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August 31, 2026



At Bentley's student philanthropy center, students learn by serving



Fresh cuts, fresh start: Waltham kids get ready for school



American Legion band closes out summer concert series



Waltham artist has solo show at Boston gallery

American Legion band closes out summer concert series

BY TIMOTHY LOK • ARTS & CULTURE • AUGUST 31, 2026



For nearly 80 years the American Legion Band has been a fixture in Waltham, performing at parades, concerts and veterans' events while welcoming generations of musicians into its ranks. The band carried forward this tradition on Aug. 25, playing the final show of the Concerts on the Common series to a rapt audience on the lawn surrounding the gazebo on Waltham Common. The concert series was presented by the Waltham Arts Council.

The band currently consists of about 40 members, both veterans and civilians, ranging in age from teens to 80s and hailing from Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. There has been an international flavor as well over the years, with temporary members joining from as far away as Brazil, Israel and the United Kingdom.

Membership is open to all ages, and there are no fees or auditions. You don't have to be affiliated or have served with any military branch or be a member of the American Legion to join the band.

Author



TIMOTHY LOK

A Waltham resident since 2013, Timothy only started leaning into photography in 2024 when he received his first proper camera. From wild life, concerts and cars — he continues to learn the art and techniques of photography through regular practice. Although he retired from work at sea in 2022, he continues to work for the maritime industry with a control systems company in Newton, MA.

Waltham voters head to the polls Tuesday for state primaries

BY NEWSROOM • ELECTIONS • AUGUST 28, 2026



Polls in Waltham will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 1, for the Massachusetts state primaries, when voters will choose party nominees for a full slate of state and federal offices.



Offices on the ballot include U.S. senator, U.S. representative, governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, secretary of state, treasurer and auditor, along with Governor's Council, state senator, state representative, district attorney and register of probate. See our [Elections section](#) for profiles of the candidates and read [why voting in the primary election has a bigger impact](#) than the general election.

Early voting in the city wrapped up Friday, Aug. 28, after a seven-day run at the gymnasium of the Rosario Malone Archive and Records Center. Voter registration closed at 5 p.m. Aug. 22, and applications to vote by mail were due by 5 p.m. Aug. 25.

Voters already registered in Waltham may cast a ballot in person Tuesday at their assigned [precinct polling place](#). Sample ballots for the Democratic and Republican primaries are posted on the city's [elections page](#).

For additional information call the City Clerk's office at 781-314-3120.

Author



NEWSROOM

Waltham's go-to news source, providing high-quality, unbiased, community-focused coverage to foster an informed and engaged community.

The week ahead: As kids head back to school, School Committee discusses safety

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD • UNCATEGORIZED • AUGUST 30, 2026

This Wednesday, after Waltham's students return to school, the district's municipal oversight body will also hold its first regular meeting of the school year; among other things, discussing statewide legislation that affects schools' protection from interference by Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Governor Maura Healey [recently signed](#) the PROTECT act, which [contains provisions prohibiting ICE agents](#) from making civil immigration arrests in schools.

The School Committee plans to discuss the act and its ramifications for how administrators, teachers and students interact with immigration law enforcement..

In addition to the PROTECT act, the committee will this week discuss renaming of [the former high school building at 617 Lexington St.](#), and consider ratifying a memorandum of agreement about building trades in the school district.

It also plans to revisit some older business, including finalizing [the Waltham High School handbook](#) for the upcoming year and discussing the district's [three-year equity plan](#).

The committee will meet at 7 p.m. on Wednesday in the James J. Cannon Lecture Hall at 617 Lexington St.

Below is a chronological rundown of other city meetings scheduled this week, Aug. 31 through Sept. 4.

Board of Survey and Planning

The Board of Survey and Planning regulates public and private ways and makes decisions on the status and boundaries of lots in the city.

The board will meet at 6 p.m. on Wednesday in the auditorium of the Clark Government Center. Its agenda will be posted [to its page](#) on the city website.

Disability Services Commission

The Disability Services Commission is a seven-person board that works to make Waltham more accessible for residents with disabilities. It advocates and distributes funds for projects related to physical accessibility, signage, interpretation services and Americans with Disabilities Act compliance.

The commission is scheduled to meet over Zoom at 8:30 a.m. on Friday. Participants can request further meeting information from DSC Chairperson Mark Johnson at markj@walhouse.org.



Waltham City Hall on the evening of August 3, 2026. Photo by The Waltham Times.

Baroque music graces the library lawn

BY TIMOTHY LOK • AROUND TOWN • AUGUST 30, 2026



Judah Coffman plays the viola da gamba in an outdoor recital at the Waltham Public Library on Aug. 27, 2026. Photo by Tim Lok.

Cellist and viola da gambaist Judah Coffman performed a free concert on the lawn at the Waltham Public Library on Aug. 27. The program included music for the viola da gamba by English composer Christopher Simpson and Scottish composer Tobias Hume, the Cello Suite No. 3 of Johann Sebastian Bach and contemporary pieces by Reena Esmail and Mark Summer.

Coffman is a performer and scholar based in Boston. He received his doctorate in music from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, specializing in European music of the Renaissance and early Baroque periods.

Seth Moulton vs Brian Shortsleeve

BY GUEST WRITER • LETTERS • AUGUST 30, 2026



In the September 1st primary election this year, the biggest showdown isn't on a ballot — it's on two ballots. With 2/3rds of registered voters in Massachusetts now “unenrolled” (the technical term in MA for independent voters), the vast majority of the voters need to decide which party's ballot to cast before they even choose which individual candidates vote for.

Notably, the Democratic ballot will only have 1 choice for Governor (Maura Healey) and the Republican ballot will only have 1 choice for Senator (John Deaton). Therefore, during the primary election, independent voters need to decide which office (Governor or Senator) they prefer to “throw away” their vote on a choice that is already decided.

Is it more important to add the weight of your vote to the [Democratic Senate race](#) (deciding between the 80 year-old Ed Markey and the 47 year-old Seth Moulton) or the [Republican Gubernatorial race](#) (deciding between the overtly pro-abortion-rights Brian Shortsleeve or the “I don't do hypotheticals” Michael Minogue)?

For independently minded voters, this can be a real conundrum in a year where (for example) even the Boston Globe editorial board has endorsed both [Seth Moulton](#) and [Brian Shortsleeve](#) in their respective primary races.

And how does the importance of a primary vote in those statewide races compare to the Middlesex DA primary where the choice between [challenger David Solet](#) and [incumbent Marian Ryan](#) will be decided solely on the Democratic primary ballot?

This conundrum is a real selling point [in favor of Ballot Question 3](#) to implement an “all party” single ballot primary in Massachusetts. Allowing us to cast a meaningful vote in every contested race during the primary rather than deciding which votes to throw away.

Sean Diamond

Waltham Cares dinner set for Sept. 16

BY NEWSROOM • COMMUNITY • AUGUST 29, 2026



Guests enjoy food provided by Brelundi at the 2025 dinner benefit. Photos by Kay Matipa.

Chaplains on the Way will hold its second annual Waltham Cares Dinner to Benefit Our Unhoused Neighbors on Sept. 16, as the nonprofit reports a sharp rise in the number of people seeking help.

The Waltham-based organization said it has seen a 67% increase in people needing assistance through its daily morning programs. Last year's [inaugural dinner](#) raised about \$34,000, and organizers are aiming for a similar total this year.

Money from the dinner supports the group's core daily operations through the winter. Chaplains on the Way is open five mornings a week in the hours after overnight shelters close and before the Community Day Center opens, giving guests a warm place to rest. Donations also pay for food, hygiene products, toiletries, clothing, sleeping bags and other supplies, and fund a hot breakfast served by volunteers. Chaplains greet guests and help them navigate healthcare, housing and social services.

State Rep. Thomas M. Stanley is serving as event chairman. Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy and members of City Council have been invited as honored guests.

"Homelessness is more than a lack of housing; it is a loss of community," Stanley said. "When someone falls on hard times, our community steps up. I invite everyone across Waltham to pull up a chair and join us for this important evening."

Louise Rachin, board president, said community support made last year's dinner a success.

"As the need on our streets continues to grow, this evening is essential to maintaining our daily breakfast and outreach programs," Rachin said.

Chaplains on the Way is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit providing spiritual care, hot meals and community connections to unhoused neighbors.

Event details

- **What:** 2nd Annual Waltham Cares Dinner
- **When:** 6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 16
- **Where:** American Legion Post 156, 215 Waverley Oaks Road, Waltham
- **Tickets:** \$50; sponsorships range from \$500 for a table host to \$5,000 for a platinum sponsor
- **Reservations and donations:** www.chaplainsontheway.us, or mail a check to Chaplains on the Way Inc., P.O. Box 541236, Waltham, MA 02454
- **Questions/RSVP:** Louise Rachin, president@chaplainsontheway.org

AeroShield is a good step toward tackling climate chaos

BY GUEST WRITER • LETTERS • AUGUST 28, 2026



To the editor:

The causes of global climate change do not form a single Gordian knot, but a multidimensional tangle of factors that rule out single solutions. As H.L. Mencken said over a century ago, *“for every complex problem, there’s a simple solution...and it’s wrong.”*

Tackling planetary climate chaos will require initiatives of widely varying sizes and scopes, each addressing some small component of the question. AeroShield’s advances in window insulation technology are a good example, as is the Commonwealth’s Climatetech program which awarded them 140K in tax incentives.

Good government plans for the future, strengthening communities, fostering innovation, and working to ensure equitable distribution of resources. The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center should be a model for other states to emulate as they explore regional and local approaches to what is, ultimately, a global problem.

Warren Senders
Medford, MA 02155

In response to: [AeroShield awarded \\$140,000 in state climatetech tax incentives – Waltham Times](#)

Waltham artist has solo show at Boston gallery

BY NEWSROOM • ARTS & CULTURE • AUGUST 27, 2026



When Caroline Grossman's father asked her, again and again, "You doing any art?" she did not realize the question would redirect her life.

That question is the title inspiration for "Yes Dad, I'm Doing Art!," a solo exhibition of Grossman's work on view Sept. 4-27 at [TAG | The Art Gallery](#) in Boston's [SoWa Art + Design District](#). An opening reception is scheduled for Friday, Sept. 4, from 5 to 8 p.m. Admission is free.

The exhibition draws on family photographs, heirlooms, documents and personal experience to examine aging, illness, caregiving, memory, identity, immigration and human connection. Grossman describes the show as part memoir, part social commentary and part public health advocacy, as well as a tribute to her parents' encouragement of her creative work.

Her father, Lawrence K. Grossman, was a media theorist who served as president of PBS and later of NBC News. He died in 2018 at age 86 at his home in Westport, Conn., according to his Columbia College memorial. He introduced his daughter to the idea that visual communication could advance causes and move people to act. Her mother, Alberta N. Grossman, was an educator, civil rights advocate and advocate of storytelling who pressed her to find her own voice.

"Caroline's work reminds us that some of the most compelling art begins with deeply personal stories," said Claudia Fiks, founder and director of TAG | The Art Gallery. "Through vulnerability, humor and extraordinary compassion, she transforms family history into a universal reflection on resilience, caregiving, advocacy and the enduring impact of those who encourage us to become who we are."

Grossman is using the exhibition to raise awareness and support for two organizations that serve Waltham: The Waltham Times and Charles River Community Health, a community health center founded in 1974 that operates sites in Waltham and Brighton and provides primary care, dental, behavioral health, vision and pharmacy services.

TAG | The Art Gallery is operated by the New England Art Center and is located at 460C Harrison Ave. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Sunday, noon to 5 p.m., or by appointment, according to the center.

Disclosure: Caroline Grossman is a co-founder and board vice-chair at The Waltham Times. The Waltham Times is one of two nonprofit organizations the exhibition is intended to benefit.



Portrait of Alberta Grossman, the artist's mother, sporting her Waltham Times cap. Courtesy of Caroline Grossman.

License Commission assesses incidents requiring police response at local restaurants

BY CYD ABNET • GOVERNMENT • AUGUST 27, 2026



Joco's Bar and Kitchen on Moody Street (Jace Varden, owner).



Shoppers Cafe on Moody Street.

The License Commission requested three restaurants attend their August meeting because of recent incidents in which police were summoned. Whenever this occurs at a restaurant with a liquor license, the Commission reviews the incident. If the Commission feels the restaurant followed its [public safety rules and regulations](#) by calling 911 and properly addressing the incident, the case is dismissed. If not, the Commission makes a decision about what they'd like to see from the restaurant to remedy the situation.

The first incident before the Commission was a fight that happened June 4 at Joco's Bar & Kitchen on Moody Street. According to the police report, a man struck another man in the face and said the victim had made offensive sexual advances. An employee said the man was asked to leave after asking other patrons for drugs. Upon being asked to leave, the man struck the victim. Based on the report, the Commission decided not to add the incident to the restaurant's record.

The Commission also heard about a June 19 incident at City Streets on Waverley Oaks Road, where a customer was "causing a scene" according to the police report. Management asked her to leave after she began bothering other customers, but the woman refused to leave or pay for her drinks and food. Based on police assessment, she was taken into protective custody due to her perceived level of intoxication. She had two drinks during her time there, and employees let police know the second drink was taken away from her once she started acting strange. The Commission voted to dispose of the report and not add it to the restaurant's file.

The final incident before the Commission happened July 2, at Shopper's Cafe on Moody Street. A man who was leaving the bar passed out in the doorway and struck his head on the floor. According to the police report, the man did not recall falling. Firefighters treated the man's injuries, and he was taken to Newton Wellesley Hospital to be evaluated. The man was given four drinks over the course of a 2.5 hour period. The Commission disposed of the report.

In other business, the commission approved:

- A request for the extension of an entertainment permit for the annual Boston Salsa Festival at the Westin Waltham-Boston Hotel which took place Aug. 21-23. The application was pre-approved ahead of the meeting time, a process that happens when the application is submitted late.
- Two one-day all alcohol permits for events at Bentley University in September.
- Two requests for one-day all alcohol permits for wedding receptions at the Paine Estate in October.
- A request for a one-day beer and wine permit for a panel discussion event at the Gore Estate.
- A request for four one-day beer and wine permits for recurring educational wine classes at Dion's Wine, Spirits & Craft Beer. The [first class](#) will be held Sept. 16.
- A request for an extension of premise from Shopper's Cafe for the Waltham High School Field Hockey team's fifth Annual Corn Hole Tournament. The event will be held Oct. 4 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. in the parking lot behind the restaurant.
- A request for extension of premise from the Loyal Order of Moose Waltham Lodge for their annual members cookout in September.
- A request for a change of manager from the Waltham VFW Post on Trapelo Road.
- A request for a change of officers and directors from Margaritas on Moody Street. The manager will stay the same.
- A request for the transfer of the common victualer license from S & P Cuisine (doing business as Tree Top Thai Cuisine on Prospect Street) to Tree Top Cuisine LLC. Everything about Tree Top Thai Cuisine will stay the same despite the license transfer.

Author



CYD ABNET

Cyd Abnet is a Waltham native who recently graduated with a degree in Environmental Science from Clark University. She began her journalism career with Clark's student newspaper where she covered topics from on-campus protests to competitive chess scandals. In her free time you can find Cyd enjoying Waltham's numerous natural wonders.

Waltham man charged with assault after incident on the Common

BY CYD ABNET • PUBLIC SAFETY • AUGUST 27, 2026



An incident on the Waltham Common resulted in an assault charge for a Waltham man this week.

On Aug. 21 at 12:45 p.m., officers responded to the Waltham Community Day Center to speak with a person about an assault that occurred the previous day. According to the police report, the person was sleeping at the gazebo on Waltham Common when they were awakened by an older man touching their genitals. Police said video footage confirmed this encounter. After talking with several people on the Common, police identified Robert J. O'Connor, 68, of Waltham, as a suspect.

Police were able to speak to O'Connor, who told officers he was checking to see if the person was okay by putting a hand on them. O'Connor was ultimately arrested. While being booked, police discovered he is an unclassified sex offender in Florida. O'Connor pleaded not guilty on Aug. 24 to one count of indecent assault and battery on a person 14 or over and one count of lewd, wanton and lascivious conduct. O'Connor was released on personal recognizance by Judge Ellen M. Caulo and will face a pretrial hearing on Oct. 13.

Additional court activity



Waltham District Court. Photo by Isabella Lapriore.

Roberto Figueroa Berrios, 32, of Ludlow, had charges against him dismissed on Aug. 19. Figueroa Berrios was [charged in May](#) with intimidating a witness, juror or police or court official. The charges were dismissed through a nolle prosequi motion, meaning the state decided not to pursue them. A nolle prosequi motion allows the state to refile the charges within the statute of limitations of the crime.

Mario Lopez, 35, of Waltham, pleaded not guilty on Aug. 20 to two charges of assault and battery stemming from an incident at a Waltham residence. Lopez was released on personal recognizance by

Judge Amanda Ward and will face a pretrial hearing on Oct. 15.

Julio Cesar Sanchez-Garcia, 33, of Waltham, pleaded not guilty on Aug. 24 to one charge of operating under the influence of liquor, second offense, and one charge of a marked lanes violation. The charges stem from an incident on Moody Street. Sanchez-Garcia was released on personal recognizance by Caulo and will face a pretrial hearing on Sept. 24.

Chao P. Yang, 66, of Wellesley, pleaded not guilty on Aug. 24 to one count of operating under the influence of liquor and one count of negligent operation of a motor vehicle. The charges are in relation to an incident on Third Avenue. Yang was released on personal recognizance by Caulo and will face a hearing to review status on Oct. 6.

Michael R. Gray, of Waltham, had a case against him dismissed on Aug. 25 due to lack of prosecution. He was [charged in July](#) with possession of a class A drug. Gray's case was dismissed due to lack of prosecution, meaning the Commonwealth was not equipped to prosecute the case and decided to dismiss it.

Zipporah D. Hebron, 23, of Middleboro, pleaded not guilty on Aug. 25 to a charge of assault and battery on a family or household member. The charge stems from an incident in Hannaford's Supermarket parking lot. Hebron was released on personal recognizance by Caulo and will have a hearing to review status on Aug. 28.

Alejandro Lugo, 38, of Waltham, had a case against him dismissed on Aug. 28 due to lack of prosecution. He was [charged in June](#) with assault and battery on a family or household member. Lugo's case was dismissed due to lack of prosecution, meaning the Commonwealth was not equipped to prosecute the case and decided to dismiss it.

Author



CYD ABNET

Cyd Abnet is a Waltham native who recently graduated with a degree in Environmental Science from Clark University. She began her journalism career with Clark's student newspaper where she covered topics from on-campus protests to competitive chess scandals. In her free time you can find Cyd enjoying Waltham's numerous natural wonders.

At Bentley's student philanthropy center, students learn by serving their community

BY LEA ZAHARONI • COMMUNITY • AUGUST 27, 2026



Bentley students take part in a service-learning community project. Photo courtesy of BSLCE.

The Bentley Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Center runs on a simple premise: Community engagement should be graded, structured and student-led — not treated as a side project or extracurricular activity. Entering its 35th year of operation this fall, the center's work will engage about a quarter of Bentley's 4,500 undergraduates, making it one of the largest programs of its kind in the country.

Founded in 1991 as the Bentley Service Learning Project, the center has changed its name twice, eventually adopting its current title to reflect a broader civic mission alongside academics. It was one of the earlier adopters of "service-learning" back when the concept, and the vocabulary for it, were still being invented.

"Thirty-five years ago, service-learning wasn't really a thing as a pedagogy or as a concept at other universities," said Jonathan White, the center's executive director and a faculty member in Bentley's sociology department.

White said his predecessor and the center's founder, Edward Zlotkowski, is considered a pioneer of the service-learning philosophy, which became a national movement. Zlotkowski later wrote a book called "Students as Colleagues", which informs how the center operates. White co-directs with Brian Shea, an alum of the center himself, but Bentley students are the backbone of the center's leadership structure.

About 150 students serve as program managers and are paid to run training, facilitate community partnerships and coach students in their service placements. "Jonathan and I, we're not going to Whittemore Elementary School to facilitate a reading program for fourth graders," Shea said. "We're not going to the Waltham Senior Center to lead an intergenerational program. ... Those are all student-led."

Getting paid is important, Shea added, for reasons beyond the obvious. "It's helpful simply to break the notion that the only thing you can get paid for is something that doesn't align with your values," he said. "I think it is good for especially students at a business school to understand that community work is valuable, and it is valued."

Above the program managers sit student directors — a group of four selected students who sit in on staff meetings alongside the directors, helping make decisions about how the center runs. They work roughly 20 hours a week on top of full course loads and represent the center publicly, including through presentations to Bentley's Board of Trustees. Selecting them is a weekslong process that includes extensive student input.

Despite its large size, that level of care translates directly to the quality of students' experience with the center. Helen Yac Xiquin, who was a lead program manager before she graduated this spring, first encountered BSLCE before she had even committed to Bentley. While touring campus on admitted students day, she passed a BSLCE table and, on impulse, wrote down a program she dreamed of starting: helping immigrant populations prepare for their citizenship tests. Years later, while working at the center, Shea handed her a small slip of paper — the exact note she'd written at 18. "It was a total full-circle moment for me," she said.

By then, she was already doing the work she had once only imagined, spending all four of her years at Bentley with the Whittemore English-Spanish exchange program, where she helped immigrant parents build confidence speaking English.

While she helped parents learn English, Helen said, they also helped her strengthen her Spanish skills — exemplifying the balance that the directors hold in such high regard. Shea said students are encouraged to think of it as working with the community, rather than for the community.

In line with the service-learning philosophy, the educational aspect of students' work is reflected in tangible academic credit. Bentley faculty members can offer an additional optional credit tied to community-based work. Students who opt in don't just volunteer for an afternoon; they take on roughly 30 hours of structured work, including prep and reflection.

That legitimization matters more than it may seem, the directors said. "When it comes to midterms, even if the students' priority is to work with the community, they're going to skip that and study for their test," White said. "Here, it's grade-incentivized. The school has decided that it's equally important."

Roughly 1,200 students take part in the credited model each year — a level of participation that is highly sought after among Bentley's peers. The BSLCE pioneered the additional-credit model, and White says he still fields calls from other universities asking how to replicate it. "I wish more people would consider implementing it. ... Often the barrier is trying to get it into the systems of their school.

At Bentley, the model falls under academic affairs rather than student affairs — an unusual placement that, White said, reflects how deeply the university has invested in service learning.

The directors note that none of this happened all at once. The additional-credit option arrived in the late 1990s, allowing the program to scale. Program manager roles came later, and the student director model has continued to expand. Even outside partnerships keep growing; White said the College Board has approached Bentley about building service-learning components into Advanced Placement courses nationwide.



Helen Yac Xiquin gives a speech at an award ceremony for the center's graduating seniors. Photo courtesy of BSLCE.

What hasn't changed is the underlying premise that community-based work holds value not only for the community, but for the student doing it. Alexander Sassaman, lead program manager for the Sages and Seekers program with Waltham Connections for Healthy Aging, said the center's work dramatically changed the way he views Waltham. "It is easy for the university to feel like its own world," he said. "For some, this can isolate students from the Waltham community. The Service-Learning Program at Bentley provides a way to bridge this gap. I feel more connected than ever to the Waltham community and have even run into a Sage from my program in Cafe on the Common."

For now, White says he's less interested in dwelling on the center's past achievements than in what it does next. As the new freshmen arrive, the bigger goal is making sure programming keeps evolving, as always, pulled forward by the students running it.

Author



LEA ZAHARONI

Lea Zaharoni is a recent graduate of Brandeis University, where she majored in American Studies and Journalism. She spent most of her time at school working as General Manager of the student radio station WBRS 100.1, which broadcasts live 24/7 on Waltham FM radio. She's also written for Brandeis' student newspaper, the Justice, as well as the Irish Independent in Dublin and Dig Boston. Lea loves exploring new places in town and returning to old favorites, and counts herself very lucky to be a part of the Waltham community.

Last call: Waltham citizens police academy applications close Friday

BY NEWSROOM • PUBLIC SAFETY • AUGUST 27, 2026



Waltham Police Department CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY

The Waltham Police Department is accepting applications for its Citizens Police Academy, a free 12-week program that gives residents a behind-the-scenes look at police work.

The academy meets Wednesdays from 6 to 9 p.m., Sept. 2 through Nov. 18, in the Waltham Police Academy Room at 155 Lexington St. Applications are due Friday, Aug. 28.

The program is open to Waltham residents at no cost. Applicants must consent to a criminal record check.

Sessions cover patrol procedures, narcotics investigation and domestic violence, along with field exercises, firearm training and patrol ride-alongs.

Applications are available at the main station at 155 Lexington St., the neighborhood substation at 11 Carter St., and on [the department's website](#).

Author



NEWSROOM

Waltham's go-to news source, providing high-quality, unbiased, community-focused coverage to foster an informed and engaged community.

Community block grant funds senior housing, after-school program, services for homeless neighbors and local business

BY LEA ZAHARONI • NEWS • AUGUST 27, 2026



The Waltham Planning Department presented its [Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report](#) for last year's Community Development Block Grant on Aug. 26, part of an annual process to distribute federal funds to municipalities and collect feedback on how effective those funds were.

The report highlighted several community projects. The [Beaverbrook Senior Apartments](#), owned by the Waltham Housing Authority, received a gut renovation of all 60 units, plus grab bars, walkway repairs and a rebuilt community center. Construction, which is still ongoing, used \$240,621 of CDBG funds allocated to the project.

The Chesterbrook Community Foundation received \$77,322 to replace deteriorating windows, which will benefit its children's after-school program.



Windows on the Chesterbrook Community Foundation before renovations. Courtesy of the Planning Department.



Windows on the Chesterbrook Community Foundation after renovations. Courtesy of the Planning Department.

Four businesses also received \$31,997 in funding through the Downtown Waltham Partnership for exterior improvements.

Homeless assistance programs received \$51,945 in funding, including Healthy Waltham's food pantry, Chaplains on the Way's free breakfast program and the Salvation Army's Hope Kitchen.

The CDBG program, run by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Design, allocates money to cities so they can develop housing opportunities and quality-of-life improvements for residents. The grants are intended for low- and moderate-income residents and for residents in vulnerable populations, such as survivors of domestic violence and people experiencing homelessness.

In project year 2025-26, Waltham received \$850,450 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and spent \$868,727, with extra funds carrying over from prior years. More than 1,100 residents were served overall, 99% of whom were low-income.

Some funds went unused

The report also included lapses in impact, particularly with a housing rehabilitation initiative that went unused by residents. Listed as a priority in Waltham's five-year funding plan, the program would provide interest-free loans for home repairs.

However, for the second consecutive year, the city received no eligible applications for the program. The report attributed this to the \$10,000 loan cap, which may not provide enough assistance for low-income individuals "amidst general increasing construction and material costs," the report states.

Despite positive impacts, uncertainty about funding framed the Planning Department's presentation. The CDBG program serves municipalities across the country, and as participation [goes up](#), available funding is stretched thin.

Since the program's inception in 1975, the number of eligible cities has roughly doubled, while annual funding levels have not increased proportionally or kept pace with inflation. "The CDBG program has significantly less purchasing power to service significantly more people," a 2023 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development study [stated](#).

Frank Nakashian, the city's assistant director of planning and sustainability, also alluded to confusion about how HUD doles out the funding they do have. "[The government] has their own equations that we're not pretty sure of," he said. The 50-year allocation formula HUD uses is under active scrutiny, and Congress proposed a modernization act in 2024.

Because of this uncertainty, both situational and systemic, Waltham is looking to the future with only placeholder numbers. "We know that we have \$846,000 to play with for next year, but we haven't got the money yet," Nakashian said.

A few years ago, he said, Waltham received more than \$1 million in CDBG funding. The oldest CAPER report available on the Planning Department's website, for project year 2021-22, lists the amount at \$978,390. "We get less and less ... but we just have to play by the rules and see what we get."

Residents can submit comments on the report draft until Sept. 18 by emailing walthamcdbg@city.waltham.ma.us, or mailing directly to the Planning Department.

Author



LEA ZAHARONI

Lea Zaharoni is a recent graduate of Brandeis University, where she majored in American Studies and Journalism. She spent most of her time at school working as General Manager of the student radio station WBRS 100.1, which broadcasts live 24/7 on Waltham FM radio. She's also written for Brandeis' student newspaper, the Justice, as well as the Irish Independent in Dublin and Dig Boston. Lea loves exploring new places in town and returning to old favorites, and counts herself very lucky to be a part of the Waltham community.

Police pilot new hiring program to address staffing shortages

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD • PUBLIC SAFETY • AUGUST 27, 2026



Waltham's police department is trying a new hiring strategy: This year, new recruits can apply even without prior police training.

New hires will still have to go through police academy training before starting on the force..

According to Police Chief Kevin O'Connell, Waltham needs this new approach. The police department is understaffed, and O'Connell said it's had a hard time finding new hires through the state-assembled candidate list.

Now, the department is expanding its hiring search to include candidates from municipal or university police departments that do not participate in the Civil Service system, as well as civilians without prior police experience.

At [June's budget hearings](#), O'Connell said some duties, such as enforcing traffic regulations, have been falling through the cracks while the department has only been able to staff shifts at a minimum standard.

The WPD has made some hires and closed some of its vacancies, but as of the end of July, it still needed to fill six positions.

While [overall crime rates are declining in Waltham](#), O'Connell said he would like to expand the WPD's ranks even further, although he added that the department doesn't have immediate plans to expand.

Waltham's Police Department is a Civil Service organization, a designation originally created to combat corruption and nepotism in local police forces. It requires the department to follow certain fairness and reporting standards, including in hiring. In March, however, the state gave Waltham permission to hire up to half of new police officers from outside of the Civil Service list.

The WPD is reserving judgement on the efficacy of this alternate hiring pathway. O'Connell said the department will evaluate the program "after we have had an opportunity to go through the [hiring] process," although he didn't specify how the department will measure its success.

The alternate pathways program

This alternate pathway program opened up in 2024 as part of statewide public service reforms. Sophia Hall, deputy litigation director at the Boston-based legal organization [Lawyers for Civil Rights](#), said this program is new enough that there's not much data out there about it, and it's hard to assess its results.

Hall said it's a bad idea for police departments to leave the Civil Service entirely behind. She said that even if its traditional hiring list is restrictive, the program as a whole creates important tools to keep police hiring systems fair and fight discrimination that can, in the long run, lead to unequal policing and keep promising candidates out of local departments.

Dave Koffman, senior executive and legislative director of the [Massachusetts Municipal Association](#), said the new program offered important flexibility to police departments around the state. He said many departments have [abandoned their Civil Service status](#) over the past decade because they felt their hands were tied by its hiring requirements, emphasizing that 59 of the state's 98 Civil Service departments have opted to hire through alternate pathways since the program's adoption.

Koffman said Waltham's police department isn't the only municipal department having trouble hiring, noting that there has been a decline in candidates applying to many types of specialized municipal jobs across the state.

Author



ARTIE KRONENFELD

Artie Kronenfeld is a Waltham-based reporter who enjoys writing about policy and administration that affect people's everyday lives. Previously hailing from Toronto, they're a former editor-in-chief of the University of Toronto's flagship student paper The Varsity. You can find them during off-work hours playing niche RPGs, wandering through Haymarket and making extra spreadsheets that nobody asked for.

Deaton focuses on housing, energy costs at Waltham GOP ice cream social

BY CHARLIE JOHNSON • GOVERNMENT • AUGUST 27, 2026



Attendees gather at the Republican City Committee ice cream social. Photo by Charlie Johnson.

Waltham republicans gathered at Pizzi Farm Ice Cream for free scoops and political conversation with candidates for state and federal office, including U.S. Senate candidate John Deaton.

The event gives Waltham Republicans a chance to meet one another and, during election years, hear from candidates seeking local and state office. Deaton moved from table to table, talking with attendees.

Deaton is running unopposed in the Sept. 1 Republican primary. On the Democratic side, U.S. Rep. Seth Moulton is challenging incumbent Sen. Ed Markey for the nomination. Deaton and Moulton participated in an unusual cross-party

debate hosted by WBZ in June that Markey did not attend. Last Friday, Moulton did a bar crawl on Moody Street to socialize with voters.

Deaton, a former Marine and trial attorney, unsuccessfully challenged Sen. Elizabeth Warren's seat in 2024, losing in the general election. Now he is trying again to unseat Sen. Ed Markey.

'Priced out'

Deaton said housing affordability is a central issue in his campaign. He argued that young people once could take a second job to save for a down payment or another step toward their future, while many now need that extra income simply to cover rent and electricity.

Asked how he would address housing affordability in Waltham, Deaton said he has visited the city four times and noticed that, like many surrounding communities, home prices have "skyrocketed" out of reach. He estimated that the average home in Waltham costs more than \$600,000 and added that mortgage interest rates are at 6% as another barrier to homeownership.

"That's why I think young people are turning to crypto or turning to these betting sites," he said. "They're trying to build wealth in an era where they've been priced out of the traditional way of

building wealth.”

Challenging the ‘status quo’

Deaton took aim at Sen. Markey’s support for a recent bipartisan housing bill, saying Markey had merely voted for legislation that drew broad support from Republicans as well as Democrats.

Deaton argued that Markey has focused on policies he considers too far to the left rather than the affordability concerns facing Massachusetts residents. He gave the example of Markey’s support for abolishing the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency.

On energy, Deaton said he wants to expand nuclear power, including through small modular reactors, as a way to increase the state’s energy supply and lower costs. He contrasted that with Markey’s support for the Green New Deal policies.

He has also proposed building 5 million homes over the next five years, including by making unused federal and state land available for development.

Deaton said he feels confident facing either Markey or Moulton in the general election because he views both as representative of a status quo that needs to change.

Lenore Karaian, a retired Waltham resident and member of the Republican City Committee, attended the event with her brother John. Karaian said she is considering voting for Deaton. She called out increased immigration in recent years as one factor she believes has contributed to the region’s housing shortage and criticized Gov. Maura Healey’s handling of immigration.

“That’s why we have a housing crisis,” Karaian said.

Waltham resident Steven B. said he supports Deaton for U.S. Senate, and like Deaton framed his support around a desire for political change.

“It’s about time we get something new in Massachusetts,” Steven said.

Author



CHARLIE JOHNSON

Charlie Johnson is a freelance reporter covering stories across the Greater Boston area. A graduate of Boston University’s journalism program, he wrote for The Daily Free Press in the Campus News and City News sections and reported for Brookline.News through BU’s pilot Newsroom program. Most recently, he covered local government, business, housing and community news for Fig City News in Newton.



John Deaton speaks to residents at ice cream social. Photo by Charlie Johnson.

ZBA extends timeline for 2023 housing project

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD • GOVERNMENT • AUGUST 27, 2026



A three-year-old project to demolish and rebuild a Main Street building got another timeline extension at Tuesday's Zoning Board of Appeals meeting.

Son Le, the owner of 1122–1130 Main St., has [previously requested](#) the board extend the time limit for zoning variances it granted to the property in 2023. Le purchased the property in 2024 and plans to [knock down the current two-family home and turn it into a five-unit residence](#). The board had previously agreed to extend the deadline but warned it would not grant another extension.

Le told the board this week that his hands are tied. He submitted requests for demolition and construction permits to the Building Department in July, but has yet to receive a response. Board members expressed frustration with the project's slow pace, but unanimously agreed to extend the timeline on its decision for another six months.

Also on the docket were two private homeowners on Wimbledon Circle who received permission to expand their garage close to the back of their lot. Their attorney, Bret Francis, explained the expansion would allow them to relocate the contents of a shed that has been attached to the property for decades but technically sits on land owned by the Cambridge Water Department. The board stipulated that the property owners remove the shed and work with Cambridge to establish clearer property boundary lines.



Bret Francis presenting about the garage case at the ZBA. Photo by Artie Kronenfeld.

Author



ARTIE KRONENFELD

Artie Kronenfeld is a Waltham-based reporter who enjoys writing about policy and administration that affect people's everyday lives. Previously hailing from Toronto, they're a former editor-in-chief of the University of Toronto's flagship student paper *The Varsity*. You can find them during off-work hours playing niche RPGs, wandering through Haymarket and making extra spreadsheets that nobody asked for.

Why John Lawn has my vote

BY GUEST WRITER • LETTERS • AUGUST 26, 2026



I recently read Alison Leary’s response to a Ballotpedia question asking, “What characteristics or principles are most important for an elected official?” Her answer was: “Honesty, Accountability, Empathy, and Commitment.”

I wholeheartedly agree. Those are precisely the qualities I have seen consistently demonstrated by the candidate receiving my vote on September 1: Representative John Lawn.

I’m a senior who has worked since I was 16. I spent 32 years with the U.S. Postal Service, raised my daughter as a single mother, and returned to college in my late 40s while working full-time. I know something about persistence, and I value people who don’t simply make promises, but show up year after year and do the work.

The old adage “New friends are silver; old friends are gold” comes to mind. New candidates and promises of dramatic change can be enticing. But particularly in these volatile times, I believe experience, trusted relationships, and a proven record of commitment matter.

As a senior woman and alumna of both a women’s college and a girls’ high school, I take women’s leadership seriously. But I also believe we should judge candidates by the qualities Ms. Leary herself identified: honesty, accountability, empathy, and commitment. i therefore ask you to join me in voting for John Lawn on September 1.

Rita Gibbons
Waltham

Ice cream for the kids, health answers for the parents

BY JUNE KINOSHITA • AROUND TOWN • AUGUST 25, 2026



Local families check out nonprofit tables at the Family Health Fair. Photo by The Waltham Times.



Tuesday, Aug. 25, dawned with blue skies and perfect late-summer weather, sunny but with a touch of cool breezes, foreshadowing the arrival of autumn. Dozens of families took the opportunity for a pleasant outing to visit the Family Health Fair hosted by Charles River Community Health Center at 43 Foundry Ave.

While the children collected balloons, drew pictures and feasted on ice cream, their parents browsed the tables to learn about such topics as breast cancer screening, mental health resources and support for family caregivers.

Waltham Times volunteers were there too, signing up new readers and asking passersby about what news stories mattered to them. “I like to see good news,” one woman said.

The annual fair marks National Health Center Awareness Month, observed in August. Community health centers provide affordable, comprehensive primary care to underserved and low-income populations, serving up to 52 million people nationwide regardless of their ability to pay.

The Charles River Community Health Center serves more than 13,600 patients a year at its sites in Waltham and Brighton, with the Waltham clinic seeing half, or roughly 6,000 to 6,800 patients, or approximately 8.6 percent of Waltham’s total residents.

Register for fall skating classes

BY NEWSROOM • SPORTS & RECREATION • AUGUST 25, 2026



A child learns to ice skate. Canva Stock image.

Bay State Skating School is now accepting registrations for its fall learn-to-skate classes for children and teens ages 4 to 18 at Veterans Memorial Rink, 295 Totten Pond Road.

The nonprofit, which has offered skating instruction for more than 55 years, will hold two sessions at the Waltham rink. Sunday Session I begins Sept. 27 and runs five weeks. Saturday Session I begins Oct. 24 and runs six weeks.

For class times, registration and program information, visit the [Bay State Skating School website](#) or call 781-890-8480.

Author



NEWSROOM

Waltham's go-to news source, providing high-quality, unbiased, community-focused coverage to foster an informed and engaged community.

AeroShield awarded \$140,000 in state climatetech tax incentives

BY JUNE KINOSHITA • BUSINESS • AUGUST 25, 2026



Lead product engineer, Muny Tram, examines a window prototype for its optical quality. Inside the unit is a layer of clear and insulating aerogel to create a window that can save hundreds of dollars on heating and cooling costs when installed in a home or building. Courtesy of AeroShield.

A Waltham materials science company will receive \$140,000 in state tax incentives to expand production of its super-insulating window technology, part of a \$27.2 million package the Healey-Driscoll administration announced on Aug. 21.

[AeroShield Materials](#), which operates a manufacturing plant and research labs on Calvary Street, was among 18 Massachusetts climatetech companies selected for the inaugural round of the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center's Climatetech Tax Incentives Program.

The company will use the funding to manufacture aerogel insulation for windows, a technology it says improves energy efficiency and reduces heating and cooling costs. An MIT spin-out, AeroShield makes what it describes as the world's most insulating transparent material — a patented silica aerogel coating that can make a window up to 65% more energy efficient, lowering both utility bills and energy use.

Since moving to Waltham in 2024, AeroShield has been producing the world's first aerogel-insulated window units on its pilot line, using them for demonstrations and product certification ahead of a commercial launch planned for next year.

"Climatetech is creating new opportunities for workers and communities across Massachusetts," Gov. Maura Healey said in a statement. "These investments will help companies expand their facilities, hire more workers and grow right here in our state."



The company employs 21 people full time, 20 of them at the Waltham site, said co-founder and CEO Elise Strobach. AeroShield also hired a roster of Waltham vendors to build out its facility, including Eastern Industrial Automation, Galaxy Integrated Technologies and Keane Fire & Safety, and has drawn on a longer list of Massachusetts suppliers for manufacturing equipment and construction upgrades. Company Earth Day events have included river cleanups and volunteering.

Two AeroShield engineers inspect aerogel insulated glass units as they are being produced at a pilot manufacturing facility in Waltham, MA. These units can insulate 65% better thanks to the patented aerogel insulation. Courtesy of AeroShield.

“While we are still small, we would love to engage more with the community through educational programs,” Strobach said.

Ben Downing, CEO of the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, said the awards will help recipients “invest in our communities, creating the jobs and technologies that will drive our economy forward.”

Author



JUNE KINOSHITA

A Waltham resident since 2003, June has been a writer and editor for Scientific American, Science, The New York Times Magazine, among others. She co-founded the Alzheimer Research Forum and N-of-One. She recently retired from a 13-year career as a leader at the FSHD Society, a rare disease patient advocacy organization.

Unsung Heroes: Meet Nathan Merrin

BY ALLIE LADJEVA • COMMUNITY • AUGUST 25, 2026



When Nathan Merrin moved from San Francisco to attend Brandeis University, he knew he wanted to do more than simply attend classes. Last year, he interned at REACH: Beyond Domestic Violence, working with survivors while learning about the behind-the-scenes work that makes the organization's services possible.

Merrin is a recent graduate of Brandeis University, where he majored in psychology and computer science. When he came to Waltham, he knew he wanted to engage with the local community.

"I'm really interested in helping people, and also just getting to work with people one-on-one. That was something I was really passionate about, especially going into my senior year and thinking about what I wanted to do career-wise," Merrin said.



Nathan Merrin, courtesy photo.

Merrin was a development intern at REACH: Beyond Domestic Violence during his senior year. In that role, he helped plan fundraising events and manage the finances. The experience helped him better understand the essential behind-the-scenes work that keeps nonprofits running.

"Before [my experience at REACH], I mostly worked with victims of crime, worked with people one-on-one. But I didn't know what it meant to really think about the whole organization and to help everybody get the funds they need. The important work can only be done once we have funds to do it," Merrin said.

At REACH, he also worked in the children's therapy group. The group supports children who have survived domestic violence as they heal from their experiences. As a man working in that space, Merrin was especially conscious of respecting survivors' boundaries.

"So for a lot of people, it is triggering, or it is difficult to see a guy in these spaces, and trying to manage what that's like. So I think that's also just a big part of trying to work with people in these situations. It is recognizing that you don't want to be the hero in every situation. Sometimes you want to let somebody else take the lead," Merrin said.

Merrin praised the diversity of the Waltham community and the volunteering opportunities in the city. For him, even small acts of help can contribute to bigger change.

"If you can make change in your local community ... I feel like it is a huge win. And those small victories can kind of add up, and then you can try to see changes on the state level, and, hopefully, at some point the federal level," Merrin said.

Before his internship at REACH, Merrin had several other experiences where he supported people who had undergone trauma. In his first summer in college, he interned at the Victim Services Unit at the San Francisco District Attorney's Office, where he worked one-on-one with victims of crime.

The following summer, he worked at the Veterans Association, where he worked with veterans experiencing depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Currently, Merrin volunteers at the Veterans Association in Palo Alto, Calif., where he continues to support veterans.

“I think for every individual veteran, for every individual survivor, that trauma is really different, and it’s important to start from the beginning with everyone. Let people tell you where they’re at,” Merrin said.

Looking ahead, Merrin hopes to continue his passion for social justice through social work combined with psychology. He plans to continue the work he started at REACH by helping people who have survived significant traumas, focusing on veterans.

For Merrin, volunteering is not just about what he gives to others.

“I feel like they’ve invested in me too. It’s ... a give and take,” he said.

Comments (3)



DAVID GUMPERT • AUGUST 26, 2026 AT 12:26 PM

Inspiring to see a young person come here from the West Coast and stay, to do important work for a Waltham service organization. Thanks for the informative article.

[Reply](#)



HELEN DAVID • AUGUST 26, 2026 AT 11:00 AM

This is a great story. Brand I should be proud. Waltham is lucky to have him. More people should be like Nathan.

[Reply](#)



HILLEL BROMBERG • AUGUST 26, 2026 AT 10:39 AM

I am development writer at REACH and I’d like to give full kudos to our intern Nathan. He is both a hard worker and a warm and engaging person, just delightful to have in the office. When I see young people like Nathan and his genuine concern for those who go through life with disadvantages, I am inspired and hopeful for our future. Thank you Nathan, for everything you did at REACH and all you continue to do with others.

[Reply](#)

Hawks football looks to build on last season's experience in 2026

BY LIAM O'BRIEN • SPORTS & RECREATION • AUGUST 25, 2026



WHS Hawks football team looking to build on last season's experience. Photo by Joseph Sharkey.

The fall of 2025 was a trying one at times for the Waltham High School football team.

However, there are plenty of silver linings to draw inspiration from. The upside of having underclassmen forced into roles of high responsibility is the accumulation of experience, which will serve them well throughout their football careers.

Hawks who would not have seen the field in a normal season of good health now have the confidence that they can go out and make life tough for the opposition.

This is what head coach Sean Brackett and his troops will rely on as the 2026 campaign gets underway.

"Clearly, we are returning many players that got significant varsity experience last year," Brackett said. "Last year served as a sort of rebuilding year for us, as we battled numerous injuries to starters and played a lot of freshmen. We are hoping that experience leads to a large leap for us this year, as the majority of our team is returning, healthy, bigger, faster and stronger after an offseason in our workout program."

The Hawks return 80% of their offensive line from last season, with Servituer Vincent, Jack Speakman, Stevie Rando and Nate Bakyayita manning the trenches, while newcomer Calum Pratt rounds out the unit. Vincent is the anchor of this group. He received honorable mention DCL Honors last year as a junior and recently received an offer from Bentley University, giving him the opportunity to remain in Waltham for college.

The skill positions boast loads of experience as well, with running backs Austin Lucente and Jake Recine having received the bulk of the carries last year while wideouts Julius Genece, Ryan Ranucci and Bobby

Mendez led the wide receiver corps. Mendez even netted DCL Large All-Star honors in 2025 and proved his ability to be a game-breaker on the field.

This veteran-laden cast will be the perfect support system for freshman starting quarterback Titan Haywood. Judging by the newcomer's eighth-grade film and offseason workouts, he boasts a big arm, strong decision-making prowess and effectiveness taking off and running. Brackett is excited to see what Haywood can do with the Hawks offense.

Waltham's familiarity extends to the defensive side of the ball as well.

"Defensively, we return the majority of our starters from last year and will show a variety of looks," Brackett said. "We have a lot of depth on the defensive line and have talent and experience on the second level."

The Hawks begin the season with three consecutive home games, including the chance to avenge last year's blowout defeat to Newton North High School on Sep. 10 at 6:00 p.m. Homecoming will be the following Saturday afternoon against Chelsea High School.

"Overall, we are very excited about this year," Brackett said. "We are looking forward to coming together as a team during training camp and facing the challenges throughout the season as a unified brotherhood."

Author



LIAM O'BRIEN

Liam is a local writer with a passion for covering high school and college sports. He grew up playing AAU basketball at Kennedy Middle School and the old Waltham High gym. He loves a Saturday lunch with his family at Amuleto Mexican Table and watching football with his buddies at Joco's Bar & Kitchen on Sundays.

Four Waltham firefighters graduate state academy

BY NEWSROOM • PUBLIC SAFETY • AUGUST 25, 2026

Four of the Waltham Fire Department's newest members graduated from the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy on Friday as part of Class #341, the department announced.



Waltham Fire Department's Deputy Chief Richard Grant (left) and Chief Andrew Mullin (right) pose with Massachusetts Fire Academy graduates. From left: John Shanley, Sean Sullivan, Michael Leonard and James Falzone. Photo from Waltham Fire Department.

The graduates completed the 50-day Career Recruit Firefighter Training Program at the academy's Stow campus and will join the city's frontline firefighting force. All four were appointed to the department on May 17.

Firefighter James Falzone is assigned to Fire Suppression Group 3 at the Moody Street station. Firefighter Michael Leonard is assigned to Group 4 at Central Station. Firefighter John Shanley is assigned to Group 4 at the Moody Street station, and Firefighter Sean Sullivan is assigned to Group 1 at the Moody Street station.

Shanley earned the Richard N. Bangs Outstanding Student Award, reflecting his academic and practical skills, testing and evaluations during the 10-week program.

Fire Chief Andrew Mullin congratulated the four on completing the training and beginning their careers.

"We celebrate your dedication and hard work on completing the Fire Academy training," Mullin said. "Now you will go forward and continue to learn and serve in the proud tradition of the fire service. I wish you all the best and ask you to stay safe as you work to protect our community."

The academy, part of the state's Department of Fire Services, provides recruit and in-service training for career, call and volunteer firefighters at campuses in Stow, Springfield and Bridgewater.

El Nacho brings traditional tortilla chip-making to Waltham

 walthamtimes.org/2026/08/27/el-nacho-brings-traditional-tortilla-chip-making-to-waltham

Steve Milmore

August 28, 2026



It takes a lot of corn to make more than 300,000 tortilla chips a day. At El Nacho's Waltham factory, it also takes stone grinding, avocado oil, bold flavors and what co-founder Joe Cassinelli calls a little bit of magic.

El Nacho, which was co-founded by Cassinelli and Tobe Armendariz, has been producing its chef-crafted chips at a factory on Clematis Avenue since 2023. The growing snack company employs about 30 people, with most of its production staff living in and around Waltham.

The factory's proximity to Boston and Route 95 makes it an ideal location for producing and distributing its chips, according to Cassinelli.

Location may help, but the real work happens inside the factory.

The process begins with whole corn sourced directly from Midwest farmers who use regenerative growing practices, which are designed to conserve water and support biodiversity. El Nacho uses nixtamalization, an ancient process that involves cooking corn with

water and lime before grinding it into masa. The corn is stone-ground, formed into tortillas and fried in 100% avocado oil, which gives the chips a natural, clean flavor.

“The way everything happens right from the start through the baking part of the tortillas is the magic that differentiates our chips,” Cassinelli said. “It’s been our recipe for success.”

The Waltham-made chips come in five varieties: “OG” Original, a sea salt chip; Ms. Mango, flavored with honey, mango and lime; El Diablo, featuring chiles and lime; ¡Yo Piña!, with pineapple and barbecue; and “OG” Blue Corn, a sea salt blue corn chip.

“We season our chips with all natural ingredients, so it’s real mango juice, real pineapple juice, real honey powder, real chiles,” co-owner and master chef Armendariz added. “There are no additives or preservatives, all of which gives us a very unique profile in the market.”

The company’s distinctive logo is inspired by the spirit of lucha libre, a form of professional wrestling originating in Mexico. El Nacho chips are available locally including at Whole Foods, Roche Bros., Shaw’s, Star Market and Brothers Marketplace, as well as at thousands of regional and independent stores coast to coast.

For Cassinelli, the company’s growth is also about the people making the chips each day.

“We’re all working together at El Nacho in Waltham to build our brand. Everyone is committed and engaged in building something special,” Cassinelli said. “We have employees that are happy to come to work and are proud of what they’re doing.”

Fresh cuts, fresh start: Waltham kids get ready for school

BY LINDA HAAS & JUNE KINOSHITA • EDUCATION • AUGUST 27, 2026



River reacts to Tawrence brushing away stray hairs.



Dozens of Waltham youngsters got free haircuts from Mobar Cuts — the barber to Boston’s sports celebrities — at this year’s [“Rock The School Year”](#) event Thursday afternoon.

Blue tents, tables groaning under the weight of hair products, food vendors and face painters transformed Embassy Park into a mini-carnival celebrating the new school year. Waltham public schools begin the fall term Wednesday, Sept. 2.

“I’m from Waltham and was one of these kids back then,” said Candido “Coco” Fernandez, who owns Mobar Cuts. “I know what it’s like to want a fresh haircut. And for me, it’s a way to stay connected to my community.”

Village Bank sponsored the event. Many of the bank’s employees donate time to civic, educational and charitable organizations.

Vendors and pop-ups included Brelundi, Common Good, Dylan & Pete's Ice Cream Truck, Shopper's Cafe, Gustazo Cuban Cuisine, In a Pickle, Joco's Bar & Kitchen and Ya Mother's Truck n' Kitchen.



Maximiliano Acosta (10) with his sister Daniela (7) and mom Adriana just received a haircut from Ken Roc. Photo by Linda Haas.

Authors



LINDA HAAS

Linda Haas is a freelance photographer and teacher of photography. Her work has appeared in a variety of national and regional publications. Her clients have included numerous public and private institutions including universities, nonprofit organizations and companies. She has taught at universities, adult education programs and junior high school. She is currently an instructor at The Griffin Museum of Photography in Winchester. Linda moved back to Waltham 5 years ago after having graduated from Brandeis University 43 years earlier.



JUNE KINOSHITA

A Waltham resident since 2003, June has been a writer and editor for Scientific American, Science, The New York Times Magazine, among others. She co-founded the Alzheimer Research Forum and N-of-One. She recently retired from a 13-year career as a leader at the FSHD Society, a rare disease patient advocacy organization.

Waltham home sales, Aug. 14-20, 2026

	Sale Date	Address	Sale Price	BR/Baths	Size	Type
	8/14/2026	281 Bishops Forest Dr Unit 281 Bldg 69	\$860,000	2/3.5	2420 sf	condo
	8/17/2026	200 Weston St	\$714,000	3/1	1248 sf	1-fam
	8/17/2026	38 Hillcroft Rd	\$1,899,900	5/4	3500 sf	1-fam

	Sale Date	Address	Sale Price	BR/Baths	Size	Type
	8/17/2026	184 College Farm Rd	\$1,070,000	3/3	2016 sf	1-fam
	8/18/2026	329 Crescent St Unit 2	\$540,000	2/1	870 sf	condo
	8/18/2026	59 Wellington St Unit 2	\$740,000	2/2	1258 sf	2-fam

	Sale Date	Address	Sale Price	BR/Baths	Size	Type
	8/20/2026	66 Ash St Unit 2	\$920,000	3/4	2688 sf	condo
	8/20/2026	11 Bright St	\$730,000	3/2	1505 sf	1-fam

Events Calendar

August 30-September 26

For the latest and complete listings, see WalthamTimes.org/events.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	31	1 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm Waltham Fields Community Farm: Mobile Outreach Market (Mercado de Verduras)	2 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm Waltham Rotary Club lunch meeting 5:15 pm - 6:00 pm Piano+Flute Moves demo class (ages 4- 7) 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Board of Survey and Planning meeting	3 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Thursday Tours of the Golden Ball Tavern Museum 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm Minutemen Toastmasters of Waltham	4	5 9:30 am - 2:00 pm Waltham Farmers' Market
6 9:00 am - 10:30 am Coffee social at the Café	7	8 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm Waltham Fields Community Farm: Mobile Outreach Market (Mercado de Verduras) 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm Come sing with the Lexington Pops Chorus	9 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm Parks-Recreation Board meeting 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Opening celebration at the Rose Art Museum	10 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Thursday Tours of the Golden Ball Tavern Museum 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm Board of Library Trustees meeting 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm Conservation Commission meeting	11 Rosh Hashanah at Temple Beth Israel	
13 Rosh Hashanah a... 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm Second Sunday open house tours at the Golden Ball Tavern Museum	14 10:00 am - 11:00 am Babywearing tour of Gore Place 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Historical Commission meeting 7:30 pm - 10:00 pm Waltham City Council meeting	15 10:00 am - 4:30 pm Waltham Clothing Exchange fall season 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm Waltham Fields Community Farm: Mobile Outreach Market (Mercado de Verduras) 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm Come sing with the Lexington Pops Chorus	16 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm Waltham Rotary Club lunch meeting 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm Board of Health meeting 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Waltham Cares dinner to benefit our unhoused neighbors + 1 More	17 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Thursday Tours of the Golden Ball Tavern Museum 10:00 am - 11:00 am Traffic Commission meeting 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm Minutemen Toastmasters of Waltham	18 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Boston-built furniture tour of the Gore Mansion	19 9:30 am - 2:00 pm Waltham Farmers' Market 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm Waltham Open Mic
20 Yom Kippur at Temple Beth Israel 9:00 am - 2:00 pm Waltham Lions Club annual car show 9:00 am - 10:30 am Café Meet and Mingle: Bi+ community edition	21 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm Waltham City Council committee meetings 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Watch City Ukers Every Month at the Waltham Museum	22 10:00 am - 4:30 pm Waltham Clothing Exchange fall season 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm Waltham Fields Community Farm: Mobile Outreach Market (Mercado de Verduras) 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Community Preservation Committee meeting	23 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm License Commission meeting 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm The New Grown- ups Carriage House Concert	24 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Thursday Tours of the Golden Ball Tavern Museum 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm Conservation Commission meeting	25	26 Sukkot at Temple ... 9:00 am - 1:00 pm Waltham Clothing Exchange fall season 9:30 am - 2:00 pm Waltham Farmers' Market 11:00 am - 3:00 pm Waltham Marketplace Day + 1 More

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The advertisement has a dark blue background with a large, faint clock face. In the top left is a small logo for 'The Waltham Times'. The main text in white reads: 'It takes many hands to deliver trusted local news. Won't you add yours?'. Below this is a photo of a fluffy, light-brown dog wearing a dark baseball cap with 'Waltham Times' on it. The dog is holding a red, plush octopus in its mouth. To the right of the dog is a QR code. Below the QR code is an orange button that says 'GIVE TODAY'. In the bottom left is another QR code with the word 'SUBSCRIBE' below it. In the bottom right, on an orange background, is the text: 'Get the latest Waltham news, FREE in your inbox'.

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