outages and improved performance in the distribution system is a direct result of the continued investments made by the SMLD Board of Commissioners, annual budget funding includes a systematic trimming

approach by the working Foremen that ensures each quadrant of the system is trimmed every 4 years and this is performed at a time of year that additional growth is minimized. The Operations crew continues to replace outdated equipment with newer technology as we look for ways to improve reliability while being conscious of the financial impact on ratepayers.



## Energy Storage

We have been able to mitigate any transmission increases with the use of our battery storage systems by using locally produced (and stored) solar energy from the *E.H. Perkins* on Wiles Road, as well as our *Community Solar with Storage Project* on Chocksett Road. To date, these facilities have combined savings to ratepayers of \$2,553,752 in avoided transmission cost while producing **49,427,747 kwhrs**.

The **1 MW Community Solar Project** with 1mw/2mwhrs of energy storage was the first of its kind in Massachusetts and is fully subscribed by over 400 Sterling residents who receive 25% of their energy needs from this facility. The ratepayers in Sterling share in savings generated by using the batteries to avoid transmission costs.

## Operations Department

In 2022 the SMLD Operations installed 57 new poles and pulled 41 old poles. We responded to 7 different motor vehicle accidents involving SMLD poles or pad mount equipment. The SMLD crews replaced 5,250' of overhead primary bare wire with tree protection covered wire. This helps in reducing incidental outages, caused by tree or wildlife contact. We replaced 2,045' of primary underground cable due to life span, cable faults or emergency motor vehicle accidents. In 2022 an additional 3,205' of primary underground cable was added for new residential homes, developments or

commercial buildings being built in Sterling. We installed 92 new meters and 10 new transformers throughout the SMLD distribution system totaling 890 KVA. The SMLD has continued with the LED floodlight conversion and has changed a total of 140 of the 216 floodlights in town to 85watt LED, contributing to better lighting at lower cost. It is expected to take about another 2 years to convert all floodlights to 85watt LEDs. When complete, this will reduce our stock from a high of 32 different types of lights and wattages of bulbs to only 3 types of lighting.

We have changed all town and private cul-de-Sac lighting to LED lights throughout the SMLD distribution territory. We will continue to work on the secondary handhole box replacements in certain underground developments. The older style flush mount (sub-surface) handhole boxes are being replaced with above ground secondary pedestals. The new style pedestals allow cables to be attached to upright busbars inside the pedestal. The benefits to the upright busbars are getting the service connection point out of the bottom of the handhole and water, this reduces the deterioration of the cables and connectors that service the house or handhole. This also allows for better trouble shooting capabilities and quicker restoration times in the winter months when flush mounts are frozen underneath snowbanks. In 2023, the SMLD Operations Department will continue to prioritize tree trimming, system hardening, safety and reliable electrical system. ***The SMLD continues to provide high system power and quality, as well as maintaining excellent customer satisfaction.***

### ***Fiber Project***

In 2020, upon completion of the 72-strand fiber in and around the center of Sterling made possible by a ***\$150,000 Community Compact IT Grant received by the town of Sterling***, we also installed a 432-backbone fiber from the Shrewsbury town line to the Leominster town line in Sterling. The fiber was placed along Route 140, Muddy Pond Road, Worcester Road, School Street, Leominster Road, Chocksett Road, Pratts Junction Road, Leominster Road. This will provide internet service to the Municipal buildings, Fire, Police and the DPW and will also provide improved communication capability to the radio towers, as well as access to SMLD equipment and renewable power supply assets. This new access to higher bandwidth will provide greater speeds and tremendous savings to the town with a 4.6-year payback. In 2022, the SMLD/LAMB continued the Fiber Phase two deployment, which started offering fiber internet to Sterling Businesses and Residents along the Phase 1 route. Also, in 2022 the SMLD and the Town of Sterling joined together to expand the Town's INET system to different Town facilities and locations. Thus, expanding the LAMB fiber network to more businesses and residents of Sterling. We currently have our fiber network from Maple Steet to Kendall Hill Road, all the way to the town beach. This will help get the current emergency radio systems for SPD, SFD, DPW and the SMLD off the current ISP system and onto the LAMB fiber network. The system will also allow us to add a VoIP phone system at the town beach for an emergency call box that will connect direct to SPD/SFD

In 2022, We continued with the joint project with the Town of Sterling, with the installation of the fiber cable from Leominster Road to North Row Road, to Heywood Road, in 2023 we expect to complete the installation of fiber from Osgood Road, to Princeton Road all the way down to Route 140. With no debt to the Sterling ratepayers, this project will expand the LAMB fiber network availability from just 17% to 42% of businesses and residents.

## **Awards**

The most important award that we received in 2022 was our *safety award*. For the eleventh consecutive year the SMLD had *no workers' compensation claims or lost time*. This not only lowered our workmen's compensation insurance premiums but also qualified the SMLD to receive the *American Public Power Safety Award*. This award recognizes the Public Power Utilities across the country who achieved this milestone.

Our improved safety record and reduced premiums also provide additional savings to our ratepayers.

The SMLD also received another *American Public Power Association* award in 2022, the *RP3 Platinum Certification*. This national award recognizes utilities that demonstrate high proficiency in reliability, safety, workforce development and system improvement.

## **Power Supply**

In an effort to diversify our power resources and stabilize purchased power costs, we buy electricity through fixed contracts and the open market. These costs reflect the generation and delivery of electricity to the Town of Sterling. There are circumstances beyond our control that make the cost of electric energy fluctuate, such as periods of peak power demands during extreme temperatures, unexpected plant shutdowns and spikes in fuel prices. Changing costs are triggered by unpredictable events from the fluctuating fuel commodity markets to global unrest. Natural gas prices have declined over the last few years, but we remain challenged with the uncertainty of the delivery during cold spells. Energy produced from natural gas has risen from 5% in 2000 to over 55% in 2022. With the new legislation for the 2050 Roadmap, the SMLD will be required to have at least 50% of our power supply coming from non-carbon emitting resources by 2030 and then 75% by 2040 and 100% by 2050. This will be

accomplished by continuing to use renewables such as solar and offshore wind projects as well as new hydro power that is being brought down from Canada. We support the reduction in carbon emissions and will continue to monitor this legislation and projects to be sure they are in the best interest of the Sterling ratepayers and that it does not supersede local control.

Our transmission and capacity costs continue to rise even while energy prices decline. The driver behind these costs is a combination of things; the capacity market in New England that does not provide the lowest possible rate to the consumers and the continued build out of transmission lines with projects running 34% over budget with no recourse. At the same time, transmission owners are receiving large returns (between 11-14%) on their multi-billion-dollar investments in transmission line upgrades in New England. The SMLD along with other municipal light plants and associations continue to contest these charges in Washington with our Legislators and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

As a result of these meetings various bills were filed that did bring some relief as the returns were lowered from 11.4% down to 10.54%. We will continue to contest that the returns are closer to the industry average of 9.2%.

### ***Power Portfolio***

***Our power portfolio is over 59% from non-carbon emitting resources.*** We receive ***hydro power*** specifically from ***Baltic Mills, Mechanicsville Hydro, Energy Stream Hydro*** and ***Public Authority State of New York Hydro (PASNY)***. In 2022 ***over 20%*** of our power was received from **renewable energy sources** that includes the ***Berkshire Wind Project*** in Western MA, the ***Hancock Wind Project*** located in Hancock ME, the ***Princeton Wind Project*** on Wachusett Mountain in Princeton, MA and ***three large scale solar facilities*** in Sterling.

#### ***Solar Projects in Sterling***

- ***The E. H. Perkins Project*** is a 1 MW solar array located on Jewett Road.
- ***Wiles Road Project*** is a 2-mw solar array.
- ***Origis Energy*** 1 mw solar with storage project on Chocksett Road.

We also receive power from the ***Millstone III Nuclear Plant*** in Millstone Connecticut and the ***Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant*** in New Hampshire. Other sources of our power supply come from the ***MMWEC Stony Brook Plant*** (combined cycle units I & II)

### **We continue to offer the following assistance programs to our residents**

- NextZero (Formerly HELPS) Home Energy Audit (no cost to residents)
- Energy Star® Rebate Program, [www.munihelps.org](http://www.munihelps.org)

- Kill-A-Watt™ Electricity Usage Monitor
- TESCO Surge Arrester
- Multiple Payment Options
- EV Chargers
- Virtual Peaker Residential Demand Response Program.
- Connected Homes Program, [www.munihelps.org](http://www.munihelps.org)

### **Other community activities/contributions sanctioned by the SMLD Light Board**

- Our Annual Open House is held the 3rd Thursday in June.
- Installed LED holiday lights on the Town Common.
- Annually we Install pole, cable and lighting needed to power the Sterling Fair .
- Provide funds for annual inspection and maintenance for all town owned generators.
- Offer the round-up program to our customers to benefit the Sterling Neighbor-to-Neighbor (N-2-N) Program. Since the program began in June 2014, your generous contributions have raised over \$17,000.00 for the Neighbor-to-Neighbor Fund.
- Work with the Energy Committee providing funding for energy efficiency projects in Municipal Buildings including LED lights that use up to 67% less energy to operate.
- Installed a new generator and power cables at the Senior Center.
- Provided funds for follow-up Energy Audits of all town buildings.
- Work closely with Sterling DPW on tree maintenance and removals.

### **SMLD CHANGES IN 2022**

**Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI)** In December 2020 we began the *Meter Replacement Program*. And in 2022, completed all 4,025-meter changes in Sterling with some communicating through our new fiber backbone.

**Tree trimming services continued throughout 2022.** By using a *competitive bid process* for tree trimming the work is *primarily performed by outside contractors*. Additional tree trimming is also performed by the *SMLD line crew that involves a 5-year rotating cycle* in areas that we see an increased growth or system problem.

**Utility Scam** Be aware of utility scams that continue taking place in our area. Scammers are making calls after business hours at night and throughout the weekends. They identify themselves as a “utility” and demand that a payment be made over the phone, or the service will be disconnected. ***Do not make a payment for this request.*** Hang up and call our office at 978-422-8267 (Monday through Thursday 7:30

Department at 978-422-7331. Also, if anyone stops by your home claiming to be an SMLD employee and you do not have a pre-arranged appointment, ***do not let them in.*** All SMLD employees have photo I.D.'s and will only be at your home for a scheduled appointment. Again, call our office or the Sterling Police Department if this incident should occur.

Residents who rely on life supporting medical equipment should contact our office to be put on our ***Power Priority List.*** This list is shared with our Police and Fire Departments for follow-up in emergency situations.

## **COMING IN 2023**

### **CUSTOMER PORTAL**

With the completion of the Eaton AMI Meter System rollout and the advancement of technology and multi-speak functionality, the SMLD will be rolling out an APP based and web-based Customer Usage Portal. This portal will allow our customers to link one or multiple meters to a single login and track and view their usage data down to a 15-minute interval. Customers who sign up for ebill will also be able to view their bill.

### **FIBER INTERNET**

The SMLD and LAMB Departments continue to expand the fiber network. As we expand our network, we will continue to be able to offer this locally owned service to more businesses and residents of Sterling. We currently cover approximately 23% of Sterling and are working with the town to expand to 42% by the end of 2023. Building a completely new fiber network throughout the town is a large undertaking. We feel, with the support from our Board of Commissioners, our Office Staff and our Fiber and Electric Operations teams, we can build a system using the latest technology in high-speed internet that offers competitive pricing and unmatched customer service.

We thank the DPW personnel for their assistance throughout the year by providing maintenance to our vehicles and assisting us during roadway excavations.

We thank the Water Department for their contribution to lowering our peak power demand by shedding loads during peak periods. This helps to reduce our transmission costs, which benefits all ratepayers.

We would also like to thank the Police, Fire and Dispatchers for their continued support throughout the year. While most of the work by your departments is performed behind the scenes, it does not go unnoticed. Standing by to keep our crews safe at accident sites, monitoring our crews while out on trouble calls or keeping our communication equipment operating at peak efficiency, all contribute to the safety of our employees and for that we are most grateful.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sean Hamilton  
Interim General Manager

For the Sterling Municipal Light Board Members:  
Joseph Curtin, Chairman  
Brian Pierce, Vice Chairman  
Eric Darlington, Clerk

## **TOWN PLANNER**

Stephen Wallace became Sterling's new Town Planner in late October. He has 34 years of experience as a professional planner at the State, regional and local level. He comes to Sterling after spending the last eleven years as the Westminster Town Planner.

Mr. Wallace has begun working on a number of zoning initiatives including:

- A multi-family zoning overlay district for the Town's compliance with the State's new zoning requirement for MBTA-Adjacent communities. This will be ready for the 2024 Annual Town Meeting.
- A new floodplain zoning bylaw to go with the Town's new Flood Rate Insurance Maps that will be released in late 2023. This will be ready for the 2024 Annual Town Meeting.
- Zoning for kennels. This will be ready for the 2023 Town Meeting.
- Review the Town's options for appropriately rezoning the Performance Zone. This effort will take a while and involve a considerable amount of input from the public, Economic Development Committee and outside expertise.

Mr. Wallace will also render assistance to the Economic Development Committee by helping them prepare a promotional map/brochure, and the Open Space Committee as they attempt to create new trails and link our existing trails to those in our neighboring communities.

In addition to the above, the Town Planner will undertake the following initiatives in 2023:

- Work with the Town Administrator to prepare a database of earth removal permits and projects in town.
- Review the town-owned property list to see if we own any properties that may be suitable for senior housing.
- Work with the Conservation Agent to host an interdepartmental meeting to review the Town's new stormwater management permitting system.
- Continue to manage the Planning Board's caseload on a day-to-day basis.
- Continue to participate in MRPC's Brownfields Steering Committee and Comprehensive Economic Development Planning Committee.
- Continue to search out grant opportunities that are appropriate for our town.
- Continue to represent the Town and advocate for its interests at State and regional meetings.

You can reach the Town Planner by phone (978-422-8111, extension 2320), or email ([swallace@sterling-ma.gov](mailto:swallace@sterling-ma.gov)) or just drop by the Butterick Municipal Building (Room 202).

## **Wachusett Greenways 2022 Annual Report**

### **Onward Together – 28<sup>th</sup> Year**

What do you say the Mass Central Rail Trail is? New words came from partners this year: a sanctuary, transformative. And we heard the perennial drumbeat: Keep up the good and important work! Together we continue to build community with this shared use path through Sterling, West Boylston, Holden, Rutland, Oakham and Barre. Our partnership with these towns and Princeton and Paxton, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, local foundations, other nonprofits and businesses along with every individual donor and volunteer is our foundation.

### **Incredible Volunteers!**

"I'll help!" These words came from a trail visitor and new resident here. She immediately signed up to volunteer, and now brings her encouraging spirit to trail clearing days. "The mowers are all set for next spring," declared a pair of volunteers who cleaned and serviced our small fleet. Many volunteers helped mow, clean ditches, rake leaves, remove dead trees, offer hospitality, mail letters, reach out, stake new trail and more!

### **Partner Town Support**

All eight Towns--Barre, Holden, Oakham, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling and West Boylston--contributed toward Wachusett Greenways' annual operating expenses. Special thanks to the DPW teams in Sterling, West Boylston and Holden for help with maintenance.

### **Filling Gaps on the MCRT**

In 2022, with support from MassTrails, Wachusett Greenways completed two new miles of the Mass Central Rail Trail in Holden between Mill Street and Princeton Street and installed the new bridge in Sterling at West Washacum Lake. WG is also conducting an enhanced maintenance program to upgrade trail surfaces.

In 2023, WG will begin construction of a new accessible MCRT route over the hill in Holden from Wachusett Street (Route 31) at Mill Street toward Manning Street. Filling the gaps and reconstructing MCRT sections for accessible shared use is part of a statewide effort to complete the 104 mile MCRT between Northampton and Boston. MassTrails and DCR guidance and matching grant support is essential for linking the whole MCRT.

### **Tunnel Murals**

MCRT Charnock Tunnel Mural grew in 2022. Trail visitors express delight with the beautiful scenes created by artist Margaret McCandless and several volunteers. In 2023 Margaret will engage volunteers with painting a new Pommogussett Tunnel Mural which "weaves human history and natural history into one presentation." These WG mural projects are produced with support from grants from Rutland, Paxton and Holden

## **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

To the Honorable Select Board and the Citizens of Sterling:

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) has the authority to hear appeals of the Zoning Enforcement Officer, to grant Variances when zoning requirements cannot be met, and to grant Special Permits based on use where required by Sterling's Protective Bylaws.

In 2022, the Zoning Board of Appeals received 11 new applications.

January	185 Pratts Junction Road	Variance	Continued
	18 Circle Ave	Special Permit	Granted
March	185 Pratts Junction Road	Variance (continued)	Withdrawn
	227 Leominster Road	Special Permit	Granted
	150 Clinton Road	Special Permit Modification	Granted
	Cider Hill Estates (off Redstone)	Special Permit Modification	Continued
April	Cider Hill Estates (off Redstone)	Special Permit Modification	Granted
May	101 Osgood Road	Special Permit	Continued
June	101 Osgood Road	Special Permit (continued)	Granted
July	Northgate Meadows	Comprehensive Permit Modification	Continued
August	Northgate Meadows	Modification (continued)	Continued
	78 Worcester Road	Special Permit	Leave to Withdraw
October	Northgate Meadows	Modification (continued)	Granted
	275 Leominster Road	Special Permit	Granted
	141-149 Greenland Road	Special Permit	Continued
November	141-149 Greenland Road	Special Permit (continued)	Granted
	15 School Street	Special Permit	Denied

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Fox, Chairman  
 Joseph Curtin, Vice Chairman  
 Diana Baldarelli, Clerk  
 Matthew CampoBasso  
 Everett Pierce  
 Gail Bergeron, Alternate

### Notes:

[illegible]

# TOWN INFORMATION

[www.sterling-ma.gov](http://www.sterling-ma.gov)

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

### **At the Butterick Municipal Building: 978-422-8111**

Assessors.....ext. 2313  
Board of Health .....ext. 2305  
Select Board .....ext. 2316  
Bulding/Inspections .....ext. 2301  
Planning & Zoning Boards ..... ext. 2320  
Recreation .....ext. 2323  
or 978-422-3041  
Town Administrator.....ext. 2315  
Town Clerk.....ext. 2307, 2308  
Treasurer/Collector .....ext. 2311, 2310

### **Other numbers:**

DPW & Water Dept..... 978-422-6767  
Municipal Light Dept. .... 978-422-3049  
Senior Center ..... 978-422-8267  
Police Dept. .... 978-422-7331  
Fire Dept. .... 978-422-6633

# **STERLING SUMMER CONCERT SERIES 2023**

**6 PM to 8 PM Mondays and Wednesdays in July and August  
Memorial Park, behind the Fire Station**

## **JULY 10: P.T. PICKERS**

**12: RHYTHM**

**17: HOLDIN' BACK: THE 60'S**

**19: BETTY ROY BAND**

**24: CROSSROADS**

**26: TRIGGER SOUTH**

**31: STRICTLY OVERTIME**

## **AUGUST 2: ILLUSIONS**

**7: RAMPAGE TRIO**

**9: BAND FROM U.N.C.L.E.**

**14: JIM ATKINSON BAND**

**16: LSN**

**21: RHYTHM**

## **SPONSORED BY THE STERLING CULTURAL COUNCIL**

**WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THESE LOCAL BUSINESSES**

**Don-Jo Mfg.**

**Favreau Forestry**

**Open Door Real Estate**

**Hamilton Orthodontics**

**Jay's Auto Service**

**Hendrickson Advertising**

**Rota Spring Farm Homemade Ice Cream**

**L.R. Favreau Septic**

**Kitchen Associates**

**Live Automation**

**Groundwater Supply Co. Inc.**