

Thursday, July 11, 2024

Mayor's Newton Update



State Primary on Sept. 3 with Contested Races for Two of Newton's State Representatives & Governor's Councillor: How to Vote by Mail, Vote Early In Person, or Vote on Election Day

All registered voters in Newton and across Massachusetts have the option to cast a vote-by-mail ballot and vote early, by mail or in-person, in all elections.

The next election in Newton is the State primary on Tuesday, Sept. 3, the day after Labor Day and the first day of school for students K-12 in Newton.

Vote by Mail

Sec. of State Bill Galvin's office will be sending out Vote by Mail ballot applications on Saturday, July 20 to all registered voters in Massachusetts. Please know that if you previously filled out an application to vote by mail in the March 2024 Presidential primary, you'll receive a Vote by Mail ballot automatically when they are sent out.

To vote early by mail, fill out the application then drop it off at one of the two secure ballot drop boxes outside the entrance to Newton City Hall, *or* mail it to the Newton City Clerk's Office, City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Ave., Newton, MA 02459, *or* fax to 617-796-1214, *or* scan the application and e-mail to elections@newtonma.gov, using the subject line: 2024 Vote by Mail Ballot Application. You may also fill out a Vote by Mail Application on-line [here](#).

Applications for mail-in ballots *must* have a signature that is visible and signed "in substantially the same manner as a handwritten signature." (Applications with typed signatures will not be accepted.)

The deadline to apply for a ballot to vote by mail in the Sept. 3 Primary is 5 p.m., Monday, August 26.

Newton's City Clerk's office will process applications and mail out ballots for the primary starting the last week of July and/or the first week of August. Please note that the ballots are sent out on a rolling basis, so not everyone who applied will get it at the same time.

Completed ballots can be mailed back to the Newton City Clerk's Office in the envelope provided, hand delivered to the City Clerk's office, or dropped in one of the two drop boxes in front of City Hall. Ballots must be received by 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 3 when polls close on election day to be counted.

Ballots *cannot* be dropped off at a polling place on Election Day; drop them off at City Hall.

Register to Vote

The deadline to register to vote in the Sept. 3 State Primary is 5:00 p.m., Saturday, August 24.

Not sure whether you are registered? Find your status [here](#). Not registered? Register online [here](#).

Early In-Person Voting

In-person early voting for the Sept. 3 Primary begins at Newton City Hall on Saturday, August 24 and continues through Friday, August 30. More details [here](#).

Vote on Election Day, Sept. 3

Polls will be open on election day, Tuesday, Sept. 3, across Newton from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Find your polling location [here](#).

Want to be an Election Worker?

Along with the team in our Clerk's office and the support of many different City Departments, every election we depend on hundreds of Newtonians who roll up their sleeves for the cause of democracy to help ensure every vote is counted and the process is smooth and efficient.

Interested in a paid position helping out in the upcoming primary or in the general election in November? Click [here](#) for more information and to apply! We need election workers!

School Building Update

We've been hard at work with significant improvements at 4 of our 15 elementary school buildings here in Newton with a special shout-out to the Principals and educators who have helped with the decision making and the Public Buildings teams headed by Commissioner Josh Morse.

Horace Mann Elementary School

Last night, the Horace Mann project achieved a huge milestone, as the Public Facilities Committee of the City Council approved our recommended site plan,

schematic design package, and project funding. We're building a two-story addition with a new cafetorium, stage, and music room, 6 new classrooms, and staff and student support spaces and doing further renovations of the existing building. Up next, the Finance Committee of the City Council is slated to vote on this on August 12th, which will be followed the same night by a vote of the full City Council.

The project team is currently working through the schematic designs, the construction phasing schedule and logistics plan.

To learn more about Horace Mann, check out our website [here](#). If you have any questions or comments, email us at horacemann@newtonma.gov.

Franklin Elementary School

On Monday, July 8, the full City Council approved the site plan and schematic design package, as well as the full funding for a completely new Franklin elementary school.

The project team has been continuing to refine the building design, shown below.

We anticipate starting construction next summer in 2025, completing the new building by December of 2026 (at which time we would move students into the new school), and then demolishing the existing school building and creating the new fields by the end of the summer of 2027.

To review the Franklin project go to our project website [here](#). If you have any questions or comments, email us at franklin@newtonma.gov.

Lincoln-Eliot Elementary School

The Lincoln-Eliot School construction is picking up steam.

Last month many of us gathered for a "Topping Off Ceremony" where the last piece of steel, signed by tons of current Lincoln-Eliot students, parents and staff, was placed in the frame for the new addition. Generations to come will be able to see it inside the new gym.

Masons are putting up the walls on the new gym, and the teams inside are installing insulation and hanging drywall. The spaces are all taking shape. We just received the new playground equipment as seen below. Below that is a rendering of what the new Lincoln-Eliot School playground should look like when we get that equipment put together.

The schedule for the project remains on time with students moving into the new home for the start of the 2025/2026 school year a year from this September. To stay up to date on the project, check out the project website at <http://lincolneliot-necp-projects.com/>.

Countryside Elementary School

The Countryside School project is currently in the “construction document phase” in partnership with the Massachusetts School Building Authority, MSBA, after having received full funding and site plan approval from the City Council this past winter.

We’ve still got a bunch of detailed design work left to do for this brand new school building. You can review all project information, presentations, and materials at countrysideelementaryschoolproject.com.

We are on track to bid the project out to general contractors at the end of this year, in December 2024, start construction early next year in February 2025, move students into the new school building over one of the school breaks during the winter of 2026/2027, and then complete the building demolition and new field construction by the spring of 2027.

This is an unbelievably productive, happy and exciting construction period, perhaps the busiest construction period ever, for school buildings in Newton.

Fun Programs for Older Adults this Summer in Newton

Our Senior Services and Parks, Recreation and Culture staff host a wide variety of programs for older adults to meet new friends and have some fun through the summer months in Newton. Check out a sampling of the wonderful programs below. In addition to these, we have fitness and wellness, drawing and watercolor, music classes and book clubs, Mandarin, Spanish and French conversation groups, and games of all sorts. Click [here](#) for the full list of programs run by Parks, Recreation and Culture, and [here](#) for the ones offered by our Senior Services. (By the way, we just docketed the request by our Council on Aging to change the nomenclature for the department from Senior Services to Older Adult Services.)

"Over 55" Tennis

Schedule: Tuesday and Thursday Mornings, 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Location: Cabot Park Courts

[Register Here](#)

Newton Senior Golf League

Schedule: Tuesday Mornings at 9:00 a.m.

Location: Commonwealth Golf Course

Call 617-796-1506 to register.

Golf Lessons at Leo J. Martin

Schedule: Package of three 1-hour lessons

Location: Leo J. Martin

[Register Here](#)

Tai Chi

Beginner: Fridays at 10:45 a.m.

Intermediate: Mondays at 10:15 a.m.

Advanced: Mondays at 11:30 a.m. and Fridays at 9:30 a.m.

Location: Hyde Community Center Gym

Contact seniorprograms@newtonma.gov

Bocce Drop-In

Schedule: Monday Afternoons, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Location: Cabot Park

Call 617-796-1506 to register

Pickleball

Location: McGrath Courts, 1600 Washington St.

Drop-In Play:

- Mon-Wed Nights: 4:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
- Tues-Thurs Mornings: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- Saturday Mornings: 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Lessons:

- Mon-Wed Mornings: 8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
- Thursday Afternoons: 3:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Tuesdays: 12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Public Walk-On Play:

- Mondays & Wednesdays: 11:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesdays: 2:00 p.m. - Dusk
- Thursdays: 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. - Dusk
- Fridays and Sundays: All Day
- Saturdays: 11:30 a.m. - Dusk

For more information on pickleball, email nscammon@newtonma.gov or call 617-796-1506 [or click here](#) to learn more. (FYI – players need to purchase a punch card which is required to play.)

Outdoor Walking Groups

Schedule:

- Early Mornings (Monday - Friday): 8:00 a.m. (Meet at Albemarle Fieldhouse)
- Wednesday Mornings: 10:00 a.m. (Upper Falls Greenway)
- Thursday Mornings: 9:30 a.m. (Mount Ida Campus)

Call 617-796-1506 to learn more.

Line Dancing at Post 440

Schedule: Thursdays, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. (Free informal dance lessons at 12:30 p.m.)

Location: Post 440

Call 617-796-1506 to learn more.

Line Dancing at the Hyde

Schedule: Mondays at 1:30 p.m.

Location: Hyde Community Center Gym

Email seniorprograms@newtonma.gov for more info.

Billiards / Pool

Schedule: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: Brigham House – 20 Hartford Street in Newton Highlands

Contact seniorprograms@newtonma.gov for more info.

Adult Soccer

Details: Early morning pick-up games for Newton residents over 50. Men and women welcome for fun, no-contact playing. Location and timing details [here](#). Contact David Kane at 646-644-3626 or dave.kane@gmail.com, or Nancy at 617-796-1506 or nscammon@newtonma.gov for more info.

Stop by West Newton Square

Along with our Director of Economic Development John Sisson, we went door to door in West Newton Square to welcome several new business owners and reconnect with others.

We are thrilled that the historic West Newton Cinema will be welcoming moviegoers for years to come thanks to impressive fundraising efforts this year by the [West Newton Cinema Foundation](#).

Check the short video below to see some of our small businesses, and then stop by to enjoy the summer in West Newton Square.



Be on the Lookout for Black Swallow-Wort

Black Swallow-wort (pictured below) is an invasive perennial vine. Originally from Europe, this nasty vine can easily be identified by its glossy greenish/bluish leaves in pairs opposite to each other, and little purple flowers which form long seed pods in later summer.

It's invading Newton. It's spreading rapidly and displacing native species which provide food and habitat to pollinators, songbirds and other wildlife. As it's in the Milkweed family, Monarch butterflies will mistake it for our native milkweed and lay their eggs on it, only for them to die as larvae because black swallow-wort is inedible to them. In the coming weeks, the vines' seed pods will open, and the wind will disperse the seeds on white fluffy fibers to make the infestation even worse.

Please help us all to contain this invasive species and remove it before it spreads further. Your best bet to prevent further spread is to dig up the plant, roots and all. If that isn't feasible, continually cutting it back will eventually exhaust and kill the plant, but even just removing the seed pods before they burst will help stop the spread. Put everything into a bag and then into your trash, *not* into your yard waste.

Huge thanks to the Newton Conservators for tracking invasives and providing information to us. Find more detailed information about this and Newton's other major invasive plant invaders at the Newton Conservators Invasive Plant site: <https://newtonconservators.org/invasive-plants/>.

Gath Pools and Splashpad Community Celebration and Open House

Join us on Saturday, July 20 for a community celebration of the new Gath Pools and Splashpad at 256 Albemarle Road. We'll have some fun, food and frozen treats, a synchronized swim show, music, games, and free entry until 2 p.m., as well as a little pomp and circumstance, as we'll officially cut the ribbon on the new facility at 9:45 a.m.

The two new pools at Gath have been open for a few weeks and we've been working hard finishing up the splashpad (and some of the other final touches). The splashpad will be fully operational in time for the 20th (perhaps a few days before), with the large tipping bucket drenching the young and young at heart alike.

We're making sure there is free community access to the splashpad from the park every day of the week. (Stay tuned for the hours.) For other periods, the splashpad will be available to those using the swimming pools which do require

either memberships or a daily pass. (Please know pool memberships are available for those experiencing financial hardships by clicking [here](#).)

See you on July 20th.

Warmly,
Ruthanne

P.S. Join us this Wednesday, July 17 at Newton's first **Disability Pride Celebration**. Marking the 34th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the program is at the Newton Free Library, Druker Auditorium, 330 Homer St. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Thanks go to our hosts the Newton Commission on Disability and Understanding Our Differences. Listen to a moderated panel of speakers with disabilities with a Q&A and audience discussion to follow. (ASL interpretation will be provided.)

P.P.S. **Greentail Table at 343 Watertown Street in Nonantum is celebrating its 10th Anniversary** this weekend and everyone's invited. Festivities kick off Saturday, July 13 at 1:00 p.m. with cake and ice cream, and runs through Sunday, July 14 with artisan pop-ups, raffles, giveaways, face painting, refreshments, a sale, and even Tarot card readings. Click [here](#) for more information and a schedule of events.

Past P.S.s happening soon:

The **89th Annual Italian Festival in Nonantum** – affectionately known as “Festa” – is Wednesday, July 17 through Sunday, July 21 at Pellegrini Park on Hawthorn Street. With live music every night, great food, carnival rides, community and so much more, the St. Mary of Carmen Society festival brings generations of tradition to life every summer. Click [here](#) for more information.



Sunday Night Concerts in the Newton Centre Bowl start on July 14 and continue through Aug. 18. For six weeks the open space adjacent to the Newton Centre playground and just down the hill from the hut on Tyler Terrace comes alive with music and dancing. Bring a lawn chair or blanket, perhaps a picnic dinner as well and join the fun. Click [here](#) for more information and a schedule of performers.



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