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September 28, 2026



Boston Children's delivers top-ranked care close to home



Spotted lanternflies seen in Waltham



School district posts gains in 2026 state report, high school remains a concern



Senior Center this week: Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

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BY NEWSROOM • COMMUNITY • SEPTEMBER 27, 2026



Waltham's Council on Aging operates out of the William F. Stanley Senior Center at 488 Main St. The spacious, well-equipped center offers guidance on senior issues as well as rich programs for exercise, music, classes and socializing. Check out [the center's newsletter \(en Español\)](#) for a full listing. The October newsletter has not been posted yet. Call 781-314-3499 with questions and to register for programs.



Tech tutoring sessions continue this week, Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. in Spanish, 1 p.m. in English. Held Sept. 23–Dec. 4. These sessions are for you if you have a laptop, tablet or smartphone. Learn how to set up email, organize photos or files, navigate the internet, organize your desktop or apps on your phone, set up contacts, modify security and privacy settings, fill out online forms, connect with family and friends and more. Waltham Connections and Bentley University Service Learning Program offer tech assistance to members of the senior center in English or Español. Each session is 25 minutes. You can attend as many weeks as you would like, if space is available. Free. Register for appointment.

Holy Guacamole! Friday, Oct. 2, 1 p.m. Celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month and enjoy lively Mexican music, a bilingual retelling of The Legend of the Corn, and a hands-on guacamole-making activity using fresh, traditional ingredients. It's a festive blend of culture, story, and flavor. Come hungry and leave happy! Registration begins Sept. 15. The cost is \$2 per person due at sign up.

Planning ahead

The Boston Saxophone Quartet. Friday, Oct. 9, 1:30 p.m. The Boston Saxophone Quartet will bring their signature blend of rich harmonies, smooth jazz and timeless classics. The quartet features four talented saxophonists who play everything from lively swing tunes to tunes to beautiful melodic pieces. Free. Please register.

Did you know?

The COA provides information on legal services, home care, assistance with nursing homes and assisted living facilities, financial assistance, housing options, mental health and substance abuse.

- Volunteers are needed to deliver Meals on Wheels. Home-delivered meals are available Monday- Friday. Subsidized by Springwell or private pay.
- Senior parking permits are available for \$5 per year. Show your driver's license at the COA registration desk.
- Taxi vouchers are available for purchase, six books per month.
- Help with transportation. Medical appointment transportation is available in Waltham only. Grocery shopping routes are on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, call for availability. Limited transportation to the Senior Center is available upon request with advance notice.

Multi-language programs

English as a second language class. Tuesdays at 10 a.m. Classes are given by an experienced ESL teacher. Improve your speaking, listening, reading and writing skills while learning practical English for everyday life. Free but please register.

Hora del Café. Wednesdays at 10:30–11:30 a.m. Spanish-speaking coffee hour.

Ugandan Golden Seniors. Fridays 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Lunch program.

Here is the full schedule for the rest of the month

Monday, Sept. 28

9:00 Walking group Veterans Field
9:30 Poker
9:30 Exercise class
10:00 Knitting
10:45 Exercise video
12:00 Zumba
1:00 Whist
1:00 Rummikub
1:30 Chair volleyball

Tuesday, Sept. 29

9:00 Crochet
9:00 Tai Chi: Advanced
9:30 Bridge lesson
10:00 Tai Chi: Beginner
10:00 ESL
11:00 Zoom book club
11:00 Mah Jong
11:15 Tai-Yo-Ba
11:30 Ukulele group
1:00 Bridge game
1:30 Chair exercise
3:00 Sages & Seekers

Wednesday, Sept. 30

9:00 Walking group Veterans Field
9:00 Blood pressure
9:00 Quilting
9:00 TRIAD services
9:30 Exercise class
10:00 Veterans services
10:30 Hora del Café
10:45 Exercise video
11:00 Meditation
12:00 Lunch: Beef picadillo/ turkey
ham & cheese sandwich
1:00 Bingo
1:00 Hand & root game
5:00 Country line dance



Author



NEWSROOM

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

School district posts gains in 2026 state report, high school remains a concern

BY LEA ZAHARONI • EDUCATION • SEPTEMBER 27, 2026



Waltham Public Schools made progress toward state targets in the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's annual achievement report, but Waltham High School remains a point of concern as the state says it still needs focused support.

Assistant Superintendent Shannon Conley reacted to the results, crediting Waltham's teachers for gains made. "What remains most commendable in Waltham is our educators and the community's collective commitment to student success," she said. "While accountability data captures only a portion of these efforts, Waltham remains dedicated to ... continuous improvement across all schools."

According to the 2026 report released on Sept. 22, the district as a whole is "not requiring assistance or intervention" and had made "substantial progress toward targets," with the exception of the high school. WHS moved up two percentage points to the 11th percentile. It's the first time since 2022 that the high school has been ranked above the 10th percentile.

DESE's accountability report evaluates school districts and how well they serve students, using metrics such as test scores, attendance and graduation rates. Schools receive a percentile rating that compares their performance with other schools statewide.

Wins and losses at WHS

The state cited "low student group performance among low income and high needs students" as one reason for WHS's low ranking.

However, the school's annual progress percentage toward state goals jumped from 17% last year to 47% this year. DESE certified that as "moderate progress," an improvement from the "limited progress" it found in 2025.

Several other indicators improved. Chronic absenteeism fell from 30% to 21%, while English learners' progress toward English proficiency exceeded the state's target. Math achievement was also a bright spot for the high school, with eight out of the nine student groups tracked by the state showing improvement.

Graduation rates, however, declined for vulnerable student populations: low-income students, Hispanic and Latino students, and English learners. Each fell by about 10%. By comparison, the graduation rate was 95.2% for white students and 92.9% for black students. Students with disabilities were the only group to exceed the state's target, with their graduating rate rising 13 points to 89%.

Waltham's 'comparable' peers

The state's report also lists 10 "comparable schools" with similar enrollment and student populations. For Waltham, that list includes public high schools in Somerville, Lowell, Malden, Marlborough and Worcester. Among the 10 comparable schools, Waltham ranks eighth in English language arts test scores and is tied for sixth in math test scores.

Waltham's growth scores, which track how much students have improved since last year, also provided more insights into the district's performance. Waltham's English language arts growth ranked sixth among 10 of its peers, and its math growth ranked ninth. Marlborough posted the highest growth in both subjects, with Milford and Worcester's Doherty Memorial High School close behind.

Younger grades show promise

Fitzgerald Elementary was named a School of Recognition, the state's top improvement category. It marks the second year in a row that a Waltham school has received this distinction, after Plympton Elementary last year. Fitzgerald scored in the 64th percentile of elementary schools, with notable strides made in standardized test scores. Its annual improvement score climbed from 25% last year to 92% this year.

Despite earning the distinction last year, Plympton saw a drop in its accountability rating, down from the 29th percentile last year to the 23rd percentile this year. Its improvement score also dropped sharply, from 74% last year to 34% this year. Test results account for 60% of an elementary school's improvement score, meaning a single year of test results can move a school's score by dozens of points.

The Waltham school with the highest accountability ranking this year was Kennedy Middle School, scoring in the 66th percentile. One of its strongest areas was progress among English language learners, with 63% meeting the state's expectations for progress toward English proficiency, up from 32% last year. McDevitt Middle School ranked in the 40th percentile, meeting targets for chronic absenteeism and progress toward English proficiency but declining in English language arts test scores.



Kennedy Middle School.

Dynamic scores for the district

Overall, the 2026 report shows results moving in different directions depending on where one looks. The district's cumulative score, WHS's percentile ranking and chronic absenteeism all improved from last year, while graduation rates declined. At the elementary level, school rankings moved sharply in both directions.

Waltham Partnership for Youth hiring 34 paid student interns for school year

BY NEWSROOM • EDUCATION • SEPTEMBER 27, 2026

[Waltham Partnership for Youth](#) is taking applications for its 2026-27 School-Year Internship Program. The program offers two paid internships for high school students: STEM Forward and the Teen Mental Health Alliance. Applications are due 11:59 p.m. Oct. 5, 2026.

Interns will earn \$15 an hour for up to four hours a week. Applicants must be at least 15 years old and authorized to work in the U.S. The positions run from November 2026 through May 2027.

To apply, students must submit a resume and cover letter. Job descriptions and instructions are at bit.ly/SYIP26_27. Students new to WPY should apply at bit.ly/WPYInternshipApply.

Students who have already taken part in WPY programs must apply using the personalized link sent to their email. Students who can't find their link can email cet@walthampartnershipforyouth.org.

Available Positions

STEM Forward Program (November 2026-May 2027)

Hiring 10 interns as STEM Associates

Students will have the chance to explore fields such as data science, life sciences and conservation while building technical, professional and interpersonal skills. Interns, known as STEM Associates, will take part in hands-on, project-based work connected to real community needs. Projects may include analyzing local environmental data, designing engaging science activities for other students and developing STEM job skills while serving the Waltham community. Interns will be paid \$15 per hour and will work up to four hours per week at 510 Moody St. Participants must be at least 15 years old and authorized to work in the U.S. Work days: Tuesdays and Thursdays after school.

Teen Mental Health Alliance Internship Program (Fall Cohort: November 2026-February 2027 OR Spring Cohort: February 2027-May 2027)

Hiring 24 interns as Peer Associates (12 per cohort)

The Teen Mental Health Alliance Internship Program builds a community of trained high school students who serve as mental health first-aiders in the Waltham community. Through this internship, the program supports two cohorts of Waltham High School students in developing skills and knowledge related to mental health. It provides interns with career exploration and professional development opportunities within the mental health field, with the goal of supporting the next generation of mental health professionals. Interns will be paid \$15 per hour and will work up to four hours per week at Waltham High School. Participants must be at least 15 years old and authorized to work in the U.S. Work days: Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Dancers take the floor for dress rehearsal ahead of 14th Dancing with the Waltham Stars

BY JUNE KINOSHITA & TIMOTHY LOK • COMMUNITY • SEPTEMBER 27, 2026



Jim Rice and Lindsey Boudrot go for Broadway musical theater with “Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious”. Photo by Tim Lok.

Local dancers ran through their routines in front of a live audience Thursday, Sept. 24, at the dress rehearsal for the 14th Annual Dancing with the Waltham Stars. The fundraiser for Friends of the Waltham Senior Citizens Inc. was held the following night on Friday, Sept. 25. The sold-out event is one of the largest annual fundraising events in Waltham.

The rehearsal took place at American Legion Post 440, 295 California St., Newton. Organizers expected a big crowd, which gave performers a chance to practice in front of an audience before the main event.

Dancing with the Waltham Stars sells out early every year, said Stacey Tulley, event organizer and president of Friends of the Waltham Senior Citizens Inc. Because of that, the group began opening the dress rehearsal to the public to give people another way to see the show.

“We are blessed and humbled that it continues to be an early sell-out community event,” Tulley said in an email.

The event supports Friends of the Waltham Senior Citizens, an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit led by a board of directors. The group provides money to help the Waltham Council on Aging meet the needs of the city's most vulnerable older residents.

“Every day, dozens of seniors walk through our front door in need of help,” said COA director Patrick O’Brien. “It could be assistance with high utility bills, back rent support, housing, food assistance and numerous other needs. It is mostly behind the scenes work with the unhoused, the marginalized and many living check to check.

“The Friends are the unsung heroes of our community. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts.”

This year's champions

This year's event was extra special, according to Tulley. “We dedicated this year's show to Wendy Fournier and Yolanda Cellucci — two beautiful women that we loved.”

Wendy Fournier was a Plympton Elementary School art teacher, choreographer and “dancer extraordinaire” who had performed every year with Dancing with the Waltham Stars since it began in 2012, Tulley said.

Yolanda Cellucci was “our ‘Dolly’ [Parton] and biggest fan and supporter of the Friends organization,” Tulley said. “She came to every one of our DWTWStars Fundraisers ... and sat in the front row.” This year, Cellucci's daughter Sondra attended. “We designated Yolanda's seat with one of her signature headpieces that Sondra designed and Yolanda wore,” Tulley said.

The winners of this year's Dancing with the Waltham Stars are:

- First place — Jim Rice and Lindsey Boudrot
- Second place — Brendan Carroll and Mia Dragone
- Third place — Daniel Swenson and Olivia Salvo

Public safety report: Thieves break into car parked on Felton Street

BY CYD ABNET • PUBLIC SAFETY • SEPTEMBER 27, 2026



A soft-top convertible was broken into last week in Waltham.

On Sept. 20 at 5:58 p.m., police responded to a business on Felton Street for a report of a vehicle break-in. A suspect cut a hole in a convertible's canvas top to access the vehicle and steal items inside. Police are still investigating the incident.

Additional police and fire activity from Sept. 17-20 is as follows:

On Sept. 17 at 6:15 p.m., police responded to a report of suspicious activity at Nipper Maher Park. A caller reported seeing two men and a woman repeatedly going in and out of the men's bathroom. Police spoke with the three individuals and determined they were in the bathroom to get out of the rain.

On Sept. 17 at 8:58 p.m., police responded to a Derby Street residence. A caller reported finding a note on the residence's door that read, "I see you." Officers spoke with the caller and advised them on how to handle the situation going forward.

On Sept. 18 at 7:54 p.m., police responded to a Rosewood Drive residence. The caller reported seeing a dark SUV park on the street and turn off its lights. Police investigated and determined a police cruiser was in the area conducting traffic enforcement.

On Sept. 19 at 1:20 p.m., police responded to reports of suspicious activity along the Charles River near the Watch Factory Lofts. The caller reported seeing a man urinating in the woods. The man told police he was boating with his grandchildren and stopped in an area where he thought no one could see him.

On Sept. 19 at 5:14 p.m., police responded to a residence on Cherry Street. A caller reported seeing someone in a grey sedan sitting in front of his house. When officers spoke to the driver, they discovered he stopped to fill his tire.

On Sept. 20 at 3:17 p.m., police responded to a residence on Middlesex Circle for a report of a stolen moped. The caller told police she locked it outside her apartment but returned home to find it missing. Police are still investigating the incident.

On Sept. 20 at 8:41 p.m., police responded to the Metropolitan State Hospital administration building at 475 Trapelo Road. A caller reported hearing a loud bang followed by a car full of kids laughing. When officers arrived, there was no one in the area. They did not find anything suspicious.

All information came from spokespeople with the Waltham Police Department, [the publicly available police blotter](#), and police reports available at Waltham District Court.

Ambulance committee recommends renewing Armstrong contract

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD • PUBLIC SAFETY • SEPTEMBER 27, 2026



Waltham's Ambulance Committee this week voted to recommend to the mayor that the city continue contracting with Armstrong Ambulance, the company that has been providing ambulance services to Waltham for the past five years.

The recommendation is to authorize a new three-year contract for Armstrong with an option to renew for an additional two years.

Waltham's contract with Armstrong lapsed earlier this month, but the committee failed to get enough attendance at a previous Aug. 17 meeting to take a vote on the city's next steps. This week, it lent its support to re-contracting with Armstrong.

Waltham's Ambulance Committee is made up of first responders from around the city including representatives from the Fire Department, Police Department, Emergency Services department and 911 Center — alongside citizen representatives and Dr. Bryan Canterbury of Newton-Wellesley Hospital, who serves as Armstrong's emergency medical services supervisor for Waltham. Two Armstrong representatives also attended the meeting.

Overall, Fire Department representatives expressed satisfaction with the city's Armstrong contract, saying it's never had an issue with the standard of care provided by the company.

Fire Chief Andrew Mullin said the company has been consistently willing to revise details of its ambulance schedules and policies with working group members from his department based on the data Waltham collects about its emergency services needs. "Armstrong has been a true partner," he said.

The city's Purchasing Agent, Crystal Philpott, told committee members that the city would not have to go through its standard bid request process to draw up a new contract with Armstrong because state laws on government purchases offer exceptions for ambulance services.



Armstrong Ambulance. Photo by Joseph Sharkey.

Through its new contract, Waltham would continue to have four dedicated units, three of which would have paramedics. It can also call for backup units from neighboring Arlington, Brighton and the Lahey Hospital and Medical Center.

Armstrong representatives also told committee members that it plans to move its base of operations from its current South Side location to a garage on Dale Street, near the fire and police departments' Lexington Street headquarters.

It will continue to post ambulances on the South and North Sides during peak transit hours to avoid traffic delays, but says this new more central location will help it better cover the city; in an email to the committee, Richard Raymond, Armstrong's president, said ambulance response time in Waltham "needs to improve" and asserted this move would help.

Additionally, the Ambulance Committee:

- Confirmed that Armstrong had updated its ambulances radios and implemented a policy for drivers to check in with 911 dispatchers as they enter Waltham. Bill Ryan of the city's 911 Center said his dispatchers had encountered a case where they were not informed of ambulances already within city boundaries, and as a result, requested ambulances from another municipality, delaying response times.
- Discussed a formal medical policy for firefighter rehab during multi-alarm fires, which refers to the medical rest firefighters require before re-entering a burning building. Mullin said that many of his firefighters resisted rest and refreshments, which is why the department wanted to formalize this policy. A second ambulance will now be required at the scene of multi-alarm fires to examine and monitor firefighters during rehab.
- Heard an announcement from Armstrong representatives that the organization had finalized a policy on handcuffing patients. Dr. Canterbury had requested a review.



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.

Spotted lanternflies seen in Waltham

BY NEWSROOM • COMMUNITY • SEPTEMBER 27, 2026



Waltham residents [on Reddit](#) reported seeing the spotted lanternfly in city boundaries. Grizzlyadams33 posted a photo and wrote, “First time seeing a Lanternfly in Waltham. Looks like they’re here folks, extinguish on sight.” The creature was seen at Hobbs Brook.

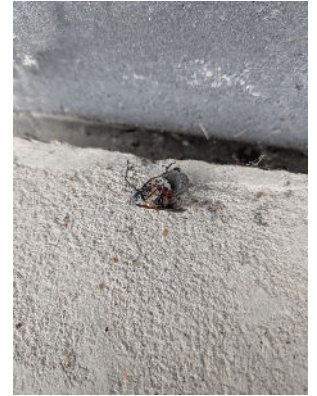
Another Redditor, whosthere5 wrote about seeing the insects “all over the Charles river walk. See them daily, step on them when I can,” and shinylikedirt commented “I just saw my first one the other day walking past Brandeis and gave it a good smush... I’ve been training for this moment!!”

State agricultural officials confirmed the presence of the spotted lanternfly in Waltham in 2025. An invasive planthopper native to Asia, it feeds on a wide range of plants including grapevines, maples and hop vines. The insect poses significant risks to grape and wine producers as well as other agricultural commodities.

The insects do not bite or sting, but they gather in large swarms that can disrupt outdoor life and coat surfaces with a sticky substance known as honeydew.

For guidance on what to do if lanternflies invade your backyard, consult the [management guidance for homeowners](#).

Residents are encouraged to report suspected sightings of the insect to [MDAR through its online reporting portal](#).



*Spotted lanternfly
photo posted by
Redditor
grizzlyadams3.*

The week ahead: City Council to discuss potential residential changes near Felton Street

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD • GOVERNMENT • SEPTEMBER 27, 2026



A proposal to extend the city's Riverfront Overlay District to a plot of land on Felton Street will return to the City Council this week.

The owners of this land originally [requested this change](#) in June, which would allow them to construct residential or commercial buildings on the land. In August they were allowed to [temporarily withdraw their petition](#).

The council will also hear a special permit request from the owner of a lot on the adjacent Williams Street, who intends to revert the property into its historic use as housing by building [four townhouses on it](#).

Below is a chronological rundown of other city meetings scheduled this week, Sept. 28 through Oct. 2.

Meeting details

Click on a meeting's name to get more information about its purpose and agenda for the week.

- ▶ **Monday, 10 a.m. — Council on Aging**
- ▶ **Monday, 7:30 p.m. — City Council**
- ▶ **Tuesday, 2 p.m. — Cemetery Commission**
- ▶ **Tuesday, 7 p.m. — Zoning Board of Appeals**
- ▶ **Friday, 8:30 a.m. — Disability Services Commission**

Bentley University Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Center (BSLCE) Job Openings

BY PUBLISHERS • EMPLOYMENT/JOB • SEPTEMBER 25, 2026



Bentley University Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Center (BSLCE) has two full-time job openings!

We are hiring one Assistant Director, Programs and Student Leadership position and one Associate Director, Civic Engagement position. Both positions are currently accepting applications and more information can be found on Bentley University's career page.

<https://bentley.wd503.myworkdayjobs.com/staff>

Contact

Phone Number:

Email:

Website: <https://bentley.wd503.myworkdayjobs.com/staff>

Sixteen years into his quest for asylum, a Ugandan immigrant is on the verge of being deported

BY DAVID E. GUMPERT • COMMUNITY • SEPTEMBER 24, 2026



Waltham resident Gedion Masunsu, 42, worked to escape the dictatorship of Uganda and gain political asylum in the United States, first by aiding U.S. troops in Iraq and then by learning about police work through the Waltham Police Department's Citizens Academy.

For the first 15 years of his campaign, Masunsu appeared to be making good progress. But in early 2025 he had problems first in a personal relationship and then in his legal representation. They hit just as the Trump administration initiated a crackdown on immigrants. As a result, he has spent the last 19 months in detention by Immigration and Customs Enforcement in the Strafford County Jail in Dover, New Hampshire.



**Gedion
Masunsu, 42.**

Even in detention, Masunsu has sought to be useful. A devout Christian, his main activity at the jail is to lead 50 to 60 of the other ICE detainees in a 20-minute gathering every afternoon as they sing religious songs and pray. Guards told Masunsu's legal representative that the prayer meetings have significantly reduced fights and tension among the inmates over the last few months.

A Waltham Times reporter pieced Masunsu's story together by reviewing his 40-page asylum petition package, interviewing him briefly by phone (where the conversations are subject to monitoring by jail personnel) and emailing questions via his legal representative, paralegal Rosette Serwanga.

Between 2010 to 2021, Gedion worked for two American military contractors providing security to U.S. bases in Iraq. He searched incoming cars and trucks, checked visitor IDs and monitored perimeter security.

Masunsu helped save the lives of two U.S. military personnel while patrolling bases, he said. In one situation, he said he heard screams from an Air Force servicewoman named Faith, who had been injured when a metal locker fell on her head; Masunsu radioed for medical assistance and, after Faith received emergency treatment, she was airlifted to Germany for further care. In another situation, he found a U.S. service member

unconscious after striking his head against a water heater. Masunsu said he began CPR and radioed for medical assistance.

Masunsu received two medals for his life-saving actions, along with three certificates of appreciation; one from the 1st Infantry Division stated, “Your exceptional support and hard work contributed to the completion of many projects for the camp and our soldiers.”

Seeking a new life

After that, Masunsu returned briefly to Uganda in 2021 and concluded that his previous involvement as a member of the political opposition there put him in serious personal danger. He fled to the United States in 2022, moved in with a friend in Waltham and petitioned immigration authorities for political asylum. Waltham is a heavily immigrant city, with more than one-fourth of its 65,000 residents being immigrants; this includes a thriving Ugandan immigrant community.

With hopes of utilizing his security experience in Iraq, Masunsu enrolled in a 12-week Waltham police program, the Waltham Citizens Police Academy. The once-a-week three-hour program included sessions on police patrol procedures, narcotics investigations, domestic violence, firearm training and patrol ride-alongs; participants needed to pass a criminal background check.

Although Masunsu completed the program and has authorization to work in the U.S., not having American citizenship limited his employment options to work as a health-care aide and Uber driver.

He continued his record of good deeds in the summer of 2024, intervening to stop a suicide near the Waltham YMCA by pursuing a man nearly a mile on foot and helping return him to the YMCA, where Waltham police took over the intervention.

An early 2025 domestic incident upended his plans. An argument with Sylvia Mamutabi Mugisha, also a Ugandan immigrant, involved loud shouting that led to a call to police. Waltham police responded, and officers arrested and charged Masunsu on four counts of assault and battery and one count of destruction of property. Masunsu was held for several days before being released on his own recognizance. A few weeks later, Massachusetts Judge Ellen M. Caulo dismissed all charges against Masunsu.

ICE picked up Masunsu several days after the dismissal.

Masunsu suffered a rotator cuff injury while being transported in an ICE van, an injury that was diagnosed by specialists while he was imprisoned. However, he said the injury was not properly treated during his detention and now threatens to disable him.

Masunsu and Mugisha married this spring while he was still in detention. One of Mugisha's children, Paris Kirunda, 23, wrote a letter of support for her stepfather's petition for political asylum, in which she described him as "a man who has become so much more than my mother's partner – he has become family. From the moment Gedion came into our lives, he embraced my siblings and me with genuine love, kindness, and respect. ... Watching someone with such a caring heart remain in detention for such a long time has been incredibly painful for our entire family.."

Mugisha didn't respond to requests for an interview.

A credible case for asylum

Meanwhile, Masunsu's immigration case grinds on.

Masunsu had passed an initial fear screening, meaning that he had reason to fear persecution in Uganda, and in April 2025 an immigration judge found his testimony credible and granted him withholding of removal, a form of protection from being sent back to Uganda.

The government appealed that ruling, with an immigration judge issuing a removal order dated March 31, 2026, followed by the Board of Immigration Appeals' dismissal of Masunsu's appeal on Sept. 15.

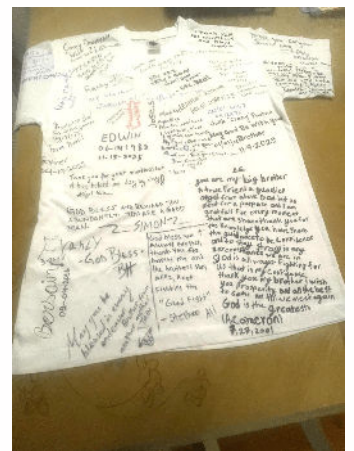
Serwanga contested the chain of actions. According to Serwanga, "Our understanding is that his former attorney filed that appeal late. If the Board dismissed it for that reason, it did not decide the substance of his protection claim. The earlier favorable credibility finding remains part of his history, but it does not, on its own, prevent removal under the current order."

Masunsu is now subject to possible deportation, either back to Uganda or to a third country that hasn't been identified.

"I have no charges against me," he told The Waltham Times reporter over the phone. "I am being held for no reason."

Until he gets a new immigration lawyer, paralegal Serwanga, has become desperate over the possibility Masunsu could be deported. "I can't sleep at night," she said.

Masunsu said he tries to take heart from the daily prayer meetings he leads in jail. Detainees "talk about how the prayer changes their lives. ... They have forgiven the people" who imprisoned them.



Signed T-shirt for
Gideon Masunsu.

In a log he keeps of “Prayer requests,” he includes this one: “God to help me forgive those who have hurt me and to have peace in my heart.”



Author

DAVID E. GUMPERT

Waltham resident David E. Gumpert is a business writer and co-author of a memoir with his aunt, “Inge: A Girl’s Journey Through Nazi Europe.” He is currently writing a book about his family’s businesses in Nazi Germany.

Comments (8)



CHRISTINE • SEPTEMBER 27, 2026 AT 12:33 PM

Thank you for sharing his story. These stories bring the true reality of immigrant experiences and long asylum cases in America to life. Is there any way to directly support his family or an organization supporting immigrant needs in Waltham?

[Reply](#)



DAMALIE NAGUJJA • SEPTEMBER 27, 2026 AT 6:47 AM

I pray that God make a way for him where there seems to be no way . Isiah 43:19-20 & Isiah 40:23-25.

[Reply](#)



KERESI NAMARA • SEPTEMBER 27, 2026 AT 3:53 AM

What an amazing man from my home country, imagine a step daughter appreciating him like that, that’s a rare character in men. I pray for his victory 🙌

[Reply](#)



JUDIT PRICE • SEPTEMBER 26, 2026 AT 2:48 PM

Wonderful and timely article
Very well written
Congratulations David!

[Reply](#)



LEEOTIS JOHNSON • SEPTEMBER 25, 2026 AT 6:18 PM

Loved this article written by my brilliant classmate, David Gumpert. I pray that things work out for this young man. What has happened to him is wrong on so many levels.

[Reply](#)



DAVID GUMPERT • SEPTEMBER 26, 2026 AT 12:24 AM

Thanks for sharing, Leeotis. Lots of us are in agreement with you.

[Reply](#)



JESSICA • SEPTEMBER 25, 2026 AT 9:19 AM

At minimum this man should have a competent immigration attorney and should not be imprisoned while his case proceeds. I hope for the best for him and his family. Thank you for this report.

[Reply](#)



DAVID GUMPERT • SEPTEMBER 25, 2026 AT 6:10 PM

I absolutely agree. Part of the problem here is that Gedion Masunsu isn't alone—many immigrants with no criminal record and in the U.S. legally are being imprisoned without any of the most basic of our constitutional guarantees (to be informed of charges, given the opportunity for bail, have access to legal representation), so demand for competent immigration lawyers is extremely high. Hopefully there is a skilled lawyer able to take on his case. But time is running very short.

[Reply](#)

First Parish steeple gets additional funding after contractor goes silent

BY CHARLIE JOHNSON • GOVERNMENT • SEPTEMBER 24, 2026



First Parish Church.

The Community Preservation Commission approved additional funds for the First Parish steeple restoration after the project's original contractor, American Steeples, stopped responding to the church.

First Parish received funding last year for the steeple restoration and solicited three bids for the project. Property Commissioner Walter Beebe-Center said the church selected American Steeple, signed its proposal and expected the company to complete the work in 2026. After following up multiple times, Beebe-Center said he has not received a response from the company since its last communication in May.

First Parish has since met with its two other bidders. Last year, the CPC approved \$77,250 for the project. First Parish returned to the commission seeking an additional \$50,768 to cover increased project costs.

During Tuesday's meeting, Commissioner Frank Fitzgerald asked about the structural integrity of the steeple outside of the exterior restoration.

"All accounts have indicated that structurally that is a stable steeple, good for another century," Beebe-Center said.

Also at Tuesday's meeting the Community Day Center of Waltham requested funding to restore the exterior of its building at 20 Felton St., including replacing its siding and windows. The center has provided crisis management, support services and housing assistance to people experiencing homelessness for more than 20 years and has operated at its current Felton Street location since around 2014.

Executive director Chloe-Rose Crouch said the siding and windows need to be replaced for the building to remain viable and usable.

The center hopes to begin the project this fall. The commission approved up to \$85,000 for the restoration of the exterior, with the Historical Commission providing oversight of the materials.

Gore Place received funding last year from the CPC to assess the condition of its south-facing windows, which have deteriorated after centuries of exposure to sunlight and weather.

On Tuesday, Gore Place returned to the commission seeking funding for a larger restoration based on the study's findings. The organization received two bids for the work, including one from its preferred contractor, Gilman Guidelli & Bellow, which proposed restoring the window sashes and repairing the surrounding frames. The commission approved up to \$350,000 for the work.

The funding recommendations will next go before the City Council for approval.



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.

New flavors and an old favorite: Two license applications for restaurants approved by License Commission

BY CYD ABNET • GOVERNMENT • SEPTEMBER 24, 2026



657 Main St. location will be the home of Dominican Grilled Chicken. Google Street View.

The License Commission approved two restaurant license applications at its September meeting: one for a new franchise and one to reopen a temporarily closed restaurant at a new location.

The commission approved an application for a new common victualer license and a new manager for an upcoming bb.q Chicken franchise location at 137 Moody St. The restaurant chain has locations all across the United States. The Moody St. site will be the franchise owner's 10th location in Massachusetts. The restaurant serves Korean-style fried chicken using traditional Korean sauces and seasonings. No opening date was announced.

The commission also approved an application to transfer a common victualer license for Dominican Grilled Chicken, which will reopen at 657 Main St. under manager Marvin R. Belliard. The restaurant has been closed since [a two-alarm fire](#) rendered its former location unusable last November. Dominican Grilled Chicken plans to open on Oct. 12.

When asked what made the restaurant's grilled chicken "Dominican," Belliard said, "Flavor! The chef, he puts the magic on it. To bring everyone together."

In other business, the license commission:

- Approved 14 one-day all alcohol permit requests from Ken Levine for football and hockey events at Bentley University. The commission also discussed a pre-approved one-day all alcohol permit for a career fair alumni reception at Bentley University on Sept. 22. Permits are pre-approved via phone voice vote when requests are submitted late, and the event will take place before the next meeting.
- Approved a request for a one-day all alcohol permit from director Chloe-Rose Crouch of the Community Day Center of Waltham for its [annual fundraising event](#) at the Gore Estate on Oct. 29.
- Moved an application for change of manager for the Hampton Inn and Suites on Second Avenue to their October meeting, as the new manager did not attend the meeting.
- Approved an application for change of manager for the Embassy Suites on Winter Street.
- Discussed an Aug. 29 incident at Shopper's Cafe. Co-owner Lauren LaCava Bibbo was present while the incident was discussed. A male patron in the restaurant started yelling racial slurs and was asked to leave. He drank half a beer, which staff took away from him once he became aggressive. When police arrived, the man was unsteady on his feet, had glassy eyes and smelled of alcohol. He was placed into protective custody. In the police report, the bartender's statement differed from the statement given by the Shopper's Cafe co-owner and Ward 5 Councilor Joey LaCava to police. LaCava wasn't present on the night of the incident. Due to the discrepancy in reports, the commission voted to put the incident on file. LaCava arrived after the meeting ended and privately met with commission members to discuss the incident after the general meeting adjourned.
- Discussed an incident that took place outside of the 7/11 on Moody Street on Sept. 6. The people involved were patrons at Franco's Pizzeria and Pub beforehand, so owner Thomas Collins was present. The patrons argued in the bar and, despite each person leaving several minutes apart, got into a second verbal altercation in front of the 7/11. This resulted in one of the males being punched several times. The male refused medical attention. It was determined that the two patrons were not overserved. The commission moved to dismiss the incident.



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.

Comments (1)



ROBIN CAPELLO • SEPTEMBER 25, 2026 AT 2:10 PM

I hope you could help answer in reference to this article regarding a city public meeting. "Due to the discrepancy in reports, the commission voted to put the incident on file. XXX arrived after the meeting ended and privately met with commission members to discuss the incident after the general meeting adjourned".

Q. 1..Where do I find the procedural process of putting an incident 'On File'.

Q. 2.. Where do I find the procedural process when the witnesses does not participate in the questioning.

Q. 3.. The private meeting notes mentioned, are they available on Open Gov, or anywhere?

Thank you in advance.

Cultural Council potluck event celebrates arts organizations around the city

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD • ARTS & CULTURE • SEPTEMBER 24, 2026



Waltham Cultural Council awardees enjoy meeting up at the Waltham Fields Community Farm for the annual awardees lunch on Sept. 19, 2026. Photo by Artie Kronenfeld.

Over the past year, 51 arts projects and cultural organizations around the city received state and local funding through the Waltham Cultural Council to support their work in Waltham.

WCC grants can cover everything from performances to visual art exhibitions to history projects, but they have to serve the local Waltham community.

This weekend, a handful of grantees came to the Waltham Fields Community Farms for a celebratory potluck to talk about their projects and the role of the arts in Waltham.

Many grantees thanked WCC volunteers for their role in running the grant program. The program supports a range of projects, including local organizations such as the Waltham Philharmonic, that have been operating in Waltham for decades. It also supports artists

who are new to the city, or who are holding temporary performances in Waltham; for example, Somerville-based artist Julia Csekö, a first-time grant recipient, used her grant to help fund an exhibition of her art [at Bentley University this spring](#).

[Applications](#) for this year's funding cycle [opened recently](#) and will stay open until Oct. 15. The WCC will allocate a total of \$43,100 in funding, and the council will announce grant winners in the new year.

The projects

For the past few years, Rondaé Drafts of Music Dance.edu has been running a hip-hop chair dance program at the Waltham seniors' center. As she gets older, she says she understands more and more the importance of keeping active.

This year, Drafts has been able to expand her programming to include a hip-hop square dance class, and she's run an event with the Waltham Housing Authority. Her programs for Waltham seniors, she said, are made possible by the WCC's grants. And she'd like to expand her offerings in Waltham further; she's hoping to potentially bring her square dancing classes to Parks and Recreation summer camps.

The Waltham Choral Parents Association, meanwhile, has been around for more than 40 years to support the high school's show choirs and show band. Despite its long experience, WCPA parents Amy Pereira and Daniella DiMatteo said running the organization comes with its share of difficulties.

Unlike with sports, Pereira pointed out, there's no central organizational body for show choirs — which means no consistent central source of funding. Even many of the competitions students attend every year aren't guaranteed. "It takes a program like ours, that has been around for a while and is well funded, to do [a competition]," she said.

Pereira said the WCC's funding goes toward hosting Waltham High's own annual competition in the spring, which not only gives Waltham's students a chance to perform alongside other choirs, but provides a platform for show choirs from all over the country that come to compete.

Funding sources like the grants distributed by the WCC, Pereira said, help keep the program running. "It's been going for 40 years — and we hope it goes for another 40!" she said.

Disclosure: The Waltham Times received WCC grants in 2025 and 2026 to fund its arts coverage.

Head of care advocacy group receives award, worries about loss of Haitian workers

BY DAVID E. GUMPERT • COMMUNITY • SEPTEMBER 24, 2026



The Arc of Massachusetts announced this week that its CEO, Maura Sullivan, is receiving a national award from the Courage Project, a nonpartisan initiative that recognizes people and organizations for taking meaningful action in their communities and shares stories that help bring people together.

Sullivan has sounded the alarm about how the end of Temporary Protected Status for Haitian immigrants will affect people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who rely on Haitian direct support professionals, home health aides and caregivers. By connecting federal immigration policy to immediate, tangible consequences for some of the state's most vulnerable residents, Sullivan has helped keep the issue in front of lawmakers, reporters and the public at a moment when it might otherwise have been treated as unrelated to disability policy.



Maura Sullivan, CEO of The Arc of Massachusetts. Courtesy photo.

Sullivan worries the impact could be substantial. She thought Work Community Independence, a Waltham provider of group homes and similar services to developmentally disabled individuals, had already lost some Haitian workers, while other organizations in Watertown and Quincy had lost staff as well. WCI didn't respond to a request for comment from The Waltham Times by press time.

"Across the board, losing these wonderful TPS workers will hurt people with developmental disabilities," Sullivan told The Waltham Times in a recent interview. "There's already a workforce shortage crisis. ... Eliminating the pipeline of workers will increase this workforce shortage."

She expressed concern that the removal of Haitians from the workforce is part of a longer-term problem. "The collective effect of this catastrophic (immigration) policy will have an economic impact. Providers will have a hard time staffing these facilities."

She anticipates a further "spillover on caregivers, who worry that they will be taken even though they are here legally."

Annual Cedarwood Yard Sale: postponed to Saturday, 10/3

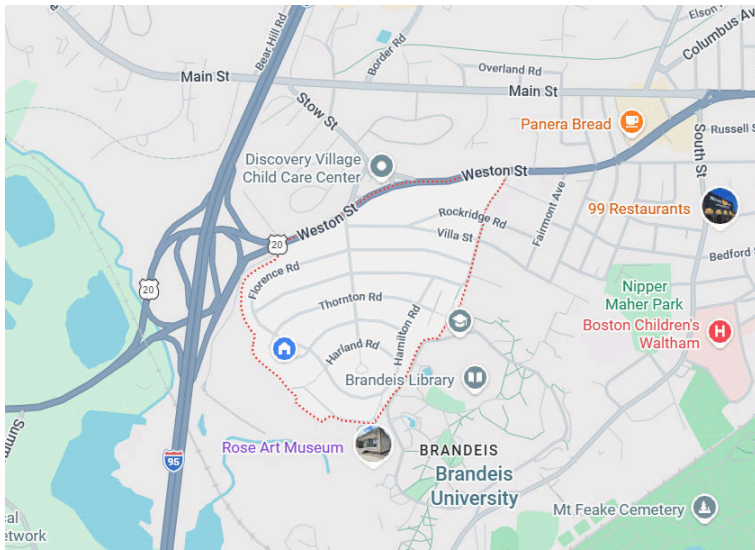
BY WILLY OSMAN • COMMUNITY • SEPTEMBER 24, 2026



Customers browse an assortment of household items and plants for sale on Florence Rd. at last year's yard sale. Photo by Cyd Abnet.

The [Cedarwood Neighborhood Association](#)'s annual yard sale scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 26, has been postponed until Saturday, Oct. 3, due to the impending bad weather. Dozens of neighborhood residents bring out items to sell from tables set up in their yards and driveways. It's a great way to pick up a few bargains while meeting neighbors.

Cedarwood is the neighborhood centered around Cedarwood Avenue near the intersection of Routes 20 and 95, just north of Brandeis University.



A yard sale map and other information will be available Saturday at the White Elephant Table table at 23 Cedarwood Ave. Visitors can also donate to the White Elephant fundraiser beginning at 8:30 am. Proceeds support the [Cedarwood Association scholarship](#).

Cedarwood residents who want to have their address listed on the yard sale map, donate items to the White Elephant Table, or volunteer to help, can [contact organizers here](#).



Author

WILLY OSMAN

Encounter in Home Depot parking lot leads to alleged strangulation attempt

BY CYD ABNET • NEWS • SEPTEMBER 24, 2026



A Waltham man pleaded not guilty to a charge of suffocation or strangulation following an alleged incident in the Home Depot parking lot.

On Sept. 17 at 12:30 p.m., police received two calls reporting an incident in the parking lot of the Home Depot on First Avenue. According to the police report, the first caller said he had been hit by a white car while in the parking lot. The second caller, identified later as Alexander J.

Mackenzie, 71, of Quincy, said the first caller had kicked his truck and caused damage.



Waltham District Court.

When officers arrived, they spoke to Mackenzie, who said he didn't see the first caller behind him when he was backing up. When the first caller became upset that Mackenzie didn't stop, he began to yell. Mackenzie said he thought he saw a weapon in the caller's hand, so he grabbed a hammer from his truck and went out to confront the man. Mackenzie said he hadn't "laid a hand" on the man, but the man kicked the passenger side door of the truck and left a small dent.

The other caller said Mackenzie had almost reversed into him, which caused the man to yell. He began to record as he approached Mackenzie's side door, at which point Mackenzie allegedly exited the vehicle with a hammer in his hand. The man admitted to kicking the truck, but said he did it because Mackenzie was attempting to run him over.

After kicking the truck, the man said Mackenzie exited the vehicle again and strangled him for around four seconds using both hands. The man showed the footage he captured to the police, which featured a few seconds when the camera pointed to the ground during which the man alleged Mackenzie was strangling him. The man refused treatment from an ambulance at the scene.

Mackenzie was arrested and charged with one count of strangulation or suffocation. He pleaded not guilty on Sept. 18. It is unclear based on the data in MassCourts whether or not Mackenzie was released on personal recognizance. He will face a pretrial hearing on Nov. 2.

Additional court activity

Jose R. Abrego Lopez, 23, of Waltham, was arraigned in court Sept. 20 for one count of assault and battery, one count of assault and battery with a dangerous weapon and one count of assault and battery with serious bodily injury. It is unclear how he pleaded based on the data available

via MassCourts. Abrego Lopez was released on personal recognizance by Judge Ellen M. Caulo and will face a pretrial hearing for his case on Nov. 5.

Michael Degrandis, 46, homeless, of Waltham, pleaded guilty to two charges and had one charge against him dismissed on Sept. 9. The charges were based on [an alleged incident in May](#) at the Hyatt House Hotel in Waltham. Degrandis pleaded guilty to breaking and entering for misdemeanor and trespassing. He was sentenced to 30 days in jail, and got credit for 30 days already served. The additional charge of assault and battery was dismissed due to lack of prosecution, meaning that the Commonwealth was not equipped to prosecute the case and decided to dismiss it.

Bianca Lavargna, 33, of Waltham, had charges against her dismissed on Sept. 17. She was charged with larceny from a person, larceny under \$250 from a person over 60, larceny of a motor vehicle and larceny of over \$1,200 in April after [an alleged incident](#) at the ReNew Waltham apartment complex. Lavargna's case was dismissed due to lack of prosecution.



Author



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City seeks poll workers for Nov. 3 election

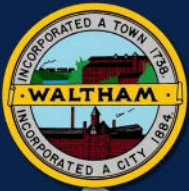
BY NEWSROOM • ELECTIONS • SEPTEMBER 24, 2026



The Waltham City Clerk's office needs poll workers for the election on Tuesday, Nov. 3. Various paid positions are available with training included.

Applicants must be at least 18 years old and registered to vote in Massachusetts. They must be available to work Nov. 3 from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. and cannot be a candidate in this election. Pay ranges from \$185 to \$200, with an additional \$8 paid for training.

Interested individuals are asked to fill out this [application form](#) and return it to City Hall or call 781-314-3120 for information.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

BECOME A POLL WORKER!

Requirements:

- Must be at least 18 years old and registered to vote in Massachusetts.
- Be available to work Election Day from 6am to 9pm.
- Not be running as a candidate on Election Day.
- Excellent customer service, dedication, efficiency, patience and friendliness.
- Fluency in another language is a plus to assist our diverse community.

Benefits:

- Paid position (\$200 Warden, \$195 Clerk, \$185 Inspector)
- Paid training (\$8)
- Learn about the Voting process
- Protect U.S. Democracy

To Apply:

Fill out an application & W9 form and return it to the Office of the City Clerk:

- Mail: 610 Main Street, Waltham, MA 02452
- Email: vmaluf@city.waltham.ma.us
- Fax: 781-314-3130

STATE ELECTION
NOVEMBER 3, 2026

City Council in brief: State program will fund energy-efficient building retrofits

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD & STEVE MILMORE • GOVERNMENT • SEPTEMBER 22, 2026



The City Council's Committee of the Whole hears plans to renovate former Fernald State School buildings into housing for veterans. Photo by Artie Kronenfeld.

Window improvements at City Hall, building weatherization and pipe insulation are all on the table as the city decides how to use \$173,714 in state funding for energy-related municipal building projects.

The money comes from a Green Communities grant the Finance Committee voted to accept at its Sept. 21 meeting.

Waltham participates in the state's [Green Communities Program](#), administered by the Department of Energy Resources. The program provides funding to municipalities for projects aimed at reducing energy use and costs and improving energy efficiency in municipal buildings.

Planning Director Robert Waters told committee members his department has not finalized which projects the grant will fund. According to [grant documents](#), Waltham will focus on energy-efficiency improvements at City Hall, the Valor School and the 21-25 Lexington St. municipal services building, which includes office space for the IT, Planning, Housing, Retirement and Assessor's departments.

Additionally, the City Council:

- Received a report on [how city employees use AI](#) from IT Director Donald Aucoin. (Committee of the Whole).
- Heard a proposal to create a low-income veterans housing and services complex [at the Fernald property](#). (Committee of the Whole).
- Accepted a donation of fitness equipment from Core Development & Management and Planet Fitness for the Fire Department. (Finance Committee).
- Preliminarily approved a secondhand dealer's license for sports equipment and bike repair shop Pedals & Power on River Street, as well as a used vehicle sales license for New England Transit Sales, Inc. on Lexington Street. (Licenses and Franchises).
- Preliminarily voted to [name the former Waltham High School at 617 Lexington St. after former Superintendent of Schools John "Jack" Daddona](#). Because the building does not currently have an official name, a public hearing is unnecessary. (Licenses and Franchises).
- Requested the Law Department study legal options for how the city could regulate [temporary secondhand goods "buying events"](#) run by organizations without property in Waltham. (Licenses and Franchises).
- Requested the Law Department review a special permit modification to [allow the current Crescent Suites Hotel to pivot toward long-term stays](#), a request for [a drive-thru ATM at a new Service Credit Union location at 995 Main St.](#), and new edits on a special permit application for [a Cava franchisee at the Market Basket plaza](#). (Ordinances and Rules).
- Requested that the Law Department suggest changes to bring [the city's MBTA Communities Act zoning](#) in line with recently amended [housing affordability legislation](#). (Ordinances and Rules).



Authors



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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.



STEVE MILMORE

Steve Milmore has more than 30 years experience in corporate communications and public relations. He started his career as copy editor for Computerworld magazine and has held writing and management positions at leading high tech companies including Oracle, IBM, and Dun & Bradstreet. Steve is a long-time resident of Waltham.

IT department urges citywide approach to AI oversight

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD & STEVE MILMORE • GOVERNMENT • SEPTEMBER 22, 2026



Waltham IT Director Donald Aucoin (standing, right) discusses AI use by the city on Sept. 21, 2026. Photo by Artie Kronenfeld.

Waltham’s municipal employees are starting to use artificial intelligence tools in their work, but IT director Donald Aucoin says the city’s still in the “infancy stages” of using AI.

As he anticipates Waltham expanding its AI use, Aucoin warns that city leaders need to implement significant oversight and direction beyond what his own department can provide.

Aucoin made these comments at the City Council’s Committee of the Whole meeting this week, where he discussed how Waltham currently uses and regulates AI tools. He also advised what new policies it may need going forward.

So far, Aucoin said, not all city employees are using AI. Most AI use is through “assistance” tools to help with tasks such as writing or editing — for example, in writing police reports. Some tools, such as Microsoft Copilot, an AI assistant, are off-limits to city employees except administrative assistants.

Some departments are using conversational AI for data analysis — for example, the Department of Public Works uses it to predict flooding risks and infrastructure needs.

Aucoin said the city is exploring potential uses, including in the municipal hiring process. While the Police Department already uses AI-powered software from [QED](#) to analyze data and inform policing decisions, he said the department was looking into purchasing more powerful hardware to use other AI tools.

Many of Waltham's municipal software tools are designed by third-party vendors, and Aucoin said AI is an increasingly popular buzzword among software companies.

"There isn't a piece of software right now that isn't claiming to be implementing some form of AI," he said, "Right now, it's like the Wild West."

Councilors asked Aucoin to provide a full list of all software used in the city that contains AI integrations, as well as any departmental policies that regulate software purchases. The council temporarily tabled the subject so councilors could discuss their concerns and priorities with other city officials.

Challenges in the road ahead

As he sees AI use expand, one of Aucoin's central concerns is defending against AI-assisted cyberattacks. He said Waltham's digital assets are well-protected and that he frequently compares notes with other municipalities, adding that he isn't currently worried about a cybersecurity incident like the one that temporarily shut down [Everett's city hall in early September](#).

He told councilors he was working with state officials to get Waltham access to security programs that would use AI to carry out constant security audits of the city's web assets.

Aucoin said he was also very concerned about data security and access issues. However, Waltham doesn't appear to have a clear policy on how AI tools can use and store data. When Councilor-at-Large Tim King asked if the city considered running any AI-powered tools on a local server to avoid information leaving the city through training data, Aucoin wasn't able to provide a clear answer.

Aucoin emphasized that the IT Department doesn't vet other departments' software purchases. "I'm not always the one evaluating this software. We have multiple departments. They have very specific tasks. Many times, I'm not [as] aware of these tasks and requirements as they are."

Although he and other department heads have been reading about concerns and best practices for using AI, Aucoin said Waltham doesn't have central policies regulating AI safety or software purchases.

Going forward, Aucoin said he would like to see a clear AI policy and better oversight, but argued his department wouldn't have the capacity to provide it, saying it needs to focus on the city's cybersecurity and keeping its digital infrastructure up to date.

To represent the city's various needs and priorities, Aucoin suggested the city assemble a "steering committee" composed of members from across city departments to set policies and provide oversight. At the suggestion of a conversational AI program, he recommended including representatives from the city's Finance and HR Departments.

"[AI regulation] is a challenge and a question I don't want to face alone," said Aucoin. "I think that's the responsibility of the community and particularly its leaders. That involves funding; it involves backing and support, and it involves staffing."

"This isn't an IT problem. This is a global, federal, state and local problem. It's a community problem."



Authors



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Council enthusiastic about proposed veteran housing and services at Fernald

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD • GOVERNMENT • SEPTEMBER 22, 2026



Aerial view of MacDougall Hall. Photo by Thomas Coyne on fernaldstateschool.com.

Waltham is entertaining an ambitious proposal to bring a 66-unit housing development for low-income veterans to the Fernald property.

Caritas Communities, a company that develops and manages housing for low-income residents in Massachusetts, proposed the project. Caritas was the only company to respond to a [bid request the city circulated](#) for affordable housing projects for the site.

Caritas representatives visited the City Council's Committee of the Whole meeting this week to present an initial version of its plan to build veterans' housing and support services.

A look at the project

Caritas proposes taking over Dolan and MacDougall halls, two former dormitories on the west side of the former Fernald's campus, via a long-term lease.

It plans to renovate both halls and build a new central building to connect them. This new complex would hold three and a half floors of one-bedroom and studio apartments. The units,



designed for single veterans living alone, would be small, ranging from approximately 350–700 square feet, but the building would provide additional storage space and shared common areas.

Dolan Hall with overgrown grounds and broken windows. Photo by Tom Kirsch on fernaldstateschool.com.

The apartments would be designated for low-income veterans, with a preference for those with disabilities or experiencing homelessness. Caritas' executive director Frank Connell said the company planned to coordinate with [the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing voucher program](#) to provide additional rent support for some residents.

Caritas also plans to rent and renovate the nearby West Nurses' Home, a building formerly inhabited by Fernald staff, as a center for wraparound support services run by Veteran Pathways of New England. These services would include job training, financial assistance, wellness programs and offsite transportation.

The buildings would center around a monument to fallen soldiers that architect David Tanner of BWA Architecture, Inc. said he hopes will set a new tone for the site.

"You're all aware of [the history of the state school](#) — and it's not a history that we intend to celebrate with this project," Tanner said. "The goal here is, for the well-being of veterans, to preserve this building that deserves to be preserved, really to shrug off this old legacy and [build] a new one."

It's unclear how much renovation work the three buildings will require, but the project team said the buildings' outside masonry and the concrete floors are in surprisingly good shape. Connell emphasized that at this stage of the process, any estimates for total renovation costs are extremely preliminary, but guessed the process could cost along the lines of \$55 million.

Most of the project, Connell said, would be funded through state and federal loan programs contingent on Caritas' promise to provide affordable housing. Some of those programs would also require some kind of proof of municipal support, which he said the company would likely seek through a Community Preservation Act grant.

Enthusiasm from councilors

Councilors expressed broad support and excitement about housing plans for the Fernald site, which they said were long overdue.

"I've been looking forward to voting on something like this since I got elected," said Ward 8 Councilor Bill Hanley. "I can't think of a better way to heal what went on at those 200 acres under the state's watch."

Caritas has expanded the scope of the project since its initial bid; Connell said his company has taken on physically larger projects before, but the overall scope is especially ambitious. Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy told councilors she was "pleasantly surprised" at the expansion, and vouched for Caritas, who she said has experience in providing veterans' housing and has already thoroughly vetted the property.

Multiple councilors expressed strong support for Waltham veterans to receive preference for the project with Ward 8 Councilor Cathyann Harris calling it a “non-negotiable.”

Connell told councilors his team would try to guarantee a Waltham preference, but warned that the company will be dependent on the criteria of state grant programs, which are focused on alleviating housing needs across the state. He added that Massachusetts veterans are currently [experiencing high rates of homelessness](#).

Ward 6 Councilor Sean T. Durkee said he was glad to see the project plans to provide transportation for residents, given the relative isolation of the site, but raised concerns about the size of proposed apartments.

“Most people would have friends and have people over,” he said. “If you want to enhance [veterans’ housing] experience, let’s not remind them of what it’s like in basic training.”

The city council decided to table the matter while it waits for McCarthy to return to them with specific requests to move the project forward.



Author



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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.

Lend a hand this fall: Volunteer opportunities across Waltham

BY BETTY BARRER & CAROL GREENFIELD • COMMUNITY • SEPTEMBER 22, 2026



Fall brings nippy mornings, quick sunsets, back-to-school excitement — and for many residents, a renewed focus on community. Volunteering brings people closer, meets many serious community needs, and, [according to the Mayo Clinic](#), helps volunteers be healthier and happier.

From food pantries to tutoring, from farm work to clothing exchanges, local nonprofits are calling on volunteers to help strengthen the city's heart. Whether you have an hour a week or a day to spare, the chance to make a difference lies just around the corner. Here are more than a dozen volunteer opportunities in Waltham.



Juliet Najjumba, founder of Africano Waltham, smiles for a picture with two Africano Waltham participants

[Africano Waltham](#) is a community-led nonprofit organization supporting African immigrant families, youth and seniors in Waltham. Help the organization with fundraising support. Opportunities are virtual, with optional in-person meetings. Contact: 781-298-1545 or info@africanowaltham.org.

[The Cat Connection](#), an all-volunteer nonprofit cat shelter, seeks seasonal or year-round volunteers to fill caretaker positions for the cats residing at its shelter. Tasks include feeding cats, scooping litter boxes, tidying the shelter and socializing and playing with cats and kittens. Caretaking shifts are daily, 8 to 10 a.m. or 5 to 7 p.m. Contact tccshelterschedule@gmail.com.

Charles River Museum of Industry and Innovation seeks seasonal and year-round volunteers to share our region's proud industrial history with the community. Volunteers can be tour guides or STEM educators for school groups. The museum also welcomes volunteers with specific knowledge about vintage machinery or textile history or backgrounds in historical research and writing. Contact director of education Steve Guerriero, info@charlesrivermuseum.org, 781-893-5410.

Community Day Center of Waltham, 16 and 20 Felton St., provides day shelter and support services to adults experiencing homelessness. Positions available include: Assisting in TheShop@20 Felton by sorting donations and providing a warm service experience to guests selecting seasonal, donated clothing and shoes; distributing mail and travel-size essential items (hygiene items, hand warmers, hand sanitizer, etc.) to guests at the Drop-in Space; or working in the kitchen and serving lunch. Support is needed daily, especially from 12:30 to 2 p.m. Volunteers must commit to at least one day weekly for at least 3 months. Contact executive director Chloe-Rose Crouch at director@communitydaycenter.org or 781-392-6311.

CTNNBI Connect and Cure seeks volunteers to provide care for special-needs children on Saturday, Oct.10, during its annual conference at Westin Waltham Boston, 70 3rd Ave. Volunteers engage with the children alongside parent volunteers, offering an extra set of caring hands. For more information, contact crawford.mcwilliams@currectnbnl.org.

Healthy Waltham promotes collaborative approaches to improving the health and wellness of underserved and low-income populations. Help with ongoing food pantries, held on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month, at 101 School St. Shifts run from 10 a.m. to noon, 12:30 to 3 p.m., 2:30 to 5 p.m., and 4:30 to 6 p.m. Contact Maria DiMaggio at Maria@healthy-waltham.org.

Jewish Family & Children's Service hosts the Family Table Food Pantry on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1430 Main St. Volunteers are needed to pack and deliver groceries on Sundays, support clients at Marketplace distribution on Tuesdays, and prepack clients' bags on Thursdays. Contact Lisa Katz at lkatz@jfcsboston.org, 781-693-1231.

REACH Beyond Domestic Violence empowers individuals, families and communities to overcome domestic violence. Year-round, enroll in [direct volunteer service](#) or internships. Before the holidays, host a Holiday Gift Drive to collect items for families and individuals rebuilding their lives after experiencing domestic violence. Also, organize a fundraising event, such as a school or community collection, to support the [Holiday Gift Program](#). Contact mcastaneda@reachma.org, 781-891-0724.

Waltham Clothing Exchange is a thrift shop and a longtime project of First Parish Waltham, 50 Church St. Become a seasonal volunteer in spring and fall, on Tuesdays and some Saturdays. Tasks include pricing, sorting, hanging donations and assisting customers. Contact walthamclothingexchange@gmail.com.

Waltham Fields Community Farm cultivates sustainable and equitable relationships among people, their food supply and the land from which it grows. Learn about and sign up for volunteer opportunities on this continually updated [list](#). Volunteer on [Farm Day](#), Saturday, Oct.

17; shifts and roles are available all day. Community organizations or companies can plan a group volunteering event at the farm. Contact volunteer@communityfarms.org.



Waltham seniors participate in the flower arrangement workshop. Picture courtesy of Council on Aging.

Waltham Council on Aging seeks year-round volunteer drivers for its Meals on Wheels food delivery program run from the William F. Stanley Senior Center at 488 Main St. Volunteers start around 10:30 a.m.; routes usually take about an hour. Some volunteers have one route one day a week; others choose to volunteer more often. Contact 781-314-3300.

Waltham Museum, 25 Lexington St., preserves local history and provides multidisciplinary cultural and educational programs for diverse audiences. Volunteer roles include docenting, accessioning, digitizing slides, researching and working on the museum's website and social media. Hours are Sundays, 1:30 to 4 p.m., and some weekdays; some remote volunteering is available. Contact info@walthammuseum.org, 781-893-9020.

WATCH CDC, 24 Crescent St., Ste. 201, promotes affordable housing, provides adult education and leadership development, and empowers underrepresented residents through civic engagement. Volunteers work as tutors and classroom aides in adult English language programs, at the front desk, at one-time events, on the advisory board, and on special projects. Contact Nafisa Abdinur at nafisa@watchcdc.org or 781-891-6689 ext. 212.

Public health report: Inspectors find critical violations at eight restaurants in August

BY ARTIE KRONENFELD • PUBLIC SAFETY • SEPTEMBER 22, 2026



Health Department inspectors found minor health violations at nearly half of the 73 restaurants, stores, hotel, and other locations they inspected in August, and identified critical issues at eight.

Waltham's Health Department regularly inspects locations that sell and handle food and tobacco to ensure compliance with the city's safety regulations. It's common for establishments to have minor violations during inspections. When the Health Department finds violations, business owners are given a deadline to correct them.

Health Department Inspector Ivan Colon said if the Health Department finds a violation causing immediate and severe health concerns or finds three or more health violations deemed "critical," the Health Department will close the business until it determines it is safe for patrons.

Between Aug. 1-31, inspectors found 36 businesses that violated clauses in Waltham's health and safety code. All of those locations — including the eight with critical violations — fixed the identified issues by the department's deadline.

Critical violations

Below is a summary of the violations inspectors identified as critical and needing immediate fixes. All passed a later re-inspection by health inspectors. The first had three violations. The rest are in chronological order.

Salgueros Market, 139 Felton St., on August 27

Inspectors required the store to exterminate rats in its basement, keep condiment trays at correct temperatures and clean can openers of food buildup.

Because inspectors found three critical violations, the department required Salgueros Market to close immediately until it addressed the identified health issues. The store passed its re-inspection on August 31 and was allowed to re-open.

Joco's Bar and Kitchen, 450 Moody St., on August 2

Inspectors required the restaurant to clean its basement of debris, including trash and rodent droppings.

Peppino's Dosa, 434 Moody St., on August 3

Inspectors required the restaurant to clean food buildup from can openers.

Salgueros Market, 344 Newton St., on August 7

Inspectors required the store to move some food, including eggs and produce, into a cooler with correct temperature control.

Penang, 569 Moody St., on August 10

Inspectors required the restaurant to hire a professional to clean its fume hood.

Asia Wok, 573 Main St., on August 18

Inspectors required the restaurant to clean food buildup from can openers.

Los Latinos Meat Market, 230 Newton St., on August 19

Inspectors required the store to repair the temperature control on a handwash sink. Its owners corrected this issue during inspection.

Absolutely Asia, 864 Main St., on August 26

Inspectors required the restaurant to add English labels to all meat and seafood in its fridges.

Other health department business

Health inspectors also investigate complaints about pests, trash management on private properties and other environmental hazards. As of publication, the Health Department had not provided information about its August health complaint investigations. Colon wrote that the department is currently “limited in staffing” and still [hiring a full-time administrator](#).



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.

Four Waltham women fighting in Haymakers for Hope Belles of the Brawl next month

BY GREG LEVINSKY • SPORTS & RECREATION • SEPTEMBER 22, 2026



Four Waltham women will enter the ring to box for a good cause at the MGM Music Hall in Boston's Fenway neighborhood next month.

Kassandra Aguirre, Kayla Chase, Helena Lally and Haley Kutzer will compete in the 13th annual [Haymakers for Hope Belles of the Brawl](#) all-women charity event on Thursday, Oct. 14. The USA Boxing-sanctioned fights, which consist of three two-minute rounds, begin at 7:30 p.m. Money raised supports cancer research, awareness, survivorship and care across numerous charities.

Whoever raises the most money gets to pick when they fight. There are 30 fighters, so 15 bouts total.

"If stepping into the ring helps raise funds ... and reminds people why continued investment in cancer research matters, then I'm really glad to be doing this," said Aguirre, 31.

The women train at TITLE Boxing Club in Watertown, Lucky Punch Boxing in Newton and Nolan Bros Boxing in Waltham.



Kassandra Aguirre. Courtesy photo.



Kayla Chase. Courtesy photo.

A 2013 Waltham High School graduate, Aguirre participated in gymnastics and cheerleading growing up. She had thought about trying boxing for a long time and began taking classes a couple years ago. A merchandise planner at New Balance, Belles of the Brawl is Aguirre's second public fight.

She's participating in the memory of her uncle Ricardo, who died from lung cancer in 2003, and her aunt Chela, who died from breast cancer a few years later.

"They were always people who lived life to the fullest, always encouraging me to be strong," Aguirre said. "It's really special to be able to fight in their memory and raise money for this really incredible cause."

Chase, 38, a general sales manager at Acura of Boston, is dedicating her fight to her friend Lauren, who is in remission from breast cancer, as well as to the memory of her aunts Donna, Jeannie and Nancy, and her uncles Ronnie and Frank.

"It's a good excuse to get in the ring because it's a good cause," Chase said. "I don't think there's anybody whose family hasn't been touched by cancer."

A Watertown native who was a high school cheerleader, Chase and her family moved to Waltham in 2019. She started boxing a little over two years ago after giving birth to "lose the baby weight." After some consistent 5 a.m. classes, Chase got hooked on the sport.

The mother of two said this will be the first and only time she participates in the event, and it is her first real fight. She trains seven days a week and twice on Thursdays.

Lally, 34, a registered nurse at Brigham and Women's Faulkner Hospital, fights for her aunt Mary, who recently died of glioblastoma, and her mother's best friend, Lynn, a "second mom" who died when Lally was 10. A Waltham resident since 2014, the Lakeville native knew a handful of people who participated in the past.

"I don't love attention, really, so this is outside my comfort zone for sure," Lally said. "The fact that it's for charity and raising a lot of money for a really great cause is a great motivator."

Her husband, Sean, owns the TITLE Boxing club in Watertown. A boxer for fitness since 2018, Lally played tennis through college. She's "so scared" but also "very excited" for her first public fight.

"I've been enjoying the process," Lally said. "If you go into it with a negative mindset, it would make it a lot harder."

Lally also draws motivation from her three daughters.

Kutzer, 22, works as a medical and research assistant at Boston Bone & Joint Institute. She's fighting in honor of her grandmother, Marian, and grandfather, Harold. A Westwood resident, Kutzer's job is in Waltham, and she trains at Nolan Bros Boxing in town.

Kutzer graduated from Northeastern University in April and is in the process of applying to medical school. A star skier and lacrosse player at Westwood High School and an All-American on the slopes for Northeastern, she learned about Haymakers for Hope through her older brother, Matt, who caught wind of it at his gym.

“It was a great way to find the next athletic thing I’d focus on and goal to take on while supporting my interests in medicine and cancer research,” Kutzer said.

It’s been a three-and-half month training process. Kutzer was nervous for a bit, but changed her tune.

“We’re not competing for a pro title, we’re here to raise money for cancer and show the skills we’ve developed over the past few months,” Kutzer said. “I’m just excited to get out there.”

Belles of the Brawl is a 21+ event, with tickets available [here](#). Participants have raised more than \$175,000 in total. The Waltham quartet accounts for more than \$37,000.

“The atmosphere is going to be incredible,” Aguirre said. “There’s a dozen other girls who will be fighting for their loved ones. ... It will be great to see how everybody has been training and preparing for this, and we get to raise money for charity.”



Author



GREG LEVINSKY

Greg Levinsky is a graduate Boston University. His work has appeared in The Boston Globe, Detroit Free Press and several outlets in Massachusetts and Maine. He can be reached [by email](#).

Forest Street plan to improve safety, calm traffic receives mixed response from residents

BY CHARLIE JOHNSON • GOVERNMENT • SEPTEMBER 22, 2026



Ward 1 Councilor Anthony LaFauci speaks to city officials and residents in attendance at a public meeting to discuss Forest Street Improvement Plans on Sept.17. Photo by Charlie Johnson.

An almost decade-old effort to improve traffic safety along Forest Street is moving closer to construction, with city officials presenting plans at a public meeting on Thursday. However, residents remain divided on whether these changes address their concerns.

Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy, who led the meeting, said the city first held a neighborhood meeting at Northeast Elementary School about 10 years ago to discuss possible changes to Forest Street. At that time, residents expressed a range of views about necessary improvements.

“We decided to go back, do some surveys and come up with something that I can simplify,” McCarthy said.

Some residents initially proposed adding traffic islands to Forest Street. The city ruled out the idea after engineers determined the street was not wide enough to accommodate them. Instead, engineers recommended new sidewalks, two bike lanes and other traffic-calming measures.

“The major concerns are pedestrian safety, bicycle safety, car commuter safety and how we can effectively enhance Forest Street to achieve all three of those objectives,” Ward 1 Councilor Anthony LaFauci said.

One Forest Street resident said deteriorating sidewalks make portions of the street difficult to walk on, especially during periods of heavy foot traffic such as Halloween. Residents highlighted tree roots pushing through asphalt and uneven sidewalk sections as hazards. Several residents

suggested using pavers or making other changes to create flatter, more accessible walking surfaces.

McCarthy said the more residential westerly side of Forest Street will receive new sidewalks, granite curbing and additional trees where possible.

Diamond said he is encouraged by the city's plan to improve pedestrian access along the street.

"As of today, you are literally taking your life in your hands if you walk at all as you're having to jump up onto a grass side of somebody's yard or into a forested area," Resident Sean Diamond said. "It is very dangerous on that westerly side of the street right now."

On the easterly side of Forest Street, alongside part of Bentley University's campus, the proposal calls for a sidewalk and two bike lanes, one in each direction. Little or no additional tree planting is planned because much of that side is already wooded.

One resident questioned whether bike lanes should be a priority, saying most traffic consists of cars and pedestrians rather than cyclists. Others supported bicycle infrastructure while questioning the proposed configuration. One resident suggested placing a one-way bike lane on each side of Forest Street instead of two lanes together on one side, citing concerns about cyclists and electric bikes traveling quickly downhill.

Diamond suggested placing the bike lanes behind the curb, separated from vehicle traffic, potentially as part of a wider shared-use path.

"The main thing right off the bat is make it safer than it is today and make it accessible for pedestrians on both sides," Diamond said after the meeting. "And then if you can have enough room for both a sidewalk and bike lanes that are separate from the street, separate from the travel of vehicles, then I think at that point, you're in a good spot."

Forest Street would also be repaved during the project.

Ward 4 Councilor John McLaughlin emphasized the importance of Bentley University contributing to the project cost because Forest Street runs alongside its campus.

The project would also improve connections between Forest Street and the rail trail. McCarthy hopes to put the project out for bid by January, allowing construction to begin in the spring.

"It's been a long-talked-about subject, going on decades, and so it was great to see a very large turnout for this," LaFauci said.

Boston Children's delivers top-ranked care close to home

BY JUNE KINOSHITA • HEALTH & LIFESTYLE • SEPTEMBER 22, 2026



A whimsical pooch sculpture greets families arriving at Boston Children's Hospital's Waltham campus. Photo by The Waltham Times.

Boston Children's Hospital, which operates its largest satellite campus in Waltham, landed on U.S. News & World Report's 2026-27 [Best Children's Hospitals Honor Roll](#), one of only 11 children's hospitals in the country to earn the distinction.

The hospital ranked first nationally in seven specialties: neonatology, pediatric cancer, pediatric gastroenterology and GI surgery, pediatric nephrology, pediatric neurology and neurosurgery, pediatric pulmonology and lung surgery, and pediatric urology. It ranked third in pediatric orthopedics, fourth in pediatric diabetes and endocrinology and eighth in pediatric cardiology and heart surgery.

For Waltham families, many of those top-ranked services are available 15 miles from the hospital's Longwood Avenue campus in Boston. The [Waltham site](#), at 9 Hope Ave., on the grounds of the former Waltham Hospital, offers office-based and surgical care in 79 specialties including substance use disorder, eating disorders, allergy, hearing and vision, orthopedics and sports medicine, urology, otolaryngology, plastic and oral maxillofacial surgery, neurology, neurosurgery, cardiology and sleep disorders.

Boston Children's acquired the Hope Avenue property in 2004 and opened the following year. The site has since grown into the hospital's largest and most comprehensive location outside Boston and the only one offering full-service MRI, CT scanning and inpatient beds.

Nearly 700 patients visit the radiology department each week. The campus includes six operating rooms, an 11-bed inpatient surgical unit, an infusion unit, a sleep clinic, an ophthalmology department, an autism assessment center and two inpatient psychiatric programs, including a 12-bed Community Based Acute Treatment program.

A multidisciplinary clinic added almost two years ago devotes a full day to a single complex condition — spina bifida, cerebral palsy and muscular dystrophy among them — coordinating all relevant specialists into one appointment.

Not everything is replicated in Waltham. There is no urgent care or emergency department, and some services require the Boston campus. Blood is drawn at an on-site phlebotomy clinic and couriered to Boston.

“Being recognized among the nation’s best children’s hospitals is a reflection of the extraordinary expertise, dedication, and collaboration of our teams, as well as the trust families place in us every day,” said Kevin B. Churchwell, the hospital’s CEO. “These rankings represent more than numbers — they reflect the children and families who turn to Boston Children’s for answers, and the collective commitment of our clinicians, researchers, and staff to deliver the very best care and advance what’s possible for children.”

The rankings are intended to help parents, in consultation with their children’s doctors, find pediatric care for serious illness, high-stakes surgery or complex medical needs.



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.

Waltham Moose Lodge fires up grill for members

BY JOSEPH SHARKEY • AROUND TOWN • SEPTEMBER 22, 2026



Pictured from left are: Robert Davis, president; Kim Davis, lodge sergeant-at-arms and senior regent of Women of the Moose Chapter 2456; Chris Grimes, chaplain; Meg Goodale, secretary of Women of the Moose Chapter 2456; Tom Goodale, administrator; Mark Patterson, vice president; Don Hodges, second-year trustee; Joe Milner, treasurer; and Zach Bourque, first-year trustee of Waltham Moose and financial director for Minute Men Moose Legion 28. Photo by Joseph Sharkey.

Members, families and guests gathered on Saturday, Sept. 19, at Waltham Moose Lodge 1018 for the organization's annual Member Appreciation Cookout.

The event featured burgers, hot dogs, cold drinks, music and family-friendly activities. Members also spent time together and celebrated the lodge community.

Waltham Moose Lodge 1018 has long been a local fraternal organization focused on community, charitable work and member activities.



JOSEPH SHARKEY

Joseph Sharkey is an independent news photographer based in Waltham. He grew up in the city and has had a strong interest in public safety and first responders. That passion led him to covering breaking news, focusing on incidents like fires, accidents and major public safety events. His work has been featured on WCVB, WHDH, NBC10 Boston and other local news outlets.

Back to school nights

BY NEWSROOM • AROUND TOWN • SEPTEMBER 21, 2026



Emily Szczypek and Jen Williams greeted students and families at Waltham High School's back-to-school night last Thursday, Sept. 16. They handed out cards with information about how to sign up for free subscriptions to The Waltham Times and explained how to use the translation plug-in at the bottom right corner of the site to translate the entire site into other languages. Families could also pick up the Times' profile (in four languages) of new WHS principal William Conard.



Author



NEWSROOM

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

Waltham home sales, Sept. 15–18, 2026



	Sale Date	Address	Sale Price	BR/Baths	Size	Type
	9/15/2026	61 Hall St Unit 304	\$1,310,000	2/3	1823 sf	condo
	9/16/2026	134 Brown St Unit 2	\$775,000	3/2	1061 sf	condo
	9/18/2026	28 Howard St Unit 2	\$1,250,000	3/4	2740 sf	condo
	9/18/2026	27-29 Highland St	\$1,120,000	4/2	3232 sf	2-fam
	9/18/2026	4 Boynton St Unit 1	\$1,150,000	4/3.5	2904 sf	condo
	9/18/2026	37 Kenmore Rd	\$722,000	2/1	936 sf	1-fam
	9/18/2026	71 Farnum Rd	\$660,000	3/1	1224 sf	1-fam

Events Calendar

September 28-October 24

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

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
27 Sukkot at Temple ... Ride & Stride for ... 9:30 am - 4:00 pm Fall orchid sale	28 7:30 pm - 10:00 pm Waltham City Council meeting	29 7:30 am - 9:00 am Charles River Health's fall community breakfast 10:00 am - 4:30 pm Waltham Clothing Exchange fall season 11:30 am - 9:00 pm Fundraisers for Waltham's environment at Not Your Average Joe's	30 The Cat Connecti...	1 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Thursday Tours of the Golden Ball Tavern Museum 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Multi-chamber business expo 2026 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm Minutemen Toastmasters of Waltham	2	3 9:00 am - 3:00 pm 59th Annual Barn Sale 9:30 am - 2:00 pm Waltham Farmers' Market
4 9:00 am - 2:00 pm Waltham Lions Club annual car show	5 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm Waltham City Council committee meetings 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Historical Commission meeting	6 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 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm Waltham Rotary Club lunch meeting 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Board of Survey and Planning meeting 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm WDCC Ballot Questions Open House	8 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	9	10 9:00 am - 1:00 pm Waltham Clothing Exchange fall season 9:00 am - 12:00 pm BrightBridge Credit Union Community Shred Day 9:30 am - 2:00 pm Waltham Farmers' Market
11 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm Second Sunday open house tours at the Golden Ball Tavern Museum	12 10:00 am - 11:00 am Babywearing tour of Gore Place	13 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 - 10:00 pm Waltham City Council meeting	14 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm Parks-Recreation Board meeting	15 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Thursday Tours of the Golden Ball Tavern Museum 10:00 am - 11:00 am Traffic Commission meeting 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm Reporting the Middle East after 9/11	16 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm Make a mosaic frame or mosaic jewelry	17 9:30 am - 2:00 pm Waltham Farmers' Market 10:00 am - 1:00 pm 2026 REACH Fall Festival and 5K 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm 16th Annual Farm Day
18 8:00 am - 12:00 pm Opportunities for Inclusion's 54th Annual Harvest Breakfast 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm Film screening: 'One Sings, the Other Doesn't'	19 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Watch City Ukers Every Month at the Waltham Museum 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm Waltham City Council committee meetings	20 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)	21 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm Waltham Rotary Club lunch meeting 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm Board of Health meeting 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm School Committee meeting	22 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Thursday Tours of the Golden Ball Tavern Museum 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm Conservation Commission meeting	23	24 9:00 am - 1:00 pm Waltham Clothing Exchange fall season 9:30 am - 2:00 pm Waltham Farmers' Market 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm Make a mosaic mirror or heart

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Minuteman Press locations are full-service design, print and marketing centers serving the entire business community from small businesses to Fortune 500 companies. Our customers are wide-ranging and include local organizations, government groups, non-profits, professional sports teams, businesses, entrepreneurs, consumers, and more. At Minuteman Press, we can produce anything you can put a name, image, or logo on!

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?'. A golden retriever dog is the central figure, wearing a black baseball cap with 'Waltham Times' on it and holding a red octopus toy. To the right of the dog is a QR code. Below the dog is an orange button that says 'GIVE TODAY'. In the bottom left is another QR code with the word 'SUBSCRIBE' below it. The bottom right has white text: 'Get the latest Waltham news, FREE in your inbox'.

The Waltham Times is Waltham's local news publication, currently available online only. This printed compendium of articles is produced by volunteers for readers who prefer hardcopy. We aim to have an official printed edition of The Waltham Times in the future, dependent of raising sufficient revenue through donations, grants and advertising to cover the cost of printing.



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