

Thursday, June 10, 2021

Mayor's Update



On Monday, I had the honor of administering the oath of office to Newton Police Chief John F. Carmichael, Jr.

Chief Carmichael went through 17 sets of interviews, a rigorous evaluation at an assessment center, and thorough reference and background checks. I know he is the right person, at this critical moment in time, to lead our strong and good Newton Police Department into its next chapter.

He started work right away getting to know the officers, dispatchers and civilian staff at NPD, our department heads and City and School employees, and all of us. I know he dunked at least one basketball with a group of kids he saw playing hoops on his way to City Hall yesterday afternoon.

He also wasted no time getting involved in the nitty-gritty of everyday policing. Yesterday, just before noon, Newton Police Officers responded to a report of a breaking and entering in progress in the 300 block of Watertown Street.

Arriving officers learned the suspect had fled the scene and put out a description over the radio of three suspects and their vehicle.

A Detective Sergeant heard the description, spotted the vehicle, and eventually stopped it on Bridge Street, arresting the three suspects (all from Boston) at the scene and charging them with breaking and entering.

Where was Chief Carmichael? He helped out by directing the stalled traffic around the arrest scene on Bridge Street.

Good work done by all.

(Click the photo above and scroll down to watch a NewTV video of the swearing in ceremony.)

COVID-19 Update

We're continuing to see good COVID-19 numbers this week.

We had 5 new confirmed cases in Newton, one more than last week, bringing our cumulative total number of cases to 4,376.

Newton had 9 new cases during the two-week tracking period used by the State from May 23 – June 5, compared to 8 over the previous two weeks, and 14 during the two-week tracking prior to that. The average daily incidence rate is 0.7 per 100,000, up slightly from 0.6 last week, and the percent of tests performed on Newton residents that came back positive is now 0.13% of the 7,453 tests performed.

I can also report again, for the ninth week in a row, the great news that no one in Newton died with COVID-19.

Again, this week the Boston College community accounted for none of Newton's new cases.

Over the past seven days, from June 3 – 9, the Newton Public Schools reported one new case of COVID-19.

The chart with week by week school data from the pooled testing program is available [here](#) and overall school data dashboard is [here](#).

This week's State vaccination information shows that 71,901 Newtonians, or 78% of our population, have had at least one vaccine dose. The state data also shows that more than 69% of Newton's population is now fully vaccinated with 9% partially vaccinated. (Last week we were at 65% and 12% respectively.) State data shows 95%+ of Newton residents who are ages 30 and older are partially or fully vaccinated. To see more detailed vaccination information, click [here](#).

The vaccination rates for younger age groups are:

68% who are 20 – 29 years old (67% last week)
59% who are 16 – 19 years old (58% last week)
79% who are 12 – 15 years old (69% last week)

Not vaccinated yet? Appointments are available and increasingly many clinics take walk-ins. Find locations at newtonma.gov/vaccines.

Solar panels started going up this week at the Newton Free Library parking lot on Homer Street. Once the panels are operational, they will provide 40% of the library's electricity.



Gath Pool & Crystal Lake Opening

After a year with beaches and pools closed, I'm so happy the official swim season in Newton begins at Gath Pool and Crystal Lake with the bathhouse open and lifeguards on duty on Monday, June 21, with a full schedule starting the following Monday, June 28.

Click [here](#) for Crystal Lake schedule, and [here](#) for the Gath Pool schedule.

Find more information about swim lessons [here](#).

New for the Summer of 2021: Purchase your Crystal Lake and Gath Pool memberships online.

Newton residents can click [here](#) to purchase memberships and pick up scan cards on your first visit to the Lake or Pool. Summer membership for the summer for both swim sites is \$55 for adults 18 – 61, and \$35 for children 6 – 17 and people age 62 and older. Children under 5 are free.

Lifeguards

Parks, Recreation & Culture is seeking lifeguards for the Crystal Lake summer season June 21 – Aug. 27. Contact Carol Stapleton at cstapleton@newtonma.gov for more information and to arrange for an interview.

Clean Recycling

Back in 2018, we asked for help in cleaning up our recycling – and you delivered.

The City of Newton went from having 18% of our recycling contaminated to 9% after a robust education campaign that included inspectors checking recycling bins.

Why is this important? Our contract with Waste Management includes fines if our recycling is more than 10% contaminated with things that shouldn't be included in the recycling bins.

What are some of the things that should NOT go in our recycling bins? Plastic bags and plastic utensils, black plastic takeout food trays, food or beverage cartons, Styrofoam, shredded paper, wood, clothing and textiles, tissues and napkins, and medicine bottles.

With your help, the City of Newton has not paid one penny in fines because of contaminated recycling. since February 2019.

Let's keep it that way.

We're now launching another education campaign. We'll soon be seeing large permanent decals (see the photo) on our recycling bins, designed by the [MassDEP Recycle Smart](#) campaign, to remind us of what materials are okay to go in the green carts.

Since we're going to be adding decals on each recycling bin, we'll also be gathering some data. Data will help us better understand how these services are functioning and how we can improve, with an emphasis on advancing waste reduction efforts. Waste reduction is important for the environment, and also because disposal costs are expected to continue to increase significantly in the next 10 years.

We're looking for volunteers interested in recycling education and waste reduction, and they must pass a background check.

Details about the project:

- Volunteers will walk neighborhood routes, adhere stickers to recycling carts, lift cart lids and document observations to help us make improvements. (NOTE: This is not an enforcement project; there will not be any fines.)
- The project starts on Monday, June 14 and will run through mid-October. Volunteers are needed weekday mornings from 7:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. We are looking for volunteers who will commit to walking a minimum of one route per week.
- Our goal is to get a sticker on every bin in the City, so we're looking for as many volunteers as we can get.
- This is a fair-weather project. If it is raining, the routes that day will be cancelled.

Help us provide recycling education to reduce recycling contamination while getting some exercise and spending time outside. Also help us gather information that will inform decisions regarding Newton's waste and recycling collection services.

Interested in being a volunteer? Please fill in your information in this [survey](#). Please email us with questions at recycling@newtonma.gov.



On Sunday the Nonantum Neighborhood Association honored City Councilor Jay Ciccone with a memorial brick in front of Newton Fire Headquarters at the City's 9-11 Memorial. Councilor Ciccone was a true son of Newton who loved his City and his neighborhood, Nonantum. He was elected to the then Board of Aldermen in 2007, and served until his death last June.

(Pictured is Jay's granddaughter unveiling her grandfather's memorial brick.)

Celebrating Juneteenth

Juneteenth will officially be celebrated in both Massachusetts and Newton for the first time this year to commemorate the end of slavery in the United States. First celebrated in 1866, the first anniversary of the day that African Americans in Texas first learned of the Emancipation Proclamation (more than two years after initially issued), we are celebrating freedom and liberation. Learn, listen, dance, and absorb all that is Juneteenth:



Monday, June 14 at 4:00 p.m. An American History of the Long Road to Freedom, Newton Free Library (Virtual). Join Dr. Matthew Delmont, the Sherman Fairchild Distinguished Professor of History at Dartmouth College, to explore the origins and importance of Juneteenth through the lens of the generations of Black Americans who fought for freedom and equality. Find more information [here](#).

Saturday, June 19 from 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. New Art Center will host a Juneteenth celebration in the Trio courtyard, 245 Walnut Street, Newtonville. This free public event will be led by artist and educator [Annette McCarty](#) in celebration and commemoration of the end of slavery in the United States.

Saturday, June 19, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. Join us at the Hyde Bandstand, 90 Highland Street, Newton Highlands, for music, local artwork and speakers. We'll also be reading the Emancipation Proclamation and unveiling one of Newton's sidewalk poems. Thanks go to Newton Pride, the Newton Cultural Council, Historic Newton, and the Harmony Foundation. Find more information [here](#).

Sunday, June 20, Noon – 4:00 p.m. Join us at the Hyde Bandstand, 90 Highland Street, Newton Highlands for a program of speakers, music, and performances presented by Newton North’s FORJ (Families Organizing for Racial Justice). Find more information [here](#).

Warmly,

Ruthanne

P.S. On June 14, 1777, the flag of the United States was adopted. Join us on **Monday, June, 14 at 5:00 p.m. in the circle in front of City Hall to celebrate Flag Day** and “Old Glory.” Interested in the origins of Flag Day? Click [here](#).

P.P.S. We tinted the water in the City Hall fountain orange last Friday on **National Gun Violence Awareness Day**. Why orange? That’s the color the friends of 15-year old Hadiya Pendleton wore in her honor after she was shot and killed in Chicago seven years ago. I’m proud that together our City, City Council and I took a stand against a gun store in our community. The water in the fountain will remain orange for the rest of the month to honor the victims and survivors of gun violence.



P.P.P.S. As the **Newton Free Library welcomes us back** in person, they want to hear from us about our **programs and services** to make our terrific library even better. Whether you're a library regular, an occasional visitor or rarely use our Library, please complete the five minute survey [here](#) and let the staff know what matters to you and how we can do better.



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