

TOWN OF HINSDALE E-NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2017

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR – “THANK YOU” AND TRANSITION

As this will be the last newsletter I prepare and issue (I will be stepping down as Town Administrator on June 30 to become the Town Manager of Enfield, NH), I wanted to take a moment to say THANK YOU to all local officials, employees, and residents of the Town of Hinsdale for being so welcoming during my time here. As I laid out in my official letter of resignation submitted to the Select Board on May 10 (a copy of this letter can be accessed here:

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/f35351_ccd357d0fec9408395cd201a09fa1d6d.pdf), it truly has been an honor and privilege to serve Hinsdale as the community’s first Town Administrator. I am proud of what we were able to accomplish over the past two years, and am confident that additional progress will be achieved in the years ahead. Again, THANK YOU.

On a related note, the search for a new Town Administrator is underway. The Select Board will officially appoint a Search Committee at its next business meeting (June 14), and we anticipate that interviews with qualified candidates will begin the week of June 19. The Search Committee will then identify a list of finalists (likely up to three individuals) for the Select Board to interview separately in late-June or early-July. A copy of the job announcement can be found on the Massachusetts Municipal Association’s website:

<https://www.mma.org/jobs/town-administrator-town-hinsdale>

Very best,
Ryan J. Aylesworth

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 being 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!

COMPREHENSIVE FISCAL YEAR 2018 BUDGET NOW AVAILABLE

The Fiscal Year 2018 budget was approved at the Annual Town Meeting on May 17.

When funding for Water & Sewer and Capital Items are excluded, aggregate spending for Fiscal Year 2018 will be approximately \$5.213 million. This represents a roughly 0.55% increase over the approximately \$5.184 million budgeted for in Fiscal Year 2017.

Based on the spending approved in the Fiscal Year 2018 budget, and an analysis of anticipated local revenues (which are anticipated to increase slightly) and state aid (which is essential level funded), the tax rate is projected to be approximately \$13.97 to \$14.08 per \$1,000 in assessed value, which is a \$0.01 to \$0.12 decrease below the \$14.09 tax rate in Fiscal Year 2017. This translates into a roughly \$2 to a \$28 tax decrease for a Hinsdale home of “average” value (average home value in 2017 is \$234,800 with a property tax obligation of \$3,308.33).

It is estimated that the total tax levy in Fiscal Year 2018 will be approximately \$4.137 million (\$1.715 million of the \$5.852 million overall budget will be funded from a combination of state aid, local receipts, Free Cash, Overlay Surplus, and Water/Sewer surplus), which keeps the town roughly \$434,000 below its estimated \$4.571 million levy limit. Put another way, we have a roughly 9.5% “cushion” between projected actual levy and the levy limit. This difference is known as “excess levy capacity” or “soft reserve.” The tax levy in most Berkshire communities (and most communities across the Commonwealth for that matter) is often within 1%-2% of its levy limit. Proposition 2 ½ prohibits a municipality from taxing above its levy limit unless it obtains authorization at Town Meeting to enter into a debt exclusion or an override.

The approved budget funds approximately \$289,000 worth of non-recurring items (i.e., equipment, capital projects, etc.) from a combination of Free Cash, Overlay Surplus, and Sewer I and Sewer III surplus.

The budget funds two new permanent part-time positions (Conservation Agent and Housing Inspector) and one seasonal full-time position (Water & Sewer Laborer), and eliminates one existing part-time position (Town Hall Custodian).

Central Berkshire Regional School District’s cumulative assessment (including operating and capital expenses) to the Town in Fiscal Year 2018 is essentially level funded from Fiscal Year 2017 (\$2,499,968 vs. \$2,496,738;

0.13% increase), which includes Year 1 debt service costs associated with the feasibility study for Wahconah High School.

The budget included a transfer of \$50,000 from Free Cash to the Town's Capital Stabilization Fund to begin building a reserve to finance future capital projects and equipment purchases. Future appropriations/transfers to and withdrawals from this account will both require a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote at Town Meeting. The Town Administrator recommends the town begin transferring up to \$50,000 from Free Cash into the Capital Stabilization fund annually for a minimum of four years before funds are slated to be withdrawn from the account.

Additionally, the Fiscal Year 2018 budget approved at the Annual Town Meeting established a new Roads Stabilization Fund, and raised and appropriated \$50,000 to this fund to begin building a reserve to finance future road/bridge (re)construction projects. Future appropriations/transfers to and withdrawals from this account will both require a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote at Town Meeting. The goal is to raise and appropriate at least \$50,000 to the Roads Stabilization Fund annually for a minimum of five years before funds are slated to be withdrawn from the account.

An electronic copy of the Comprehensive Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Document has been made available on the Town's official website. The document can be accessed here:

<https://www.hinsdalemass.com/policy-documents-publications>

If you have specific questions about the Fiscal Year 2018 budget, please contact Ryan Aylesworth, Town Administrator, at 413-655-2300 X 355 or town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov.

2017 ANNUAL LOCAL ELECTIONS

The annual town elections were held on Saturday, May 20. Individuals elected to each of the vacant offices were as follows:

- Select Board (one 3-year term) – Richard Kardasen
- Town Clerk (one 3-year term) – Dawn Frissell
- Board of Assessors (one 3-year term) – Neil Barrocas
- Finance Committee (three 3-year terms) – Ray Bolduc, Christine Pike, Mary Rice
- Finance Committee (two 1-year terms) – Heather Brown, Shaun Galliher
- Planning Board (one 5-year term) – Dan Brown
- Planning Board (one 1-year term) – Bill Pike

All candidates ran unopposed for their respective seats.

If you have any questions about the Annual Town Meeting or local elections, please do not hesitate to contact the Town Clerk by phone (413-655-2300 Ext. 301) or email (town.clerk@hinsdalema.gov).

MEDICAL/RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA CULTIVATION FACILITY

As was reported in a recent edition of the *Berkshire Eagle*, in October 2016 the Hinsdale Select Board voted in support of a proposal advanced by Ipswich Pharmaceuticals to develop a medical marijuana cultivation facility on a roughly 13-acre parcel situated on Bullards Crossing Road. This support was contingent on the Town and Ipswich Pharmaceuticals forging a mutually agreeable host community agreement, and the support was also limited purely to cultivation and not a dispensary. The vote of support also specified that if Ipswich wished to cultivate recreational marijuana in the future they would have to come before the Select Board again and obtain separate approval for that venture. Some months later, after recreational marijuana was legalized by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, representatives of Ipswich Pharmaceuticals approached the Town Administrator and Select Board to seek approval for recreational marijuana cultivation. The local approval process for recreational marijuana cultivation is different than it is for medical marijuana, and we are currently conferring with Town Counsel as to how the process should proceed. In the event that recreational marijuana cultivation is to move forward on the site proposed by Ipswich, town officials are working diligently with our legal counsel to ensure that the Town's interests and needs are adequately addressed in the host community agreement that is still to be finalized.

If you have specific questions about the proposed marijuana cultivation facility, please contact Ryan Aylesworth, Town Administrator, at 413-655-2300 X 355 or town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov.

WATER & SEWER RATES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

During its next business meeting (Wednesday, June 14 at 6:00 PM) the Hinsdale Select Board/Water & Sewer Commissioners will be reviewing detailed analysis and recommendations provided by a professional engineering firm regarding alternative billing structures that the Town could implement beginning in Fiscal Year 2018 (which commences July 1, 2017). In addition to establishing new water rates for the coming Fiscal Year, fees for Sewer I, Sewer II, and Sewer III customers will also be reviewed and set

during this meeting. We welcome residents to attend this important upcoming meeting for informational purposes.

If you have any questions, please contact Larry Turner, Water & Sewer Superintendent, at 413-655-2300 X 307 or water.sewer@hinsdalema.gov.

AQUATIC WEED TREATMENTS UNDERWAY FOR ASHMERE LAKE AND PLUNKETT RESERVOIR

On Tuesday, June 13, both Ashmere Lake and Plunkett Reservoir will be chemically treated to control the growth of nuisance aquatic vegetation. The treatments will be administered by SÖLitude Lake Management, a national company extensive expertise and experience managing aquatic vegetation. This chemical treatment is being conducted pursuant to a permit issued by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and an Order of Conditions issued the Hinsdale & Peru Conservation Commissions (DEP File # 181-0077 & 260-014).

During and immediately after the water bodies are treated, we direct residents and visitors to refrain from using the water for the following purpose(s) until the dated noted below:

Ashmere Lake

Drinking and Cooking	June 21, 2017
Boating, Fishing and Swimming	June 14, 2017
Watering of Livestock	June 21, 2017
Irrigation	June 19, 2017

Plunkett Reservoir

Drinking and Cooking	June 17, 2017
Boating, Fishing and Swimming	June 14, 2017
Watering of Livestock	June 15, 2017
Irrigation	June 19, 2017

If you have related questions, please contact Ryan Aylesworth, Town Administrator, at 413-655-2300 X 355 or town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov, or SÖLitude Lake Management at (508) 885-0101.

TAX COLLECTOR – NEW OFFICE HOURS

The Tax Collector’s new posted office hours are as follows:

- Tuesdays – 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM
- Wednesdays (2nd and 4th of the month) – 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM
- Wednesdays (1st and 3rd of the month) – 8:00 AM to 11:30 AM
- Wednesday Evenings (1st and 3rd of the month) – 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM
- Thursday – 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM

Please contact Pauline Wheeler, Town Collector, at 413-655-2300 Ext. 306 or tax.collector@hinsdalema.gov, with any questions concerning these new office hours.

FROM THE POLICE CHIEF – BEAR ACTIVITY

If a bear is sighted in town, leave the animal alone. In most situations, if left alone, the bear will return to the forest on its own. Keep dogs under control. Stay away from the bear and advise others to do the same. Often a bear will climb a tree to avoid people. A gathering of people not only stresses the animal, but it adds the risk of having a bear chased out into traffic or into a group of bystanders.

If a bear is in a densely populated area, contact the Environmental Police Radio Room at 1-800-632-8075 (24 hours) or the nearest MassWildlife District Office (weekdays during business hours) to report the sighting and get advice. The mere presence of a bear in a densely populated area is NOT a public safety threat and the bear will leave the area on its own. The Environmental Police or MassWildlife will provide advice and determine if a response from the Large Animal Response Team (LART) is necessary. LART consists of MassWildlife biologists and Environmental Police Officers with specific training in chemical immobilization of large animals. Decisions on appropriate response in these situations are governed by a standard protocol. Depending on the situation, members of the team can provide anything from technical advice to responding to the scene. LART will coordinate efforts with local/state police, animal control officers, MassDOT and local public works departments to ensure public safety as well as the welfare of the animal. In most cases, bears in residential areas do not require a LART response and will leave the area on their own.

If you have a bear EMERGENCY on your property, please contact the Hinsdale Police Department immediately at 413-655-0201.

If you have any additional questions about how to handle bear sightings, please do not hesitate to contact the Animal Control Officer by phone (413-655-0201) or email (kburgess@hinsdalema.gov).

HELP WANTED – VOLUNTEER EMTs & FIREFIGHTERS

The Town needs more volunteer EMT's and/or Firefighters from Hinsdale or bordering communities. If you are interested, or know someone that is, please call us today! No experience is necessary, our Fire Department will be happy to train you. You will be joining a great group of experienced volunteers of all ages and skill levels. If you are interested, please call Larry Turner, Fire Chief, 413-655-2533 or fire@hinsdalema.gov.

JUNE 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 **June 21 (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

RECENT NEWS (from past months)

UPDATES TO TRANSFER STATION OPERATING HOURS AND FEES

Please note that, effective July 1, the NEW HOURS for the Transfer Station will be as follows:

- Tuesdays 2:00-6:00 PM
- Thursdays 2:00-6:00 PM
- Saturday 7:00 AM-2:00 PM
- Sunday 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

We also wish to inform residents that, beginning with Fiscal Year 2018 (July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018), the town will be implementing a bag sticker system in addition to the annual permit/tag that everyone is accustomed to. The stickers will cost \$1 each (sold in batches of 10) and are to be secured to the neck of bags (up to 33 gallon size) being used to dispose of solid waste. Our

hope is that implementing the bag sticker system will better enable the operating costs of the transfer station to be covered by the revenues generated by user fees (as opposed to being heavily subsidized by funding from the tax levy), and also encourage residents to be more committed to sorting recyclables out of the waste stream. The cost of the annual permit/tag will remain at \$65, which is good for one vehicle. Residents wishing to purchase an additional tag for another vehicle can do so for \$15. Annual permits/tags and bag stickers will be available for purchase at Town Hall beginning on June 21 (Monday).

FROM THE TOWN COLLECTOR

Real Estate, Personal Property and Sewer Betterment Bills

The second-half real estate, personal property and sewer betterment bills for Fiscal Year 2017 (July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017) were mailed on April 1. These bills cover the period January 1 through June 30, 2017. Payment on these bills was 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.

ANNUAL MUNICIPAL WATER SYSTEM FLUSHING HAS CONCLUDED

From Tuesday April 25 through Friday May 5, the fire hydrants were flushed to help keep the town's water system free from sediment. Now that the flushing has been completed, residents should not be experiencing any form

of discoloration in their water. If your home is connected to the town's water system and are continuing to have discoloration in your water, please contact Larry Turner, Water & Sewer Superintendent, at 413-655-2300 X 307 or water.sewer@hinsdalema.gov.

COUNCIL ON AGING NEWS

Volunteers Needed!

The Hinsdale Council on Aging is looking for new members to replace members that are leaving the board. If you can help with the programs it now has, and have ideas for new programs for the senior, WE NEED YOU! Come to our next meeting at the Hinsdale Town Hall on Monday June 5, 2017 @ 5:30pm. See if you would like to help us out. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to call any of our board members: Jean Andrews, Judy Casey, Elva Hughes, Jim Manning, Sheryl Robins, Cathy Spinney, and Marion Tinney.

Yoga is Back!

Yoga is back starting Monday June 5th @ 9:00am at the Hinsdale Community Center. The cost is \$3.00 per session. Rima Sala will be the instructor for the class.

BURNING SEASON IS OVER

Open Burning Season for 2017 has concluded. The Open Burning Season in Massachusetts runs from January 15 to May 1. If you have any questions about Open Burning Season, please either contact the Hinsdale Fire Department (413-655-2533) or visit the following link:

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

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.

FROM THE HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

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.

UPDATE FROM THE POLICE CHIEF

IRS Scams

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](#).

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).

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.

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

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 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.

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)

- June 14 @ 4:00 PM - Mission & Vision Working Group
- June 14 @ 6:00 PM – Select Board and Water & Sewer Commissioners
- June 19 @ 9:30 AM – Water & Sewer Committee
- June 21 @ 5:00 PM – Board of Assessors
- June 21 @ 5:00 PM - Mission & Vision Working Group
- June 28 @ 5:00 PM - Mission & Vision Working Group
- June 28 @ 7:00 PM – Select Board
- July 3 @ 9:30 AM – Water & Sewer Committee
- July 5 @ 6:30 PM – Planning Board
- July 6 @ 7:00 PM – Finance Committee
- July 11 @ 6:00 PM – Conservation Commission
- July 12 @ 7:00 PM – Select Board