

Mayor's Update



NewMo Starts Today

Today is an exciting day in the City of Newton as we officially launch Newton in Motion, or NewMo, our innovative transportation service for seniors 60 and older.

The first riders got picked up at 8:00 this morning and the four vans have been busy all day.

I was lucky enough to be one of the first riders. The NewMo van picked me up at City Hall and I took a spin with Phyllis Chmara and Faina Saltanov from the Golda Meir House who were thrilled NewMo picked them up within 10 minutes of their request.



(Photo: With Director of Senior Services Jayne Colino and Newton residents Phyllis Chmara and Faina Saltanov in a NewMo van.)

We're teaming with Via, a leading provider of on-demand ride sharing, to provide easily identifiable vans and vetted drivers who arrive within 30 minutes at an affordable price. The service will reliably get people to and from the Senior Center, villages, medical

appointments and to specified destinations, primarily in Newton.

Collision probably isn't the best word to use on a day we're launching a new transportation system, but this really is about a collision of new technology and business models and the needs of people coming together and changing the way transportation is provided.

We're used to transportation using fixed routes and fixed schedules. NewMo explodes that model by allowing people to get to where they need to go when they need to be there, often sharing the van with others going in the same direction.

I'm deeply grateful to Director of Senior Services Jayne Colino and Alice Bailey and Director of Transportation Planning Nicole Freedman who worked so hard to put

together with Via this transportation service, the first of its kind in the Commonwealth.

Want to sign up? More information about NewMo is [HERE](#).

(Photo: Paving outside the new Cabot School.)

Improving Newton's School Buildings

More than 80 tradespeople from dozens of subcontractors are working at Cabot Elementary School six days a week. The renovated school in Newtonville will be



completed on time by July 1 so the phone lines, computers, furniture, supplies and classrooms can be set up and ready for the first day of school on Sept. 3.

On Saturday alone, crews worked on the elevators, plumbing fixtures, security, lighting and communications systems, ductwork, flooring, and basketball hoops. Earlier in the week contractors simulated a storm event with water and wind blown at windows; they held.

Newton has a very busy summer ahead at many school buildings.

Horace Mann Elementary School at 687 Watertown Street is moving to 225 Nevada Street in September (the name of the Carr School will be changed to Horace Mann). In preparation, air conditioning is being installed at the new Horace Mann and two classrooms are being enlarged.

Work then begins on the former Horace Mann School so it can become the permanent home of the Newton Early Childhood Program (NECP) which is currently operating at 150 Jackson Road, the former Aquinas property. NECP will move in early 2021.

Plans are also in the design phase for 150 Jackson Road to become the new home of the Lincoln-Eliot School. Then, the former Lincoln-Eliot will become swing space for additional schools as future renovations are undertaken. Countryside, Ward and Franklin are next on the long-range plan. In the meantime, HVAC improvements at Lincoln-Eliot will soon be completed, and windows and door replacements will begin in the fall.

New boilers will be installed at Bigelow and Day Middle schools and two additional classrooms are being created within Oak Hill Middle School.

In all, crews will tackle 235 school improvement projects this summer, ranging from flooring and painting to lighting upgrades.

(Photo: With Bob DeRubeis)

Serving Our City for 32 years: Bob DeRubeis

The following is a letter I sent to the City Council announcing Bob DeRubeis'

retirement:

With a wide range of emotions, I am letting you know that Bob DeRubeis, our Parks, Recreation and Culture Commissioner will retire when he turns 65 next February 2020. I am grateful for Bob's leadership, humanity, fine management skills, good nature and deep love of Newton. I am happy that he will enjoy a new phase of life. I am so sorry to lose him for he has been an exceptional public servant and fine Commissioner.



Bob has a hard job and he does it beautifully. He leads a department with a wide range of duties, many of which are public facing. His department, for example, does snowplowing around schools and public buildings and field maintenance, runs summer camps and recreation programs and takes care of our trees, operates farmers' markets and oversees Gath Pool and Crystal Lake. At every turn, Bob proves himself to be a leader who has the respect and affection of his employees and other City and School department heads, gets things done well, and gives everyone respect so residents and City Councilors on both sides of an issue are generally satisfied.

Bob grew up in West Newton and graduated from Newton North and Boston State College with a degree in education. While Bob worked for the City for 32 years, he originally thought he would spend his career as a teacher and a coach. A call from then Parks and Recreation Commissioner Russ Halloran offering him a full-time job changed his plans. He left his job as a teacher in Methuen and began a career that saw him move up from Supervisor to Deputy Commissioner and then Commissioner of Parks and Recreation in 2010. He added Culture to his title earlier this year. Working for five different Mayors, Bob also held the positions of Director of Human Resources and Chief Budget Officer, earned a masters degree from Boston University, attended law school and passed the bar exam.

The Parks and Recreation Department moved forward under Bob's leadership. The Newton Highlands Playground, for example, took years of effort to plan, fund and reconstruct; with its fields, courts and playground and open space it is a model for future parks in Newton; the unique and quite exceptional programming for special needs residents flourished and grew and is a model for not just the Commonwealth but for the country; and the historic Farlow Park in Newton Centre was restored, to name just a few.

As a youngster, Bob played Little League in West Newton and then left field for the Newton North Tigers baseball team with the class of 1973. In the summer, he worked at the camp at the Lincoln-Eliot School playground. Never in his wildest dreams did he think he would one day oversee the sports fields, playgrounds and camps that gave him so much joy as a youth.

"I never thought I'd be doing this, but things fell into place. This has become my life,

this is my family. I'll miss the people here," he said.

The people of Newton will miss Bob DeRubeis too as a Commissioner, but he will still be part of our family, our community.

I know I speak for everyone in saying, thank you, congratulations and Godspeed to Bob come February 2020. In the meantime, we will begin the process of filling this critical position.

Be A Part of the Process

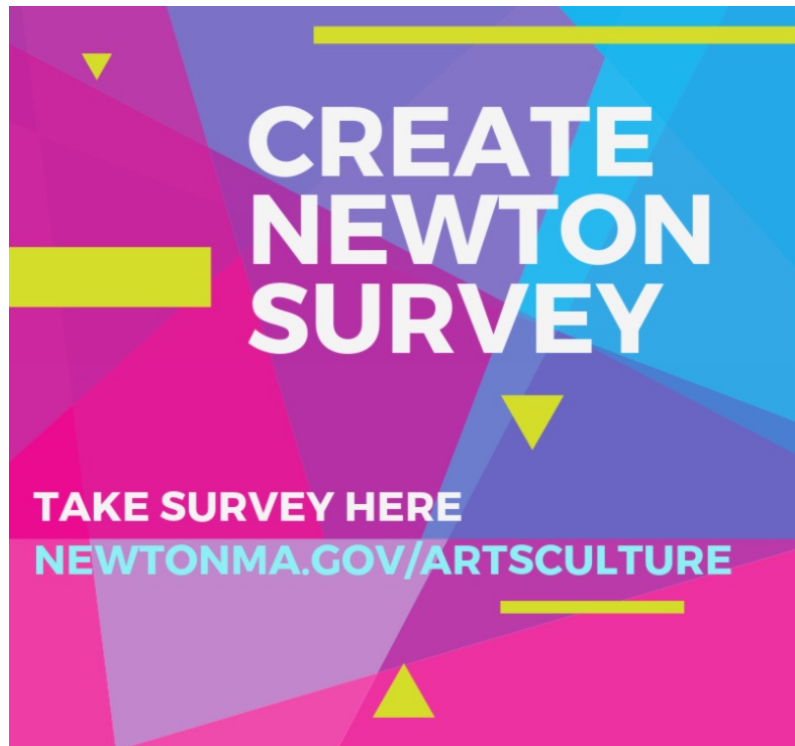
The City of Newton is currently undertaking a 7-month planning process to create a Comprehensive Arts & Cultural Plan for the City.

The plan, entitled [Create Newton](#), will identify all of Newton's arts and cultural assets – from our buildings and non-profits, to the events and festivals we host, to the local traditions and initiatives in our villages and neighborhoods. We will explore how arts and cultural goals and interests are aligned with our businesses,

recreational opportunities, and commercial districts, and identify goals, set out recommendations, and seek opportunities to collaborate and expand our pool of funding.

Input from parents, and children 12 years and older, who enjoy Newton's arts and cultural events is greatly valued. Please take 10 minutes to complete this anonymous survey to assist in the planning process: [HERE](#).

(Please note that the survey is best taken on your computer and not on your smart phone or smaller device.



(Photo: Newton Police Officer Brett Ferolito with some of the Newton residents who helped organize Saturday's Gun Buy Back Alexandra Wolf, Heather Toasig, Laura Towim and Rev. Carla Bailey)

46 Guns "Bought Back"

The Newton Police Department received a total of 46 firearms and 2,500 rounds of ammunition at

Saturday's Gun Buy Back day where gun owners turned in their unwanted firearms in exchange for gift cards. There was a mix of handguns and rifles (and a few bb guns and replicas), according to Officer Brett Ferolito.

While there were a lot of reasons people dropped off their guns, Officer Ferolito said the most frequent stories involved a recently deceased family member or no desire to own a gun.

Thanks go to the Newton Police Department, the Middlesex Sheriff's Office, Second Church in Newton, the Newton Interfaith Clergy Association (NICA), and Newton residents Laura Towim and Heather Tausig for their help.

Project Safe Summer

The Newton Police Department is partnering with police from Waltham, Watertown and the Massachusetts State Police on a summer initiative to make the Riverwalk and other parkland along the Charles River safer this summer.

The departments realized that by combining state and local police resources, more could be done to proactively and quickly address the public's concerns. The combined effort also will allow them to share intelligence and draw on each other's expertise and experience.

Police teams from the four departments are patrolling the Riverwalk and other pathways along the Charles River used by walkers, runners, cyclists and nature enthusiasts. The police teams will be out at least twice a week, supplementing existing patrols. The teams will also involve the State Police Mounted Section and the State Police Marine Section.

Off Leash Dogs

We have nearly 5,000 licensed dogs in Newton. Our dogs can run and play untethered in seven off-leash parks in Newton. But, otherwise, please keep your four-legged companion on a leash.

Dogs running off leash unfortunately are in all the City's park and conservation areas. The City's getting a lot of calls, especially about Norumbega Park in Auburndale, Kennard Park in Oak Hill and at Hunnewell Playground in Newton Corner where dogs are running free outside the designated off-leash area.

Police will increase patrols. Dog owners may be subject to fines, removal from the off-leash area and suspension of off-leash privileges.

How do you sign up to use the seven off-leash dog parks?

Off-leash permits are available at the City Clerk's Office on the first floor of City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Ave. Bring proof of your dog license, current rabies vaccination and funds to pay the fee of \$50 for Newton residents and \$100 for non-Newton residents. Off-leash dogs must wear the resident or non-resident medallion on their collars. More information as well as the fees for professional dog walkers can be found [HERE](#).

The seven off-leash parks are:

- Old Cold Spring Park off Dunklee Street in Newton Highlands (open field only), enter from Beacon Street, dawn to dusk.

- Newton Centre Playground on Tyler Terrace in Newton Centre enter from Centre, Homer or Bowen Streets or Tyler Terrace, dawn to noon. No more than 20 dogs are allowed off-leash at any one time.)
- Cabot Park on East Side Parkway in Newtonville (fenced area only), enter from corner of Newtonville Avenue and Eastside Parkway, 7:00 a.m. to dusk.
- Claflin Playground on Lowell Avenue in Newtonville, enter from Lowell Avenue, Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, dawn to 1:00 p.m. Closed from Dec. 15 to March 15.
- McGrath Park on Washington Street in West Newton (fenced area by tennis courts only), enter from Washington Street gate opening, dawn to dusk, park only in Parks and Recreation designated parking spaces.
- Hunnewell Park on Grasmere Street off Hunnewell Avenue in Newton Corner (fenced area only), park and enter from New Balance parking lot, dawn to dusk.
- Braceland Playground on Chestnut Street in Newton Upper Falls (lower tier, bottom of hill only), dawn to dusk, closed Dec. 15 to March 15.
- The Parks and Recreation Department is also working with consultants on a conceptual design for another off-Leash site in the front portion of Norumbega Park.

And remember, always pick-up after your dog!

(Photo: Firefighters and their families gathered recently to honor and remember their fallen brothers and sisters at the annual Firefighters Memorial Sunday ceremonies at Fire Headquarters.)



MBTA Track and Signal Replacement Update

Up to three crews are working in up to three locations in Newton as part of the MBTA Green Line track and signal replacement project that started in April and will continue to November 1. This is noisy, overnight work.

Crews are currently working on tracks, signal/electrical and structural updates west of Newton Highlands, Monday through Friday from 9:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. the following morning.

On Monday, July 8, work will shift to the tracks between Newton Highlands and Brookline Village, starting at Newton Centre between Cypress Street and Langley Road and moving east.

The tentative schedule is:

- Newton Centre, starting between Cypress Street and Langley Road headed east:
Eastbound tract - scheduled for July 8 to July 30
Westbound track - scheduled for Sept. 16 to Oct.
- Newton Centre Between Langley Road and East of Glen Avenue headed east:
Eastbound track – scheduled July 31 to September 13
Westbound track – scheduled October 9 to November 1

Concerned about rodents? At the beginning of the project, a professional pest control specialist conducted preconstruction investigations. Based on these investigations and existing site conditions, a technician will move rodent bait stations to Newton Centre two weeks before work begins and will continue to monitor the construction site to look for rodent activity.

Want more information? View more project details and maps online at MBTA.com. Click on More at the top of the page, and then click on Green Line Extension. There is a link on the Green Line Extension page to sign up for updates about the project from the MBTA. You can also email the MBTA team [HERE](#).

The MBTA has set up a noise complaint hotline at 508-676-3550.



(Photo: Mark Kelly at the Memorial Day Parade with Athletes Unlimited athletes and friends.)

Congratulations to Newton's Mark Kelly

The City of Newton has extraordinary therapeutic recreation programs for people of all ages with special needs. Why? Because we have an extraordinary leader – Mark Kelly.

Mark was just recognized as having the “passion to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and their families, and to build stronger communities,” by the Federation for Children with Special Needs which honored him with their prestigious President’s Award.

In granting the award, the Federation highlighted his role building Camp Echo Bridge into a nationally recognized inclusive model, writing, “When it comes to therapeutic recreation, Mark believes the benefits are truly endless – for all those involved including athletes, coaches, volunteers and families.”

Mark Kelly is passionate, tireless and caring. Congratulations Mark.

Warmly,

Ruthanne

P.S. Newton has a full day of fun planned for the Fourth of July. Bring the kids to Kids Morning at Newton Centre Playground from 10:00 a.m. to noon, then head over to Albemarle Field for the afternoon open air market and amusement rides. The Bo & Bill Winiker Band begins playing at 6:00 p.m. and the fireworks display caps off the celebrations.

P.P.S Come meditate with me and experience the power of collective meditation at America Meditates in Newton at the Newton Free Library Druker Auditorium, 330 Homer St., on Friday, June 21 from noon to 1:00 p.m.

P.P.P.S The Gath Pool, 256 Albemarle Road, opened for the preseason June 11. The regular schedule begins on Tuesday, June 25. Crystal Lake is also open on a pre-season schedule through June 23, with the full summer schedule starting on Monday, June 24.

