



TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, MATTHEW COOGAN



Greetings Boxford Residents

This is the sixth edition of the Town of Boxford Quarterly Community Newsletter and the first in 2023. We aim for everyone to find these updates accessible and informative, and welcome feedback for improving communication with the public.

The May 9th Annual Town Meeting and May 16th Annual Town Election are quickly approaching. Next year's operating budget, Fiscal Year 2024, will be one of several warrant articles for residents to consider. In an economic climate of rising costs and high inflation, several of our boards and committees are working diligently to assemble a budget that funds level services as efficiently and effectively as possible. It will be a challenging year as costs to maintain existing school and town services are increasing at a rate beyond 2.5%. Information on the FY24 budget can be found on the [Finance Committee website](#). Detailed budget information on the [Masco Regional School District budget can be found on its website](#). The Finance Committee, [Boxford School Committee](#), and [Regional School District Committee](#) are holding public meetings throughout the month of March. Meeting agendas may be found on their respective webpages. Recordings of meetings may be viewed on the [BCATv website](#).

The Select Board will be finalizing the Town Meeting Warrant and Town Election ballot on April 10th and will be meeting the next three Mondays in March to review department budgets, warrant articles, and preparing for Town Meeting. Agenda materials may be reviewed on the [Select Board website](#). Information on the Town Meeting Warrant Article will be available to review in mid-April.

Thank you to all the staff, the Boards and Committee members, and all the volunteers who work over several months to plan the Annual Town Meeting and Town Election.

Finally, we have received a few inquiries on this summer's Park Program. It will be a 5-week program, and we are targeting a start date of June 27th. The application window for staff will open later this month. Registration for Park Program attendees will begin in May.

TOWN CLERK



The Town Clerk's office is preparing for our Annual Town Meeting and Election.

Boxford's Annual Town Meeting will take place on May 9, 2023 at 7pm in the Masconomet Auditorium, 20 Endicott Road.

The Annual Town Election will occur on May 16 at Town Hall, 7A Spofford Road from 7am until 8pm.

The last day to register to vote (if you are not already registered) is April 30. Registration may be accomplished online by going to <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr/> or in person at the Town Clerk's office in Town Hall.

If you are interested in running for office, nomination papers are available in the Town Clerk's office until March 16. Candidates must obtain the signatures of 50 registered Boxford voters and return their nomination papers to the Town Clerk's office by March 20.

Questions? Please contact the Town Clerk's office at 978-887-0710 or rphelan@boxfordma.gov.

ASSESSING DEPARTMENT

At the 2022 Annual Town Meeting, residents voted to adopt Local Option Personal Exemption Clause 57. This exemption allows Seniors who receive “circuit breaker” tax credits on their Massachusetts state income taxes to obtain a reduction of their real estate taxes up to the amount of their credits.

Who is eligible?

- You must own and occupy the property as of July 1 of the fiscal year.
- You must be 65 or older.
- You must have received a “circuit breaker” credit on your Massachusetts state income taxes for the preceding calendar year.

How to apply?

- Applications must be filed annually with the Board of Assessors by 4/1.
- You must include a full copy of your Massachusetts state income tax return for the preceding year, including Schedule CB (Circuit Breaker Credit). For the current Fiscal Year 2023, please submit your 2021 tax return.
- Exemption amounts will be determined once all applications have been submitted for the year (after April 1st). Applicants will be notified of their exemption amount, which will be abated off of the 4th quarter tax bills. Any overpayments will be refunded.

Questions?

- For more information on Clause 57 or any property tax exemptions available, please contact the Assessor’s office.
- For more information on the State Circuit Breaker Tax Credit, please contact your tax preparer or the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.

Excise tax bills for residents who had a vehicle registered in Boxford on January 1, 2023 were mailed on February 17 and are due on March 20.

Excise tax bill information is generated at the Registry of Motor Vehicles according to the information on a resident’s registration. It is important to notify the RMV if you move or change the place of garaging of your vehicle. Otherwise, you will continue to receive excise tax bills from the Town of Boxford.

Excise tax is assessed at \$25 per thousand dollars of taxable value. The value of a motor vehicle is determined at the RMV using a statutory formula based on the Manufacturer’s Suggested Retail Price (MSRP). Condition and market value are not considered when determining value. Percentages are determined as follows (examples based on 2023 excise tax bills):

In the year prior to model year (model year 2024)	50%
In the year of manufacture (model year 2023)	90%
Second Year (model year 2022)	60%
Third Year (model year 2021)	40%
Fourth Year (model year 2020)	25%
Fifth year, each year thereafter (model year 2019 and older)	10%

Excise tax is billed by the calendar year. If a vehicle is registered mid-year, the excise tax will be prorated by the month.

If you believe the MSRP of your vehicle is incorrect, please contact the RMV at 857-368-8180. The RMV will then notify the Assessor of any errors.

Taxpayers may be eligible for an abatement of excise tax if the vehicle has been sold, declared a total loss, junked, or registered in another state. Information regarding documents needed for an abatement may be found on the back of your tax bill or on the Assessing Department’s website. Abatement applications must be received by the Assessor’s office within 3 years of when the excise was due or 1 year after the excise was paid, whichever is later.

Filing an application for abatement does NOT stay the collection of your excise tax bill. To avoid interest, fees, and collection action, you must pay the bill within 30 days of the issue date. If you receive an abatement on a bill that has been paid, you will receive a refund. Any abatements granted will be on the original excise tax only and will not reduce any interest or fees. For more information on how your excise tax bill is generated or for questions on the abatement process, please contact the Assessor’s office.

TREASURER/TAX COLLECTOR

Motor Vehicle Excise Tax Bills--FAQ

Excise tax bills are issued to all owners of vehicles that were registered and garaged in Boxford on January 1st. The payment due date is Monday, March 20th. Bills for new vehicles acquired after Jan. 1st will be issued periodically throughout the year. If you do not receive a bill for a vehicle you own, please contact the Collector of Taxes at 978-887-3674 or eguerin@boxfordma.gov.

Please do not ignore an excise tax bill! Massachusetts law (c. 60A) provides for strict enforcement of excise tax collection. If not paid by the due date, the unpaid bill may be subject to interest at 12% per annum, and fees: \$10 for demand, \$22 for mailed warrant, \$17 for service of warrant and \$20 non-renewal mark at RMV. Ultimately, the vehicle registration and drivers’ license cannot be renewed until the unpaid excise tax, interest and fees are paid in full.

Payments that include the remittance coupon may be mailed in the envelope provided to Town of Boxford, P.O. Box 601, Medford, MA 02155-0007. Payments may also be made online via www.boxfordma.gov or in person at Town Hall Monday – Thursday 8:00AM – 4:30PM. Payments made outside of business hours may be deposited in the secure payment drop box located to the right of the main entrance to Town Hall.

BOXFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT

Free Car Seat Safety Checks

Boxford Fire is pleased to announce firefighters Calum Tilston and Christopher Patrikas have completed their Car Seat Technician Certification course. Boxford Fire now has four career members certified to check and install child car seats. Safety checks and installations are offered by calling the East Fire Station (978) 887-5725 to schedule an appointment.

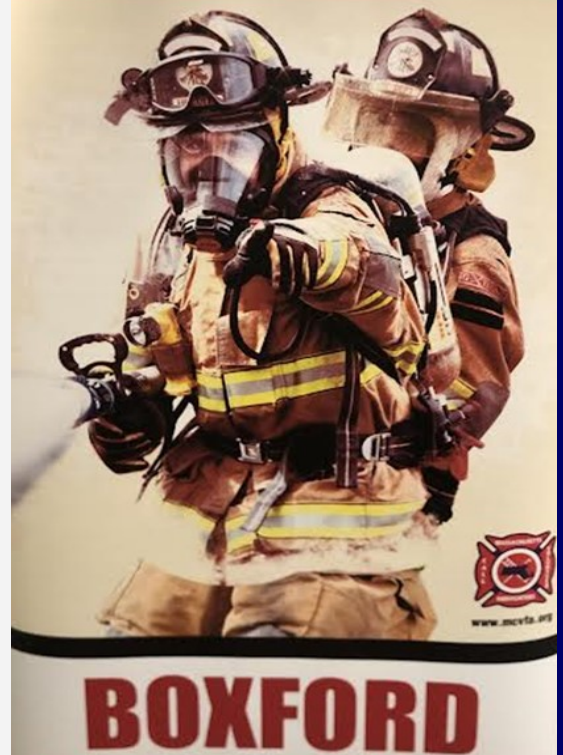
Did you know?

There are three types of car seats; Rear-Facing, Forward-Facing, and Booster Seats. When purchasing a new car seat, it is recommended to read the manufacturer's labels to ensure the seat is appropriate for your child's weight, height, and age. Always complete and mail the registration card of your new seat. This allows the manufacturer to notify you of any recalls. Never buy a used car seat! There is no way to be sure that a used car seat is not missing parts, labels, instructions, or may have been involved in a crash.

Call Firefighters Needed

Boxford Fire is looking to hire call firefighters. Our Town relies on residents to serve on the Fire Department and respond to help their fellow neighbors during their emergencies. Members must be at least 18, reside in Town or within 10 minutes to one of the two fire stations.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



BOXFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Town of Boxford recently experienced a series of car and house breaks during late December and early January. It had been over a year since we had any incidents of this type. At this time, we are happy to report, due to the hard work of the Boxford Police Department and surrounding departments, two suspects are in custody for these crimes. We want to remind residents of Boxford to report any suspicious activity immediately and to please keep your vehicles locked at all times when they are not inside a garage. Although the weather has been unseasonably warm we did have a significant increase in crashes in mid-December. As the weather turns back again to a wintery pattern, please be mindful of variable road conditions. Road conditions from one side of town to the other can be very different.

ONLINE PAYMENTS

Online payments are available!

Purchase trash stickers, dog licenses, burn permits and pay your property or excise tax.
<https://epay.cityhallsystems.com/selection>

COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Department, along with the Police and Fire Departments, has started the process of moving to ProPhoenix, our new CAD/RMS (Computer Aided Dispatch/Records Management System) software. This new software was approved by voters at the May 2022 Annual Town Meeting and replaces our current software that we have used since 1989. The primary reason for the change was the current software went end of life December 2021 and the provider had no replacement available. We are looking forward to this new chapter in our software experience but realize it will involve some changes and the obvious learning curve. We appreciate the help over the past 34 years from our previous software vendor, Pamet software, now known as Under Control Software.

We also have a new Dispatcher in training, Harrison Prinz, who started training on January 31, 2023. Harrison is also a call member of the Boxford Fire Department. Welcome aboard Harrison!



LAND USE

The Conservation Commission completed the review and approved amendments to the Stormwater Management Permit for the Cole School parking lot improvement project. The amendments incorporate 27 Main Street into the construction site, which was acquired by the Town last April. The Boxford Planning Board also reviewed and recommended approval of the amended Cole School parking lot improvement project as part of a separate Special Permit/Site Plan approval process overseen by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Conservation Commission continues to provide oversight of The Willows at Boxford elderly housing project on Willow Road. The Commission finalized and signed a Conservation Restriction that will safeguard the open space land at The Willows at Boxford while ensuring public access to trails for Boxford residents.

The Planning Board met jointly with the Select Board to discuss the requirements of the MBTA Communities Act. The Act requires affected communities to provide multi-family housing at a minimum density of fifteen units per acre in quantities as prescribed by the Act. Boxford is required under the Act to provide 141 units. The town successfully submitted initial responses as required under the Act in order to remain in compliance.

The Community Preservation Committee continues to work with the Land Committee to purchase approximately 35.5 acres of undeveloped land on Herrick Road known as the Dorman property. A topographical survey of the property has been completed and sketches have been prepared of possible recreational uses on the site. Consultations with various stakeholders, including state wildlife officials, are ongoing.

INSPECTIONAL SERVICES/ZONING

The Building Department is undergoing several changes. Stacey Fournier is transitioning to the Assistant Assessor position after serving as Administrative Assistant for the past year. We are very excited for her new job in the Assessors Department. Stacey and I are training with our vendor Open Gov and preparing to go live with on-line permitting on April 3rd. The goal is to have the administrative assistant position filled in early March to get up to speed with all of the office procedures before going live.

Joan Gordon has been assisting the department during the Administrative Assistant search. She has much experience from previous stints in the building department and is keeping the office functioning smoothly. We are also fortunate to have additional assistance from resident Joanna Hambling. Joanna has been tutored by Joan and is coming up to speed on the various office protocols and doing quite well.

The Building Department office is quite a unique place to work as an administrative assistant because you have to greet the public at the inspectional services window and interact with the various inspectors building, electrical, plumbing and gas as well as the Zoning Board of Appeals members. Joan has said that she doesn't know where the time goes at the end of the day due to the constant interactions with folks!

The Massachusetts Office of Inspection Services adopted the ICC 2021 Energy code with MA amendments on January 1, 2023. I have been reviewing and attending various training and webinars to understand the numerous code changes. We are also anticipating the State to adopt the 10th edition of the Ma Building code to take effect in June 2023. I am looking forward to a very busy spring and summer getting the office back in order.

Peter Delaney, Inspector of Buildings



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

In between snow and ice removal operations, the DPW has been focusing on building and fleet maintenance-related activities. The DPW has completed minor building improvements and preventative maintenance which would have otherwise been outsourced. Likewise, the staff has also been able to complete more repairs and preventative maintenance to the vehicle fleet. The DPW staff is capable of making these minor repairs in order to minimize costs to the town. In addition to this, the DPW has been integral in preparing for the opening of the new Community Center at 10 Elm. The state-of-the-art building has many operating systems which required training and testing to ensure proper operations going forward.

Secondly, DPW administration has been focusing on capital planning for short and long-term projects. This includes the design and permitting of several culverts throughout the town and a potential access drive to a new DPW site, the installation of a new women's shower in East Fire Station, updating the DPW's 5-year capital outlay, and other related planning efforts. The DPW also oversaw the construction of a the new fabric-covered storage facility.

Lastly, I would like to announce that, for the first time in over 4 years, the DPW is now fully staffed. Christos Pouloupoulos was recently hired and comes to the town with valuable experience for his position. We would like to welcome him to the team and look forward to having him serve the community well.

MASCONOMET



The Masconomet School Committee is engaged in discussions relating to the upcoming budget needs and proposed Capital Plan. Budget discussions have centered around increases due to a variety of factors, particularly a 15% increase in regular transportation, salary obligations, and a 14% increase in OOD placements anticipated for the FY24. In recent meetings, the administration has been presenting information regarding the current conditions of the Masco building, facilities and grounds. Through these discussions, it is apparent there is an immediate need to upgrade things such as the HVAC system and roof – given the age of the building, as well as a need to improve the condition of the fields and upgrade various equipment for sufficient upkeep and maintenance of the property. For more information, please visit <https://www.masconomet.org/domain/25>

On another note, the Committee has been engaged in discussions over the past several months about the increasing mental health needs of our students. The community is encouraged to check out the FREE, 2 half day Youth Mental Health First Aid training sponsored by the Tri Town Council's Coalition. For more information, please visit <https://drive.google.com/file/d/19X2joJwIX7cqVky pbWnvvU0DXDYV7oCE/view>

The Masconomet School Committee encourages all community members to follow the Committee's blog, available on the Masco website here <https://www.masconomet.org/domain/207> For information regarding the meeting schedule for the Masconomet Regional School Committee for the upcoming 2022-2023 school year, please visit <https://docs.google.com/document/d/16apVyVqtd1b6CCpBGJ1JWKI9JTr6Xlhx/edit>

Your Boxford representatives' contact information: Carolyn Miller cmiller@masconomet.org, Christine Bolzan cbolzan@masconomet.org, Patti Bernheart pbernheart@masconomet.org (Masco Community Relations Subcommittee Chair), [Joe McLean jmclean@masconomet.org](mailto:Joe McLean@masconomet.org)

BOXFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

In early February, the staff and students of the Boxford Elementary Schools celebrated the 100th day of school with fun and engaging lessons and activities. It is hard to believe that we are at that point of the school year! We are looking forward to the months ahead and below are a number of updates from the School Department:

- On March 14th (Pi Day, 3.14) from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. in the Spofford cafeteria, The Specialist Team is celebrating a "Pi" filled evening of fun and creative activities where students and families can experience Pi-themed activities infused with Specialists' subjects.
- Also, at Spofford Pond, the student council is working on a kindness t-shirt design contest to promote kind behavior. The students are looking forward to creating the shirts and wearing them when completed!
- At Cole School, the Boxford Parent/Teacher Organization has several events coming up (Johnny K, Sam Drazin, grade level authors, robotic dog, parent/caregiver fundraiser).
- Also, at Cole School, Kindergarten registration has begun for the Fall of 2023 and as of early February, 100 students have already registered.
- The FY24 budget development process is underway and the schools are working closely with the Town Administrator, Fincom and Select Board on the budget development process.
- Finally, across the Tri-Town School Union, free developmental screenings are being offered for students between the ages of 2.9 and 5 years old. Further information in box to the right.

Do you have concerns about your child's development?

The Tritown School Union will be offering free developmental screenings. These screenings are open to all children, between the ages of 2.9 - 5 years old, who reside in the towns of Boxford, Middleton, and Topsfield.

Please choose the date and location that works best for you. Use the QR code to schedule an appointment.



When: **December 21, 2022**
Where: Cole School
26 Middleton Rd.
Boxford, MA

When: **March 22, 2023**
Where: Steward School
261 Perkins Row
Topsfield, MA

When: **June 7, 2023**
Where: Howe Manning School
26 Central St.
Middleton, MA

BOXFORD LIBRARY

Something New and Exciting is now available through your library!

Boxford Residents can now access Hoopla Digital content: E-book, E-Audiobook, Novels, and Music. All through the [Library website](#).



- Checkout up to 8 items per month
- Library Card and PIN is required to create a Hoopla Account
- Contact the library for more information at 978-887-7323



Programs & Events—March

For Children

- Music & Movement, Thursdays at 10 am.
- Preschool Storytime, Tuesday, and Wednesday at 1:30 pm, through Wednesday, March 29th.
- Winter Craft for Kids series, Monday mornings at 10:00 am.
- Lego Club, Thursday, March 30th, at 4:00 pm.

For Adults:

- Cookbook Club, Friday, March 10th, at Noon.
- Crochet Club, Tuesday, March 14th & 28th, at 1:00 pm.
- An America Divided, with New Yorker Staff Writer, Emma Green, Tuesday, March 14, 7:00 pm, via Zoom
- Poetry Circle, Tuesday, March 21, at 7:00 pm.
- Evening Book Discussion Group, Wednesday, March 15th, at 7:00 pm, via Zoom.
- Afternoon Book Discussion Group, Wednesday, March 29th, at 1:00 pm.

Programs & Events—April

For Children

- Music & Movement, Thursdays at 10 am.
- Origami Class for Kids, Wednesday, April 19th at 2:00 pm.
- Lego Club for Kids, Thursday, April 27th, at 4:00 pm.

For Adults:

- Cookbook Club, Friday, April 14th, at Noon.
- Poetry Circle, Tuesday, April 18, at 7:00 pm.
- Evening Book Discussion Group, Wednesday, April 19th, at 7:00 pm, via Zoom.
- Afternoon Book Discussion Group, Wednesday, April 26th, at 1:00 pm.
- Walking in the Woods with Robert Frost, Saturday, April 29th, at 1:00 pm.

For more information about these programs and events and others, visit our Events Calendar on the Library's website at: www.boxfordma.gov/town-library

VETERANS SERVICES

Boxford's James L. Melvin American Legion Post #379 provided over 60 meals, gifts, and gift cards to veterans and their families in 2022. They were also able to provide the Boxford food bank with gift cards.

If you would like to help the post to help our veterans in need, please consider sending a contribution to:

**James L. Melvin Post #379
PO Box 278
West Boxford, MA 01885**

American Legion Preparations are underway for Memorial Day 2023!

A friendly reminder our Boxford office hours are as follow:
1st Thursday of the month at the Senior Center 9am-11am
3rd Thursday of the month at Town Hall 9am -11am

Please do not hesitate to reach out to Veterans Services with any questions 978-688-9525

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ON WHAT IS
HAPPENING IN
TOWN!!!**

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Board of Health, working with the Waste Stream Taskforce, has decided on a new, more cost-effective method for trash and recycling curbside collection. A new, extended contract with Waste Management will change to an automated collection format using special 64-gallon bins. The bins, one each for trash and recycling, will be provided to each residence in Boxford. No fee or sticker will be required for disposing trash or recycling in the two bins. Residents needing to dispose of larger amounts of trash will be able to buy additional bins and will be charged a fee for trash disposal using the additional bin(s). Up to 2 plastic trash bags, requiring a sticker, can also be left for pick-up on a collection day. The new system will start in July. Detailed information will be provided to residents in the next few months

Tri-Town vaccination clinics continue to run on a monthly basis - clinics serves ages 6 months and up clinics will continue to run through June 2023 - mostly infants being vaccinated at clinics right now. All individuals 6 months and up are now eligible for an updated bivalent booster vaccine.

The Plan looking ahead to fall is moving toward simplifying the vaccine schedule and the recommendation will likely be for annual booster vaccines like flu vaccines. Covid test kits are still available at the Board of Health office.

NEW Behavioral Health Helpline (CALL or TEXT) 1-833-773-2445 <https://www.masshelpline.com/> Massachusetts introduced the rollout of the behavioral health helpline (BHHL) that launched Jan 3 connects residents with qualified professionals in need of mental health and addiction services: crisis dispatch, clinical triage, mobile crisis intervention team, and community behavioral health centers. Collaborates with 211, 988, BSAS, SAMHSA (substance use hotline). Available FREE to all MA residents of all ages and available in multiple languages, 24/7. Can call yourself or on behalf of someone else you are concerned about.

BCATV Boxford Cable Access Television

BCATV is a 501(c)(3) non-profit incorporated in 2005 currently operating 3 cable television channels for the enjoyment of the residents of Boxford. Our funding comes from a small access fee on each cable subscriber's monthly cable bill.

Our **Government Channel, Comcast Ch 8 / Verizon Ch 39**, records and plays back most Boxford government meetings. Many of the meetings are broadcast live whenever possible. We have been providing this service since our incorporation over 15 years ago.

Our **Educational channel, Comcast 99 / Verizon 40**, is oriented towards Masconomet events. Masco spring sporting events, concerts, special events and Class of 2023 events are being featured with many being broadcast live on our website streaming channel.

Our **Public Access channel, Comcast Ch 8 / Verizon Ch 45**, covers other Boxford events not mentioned above, such as youth sports, local concerts, Memorial and July 4th Parades, BAA Men's Softball starting mid-June, etc.

The homepage of our website, www.BoxfordCableTv.com, lists links to all the upcoming live streaming events for the next 10 days. In addition, there is a [TV Schedules](#) link and an [Upcoming Events](#) link on our home page which provide a quick way to see what is going on in Boxford over the upcoming 10 days.

Further down on our homepage is our **Video On Demand (VOD) widget**, which allows residents to playback previously recorded event videos and even download them as desired. There are also links to other websites of specific interest to the residents of Boxford.

In summary **BCATV** strives to strengthen our community by increasing and enhancing communication among our residents via our website and our 3 local cable access television stations.

WEST BOXFORD IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY
PRESENTS

12TH ANNUAL SOUP & CHOWDER FESTIVAL

Do you have a delicious chowder,
soup, or dessert you'd like to share
with the community?

If so, please contact us via our
Facebook page (West Boxford
Improvement Society) or email us
Westboxfordimprovement@gmail.com

*Gluten free and vegan options are always
appreciated!*

**SATURDAY
MARCH 11, 2023
5:00-6:30PM**

Lincoln Hall
563 Main Street, West Boxford 01921
Plenty of parking in the back!

BOXFORD ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

The BAA is getting ready for spring programming and registration for spring sports, including registration for Stiles Pond, is currently open or will be open soon. We are also looking for a volunteer or volunteers to organize the Call to Honor Triathlon that takes place in September, which honors the memory of Captain Rick Cashin, who was a much-loved and essential member of our community.

Please email Josilyn DeMarco at baa.stilespond.beach@gmail.com for more information or to volunteer! As always, if you have questions or concerns about any of the BAA's programs, please send the appropriate sports director a message through our SportsEngine website.

**WE'RE
HIRING!**

The Town of Boxford has an opening for the position of Minutes Secretary for the Select Board to create a written record of matters discussed during the Select Board meetings. All typing of minutes can be done at home and delivered electronically.

This is an approximately 15 hours per month, non-benefit eligible position. Meetings are held every other Monday either virtually or at Boxford Town Hall. Rate of pay is \$20/hour. For a full description of the position, please visit the Human Resources/ Employment Opportunities page of the Town's website:
www.boxfordma.gov.

Perley-Parkhurst-Cole Scholarship

The Boxford Commissioner of Trust Funds is accepting applications to the Perley-Parkhurst-Cole Memorial Trust Fund.

Requests for funds will be accepted through **Wednesday, March 15**. Application instructions and guidelines may be found on our website at www.boxfordma.gov



Barbara Perley Scholarship

The Barbara Perley Scholarship Board of Directors is accepting applications to the Barbara Perley Scholarship Fund.

The deadline for this application is **Wednesday, March 15**. Application information and instructions may be found at www.barbaraperleyscholarship.org