

TOWN OF HINSDALE E-NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2017

WELCOME MESSAGE

Greetings!

In the interest of helping to keep residents informed of important “goings on” in town, we have begun producing a town-wide newsletter that will be disseminated by email on a regular basis (likely monthly) to all individuals who subscribe to the mailing list. Our hope is that the number of recipients on this list will continue to grow over time to ensure that most households receive these important updates. If you have friends or family that may be interested in receiving this newsletter in the future, please have them contact Ryan Aylesworth, Town Administrator, at 413-655-2300 X 355 or town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov.

Thank you for being a part of our community and we hope you enjoy the newsletter!

REMEMBER TO “LIKE US” ON FACEBOOK!

Just a reminder that the Town of Hinsdale recently launched an official Facebook page (“Town of Hinsdale, Massachusetts”) that can be accessed at the following web link: www.facebook.com/HinsdaleMA

This page is being maintained by town officials and be used to help disseminate important updates about community affairs and alert residents when new/detailed information is available on the Town’s official website (www.hinsdalemass.com). We hope you will “Like” this page and start receiving regular updates on your Facebook news feed!

NOMINATION PAPERS FOR TOWN ELECTIONS AVAILABLE SOON

Please note that nomination papers for local elected offices will be available beginning on March 15, 2017 for the following town offices:

- Select Board - one 3-year term
- Town Clerk - one 3-year term
- Board of Assessors - one 3-year term
- Finance Committee - three 3-year terms and two 1-year terms
- Planning Board - one 5-year term and one 1-year term

Nomination papers may be obtained at the Town Clerk's office on Mondays from 10:30 AM until noon and on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 PM to 8:00

PM. Papers must be returned by 5:00 PM on March 31. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Town Clerk by phone (413-655-2300 Ext. 301) or email (town.clerk@hinsdalema.gov).

SPECIAL ELECTION REGARDING FUNDING FOR NEW/RENOVATED WAHCONAH HIGH SCHOOL FEASIBILITY STUDY

Central Berkshire Regional School District (CBRSD) recently notified the Select Boards for each of its seven member towns that the School Committee voted unanimously to appropriate \$850,000 for a feasibility study pertaining to Wahconah High School. More specifically, the study will evaluate the options of renovating or rebuilding the current facility for a high school serving students in grades 9-12.

In order for the feasibility study to move forward, a special election must be conducted in each of the member towns. CBRSD has provided the towns with information regarding this election, which is being planned for April 8 (Saturday) between the hours of 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM. A simple majority of voters from the member towns must vote in support of the measure if the funding for the feasibility study is to be appropriated.

It is important to note that the last day to register to vote on this ballot question is March 20. A voter registration session will be held on March 20 from 2:00 PM until 4:00 PM and from 7:00 PM until 8:00 PM in the Town Clerk's office at Town Hall.

Additional information on the Wahconah High School feasibility study can be accessed at the following link:
https://media.wix.com/ugd/f35351_804db3f27afe429d94a99f98089bde5e.pdf

Please note that CBRSD is holding a series of public informational sessions specific to the feasibility study, and the session for Hinsdale and Peru residents is scheduled to take place on March 23 (Thursday) beginning at 5:30 PM in the Kittredge Elementary School Library. Please mark this date and time in your calendars so that you can be sure to attend the session and ask any questions you may have about the project.

At present, based on census figures and other variables, the Town of Hinsdale contributes approximately 14% of the funding for operating and capital expenses of the school district. It is anticipated that our respective financial obligation for funding the feasibility study would be as follows over the next five fiscal years:

- Fiscal Year 2018 (interest payment only) - \$1,829

- Fiscal Year 2019 (interest payment only) - \$2,008
- Fiscal Year 2020 (principal & interest payment) - \$23,482
- Fiscal Year 2021 (principal & interest payment) - \$23,097
- Fiscal Year 2022 (principal & interest payment) - \$22,547

Questions about the Town's estimated financial obligation for funding the feasibility study should be directed to Ryan Aylesworth, Town Administrator, at 413-655-2300 X 355 or by email at town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov. Questions about voter registration and voting procedures for the April 8 special election should be directed to the Town Clerk's office at 413-655-2300 X 301 or by email at town.clerk@hinsdalema.gov.

CHARTER/SPECTRUM HIGH-SPEED INTERNET NETWORK EXPANSION PROJECT UPDATE

Charter/Spectrum is working on the walk-out and design of the network for the unserved areas of Hinsdale and has begun to apply for the required pole licenses. The pole licensing and completion of make-ready work on the poles is probably the most time-consuming aspect of the project. Charter expects to begin offering service to the residents in these unserved areas by late summer. Charter's commitment to the Massachusetts Broadband Initiative (MBI) is to complete the project by first quarter 2018. If you have any additional questions about Charter/Spectrum's network expansion, please contact the Town Administrator at 413-655-2300 Ext. 355 or town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov.

CALLING ALL PHOTOGRAPHERS!

We would like to invite anyone with a collection of high-quality/high-resolution digital photos taken in the Town of Hinsdale to consider sharing them for possible inclusion in a variety of town publications (annual report, website, brochures, etc.). Photos of people/events, buildings and businesses, and landscapes/nature are all appreciated. If you are interested in making photos available for use by the Town, please contact the Town Administrator at 413-655-2300 Ext. 355 or town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov to discuss further. Thank you!

TOWN-WIDE GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) NOW COMPLETE AND AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

We are very happy to report that the company the Town of Hinsdale has been working with to develop a town-wide geographic information system (GIS) has

completed this important project. The GIS can be accessed at the following link: <https://www.axisgis.com/hinsdalema/>

A GIS is a system designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyze, manage, and present spatial or geographic data. AxisGIS is an Internet-based service for communities and businesses that want to publish their GIS online. AxisGIS is a cost-effective option to distribute GIS data and utility to town employees/officials as well as to the general public (which reduces the number of trips residents have to make to Town Hall for activities like generating an abutters list). AxisGIS is compatible with all internet browsers and is also compatible and functional in a mobile environment. Among other functions, AxisGIS is helping communities publish their parcel data online, enabling homeowners and real estate professionals to print maps from their own computers, providing geographically explicit information on zoning and key natural features (i.e., wetlands), supporting economic development projects, providing a platform for police and school collaboration, and creating a connection between local government, businesses, and communities.

HINSDALE OBTAINS TWO DISTRICT LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS FROM BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The Town of Hinsdale has received two competitive District Local Technical Assistance grants (both grants are valued at \$5,000) from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. One of the grants will be used to help the town update its Open Space & Recreation Plan (which many other granting bodies require to be in place in order to obtain significant levels of funding for things like acquisition of land for a community park). The other grant will be used to help the Town develop a strategy for reducing incidence of structural blight throughout the community. Both of these important projects are being undertaken to enhance Hinsdale's overall attractiveness and amenities offered to our residents and visitors.

If you have specific questions about these grants, please contact Ryan Aylesworth, Town Administrator, at 413-655-2300 X 355 or town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov.

TOWN HALL REPAIRS ARE NOW COMPLETE

We are very happy to report that, with the exception of some post-construction cleaning services and re-grouting limited sections of the second floor bathrooms, the extensive building repairs and renovations that having been ongoing at Town Hall over the past several weeks are complete. Town

officials wish to extend a big “thank you” to Appalachian Contractors, ServiceMaster, all the subcontractors, and the Town employees that helped coordinate and carry out all the needed repairs stemming from water damage earlier this winter. We appreciate everyone’s patience while this project was in the works!

PITTSFIELD ROAD DRAINAGE INFORMATIONAL UPDATE

It has come to our attention that there are concerns among residents regarding drainage issues on a section of Pittsfield Road adjacent to the reservoir. It is important to understand that the drain and “Beaver Deceiver” in question are the property of the City of Pittsfield, which owns the reservoir and the surrounding watershed. Although members of the Hinsdale Highway Department took necessary action on the evening of February 25 (Saturday) to maintain public safety by removing leaf litter and woody debris surrounding the clogged roadside drain that was resulting in water pooling across the surface of Pittsfield Road, it must be emphasized that ongoing maintenance of this drain and the associated “Beaver Deceiver” is the responsibility of the City of Pittsfield and/or its contractors. We hope this information alleviates any confusion related to the observed drainage issues that our Highway Department helped to address over the weekend, but please do not hesitate to contact Rene Senecal, Highway Department Superintendent (413-655-2300 Ext. 304 or dpw.highways@hinsdalema.gov), if you have any additional questions.

FROM THE TOWN COLLECTOR

The second-half real estate, personal property and sewer betterment bills for Fiscal Year 2017 (July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017) are being printed and are scheduled to be mailed on April 1. These bills cover the period January 1 through June 30, 2017. Payment on these bills will be due on or before May 1. Interest of 14% will be added to all late payments. The Town Collector’s office hours are: Monday 9:00 AM-12:00 PM, Tuesday-Thursday 8:00 AM-1:00 PM, and 5:30-7:00 PM on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month.

The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles controls the names and addresses on motor vehicle excise tax bills. The Town cannot change this information on your behalf; that must be done by the taxpayer with the Registry.

ALL requests for (i) address changes for real estate personal property and (ii) abatements should be sent directly to the Board of Assessors at Hinsdale’s

Town Hall, not to the Town Collector. Similarly, address changes for water and/or sewer bills should be directed to the Water & Sewer Department.

Please contact Pauline Wheeler, Town Collector, at 413-655-2300 Ext. 306 or tax.collector@hinsdalema.gov, with any questions concerning payments. Questions pertaining to assessment, address and name changes should be directed to Dave Zagorski, Assistant Assessor, at 655-2300 or assessors@hinsdalema.gov, if you have any questions.

UPDATE FROM THE POLICE CHIEF

Please be advised that if you have any questions regarding this or ANY scam please call or stop at the station and talk to one of the officers.

The IRS continues to warn consumers to guard against scam phone calls from thieves intent on stealing their money or their identity. Criminals pose as the IRS to trick victims out of their money or personal information. Here are several tips to help you avoid being a victim of these scams:

- Scammers make unsolicited calls. Thieves call taxpayers claiming to be IRS officials. They demand that the victim pay a bogus tax bill. They con the victim into sending cash, usually through a prepaid debit card or wire transfer. They may also leave “urgent” callback requests through phone “robo-calls,” or via phishing email. Callers try to scare their victims. Many phone scams use threats to intimidate and bully a victim into paying. They may even threaten to arrest, deport or revoke the license of their victim if they don’t get the money.
- Scams use caller ID spoofing. Scammers often alter caller ID to make it look like the IRS or another agency is calling. The callers use IRS titles and fake badge numbers to appear legitimate. They may use the victim’s name, address and other personal information to make the call sound official.
- Cons try new tricks all the time. Some schemes provide an actual IRS address where they tell the victim to mail a receipt for the payment they make. Others use emails that contain a fake IRS document with a phone number or an email address for a reply. These scams often use official IRS letterhead in emails or regular mail that they send to their victims. They try these ploys to make the ruse look official.
- Scams cost victims over \$23 million. The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, or TIGTA, has received reports of about 736,000 scam contacts since October 2013. Nearly 4,550 victims have collectively paid over \$23 million as a result of the scam.

The IRS will not:

- Call you to demand immediate payment. The IRS will not call you if you owe taxes without first sending you a bill in the mail.
- Demand that you pay taxes and not allow you to question or appeal the amount you owe.
- Require that you pay your taxes a certain way. For instance, require that you pay with a prepaid debit card.
- Ask for your credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
- Threaten to bring in police or other agencies to arrest you for not paying.

If you don't owe taxes, or have no reason to think that you do:

- Do not give out any information. Hang up immediately.
- Contact TIGTA to report the call. Use their "[IRS Impersonation Scam Reporting](#)" web page. You can also call 800-366-4484.
- Report it to the Federal Trade Commission. Use the "[FTC Complaint Assistant](#)" on [FTC.gov](#). Please add "IRS Telephone Scam" in the notes.

If you know you owe, or think you may owe tax:

- Call the IRS at 800-829-1040. IRS workers can help you.

Phone scams first tried to sting older people, new immigrants to the U.S. and those who speak English as a second language. Now the crooks try to swindle just about anyone. And they've ripped-off people in every state in the nation. Stay alert to scams that use the IRS as a lure. Tax scams can happen any time of year, not just at tax time. For more, visit "[Tax Scams and Consumer Alerts](#)" on [www.IRS.gov](#).

Each and every taxpayer has a set of fundamental rights they should be aware of when dealing with the IRS. These are your [Taxpayer Bill of Rights](#). Explore your rights and our obligations to protect them on [www.IRS.gov](#).

ENCOURAGING RESIDENTS TO SIGNUP FOR "CodeRED"

Following an extensive and thorough evaluation and review of alerting systems, the Town of Hinsdale (in coordination with the Town of Dalton and other neighboring towns) has implemented the CodeRED system, a high-speed emergency notification service provided by Ormond Beach, FL-based Emergency Communications Network.

The CodeRED system is intended to serve as the backbone of Hinsdale's emergency planning and communications outreach to both citizens and local officials/personnel by using the system capabilities to send telephone calls, text messages, emails and social media in an effort to effectively inform residents to protect life and property. CodeRED, among other notification systems available, was selected for its unrivaled reliability and accuracy, as well as the system's global use.

The Town has been provided an initial database of residential and business telephone numbers, but this does not include cell phone numbers or text and email addresses. All residents are encouraged to visit the CodeRED website - <https://public.coderedweb.com/cne/en-US/BFE8C454173E> - and enter additional contact information. Please be sure to enter zip code so that your information will connect directly to the system. You also have the option of signing up for CodeRED by filling out hard copy registration forms available at the Hinsdale Police Station or Public Library.

Please contact Ray Boldoc, Emergency Management Director, at 822-6856 or rrboldu@berkshire.net, with any questions regarding CodeRED.

HELP WANTED – HINSDALE MEMORIAL DAY COMMITTEE

The Hinsdale Memorial Day Committee is looking for assistance over the next couple of months to help out Gloria Grebb. If anyone would be willing to lend her a hand, please contact her at 413-655-0206.

REMINDER THAT SEMI-ANNUAL WATER & SEWER BILLS ARE DUE ON MARCH 15

The semi-annual water and sewer bills that were mailed in January are due on March 15. Please note that if payments are not received by March 15 a \$10 late fee/penalty will be assessed to the account on a monthly basis until full payment is made (a \$20 late fee will be assessed for households that are served by both the water and sewer systems). Additionally, water service can and will be shut off if a bill becomes delinquent for more than 30 days. If you have questions about the Town's water or sewer policies or shutoff procedures, please contact Larry Turner, Water & Sewer Superintendent, at 413-655-2300 Ext. 307 or water.sewer@hinsdalema.gov.

Beginning with the latest round of semi-annual bills, Hinsdale residents now have the ability to securely pay their water and sewer bills online via the town's official website - www.hinsdalemass.com. This new payment method serves to accommodate those Hinsdale residents who want the convenience of paying their taxes and fees online, anytime day or night.

The process for residents to pay online is simple: with your bill and checkbook in hand, 1) Go to: www.hinsdalemass.com; 2) Click on the "UniPay – Online Tax and Fee Payment Portal" Button; and 3) Complete each screen to process your payment.

Residents are able to make payments via “e-check” (applicable check routing number and account numbers will need to be provided) or Master Card, Visa Card, or Discover Card. Payments by e-check will be assessed a flat fee of \$0.25 (less than the cost of a surface mail stamp), and payments by credit card will be assessed a variable fee (usually around 2.5% of the total amount due) depending on the monetary value of the transaction. In all cases, e-check and credit card transaction fees will be retained by Unibank and not the Town. Online payment is highly encouraged, but the town will continue to accept physical checks.

If you have specific questions about online bill pay, please contact Ryan Aylesworth, Town Administrator, at 413-655-2300 X 355 or town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov.

MARCH OFFICE HOURS FOR VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

As has been previously reported, the Town of Hinsdale has entered into an inter-municipal agreement with the City of Pittsfield’s Veteran Services Department. Under this agreement, James Clark, Director of Veterans’ Services, will serve as our community’s Veterans Service Office (VSO). Hinsdale veterans will have access to a full-time VSO with significant knowledge and experience in the field of veteran aide. Office hours will be primarily administered in Pittsfield City Hall, but a limited amount of office hours will also be conducted at Hinsdale Town Hall on a monthly basis (those hours will soon be posted). The next set of scheduled office hours will be taking place at Town Hall on **March 22 (Wednesday) at 1:00 PM**

Questions about veterans services should be directed to James Clark, Director of Veterans’ Services, at 413-499-9433 or by email at jclark@pittsfieldch.com

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RECENT NEWS (from past months)

FROM THE TOWN COLLECTOR - Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes

Annual motor vehicle excise tax bills will be mailed no later than February 17 and payments will be due by March 20. Hinsdale residents now have the ability to securely all taxes and water/sewer user fees online via the town’s official website - www.hinsdalemass.com. The process for residents to pay online is simple: with your bill and checkbook in hand, 1) Go to: www.hinsdalemass.com; 2) Click on the “UniPay – Online Tax and Fee

Payment Portal” Button; and 3) Complete each screen to process your payment.

The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles controls the names and addresses on motor vehicle excise tax bills. The Town cannot change this information on your behalf; that must be done by the taxpayer with the Registry.

Please contact Pauline Wheeler, Town Collector, at 655-2306 or tax.collector@hinsdalema.gov, with any questions concerning payments.

NEED FOOD AND/OR FUEL ASSISTANCE?

You may be eligible for financial assistance from your friends and neighbors right here in town. Contact the Berkshire Community Action Council at 413-445-4503 or visit their website at <https://bcacinc.org/>. All correspondence is strictly confidential.

MEALS ON WHEELS

The Elder Services of Berkshire County "Meals on Wheels" menu for the current month is available on line at www.esbci.org/mow/current.pdf and on the Town Hall Bulletin Board

ANNUAL CENSUS MAILED TO HINSDALE RESIDENTS

The Town Clerk’s Office has mailed the 2017 census forms to residents. It is very important that these forms be completed, updated as necessary, signed and returned in the self-addressed stamped envelope.

An annual street listing of all household residents is required under Massachusetts General Law. Information obtained from the census is used in preparing street lists, updating voter lists, preparing school lists, establishing eligibility for resident tuition at state colleges, obtaining monies for veteran’s benefits and senior programs, and other important purposes.

New residents or any household that did not receive a form are asked to call the Town Clerk’s Office at 413-655-2301 so that a form can be mailed in a timely manner.

NEWS & UPDATES FROM THE ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

Providing Proper Care & Shelter for Your Animals

As temperatures fluctuate through the winter, it is important to remember to provide proper shelter and protection for our animals. According to Massachusetts General Law (Ch. 272, Section 77), the owner or keeper of an animal must provide it with proper shelter and protection from the weather during all seasons. A dog or other animal may remain outdoors provided it is in good health and weight (for its breed), had access to an appropriate shelter, and is not of an age or breed where temperatures could be potentially dangerous (sick animals or very young or old animals).

If you have any questions or concerns about these legal requirements, please contact Officer Kristin Burgess, Animal Control Officer, at kburgess@hinsdalema.gov or call 413-655-0201.

License Acquisition & Renewal

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU LICENSE AND/OR RENEW ALL DOG LICENSES BY MAY 31, 2017. AFTER THIS DATE THERE WILL BE A LATE FEE ASSESSED.

All dogs owned or kept in Hinsdale for eleven (11) consecutive days in any calendar year shall be licensed.

- Licensed period April 1 through May 31 each year
- Licenses may be obtained through the Town Clerk
- Failure to license your dog(s) can result in a fine of up to \$50, plus applicable late-fees

Animal Control Officer Burgess is collecting any donations of:

- Bleach, dawn dish soap, disinfectant wipes and sponges
- Bones, large rawhides and training treats
- Toilet paper and paper towels
- Durable dog and cat toys
- Purina One dry dog food
- Canned dog food

ANY DONATIONS ARE FOR THE SONSINI ANIMAL SHELTER
THESE DONATIONS CAN BE BROUGHT TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Also, as a reminder, all dogs owned or kept in the Town of Hinsdale shall be restrained from running at large 24 hours a day, each day of the year. Violations are subject to monetary fines.

Other Announcements

The Hinsdale Police Department is looking into various trainings in the area related to animal rescue and emergency response more broadly. One of these trainings is Basic Animal Rescue Training (BART), which is a Department of Homeland Security approved course that empowers emergency personnel with training, knowledge, and equipment necessary to address animal needs in emergency situations. Who should attend? First Responders (police, fire, EMT/ambulance service) and animal control professionals. If you are interested in this training, please contact Officer Kristin Burgess, Animal Control Officer, at kburgess@hinsdalema.gov or call 413-655-0201.

BURNING SEASON

The Open Burning Season in Massachusetts runs from January 15 to May 1.

According to MA Department of Environmental Protection regulation (310 CMR DEP 7.07), open burning must:

- be a minimum of 75 feet from all buildings;
- be conducted between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.; and
- take place on the land closest to the source of material to be burned.

You must also be sure air quality conditions are acceptable for burning by calling the Hinsdale Fire Department business line: 413-655-2533. You need to provide the dispatcher your name and street address. It is important to note that residents need to call the Fire Department business line every day that they wish to burn (please call the day of as opposed to the day before).

Additional information on air quality conditions can be obtained by calling the Massachusetts DEP Air Quality Hotline at (617) 556-1021 or by visiting the MassAir Online website at

<http://public.dep.state.ma.us/MassAir>

Only Certain Materials Can Be Burned:

- Brush, cane, driftwood, and forestry debris from other than commercial or industrial land clearing operations.
- Agricultural materials such as fruit tree and bush prunings, raspberry stalks, and infected bee hives for disease control.
- Trees and brush resulting from agricultural land clearing.
- Fungus infected elm wood, if no other acceptable means of disposal is available.

Burning Leaves and Other Materials Is Prohibited

- Brush, trees, cane and driftwood from commercial and/or industrial land clearing operations.

- Grass, hay, leaves, stumps, and tires.
- Construction material and debris.

For a more detailed list of safety tips for Open Burning Season, please visit the following page:

<http://www.mass.gov/eopss/docs/dfs/dfs-briefs/april-2016/9-public-education-firefactors-safety-tips-for-open-burning-season.pdf>

If you have any related questions, don't hesitate to contact Larry Turner, Fire Chief, at 413-655-2533 or fire@hinsdalema.gov

UPDATE FROM THE POLICE CHIEF

License to Carry (LTC) and Firearms Identification Cards (FID)

Applications for renewals can be found at the following URL:

<http://www.mass.gov/eopss/firearms-reg-and-laws/frb/firearms-forms-and-applications.html>

Completed applications must be turned in to the Hinsdale Police Station, where applicants can schedule a subsequent appointment with the Chief of Police to review their application.

Questions about PD-related business should be directed to Susan Rathbun, Police Chief, either in-person or by email (police.chief@hinsdalema.gov).

UPDATE FROM THE HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Street Parking During Winter Months

The Hinsdale Highway Department would like to kindly remind all residents that the Select Board has adopted a policy pertaining to parking on roads during winter snow events. More specifically, the new policy prohibits parking on a public way (including both town and state roads) or any private way open to the public, obstructing snow removal from November 1 to April 15 between the hours of 12:00 AM (midnight) and 8:00 AM. Towing costs and fines will be the responsibility of the vehicles registered owner as stated in the Town of Hinsdale By-Laws.

In addition to adhering to the above policy, we also ask motorists to exercise discretion when electing where to park for extended periods of time during significant snow events taking place during daytime hours. When cars are parked along public ways both during and immediately after a significant

snow event it is more difficult for the Highway Department to plow as effectively. Keeping these roadways free of cars therefore helps promote public safety.

Information Provided by Residents

Although the Town's dedicated crew of Highway Department workers regularly monitors the condition of town-owned/town-maintained roads and other public infrastructure to identify and resolve any issues that could pose potential safety risks, we want to remind residents that informative calls are always welcomed and appreciated. Timely information provided by residents can help our Highway Department ensure that hazards are removed as quickly as possible. Please direct information and/or concerns to Rene Senecal, Highway Department Superintendent, at 413-655-2300 X 304 or dpw.highways@hinsdalema.gov.

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY SAFETY TIPS

Visit www.mass.gov/KnowPlanPrepare. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has set forth a statewide campaign to encourage Massachusetts residents, families and communities to make plans and prepare for public health and medical emergencies, threats and disasters.

A preparedness checklist is available on the DPH campaign website listed above, and it is posted as a fillable pdf. Individuals can enter the personal information for themselves and all family members. This includes relevant medical information, evacuation locations, family meeting places and important identification data.

Important themes of the campaign are:

- Build an emergency kit
- Create a family communication plan
- Plan for all medical needs
- Stay safe and well
- Include your pets in planning

Again, www.mass.gov/KnowPlanPrepare is the campaign website that can provide information, tips and links for the public. Other useful websites on emergency preparedness are:

<http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/mema/emergencies/hurricanes>

<http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agenciesmema/be-prepared>

<http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/mema/emergencies/power-outage>

TRANSFER STATION UPDATE

We have “punch cards” on sale at Town Hall for those who don’t want to pay for disposal fees by check at the transfer station. \$20 and \$40 cards are available. The “punches” on the \$20 card are done in \$2 increments (10 punches per card) and the “punches” on the \$40 card are done in \$5 increments (eight punches per card). Cards do NOT have an expiration date and there is no limit on how many you can buy! Transfer station annual stickers (\$65) and punch cards are available for sale at Town Hall during regular office hours of the Select Board Admin Assistant. Any questions, please email Kathe Warden at select.board@hinsdalema.gov.

UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS (SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

- March 13 @ 12:30 PM – Council on Aging
- March 13 @ 1:30 PM – Water & Sewer Committee
- March 14 @ 7:00 PM – Conservation Commission
- March 15 @ 6:30 PM – Board of Assessors
- March 20 @ 9:30 AM – Water & Sewer Committee
- March 22 @ 5:15 PM – Mission & Vision Working Group
- March 22 @ 7:00 PM – Select Board
- March 27 @ 9:30 AM – Water & Sewer Committee
- April 4 @ 9:30 PM – Board of Assessors
- April 4 @ 6:30 PM – Planning Board
- April 5 @ 5:00 PM – Mission & Vision Working Group
- April 5 @ 6:00 PM – Select Board [FY 2018 Budget Meeting]
- April 6 @ 7:00 PM – Finance Committee
- April 10 @ 9:30 AM – Water & Sewer Committee
- April 11 @ 7:00 PM – Conservation Commission
- April 12 @ 7:00 PM - Select Board

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS (SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

- March 23 @ 5:30 PM (Kittredge Elementary School Library) – Public Information Session Regarding Wahconah High School Feasibility Study
- April 8 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM – Special Election (Convened at Hinsdale Town Hall) Regarding Wahconah High School Feasibility Study Funding