



2023 ANNUAL TOWN REPORT



TOWN OF WARE, MASSACHUSETTS



Ware, MA

WELCOME TO TOWN

Ware is a great place where our neighbors know each other; where you can open your windows and smell fresh air; a place where you can choose to be where our businesses and restaurants are ready to serve your needs; or in the park where you can walk or run; and a place where within a few minutes you can be on the major highways headed anywhere you choose.

Ware boasts a population of 10,066 as of the last federal census, governed by a five-member Board of Selectmen who set policy and make executive decisions and a Town Manager who is in charge of the business of running our town each day. Our Town Hall is centrally located and is open, staffed appropriately ready, and willing to serve your needs.

Our school system is located on one campus proving to be quite beneficial to students, parents, and staff. We are proud of the Young Men's Library open to all and to the Senior Center catering to the elderly population. Each of these provide many programs of cultural, educational, and healthy nature for residents of all ages.

Our public safety officials are well trained and ready to be of service to anyone in need or simply to be of help answering your questions.

Our town has seasonal activities for all, whether you are interested in cultural activities, enriching and educational endeavors or sports we are lucky to have many organized activities for youth and adults.

Our weekly paper the *Ware River News* and its staff, keep our residents, as well as others in the area, well informed with news items from Ware and surrounding towns. This weekly publication is the source of information for many social and recreational offerings as well.

www.townofware.com

**Dedicated to
Mary Lane Hospital
1924-2024**



One hundred years ago, in September of 1924, a new hospital opened its doors in Ware. The twenty-five-bed hospital was known as Mary Lane Hospital.

The Gilbert Manufacturing Company, with mills along the river in Ware and Gilbertville, made its fortune making high quality woolens. Multiple generations of the Gilbert family were extremely generous with our local towns; In Gilbertville building the Stone Church and the Public Library, in Ware the Young Men's Library, Grenville Park, and Mary Lane Hospital.

The first organized medical care in the area started in 1909, with the creation of the Ware Visting Nurse and Hospital Association. Upon Lewis Gilbert's death, he bequeathed his home, land, and a Trust to endow a hospital on South Street in Ware. The name was changed to Mary Lane, in memory of his beloved wife. Many additions to the original building were added over the decades as medical advances and demands required additional space.

Mary Lane Hospital would not have been possible without the commitment of so many over the decades. This report is dedicated to the employees who worked tirelessly to provide care, the volunteers who donated their time, the donors and supporters who graciously provided funding, and to all the patients from Ware, Gilbertville, and the surrounding area who chose to receive care at Mary Lane over the last 100 years. The shuttering of Mary Lane Hospital has made us realize how fortunate we were to have high quality healthcare so close to home.

FUN FACTS ABOUT WARE

*Information taken from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ware,_Massachusetts

Settled	1717
Established	1761
Incorporated	1775
County	Hampshire County
Court Systems	Hampshire County District Court, Eastern Hampshire District Court, Palmer District Court, East Brookfield District Court
Location	Approx. 26 miles northeast of Springfield
Elevation	475 ft
Population	10,066, as of the 2020 Federal Census
Area	Land 34.4 sq. mi <u>Water 5.5 sq mi</u> Total 40.0 sq mi
Bound By	Hardwick, New Braintree, West Brookfield, Warren, Palmer, Belchertown, New Salem, and Petersham, Quabbin Reservoir
Form of Government	Open Town Meeting, Selectboard, Town Manager
Recreation Facilities	Grenville Park, 73 Church Street Memorial Field, South Street Reed Memorial Pool & Park, 119 West Main Street, POOL IS TEMPORARILY CLOSED Veterans Park, at the intersection of Routes 9 and 32, adjacent from Town Hall
Public Schools	School campus located at 237-239 West Street Ware Junior Senior High School Ware Middle School SMK Elementary School

TOWN OF WARE DIRECTORY

Ware Town Hall	413-967-9648
Board of Assessors	x 179
<i>Assessments, Abatements</i>	
Board of Health ~ Quabbin Health District	x 183
<i>Health, Sanitation, Septic Permits/Title V, Food & Beverage Licenses, Tobacco Licenses</i>	
Building Department	x 180
<i>Building Permits, Complaints, Electrical & Gas Permits Plumbing Permits, Zoning Enforcement Officer</i>	
Cemetery	x 647
Conservation Commission	x 186
Department of Public Works	x 703
<i>Road Maintenance, Snow & Ice Removal</i>	
Human Resources ~ Benefits Coordinator	x 117
Information Technology	x 127
Parks Department	x 700
<i>Grenville Park, Memorial Field</i>	
Payroll	x 104
Planning & Community Development Department	x 186
<i>Community Development Authority, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals</i>	
Senior Center	x 501
Tax Collector	x 178
<i>Excise Tax & Property Bills, Sewer & Water Bills</i>	
Town Accountant	x 106
Town Clerk	x 177
<i>Birth, Death, and Marriage Certificates, Dog Licenses, Public Records Clerk, Voter & Election Registration, Town Census</i>	
Town Manager	x 100
Town Manager Executive Assistant	x 101
<i>ABCC Licensing, Amusement/Entertainment Licenses, Class I, II, III Licenses, Selectboard, Special Events, Streetlight Outages, Parking Clerk & Permits, Toll Road</i>	
Treasurer / Collector	x 178
Veterans Agent	x 115

TOWN OF WARE DIRECTORY

Animal Control Officer Dispatch	413-967-3571
Community Action Resources	800-370-0940
Fire Department	413-967-9631
Housing Authority	413-967-4477
Police Department	413-967-3571
Quaboag Connector	413-544-3401
Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance	413-387-3026
US Post Office	413-967-9914
Ware Public Schools	413-967-4271
<i>Superintendent</i>	x 2
<i>Special Education</i>	x 3
<i>Business Office</i>	x 5
SMK Elementary School	413-967-6236
Ware Middle School	413-967-6903
Ware High School	413-967-6234
Ware River News	413-967-3505
Ware TV	413-531-8602
Young Men's Library Association	413-967-5491

Board / Committee Monthly Meeting Schedule

Subject to change with minimum 48 Hour Notice to Public

Visit townofware.com for calendar of upcoming meetings and town events!

ADA Commission	1 st Wednesday @ 6:00 PM
Board of Selectmen	1 st and 3 rd Tuesday @ 7:00 PM
Board of Assessors	1 st Tuesday @ 4:15 PM
Board of Health	3 rd Wednesday @ 6:00 PM
Cemetery Commission	Monthly, As Needed
Community Development Authority	2 nd Monday @ 6:30 PM
Conservation Commission	2 nd Wednesday @ 6:30 PM
Council on Aging	3 rd Tuesday @ 9:00 AM
Downtown Improvement Committee	2 nd Monday @ 5:00 PM
Finance Committee	1 st and 3 rd Tuesday @ 5:00 PM
Historical Commission	4 th Monday @ 7:00 PM, 3 rd Monday in May, No meetings July or December
Parks Commission	1 st Monday @ 6:30 PM
Planning Board	1 st and 3 rd Thursday @ 7:00 PM
School Committee	1 st and 3 rd Wednesday @ 6:30PM
Tax Increment Financing (TIF)	As Needed
Ware Housing Authority	2 nd Monday @ 1:00 PM
Zoning Board of Appeals	4 th Wednesday @ 7:00 PM

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TOWN OF WARE OFFICIALS

2023 ELECTED OFFICIALS

SELECTBOARD

Caitlin M. McCarthy	2024
Keith J. Kruckas	2024
Joshua A. Kusnierz	2025
John J. Cascio, Jr.	2026
Nancy J. Talbot	2026

MODERATOR

Kathleen H. Coulombe	2024
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SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Michael C. Foran	2024
Julie A F Slattery	2024
Christopher T. Desjardins	2025
Brian P. Winslow	2025
Aaron R. Sawabi	2026

BOARD OF ASSESSORS

Devin M. Peterson	2024
Gerald F. Fountain, Jr.	2025
Theodore Balicki	2026

BOARD OF HEALTH

John A. Desmond	2024
Jennifer M. McMartin	2025
Michael Juda	2026

PARK COMMISSIONERS

Kimberly E. Swarts	2024
Ryan Mulligan	2025
William R. Imbier	2026

CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS

Craig R. Simmons	2024
Paul Harper	2025
Roy P. Erickson	2026

PLANNING BOARD

Edward Murphy	2024
Kenneth Crosby	2025
Richard Starodaj	2026
Christopher DiMarzio	2026
Nancy J. Talbot	Resigned April 2023 2027
Elizabeth Hancock	Appointed to fill vacancy until April 2024 Town Election

WARE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Henrietta Devlin	Resigned February 02, 2023	2025
Nancy J. Brown	Elected 2023 Town Election to fill unexpired term	2025
Jonathan Hogan	Resigned October 31, 2023	2026
Anna Burgos		2026
S K Robinson	Selectboard appointment for failure of State to appoint	2027
Frederick Andrew Daniels		2028

2023 APPOINTED OFFICERS

Following officers are appointed by the Selectboard

TOWN MANAGER

Stuart Beckley

FIRE CHIEF

James Martinez Interim / Acting

POLICE CHIEF

Shawn C. Crevier

CONSTABLES

Tod Bertini
Francis W. Cote
Christopher R. Talbot

HONORARY POLICE OFFICERS

Dennis Healty
Gary Hoskins
John Pajak
Stanley G. Mettig

SPECIAL POLICE OFFICERS

Dan Polak
Paul Skutnik
Frank Joli
Eric Esteves

MATRONS

Maryanne Regin

VETERANS AGENT & VETERANS GRAVES OFFICER

Mark Avis	March 31, 2026
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ADA COMMISSION

Ruth McGrath		June 30, 2025
Patricia Ranner		June 30, 2025
Amber Letendre	Resigned August 2023	June 30, 2025
Heidi Reed		June 30, 2026
Brittany Robidoux		June 30, 2025
Nancy J. Talbot		June 30, 2026

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

Nicholas Bousquet	June 30, 2026
Shayne Pedericini	June 30, 2026

BOARD OF REGISTRARS

Sheryl Adamczyk		March 31, 2024
Irene Orszulak		March 31, 2025
Vacancy		March 31, 2026
Nancy J. Talbot	Ex Officio/Town Clerk	

CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Stuart Beckley	Town Manager	
Ashley Walker	Treasurer/Collector	
Keith J. Kruckas	Selectboard Representative	
Terrance Smith	Finance Committee Representative	
Jennifer McMartin	Citizen Representative	June 30, 2023
Daniel O'Connor		June 30, 2025
Clayton Sydla		June 30, 2026

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Rhiannon Gresty		June 30, 2023
S K Robinson		June 30, 2023
Brandy Brusso		June 30, 2024
Danielle Souza		June 30, 2024
John Carroll	Resigned April 17, 2023	June 30, 2025
Denise Blodgett		June 30, 2026
Kathleen Deschamps		June 30, 2026
Shayne Pedericini		June 30, 2026
Nicholas Bousquet		June 30, 2026

CONSULTANT ON LEGAL MATTERS

Robert LeMaitre

COUNCIL ON AGING

Cheryl Haigh		June 30, 2025
S K Robinson		June 30, 2025
Ginger Ziglar Thomas		June 30, 2025
Irene Eskett		June 30, 2026
Walter LaHair, Sr.		June 30, 2026
John Zienowicz	Executive Director Senior Center	
Vacancies (3)		

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Mark Swett		June 30, 2024
Dennis Cote		June 30, 2025
Kristin Rosenbeck		June 30, 2025
Thomas Barnes		June 30, 2026
Robert Krasnecky		June 30, 2026

CULTURAL COUNCIL
Terms set by Commonwealth of MA

Judy LaValley	October 31, 2024
Christina Higney	October 31, 2024
Lynn Rude	November 30, 2025
Carol Brundige	November 30, 2025
Aileen O'Regan	July 31, 2026
Sherry Pasternack	September 01, 2026
Mary Healey	October 31, 2026

DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

John J. Morrin
Dennis Craig
Shelley Regin
Carol Zins
Charles Lask

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Devin Peterson	June 30, 2023
Terrance Smith	June 30, 2024
Kelsey Sidur	June 30, 2025
S K Robinson	June 30, 2025
Kenneth Willette	June 30, 2026
Mitchell Kupperman	June 30, 2026

FLAG COMMITTEE

Frank Gadman
Todd Lavallee

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Elena Palladino	June 30, 2024
Alice Atkinson-Bonasio	June 30, 2024
Claudia Kadra	June 30, 2025
Wanda Mysona	June 30, 2025
Lorrie Willette	June 30, 2025
Kathleen Galford	June 30, 2026
Lynn Caulfield-Lak	June 30, 2026

HOSPITAL DISCUSSION COMMITTEE

Catherine Buelow – Cascio
Elena Palladino
Denis Ouimette
Terrance Smith
Nancy J. Talbot
Dr. Howard Triesch

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

James Bourcier	June 30, 2027
John Cascio, Jr	June 30, 2027
David Comeau	June 30, 2027
Tracy Meehan	June 30, 2027
Matthew Palladino	June 30, 2027
Matthew Provencal	June 30, 2027
Terrance Smith	June 30, 2027
Nancy J. Talbot	June 30, 2027
Kenneth Willette	June 30, 2027

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Jodi Chartier	June 30, 2026
Jason Brooks	June 30, 2026
Nicholas Bousquet	June 30, 2026

PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER

Nancy J. Talbot

TOWN COUNSEL

K P Law
Sullivan, Hayes & Quinn

YOUTH COMMITTEE

Derek Dineen	June 30, 2026
Shayne Pedericini	June 30, 2026

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Philip Hamel		June 30, 2023
Lewis J. Iadarola		June 30, 2024
Jodi Chartier		June 30, 2025
Charles Dowd		June 30, 2026
Gregory Eaton		June 30, 2026
David Skoczylas	Alternate	June 30, 2024
S K Robinson	Alternate	June 30, 2025

250th US ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION COMMITTEE

Nicole Croteau	June 30, 2027
Kathleen Galford	June 30, 2027
Claudia Kadra	June 30, 2027
Robert Krasnecky	June 30, 2027
Joshua Kusnierz	June 30, 2027
Wanda Mysona	June 30, 2027
Nancy J. Talbot	June 30, 2027

2023 APPOINTED OFFICERS

Following officers are appointed by Town Manager

TOWN ACCOUNTANT

Tracy Meehan

TOWN CLERK

Nancy J. Talbot

DPW DIRECTOR

Geoffrey McAlmond

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR/TOWN PLANNER

Robert Watchilla	Resigned March 28, 2023
Paralee Smith	

GAS INSPECTOR

Edward Kent	June 30, 2024
Richard Holden	June 30, 2024

INSPECTOR OF WIRES

Donald Manseau

June 30, 2024

PLANNING BOARD ALTERNATE

Vacancy

PLUMBING INSPECTORS

Edward Kent
Michael Pluta

June 30, 2024
June 30, 2024

SINKING FUND COMMISSIONERS

Stuart Beckley
Tracy Meehan

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING AUTHORITY

Paralee Smith
Keith Kruckas
Gerald Fountain
Paul Opalinski
Nicholas Bousquet
Vacancy

Community Development Director/Town Planner
Selectboard Representative
Board of Assessors Representative
Citizen Representative
Citizen Representative
Finance Committee Representative

June 30, 2023
June 30, 2026

ACCOUNTANT

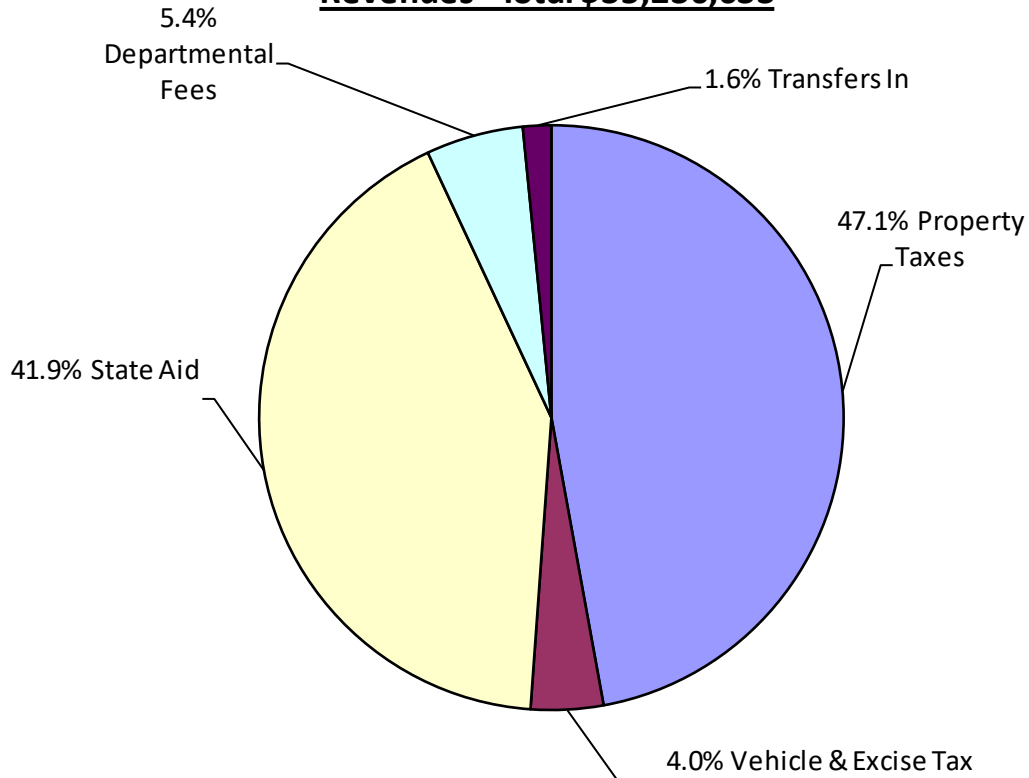
Town of Ware, Massachusetts													Unaudited
Combined Balance Sheet - All Fund Types and Account Group													
June 30, 2023													
	Governmental Fund Types				Fiduciary Fund Type Trust & Agency	Enterprise Funds		Account Group			Total (Memorandum Only)		
	General	Special Revenue	Capital Projects	Water		Sewer	General Fixed Assets	Long-Term Obligations					
ASSETS													
Cash and equivalents	13,097,194	44,435	48,146		2,797,952		2,138,791	331,771			18,458,289		
Investments					3,142,124						3,142,124		
Receivables:													
Property and excise taxes-net	1,152,810										1,152,810		
Water and sewer	-						137,732	130,118			267,850		
Departmental and other	454,066	56,319			33,091						543,476		
Due from Federal and State govts	31,339	919,233	-		-						950,572		
Due from other funds	-	4,230,846	127,630		118,929						4,477,405		
Property and equipment net of accumulated depreciation													
Amount to be provided for retirement of long-term debt & capital leases													
Amount to be provided-Comp Absences													
Total Assets	\$ 14,735,409	\$ 5,250,833	\$ 175,776		\$ 6,092,096		\$ 2,276,524	\$ 461,888	\$ 30,480,433	\$ 5,126,556	\$ 64,599,515		
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES													
Liabilities:													
Notes payable-temporary loan	-	-	-				-	-			-		
Warrants payable and accruals	2,710,600	557,891	3,704		84,732		26,812	40,554			3,424,292		
Withholdings and other liabilities	95,515	103,273			301,901						500,689		
Due to other funds	4,443,337		-				-	34,068			4,477,405		
Deferred revenue:													
Property and excise taxes	1,152,810		-								1,152,810		
Departmental and other	454,066	56,319					137,732	130,118		4,435,000	778,235		
Long-term debt payable										170,149	170,149		
Lease obligations payable										521,408	521,408		
Accrued Compensated Absences													
Total Liabilities	8,856,329	717,482	3,704		386,633		164,544	204,740	-	5,126,556	15,459,988		
Fund Balances:													
Reserved for endowment											365,880		
Reserved for expenditures	828,985	4,533,350	172,072		2,713,352		-	-			8,247,759		
Reserved for encumbrances	1,567,825						748,608	-			2,316,433		
Reserved for ambulance operation	481,475										481,475		
Reserved for investment in property									30,480,433		30,480,433		
Unreserved:													
Designated for overdrawn and unprovided accounts													
Undesignated	3,000,796				2,626,232		1,363,371	257,149			7,247,547		
Total Fund Balances	5,879,080	4,533,350	172,072		5,705,463		2,111,980	257,149	30,480,433	-	49,139,526		
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	\$ 14,735,409	\$ 5,250,833	\$ 175,776		\$ 6,092,096		\$ 2,276,524	\$ 461,888	\$ 30,480,433	\$ 5,126,556	\$ 64,599,515		

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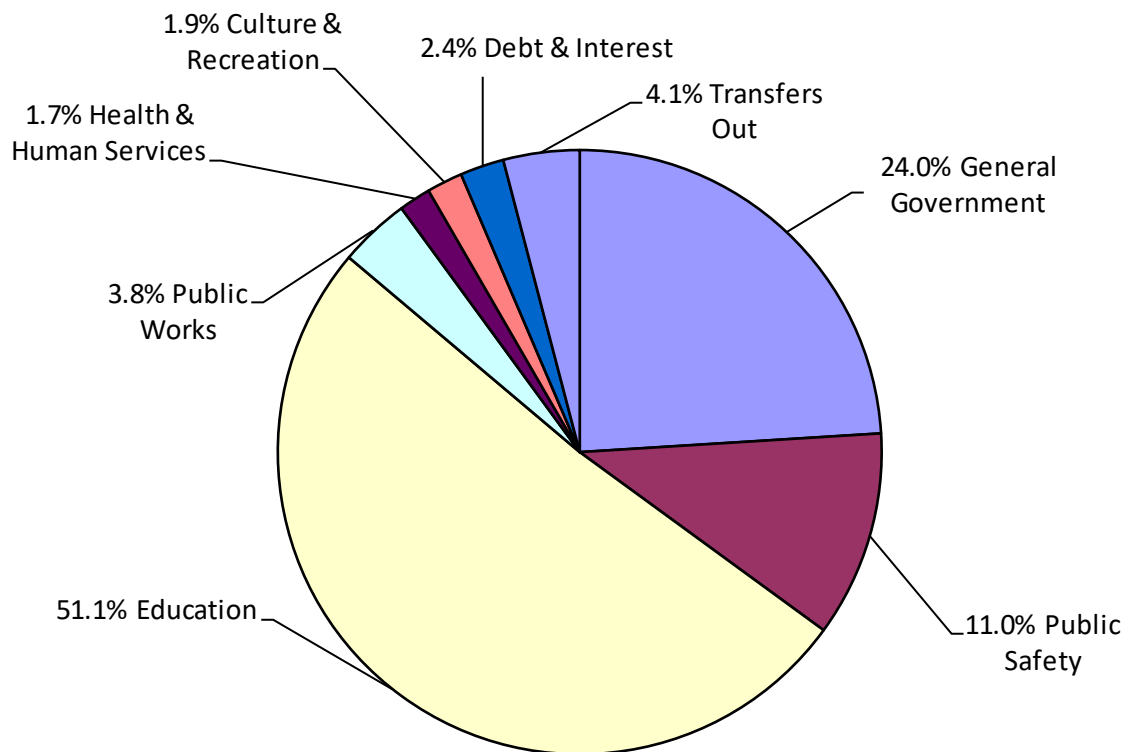
		Town of Ware, Massachusetts			<i>Unaudited</i>
		Statement of Revenues and Expenditures			
		Budget and Actual - General Fund			
		Year Ended June 30, 2023			
					Variance -
					Favorable
					(Unfavorable)
			Budget	Actual	
REVENUES					
		Property taxes - net	16,718,992	16,606,887	(112,104)
		Motor vehicle and other excise taxes	1,226,800	1,410,674	183,874
		Intergovernmental aid	14,708,809	14,765,483	56,674
		Interest on investment and taxes	111,183	232,788	121,605
		Departmental fees and miscellaneous	1,424,780	1,663,114	238,334
		Property foreclosure sales	-	-	-
		Total Revenues	34,190,563	34,678,946	488,382
EXPENDITURES					
		General government	9,401,659	8,516,104	885,555
		Public safety	4,667,369	3,909,495	757,874
		Education	18,120,151	18,129,057	(8,905)
		Public works	2,196,540	1,347,745	848,795
		Health and sanitation	213,920	194,708	19,212
		Human services	524,925	410,425	114,500
		Culture and recreation	981,535	680,318	301,217
		Debt service:			
		Principal retirement	711,099	704,299	6,800
		Interest (including temporary loans)	225,000	129,248	95,752
		Total Expenditures	37,042,198	34,021,399	3,020,799
REVENUE OVER (UNDER) EXPENDITURES			(2,851,634)	657,547	3,509,181
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)					
		Issue of serial debt	-	-	-
		Operating transfers in	577,018	551,687	25,330
		Operating transfers out	(1,453,267)	(1,446,429)	(6,838)
REVENUE AND OTHER FINANCING SOURCES OVER (UNDER) EXPENDITURES AND OTHER FINANCING USES			(3,727,883)	(237,195)	3,527,673

Town of Ware, Massachusetts
FY23 General Fund Revenue & Expenditures

Revenues - Total \$35,230,633



Expenditures - Total \$35,467,828



TAX RATES: 2018 - \$20.71; 2019 - \$20.21; 2020 - \$20.63; 2021 - \$20.18; 2022 - \$19.34; 2023 - \$17.26

TOWN OF WARE EMPLOYEE EARNINGS 2023

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
110	BECK, OLIVIA	1,720.40	-	-	1,720.40
110	WATCHILLA, ROBERT	17,957.08	-	-	17,957.08
122	BARNES, THOMAS	620.00	-	-	620.00
122	CASCIO, JOHN	1,634.32	-	-	1,634.32
122	KRUCKAS, KEITH	2,254.32	-	-	2,254.32
122	KUSNIERZ, JOSHUA	2,725.32	-	-	2,725.32
122	MCCARTHY, CAITLIN	2,561.85	-	-	2,561.85
122	TALBOT, NANCY	1,634.32	-	-	1,634.32
123	BECKLEY, STUART	109,326.81	-	-	109,326.81
123	CROTEAU, NICOLE	47,750.77	-	-	47,750.77
135	MEEHAN, TRACY	94,753.12	-	-	94,753.12
141	BALICKI, THEODORE	4,037.20	-	-	4,037.20
141	DIMO, MARY	779.00	-	-	779.00
141	FOUNTAIN JR., GERALD	4,325.60	-	-	4,325.60
141	PETERSON, DEVIN	3,757.20	-	-	3,757.20
141	WINKLER, KATE	35,328.59	-	-	35,328.59
145	GILDERT, DARLENE	60,329.74	-	-	60,329.74
145	LONGTIN, DONNA	46,711.53	-	-	46,711.53
145	ROZKUSZKA, VIOLETTE	41,348.87	-	-	41,348.87
145	WALKER, ASHLEY	83,326.83	-	-	83,326.83
152	CAGGIANO, JUSTINE	47,214.35	-	-	47,214.35
152	PRZYPEK, AMY	58,914.13	-	-	58,914.13
155	GRACE, DAVID	78,524.98	-	-	78,524.98
155	THIPHAVONG, MORGAN	12,223.00	-	-	12,223.00
161	GALFORD, KATHLEEN	55,147.04	-	-	55,147.04
161	TALBOT, NANCY	66,888.65	-	-	66,888.65
162	ALLARD, MERLE	294.25	-	-	294.25
162	ALLARD JR, RICHARD	396.00	-	-	396.00
162	BLODGETT, DENISE	462.00	-	-	462.00
162	DANSEREAU, LINDA	459.25	-	-	459.25
162	DESCHAMPS, KATHLEEN	462.00	-	-	462.00
162	DESJARDINS, REBECCA	288.75	-	-	288.75
162	DULAK, FAITH	877.50	-	-	877.50
162	GRANGER, VALERIE	286.00	-	-	286.00

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
162	HARRIS, CLIFFORD	585.25	-	-	585.25
162	KING, CAROLE	27.50	-	-	27.50
162	KORZEC, JACQUELINE	705.25	-	-	705.25
162	LABARGE, SUSAN	1,500.00	-	-	1,500.00
162	LAVALLEE, CAROLINE	409.75	-	-	409.75
162	LEEMAN, ROSEMARIE	173.25	-	-	173.25
162	LEEMAN, NORRIS	550.00	-	-	550.00
162	MALBOEUF, PHILIP	975.00	-	-	975.00
162	MALBOEUF, THERESE	585.75	-	-	585.75
162	PELLETIER, MELINDA	107.25	-	-	107.25
162	PREISICK-TRIETSCH, CARLIN	30.25	-	-	30.25
162	ROBIDOUX, LORRAINE	225.50	-	-	225.50
162	RUDE, LYNNE	104.50	-	-	104.50
162	SALETNIK, JANE	305.25	-	-	305.25
162	SHARPE, GRAYDON	96.25	-	-	96.25
162	SHUMATE, DARLENE	686.00	-	-	686.00
162	SILLOWAY, NORMA	462.00	-	-	462.00
162	SKUTNIK, JOHN	2,911.00	-	-	2,911.00
162	SKUTNIK, PATRICIA	236.50	-	-	236.50
162	SOCHA, DAVID	462.00	-	-	462.00
162	WHEELER, KATHLEEN	214.50	-	-	214.50
163	ADAMCZYK, SHERYL	400.00	-	-	400.00
163	ORSZULAK, IRENE	400.00	-	-	400.00
171	PRENOSIL, JOHN	15,840.00	-	-	15,840.00
175	BOUSQUET, NICHOLAS	3,152.00	-	-	3,152.00
175	DIMARZIO, CHRISTOPHER	617.58	-	-	617.58
175	HANCOCK, ELIZABETH	800.00	-	-	800.00
175	JACOBSEN, KRISTEN	27,917.06	-	-	27,917.06
175	LUCIS, KATLYN	2,294.25	-	-	2,294.25
175	MURPHY, EDWARD	800.00	-	-	800.00
175	SMITH, PARALEE	11,250.00	-	-	11,250.00
175	STARODOJ, RICHARD	800.00	-	-	800.00
176	DOWD, CHARLES	400.00	-	-	400.00
176	EATON, GREGORY	400.00	-	-	400.00

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
176	HAMEL, PHILIP	400.00	-	-	400.00
176	IADAROLA, LEWIS	400.00	-	-	400.00
192	GEROME, DONNA	15,788.77	-	-	15,788.77
241	CARTER, CHRISTEN	12,236.00	-	-	12,236.00
241	CHARLES, JAMES	4,648.00	-	-	4,648.00
241	CUSSON, STEPHANIE	17,494.31	-	-	17,494.31
241	MANSEAU, DONALD	18,783.84	-	-	18,783.84
241	MARQUES, ANNA	65,960.68	-	-	65,960.68
242	HOLDEN, RICHARD	1,288.00	-	-	1,288.00
242	PLUTA, MICHAEL	892.66	-	-	892.66
243	KENT JR, EDWARD	1,785.33	-	-	1,785.33
417	MORUS, DONNA	728.50	-	-	728.50
417	ORZECZ, HOLLY	13,167.32	-	-	13,167.32
510	DESMOND, JOHN	654.49	-	-	654.49
510	JUDA, MICHAEL	436.32	-	-	436.32
510	KULARSKI, THOMAS	3,600.00	-	-	3,600.00
510	MCMARTIN, JENNIFER	654.49	-	-	654.49
510	VELLE, KATRINA	218.17	-	-	218.17
541	CLOUGH, GERALD	8,286.92	-	-	8,286.92
541	DAVIS, ALTON	19,197.83	-	-	19,197.83
541	LEIS, JANINE	44,430.96	-	-	44,430.96
541	SWEENEY, MICHAEL	720.00	-	-	720.00
541	WALKER, JAMES	3,363.50	-	-	3,363.50
541	ZIENOWICZ, JOHN	62,819.76	-	-	62,819.76
543	AVIS, MARK	10,783.98	-	-	10,783.98
	TOTAL TOWN HALL/SENIOR CENTER	\$ 1,270,484.24	\$	- \$	\$ 1,270,484.24
DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
000	ARSENEAULT, DENIS	10,740.16	-	-	10,740.16
000	BERTHIAUME, LINDA	14,726.41	-	-	14,726.41
000	BIBEAU, SCOTT	648.00	-	-	648.00
000	BLODGETT, WILLIAM	15,032.38	-	-	15,032.38
000	BOUTOT, MAEGAN	59,680.61	-	-	59,680.61
000	CODERRE, EMILY	41,580.79	-	-	41,580.79
000	DAMBROSIO, MICHAEL	51,470.93	-	-	51,470.93

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
000	DAY, LAURIE	405.00	-	-	405.00
000	DIXON, SAHARRA	2,068.00	-	-	2,068.00
000	DUDA, ABAIGEAL	37,373.09	-	-	37,373.09
000	EDWARDS, REBECCA	13,607.73	-	-	13,607.73
000	GARCEAU, BRUCE	7,850.25	-	-	7,850.25
000	GARCIA, GEORGE	32,532.38	10,563.96	-	43,096.34
000	GEAGHAN, CAITLIN	17,054.76	-	-	17,054.76
000	GLANCY, JOHN	10,890.28	-	-	10,890.28
000	GRAMAROSSA, GAIL	70,273.61	-	-	70,273.61
000	HURSTON, CAROLYN	1,712.75	-	-	1,712.75
000	LEIVA-ESTRADA, OSCAR	11,145.00	732.00	-	11,877.00
000	LOWE, RAFFEL	4,396.00	-	-	4,396.00
000	MESSIER, THERESA	7,910.90	-	-	7,910.90
000	MILTON, BRANDON	32,089.06	-	-	32,089.06
000	MOONEY, JAY	65,700.00	-	-	65,700.00
000	MORIN, BENJAMIN	6,098.88	-	-	6,098.88
000	PALANO, ARIANNA	14,741.60	-	-	14,741.60
000	PAUL, MAGDALEN	21,540.00	-	-	21,540.00
000	PISCIONERI, MANDOLYN	24,051.87	891.01	-	24,942.88
000	SHEPARD, STEVEN	31,551.00	1,818.01	-	33,369.01
000	SIMMONS, CRAIG	9,801.55	-	-	9,801.55
000	SZCZEPANEK, WAYNE	16,482.25	-	-	16,482.25
000	VAZQUEZ JR, PABLO	15,390.00	-	-	15,390.00
000	WARD, NAOMI	11,265.00	-	-	11,265.00
	TOTAL GRANT PAID POSITIONS	\$ 659,810.24	\$ 14,004.98	\$ -	\$ 673,815.22

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OFF DUTY	TOTAL
210	AMES, DEREK	33,095.35	6,299.68	7,452.50	46,847.53
210	BERTINI, TOD	95,218.72	10,580.92	-	105,799.64
210	BONNAYER, JEANNINE	78,322.05	36,209.27	7,169.83	121,701.15
210	CACELA, JOHN	67,936.45	34,269.66	1,540.00	103,746.11
210	CREVIER, SHAWN	142,080.40	-	13,849.25	155,929.65
210	CREVIER, JACOB	11,552.23	7,183.21	3,024.00	21,759.44
210	DESANTIS, CHRISTOPHER	78,266.20	44,409.52	30,554.48	153,230.20
210	DOWNING, RYAN	59,609.36	19,749.43	6,154.50	85,513.29

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OFF DUTY	TOTAL
210	ESTEVES, ERIC	30,224.60	13,017.05	5,680.00	48,921.65
210	FELICIANO, NICOLAS	10,403.86	4,863.30	216.00	15,483.16
210	FRITSCHER, STEVEN	8,218.13	-	-	8,218.13
210	GLNIECKI-SKURA, DIANA	85,308.76	30,125.98	-	115,434.74
210	GORDON, ROMONE	35,041.94	5,588.33	5,266.25	45,896.52
210	HARNEY, NICHOLAS	1,896.49	79.59	-	1,976.08
210	LADUE, DANIEL	51,361.30	9,887.48	13,806.41	75,055.19
210	LAWRENCE, SCOTT	89,304.58	65,527.26	3,070.98	157,902.82
210	MANSFIELD, JACOB	8,218.13	-	-	8,218.13
210	MERRILL, LUCAS	28,159.63	5,746.73	7,044.12	40,950.48
210	OBRZUT, DAVID	71,820.20	10,043.31	-	81,863.51
210	REGIN, MARY ANN	60.00	-	-	60.00
210	ROUISSE, DANA	65,811.69	5,133.14	243.87	71,188.70
210	SKUTNIK, PAUL	340.00	-	2,376.50	2,716.50
210	ST PIERRE, PATRICK	57,671.40	22,148.89	10,924.00	90,744.29
210	TALBOT, CHRISTOPHER	82,411.77	34,724.74	12,547.54	129,684.05
210	TURPIN, TROY	11,376.13	1,392.83	-	12,768.96
210	WHITCOMB, KYLE	59,363.84	11,014.99	43,006.00	113,384.83
210	ZYGMONT, HUNTER	8,218.13	-	-	8,218.13
TOTAL POLICE DEPARTMENT		\$ 1,271,291.34	\$ 377,995.31	\$ 173,926.23	\$ 1,823,212.88
DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	AMBULANCE	TOTAL
220	ADAMS, WILLIAM	48,664.60	8,488.01	4,914.00	62,066.61
220	ALLARD, ERIC	53,235.61	5,846.99	12,966.50	72,049.10
220	BERNINGER, THOMAS	38,353.63	3,529.53	3,862.13	45,745.29
220	BOULRICE, JEREMY	92,116.26	1,979.86	1,176.00	95,272.12
220	EDGAR, DAVID	60,799.06	19,168.99	7,644.00	87,612.05
220	FANDREY, LAURA	75,752.96	8,961.58	7,644.00	92,358.54
220	FAUCHER, KAITLYN	1,575.00	-	-	1,575.00
220	FLYNN, SEAN	29,608.36	9,472.75	2,835.00	41,916.11
220	GAGNON, CHRISTOPHER	35,258.45	-	-	35,258.45
220	GAGNON, JOSEPH	29,483.40	3,366.28	2,646.00	35,495.68
220	GAMBINO, DAVID	78,402.84	15,601.60	7,644.00	101,648.44
220	GAMBINO, NICHOLAS	2,180.00	-	-	2,180.00
220	HARPER, DAKOTA	56,484.47	2,975.31	4,914.00	64,373.78

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	AMBULANCE	TOTAL
220	HORRIGAN, SUMMER	38,257.32	-	-	38,257.32
220	LAGIMONIERE, MARK	61,410.01	7,852.14	7,644.00	76,906.15
220	MARTINEZ, JAMES	107,776.46	-	-	107,776.46
220	MCNAMEE, DOLAN	1,125.00	-	-	1,125.00
220	MCNEANEY, JASON	73,415.18	15,388.06	7,644.00	96,447.24
220	MORRIN, NICHOLAS	140.00	-	-	140.00
220	MURPHY, LONNY	1,925.00	-	-	1,925.00
220	O'BRIEN, DANIEL	36,185.24	1,435.15	3,780.00	41,400.39
220	PERRON, JACOB	54,599.20	10,474.97	12,966.50	78,040.67
220	ROHAN, GAVIN	3,100.00	-	-	3,100.00
220	RUSSELL, NED	3,290.00	-	-	3,290.00
220	RUSSELL JR, PAUL	3,885.00	-	-	3,885.00
220	SPELLMAN, MATTHEW	47,096.35	9,868.03	4,914.00	61,878.38
220	SWETT, ERIC	1,400.00	-	-	1,400.00
220	TENGGREN, DANIEL	51,011.26	4,222.46	4,869.00	60,102.72
220	TITUS-ABATE, MERISSA	2,298.90	-	-	2,298.90
220	TUMINELLI, JOSEPH	46,627.88	4,938.40	4,866.75	56,433.03
220	WILLIAMSON, MACKINZIE	42,351.14	4,791.20	6,762.00	53,904.34
220	ZACHARIE, JEFFREY	71,239.59	14,669.96	7,644.00	93,553.55
TOTAL FIRE DEPARTMENT		\$ 1,249,048.17	\$ 153,031.27	\$ 117,335.88	\$ 1,519,415.32
DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	SNOW REMOVAL	TOTAL
421	DINEEN, DEREK	33,879.44	1,216.17	97.38	35,192.99
421	DUNHAM, JASON	2,640.75	-	226.35	2,867.10
421	HARPER, JOSEPH	47,159.20	1,892.96	3,441.45	52,493.61
421	KING, NOLAN	8,071.99	-	236.64	8,308.63
421	KOCZUR, STEVEN	58,248.81	333.86	4,252.95	62,835.62
421	LUKASKIEWICZ, MARK	63,625.28	1,024.47	4,638.68	69,288.43
421	NIEDZWIECKI, CHARLES	97,925.46	-	-	97,925.46
421	PERRON, DANIEL	19,113.19	626.10	-	19,739.29
421	PIECHOTA, SEAN	49,528.00	4,020.89	3,336.23	56,885.12
421	ROBIDOUX, WILLIAM	55,918.80	564.06	3,735.06	60,217.92
421	VENNE, FREDERICK	56,097.60	1,480.50	3,795.88	61,373.98
650	HALEY, BRANDON	21,360.02	1,916.65	737.39	24,014.06
650	LALASHIUS, ANDREW	22,560.01	2,458.70	1,057.50	26,076.21

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	SNOW REMOVAL	TOTAL
650	LEE, JIMMY	8,157.20	303.10	-	8,460.30
650	LOSERT, DANIEL	40,506.48	8,108.04	737.39	49,351.91
650	MCALMOND, GEOFFREY	100,586.57	-	-	100,586.57
650	POIELARCZYK, JANET	37,720.72	-	-	37,720.72
650	RUCKI, BRIAN	61,899.99	15,868.77	864.30	78,633.06
650	TOMBOR, ANDREW	32,675.10	7,032.13	-	39,707.23
660	COMEAU, DAVID	90,024.20	16,212.05	1,243.50	107,479.75
660	PROVENCAL, MATTHEW	54,835.06	7,925.19	1,296.45	64,056.70
660	STRANIERI, ETHAN	2,201.60	-	-	2,201.60
660	TWEEDIE, JEFFREY	50,274.40	7,894.64	692.80	58,861.84
	TOTAL DPW, WATER, SEWER	\$ 1,015,009.87	\$ 78,878.28	\$ 30,389.95	\$ 1,124,278.10

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	SNOW REMOVAL	TOTAL
693	DUNN, NANCY	3,323.09	-	-	3,323.09
693	HOGAN, ANDREW	13,440.00	-	-	13,440.00
693	MORIARTY, DAVID	14,312.52	-	-	14,312.52
693	OUIMETTE, DENIS	45,908.74	-	-	45,908.74
693	PIECHOTA III, JOHN	75,136.20	-	740.00	75,876.20
	TOTAL PARKS/CEMETERY	\$ 152,120.55	\$ 0.00	\$ 740.00	\$ 152,860.55

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
300	ABARE, MELISSA	72,527.96	-	-	72,527.96
300	ABETE, KEITH	77,991.68	-	-	77,991.68
300	ADAMS, ANDREA	69,860.84	-	-	69,860.84
300	ADAMS, HUNTER	3,720.00	-	-	3,720.00
300	ALAOWNIS, STEPHEN	82,774.12	-	-	82,774.12
300	ALDERMAN, WILLIAM	57,944.54	3,408.62	-	61,353.16
300	ANSALDO, LORETO	10,768.53	-	-	10,768.53
300	APHOLT, ERIN	32,744.97	-	-	32,744.97
300	AUVINE, DANIEL	20,775.00	-	-	20,775.00
300	BAIL, LISA	1,260.00	-	-	1,260.00
300	BAIN, TIFFANY	25,158.76	-	-	25,158.76
300	BALICKI, MAURA	64,002.96	-	-	64,002.96
300	BARBIASZ, WENDY	37,150.45	-	-	37,150.45
300	BEAN, JENNIFER	79,141.28	-	-	79,141.28

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
300	BECHTEL, DONALD	8,586.40	-	-	8,586.40
300	BEER, ALYCIA	49,672.90	-	-	49,672.90
300	BELANGER, THERESA	35,986.70	-	-	35,986.70
300	BENNETT, COLLEEN	300.00	-	-	300.00
300	BERNIER, MICHAEL	86,623.52	-	-	86,623.52
300	BICHSEL, DANYA	408.50	-	-	408.50
300	BILODEAU, HANNAH	10,404.18	-	-	10,404.18
300	BIRKS, DENNIS	80,239.18	-	-	80,239.18
300	BIRKS, MAYA	39,014.56	-	-	39,014.56
300	BIRON, ALLISON	78,026.68	-	-	78,026.68
300	BLACK, STEPHANIE	11,718.43	-	-	11,718.43
300	BLAIS, ANDREW	2,082.00	-	-	2,082.00
300	BLAIS, WAYNE	79,826.68	-	-	79,826.68
300	BOLDUC, JESSICA	56,652.71	-	-	56,652.71
300	BONNAYER, AMELIA	902.50	-	-	902.50
300	BOUCHER, AMBER	86,687.74	-	-	86,687.74
300	BOUDREAU, BRIANNA	3,010.80	-	-	3,010.80
300	BOUDREAU, KIRSTYN	1,120.00	-	-	1,120.00
300	BOUGHAMER, ERIN	61,330.20	-	-	61,330.20
300	BOURBEAU, HEATHER	64,206.16	-	-	64,206.16
300	BRACH, JONATHAN	77,616.68	-	-	77,616.68
300	BRADLEY, JOANN	34,052.14	-	-	34,052.14
300	BRAZEAU, CAMERON	2,482.00	-	-	2,482.00
300	BREWER, KAEALAH	30,754.26	-	-	30,754.26
300	BROWN, BETTY	78,140.96	-	-	78,140.96
300	BROWN, MICHAEL	82,462.01	-	-	82,462.01
300	BUZZELL, LEXIE	1,412.00	-	-	1,412.00
300	CAHALAN, PAIGE	17,870.11	-	-	17,870.11
300	CAMPBELL-BISHOP, MICHELLE	28,795.14	-	-	28,795.14
300	CARTER, TIFFANY	117.50	-	-	117.50
300	CASEY, HEATHER	5,760.00	-	-	5,760.00
300	CASEY, TRACY	42,968.04	-	-	42,968.04
300	CHAMPAGNE, KAREN	5,652.50	-	-	5,652.50
300	CHANIS, SUZANNE	95.00	-	-	95.00
300	CHEVRETTE, SAMANTHA	23,741.96	-	-	23,741.96

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
300	CLARK, SHAWN	2,954.00	-	-	2,954.00
300	COLEMAN, GINGER	43,309.55	-	-	43,309.55
300	CONNORS, SHIRLEY	36,609.20	-	-	36,609.20
300	COSTA, TELMO	36,876.79	1,122.78	-	37,999.57
300	COURTEMANCHE, LAUREN	24,399.72	-	-	24,399.72
300	COURTNEY, CAITLIN	45,349.42	-	-	45,349.42
300	CREPEAU, KAREN	28,666.01	-	-	28,666.01
300	CROWE-PUTZ, JACQUELINE	66,677.24	-	-	66,677.24
300	DANITIS, DEBRA	303.10	-	-	303.10
300	DARLING, TYLER	52,214.12	-	-	52,214.12
300	DAUKSEWICH, CHERYL	19,206.02	-	-	19,206.02
300	DAVIS, SHELLEY	81,318.67	-	-	81,318.67
300	DENIS, LAURIE	83,602.84	-	-	83,602.84
300	DEPATHY, SUSAN	252.00	-	-	252.00
300	DEPUTY, SUSAN	72,843.26	-	-	72,843.26
300	DESCHAMPS, KARISA	80,756.04	-	-	80,756.04
300	DESCHAMPS, KATHLEEN	2,941.00	-	-	2,941.00
300	DESCHAMPS, WILLIAM	65,748.81	-	-	65,748.81
300	DESJARDINS, CAMILLE	8,884.86	-	-	8,884.86
300	DESROCHES, AMY	1,435.00	-	-	1,435.00
300	DILEO, MARLENE	82,712.66	-	-	82,712.66
300	DINEEN, FELICITY	3,261.25	-	-	3,261.25
300	DODGE, LAURIN	13,811.11	-	-	13,811.11
300	DOMBEK, KATHLEEN	12,053.76	-	-	12,053.76
300	DOYLE, ERIC	84,981.44	-	-	84,981.44
300	DOYLE, JILLIAN	187.50	-	-	187.50
300	DUBOIS, AUTUMN	42,853.60	-	-	42,853.60
300	DUDEK, SARAH	12,470.97	-	-	12,470.97
300	DUMAS, KIANNA	6,151.25	-	-	6,151.25
300	DUPUIS, CHRISTINE	19,423.82	-	-	19,423.82
300	DURR, MARY	15,975.34	-	-	15,975.34
300	DWYER, LORI	13,976.07	-	-	13,976.07
300	DYKSTRA, YVONNE	60,153.76	-	-	60,153.76
300	EASTON, PETER	74,909.78	-	-	74,909.78
300	EATON, GREGORY	450.00	-	-	450.00

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
300	EMANUEL, EMMA	1,435.00	-	-	1,435.00
300	FAZIO, MICHAEL	79,309.48	-	-	79,309.48
300	FEBUS, CINDY	1,106.55	-	-	1,106.55
300	FENTON, MEAGHAN	64,446.16	-	-	64,446.16
300	FINOCCHIO, TIANA	21,786.48	-	-	21,786.48
300	FLANDERS, JAIMEE	3,640.00	-	-	3,640.00
300	FORAN, COLLEEN	15,493.50	-	-	15,493.50
300	FREDETTE, DAVID	59,368.54	-	-	59,368.54
300	FULLER, EMMA	610.00	-	-	610.00
300	GALLAGHER, KIMBERLY	660.75	-	-	660.75
300	GAUDREAU, LYNN	35,889.20	-	-	35,889.20
300	GEMBORYS, KENNETH	78,741.68	-	-	78,741.68
300	GERMAIN, KATY	481.40	-	-	481.40
300	GERULAITIS, ELIZABETH	549.00	-	-	549.00
300	GILLMEISTER, AMANDA	50,396.96	-	-	50,396.96
300	GLANVILLE, MELISSA	78,741.68	-	-	78,741.68
300	GOUDREAU, KIM	36,617.36	-	-	36,617.36
300	GRANT BERGERON, PAMELA	76,308.82	-	-	76,308.82
300	GREENBERG, DAVID	62,409.48	-	-	62,409.48
300	GRIFFITH, KELLY	72,519.91	-	-	72,519.91
300	GRUTTI, LYNN	66,315.24	-	-	66,315.24
300	HAGUE, SEANNA	41,999.94	-	-	41,999.94
300	HALEY, KAYLA	64,206.16	-	-	64,206.16
300	HANLEY, ELIZABETH	66,671.98	-	-	66,671.98
300	HARMON, LAUREN	63,456.52	-	-	63,456.52
300	HARPER, KATIE	18,311.30	-	-	18,311.30
300	HAWK, TIFFANY	80,721.68	-	-	80,721.68
300	HAY, DUNCAN	47,621.88	-	-	47,621.88
300	HAYDEN, JOHN	6,942.10	-	-	6,942.10
300	HAYES, STACY	86,943.46	-	-	86,943.46
300	HEBERT, REBECCA	41,975.46	-	-	41,975.46
300	HEGARTY, MONIQUE	73,969.70	-	-	73,969.70
300	HENECHAN, SHANA	13,188.39	-	-	13,188.39
300	HENRY, TINA	39,197.68	-	-	39,197.68
300	HENSON, JESSE	64,072.96	-	-	64,072.96

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
300	HERMANSON, OLIVIA	18,891.81	-	-	18,891.81
300	HILL, KAREN	77,741.68	-	-	77,741.68
300	HILL, WILLIAM	78,469.14	-	-	78,469.14
300	HOPKINS, LINDSAY	9,460.07	-	-	9,460.07
300	HORN, DEANNA	78,469.14	-	-	78,469.14
300	HOULE-ADAMCZYK, JILL	90,115.34	-	-	90,115.34
300	HUCKABY, APRIL	5,003.46	-	-	5,003.46
300	HUMMEL, NICHOLAS	20,331.41	-	-	20,331.41
300	HURLBURT, REBECCA	6,366.00	-	-	6,366.00
300	IWASINSKI, JULIA	6,719.54	-	-	6,719.54
300	IWASINSKI, PAMELA	106,599.89	-	-	106,599.89
300	JACOBS, SHANNON	5,968.75	-	-	5,968.75
300	JAMES, SANDRA	25,506.12	-	-	25,506.12
300	JARVIS, KELSI	12,858.48	-	-	12,858.48
300	JARVIS, STEVEN	4,454.00	-	-	4,454.00
300	JOCK, JACQUELINE	77,991.68	-	-	77,991.68
300	JOHNSON, BARBARA	35,979.86	-	-	35,979.86
300	KACZUWKA, LISA	23,022.78	-	-	23,022.78
300	KALISH, JUSTIN	77,616.68	-	-	77,616.68
300	KANOZEK, MELISSA	82,801.68	-	-	82,801.68
300	KARGOL, ALLISON	39,607.08	-	-	39,607.08
300	KEOUGH, KATHLEEN	75,329.78	-	-	75,329.78
300	KING, CAROLE	14,332.50	-	-	14,332.50
300	KING, GEORGE	36,838.20	401.31	-	37,239.51
300	KING, JENNIFER	81,901.68	-	-	81,901.68
300	KLUMPP, MATTHEW	77,241.68	-	-	77,241.68
300	KNIGHT, JENNIFER	80,848.52	-	-	80,848.52
300	KOCZUR, DEVON	39,160.06	188.48	-	39,348.54
300	KOCZUR, JACQUELINE	32,650.14	-	-	32,650.14
300	KUSEK-BOSER, DEBRA	37,276.30	-	-	37,276.30
300	LAGIMONIERE, MEGHAN	78,469.14	-	-	78,469.14
300	LAM, LYNN	22,156.92	-	-	22,156.92
300	LAMBERT, ALEXIA	8,984.28	-	-	8,984.28
300	LANCASTER, JUSTIN	2,145.00	-	-	2,145.00
300	LANG, HANNAH	1,664.00	-	-	1,664.00

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
300	LAROSE, ZEBULUN	1,885.20	-	-	1,885.20
300	LAURETANO, ERICA	47,037.55	-	-	47,037.55
300	LAVALLEE, GINA	1,075.00	-	-	1,075.00
300	LAVALLEY, AUDREY	1,396.25	-	-	1,396.25
300	LAVALLEY, JUDITH	52,954.54	-	-	52,954.54
300	LAZARZ, DONNA	36,882.06	-	-	36,882.06
300	LEE, ISABELLA	1,755.00	-	-	1,755.00
300	LEFFERTS, MELISSA	76,863.82	-	-	76,863.82
300	LESSORE, CHRISTINE	69,336.60	-	-	69,336.60
300	LIGAWIEC, BETH	360.00	-	-	360.00
300	LIGAWIEC, NATALIE	54,681.72	-	-	54,681.72
300	LOHR, DARCY	36,284.20	-	-	36,284.20
300	LOMBARDO, VINCENT	7,161.64	-	-	7,161.64
300	LOVATO, MICHAEL	69,384.68	-	-	69,384.68
300	LUKASIK, PAMELA	12,814.69	-	-	12,814.69
300	LYNCH, COURTNEY	74,513.18	-	-	74,513.18
300	MAGILL, KRISTINA	58,894.74	-	-	58,894.74
300	MALIN, HEATHER	89,202.84	-	-	89,202.84
300	MANLEY, ASHLEY	54,215.39	-	-	54,215.39
300	MARSLAND, KIM	31,087.15	-	-	31,087.15
300	MASSE, CASSANDRA	1,338.75	-	-	1,338.75
300	MASSE, RACHEL	81,269.52	-	-	81,269.52
300	MCHUGH, DONNA	7,614.22	-	-	7,614.22
300	MCNAMEE, ERIKA	15,989.24	-	-	15,989.24
300	MCNAULTY, HEATHER	7,175.19	-	-	7,175.19
300	MENDOZA, JENNIFER	26,563.37	-	-	26,563.37
300	MENDOZA, STEPHANIE	14,908.31	-	-	14,908.31
300	MERCER, TARA	30,300.23	-	-	30,300.23
300	MERRITT, MICHAEL	7,593.73	-	-	7,593.73
300	MILLER, AMANDA	44.00	-	-	44.00
300	MILLET, SAMANTHA	6,730.92	-	-	6,730.92
300	MINER, JAIME	67,364.74	-	-	67,364.74
300	MISISCHIA, KRISTA	175.00	-	-	175.00
300	MITCHELL, LEONA	956.18	-	-	956.18
300	MONTONE, KRYSTLE	4,074.85	-	-	4,074.85

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
300	MOONEY, OLIVIA	1,513.75	-	-	1,513.75
300	MOORE, MEGAN	5,321.62	-	-	5,321.62
300	MORIARTY, THERESA	59,078.76	1,350.67	-	60,429.43
300	MORRISSETTE, AMANDA	34,880.68	-	-	34,880.68
300	MULER, ILYANA	1,598.00	-	-	1,598.00
300	MURPHY, KRISTEN	30,007.47	-	-	30,007.47
300	MURPHY, RICHARD	30,683.44	835.87	-	31,519.31
300	MUSE, ANTHONY	57,024.20	-	-	57,024.20
300	MUSNICKI, ELIZABETH	82,383.27	-	-	82,383.27
300	NICHOLAS, ANDREA	82,046.64	-	-	82,046.64
300	NICHOLAS, JEFFREY	65,250.36	-	-	65,250.36
300	NICHOLS, JILLIAN	3,460.00	-	-	3,460.00
300	NOBLE, KEVIN	67,571.52	-	-	67,571.52
300	O'BRIEN, MAEVE	3,059.60	-	-	3,059.60
300	O'KEEFE, MELINDA	31,271.24	-	-	31,271.24
300	OCANA, ASHLEY	82,045.46	-	-	82,045.46
300	OCANA-ROSA, BELKIES	65,094.84	-	-	65,094.84
300	OLDAKOWSKI, AMY	73,009.30	-	-	73,009.30
300	OLIVER, MICHAEL	33,379.56	-	-	33,379.56
300	ORSZULAK, DANIEL	95,664.12	-	-	95,664.12
300	ORSZULAK, HEATHER	86,653.01	-	-	86,653.01
300	ORSZULAK, HEATHER	78,441.68	-	-	78,441.68
300	ORSZULAK, MARGARET	78,441.68	-	-	78,441.68
300	ORSZULAK, MORGAN	23,723.17	-	-	23,723.17
300	OSTIGUY, DEBORAH	8,476.87	-	-	8,476.87
300	PALERMO, LISA	77,241.68	-	-	77,241.68
300	PATRAW, CYNTHIA	13,648.53	-	-	13,648.53
300	PATTERSON, LISA	78,469.14	-	-	78,469.14
300	PAUL, AMY	33,540.09	-	-	33,540.09
300	PELSKI, MATTHEW	40,710.60	515.50	-	41,226.10
300	PEREZ, MELANIE	32,355.88	-	-	32,355.88
300	PESSOLANO, KRISTEN	81,233.69	-	-	81,233.69
300	PETROWSKI, ASHLEY	6,176.50	-	-	6,176.50
300	PLESCIA, SUZANNE	72,000.66	-	-	72,000.66
300	POLAND, PATRICIA	7,281.99	-	-	7,281.99

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
300	PORCELLI, SANDRA	85,481.44	-	-	85,481.44
300	POULIN, DARLENE	33,545.90	-	-	33,545.90
300	PROVOST, AMY	3,460.00	-	-	3,460.00
300	PUSKAS, MARIANNA	5,972.94	-	-	5,972.94
300	PUTNAM, CAISSIE	65,319.61	-	-	65,319.61
300	QUINN, KAREN	3,519.00	-	-	3,519.00
300	RACINE, SAMANTHA	66,744.12	-	-	66,744.12
300	RASYS, KATHERINE	50,583.82	-	-	50,583.82
300	RAVOSA, ROBERT	60,153.76	-	-	60,153.76
300	REILLY, LIA	52,591.14	-	-	52,591.14
300	RICH, EUGENE	73,617.76	-	-	73,617.76
300	RIETHLE, CAROLINE	1,200.00	-	-	1,200.00
300	ROACH, KIMBERLY	24,529.64	-	-	24,529.64
300	ROBERT, DIANNE	35,979.86	-	-	35,979.86
300	ROSALES, JUANITA	14,197.36	-	-	14,197.36
300	ROSS, JESSICA	51,610.73	-	-	51,610.73
300	RUSSELL, STEPHANIE	72,497.16	-	-	72,497.16
300	RYDER, LYNN	46,169.60	1,322.35	-	47,491.95
300	RYS, JOANNE	40,743.75	-	-	40,743.75
300	SAWABI, GAVIN	1,950.00	-	-	1,950.00
300	SAWABI, JOAN	3,780.00	-	-	3,780.00
300	SCOTT, DEBORAH	22,156.92	-	-	22,156.92
300	SEARS, MEGAN	81,711.50	-	-	81,711.50
300	SENECAL, KIMBERLY	82,159.14	-	-	82,159.14
300	SENECAL, SCOTT	12,775.00	-	-	12,775.00
300	SHAMGOCHIAN, KELLY	67,309.42	-	-	67,309.42
300	SHAMGOCHIAN, THOMAS	90,576.88	-	-	90,576.88
300	SHAW, LAUREN	12,363.39	-	-	12,363.39
300	SIMONS, TIMOTHY	2,954.00	-	-	2,954.00
300	SINCLAIR, MARILYN	1,285.00	-	-	1,285.00
300	SLATOR, NANCY	51,638.67	-	-	51,638.67
300	SLATTERY, SCOTT	106,972.84	-	-	106,972.84
300	SMITH, YVONNE	36,146.70	-	-	36,146.70
300	SMITH III, ROBERT	28,284.52	-	-	28,284.52
300	SMITH-ZAJCHOWSKI, ELIZABETH	40,862.08	-	-	40,862.08

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
300	SOUTER, REBECCA	40,752.72	-	-	40,752.72
300	STACY, CHERYL	90,981.44	-	-	90,981.44
300	STANTON, AMY	36,339.61	-	-	36,339.61
300	STODDARD, SARA	73,121.60	-	-	73,121.60
300	STYMIEST, BRITTANY	7,319.28	-	-	7,319.28
300	SULTANI, NOOR AHMAD	35,377.15	665.38	-	36,042.53
300	SWARTS, DONALD	2,954.00	-	-	2,954.00
300	SWITCHENKO, JANE	26,515.25	-	-	26,515.25
300	TARGAN, ERIC	77,991.68	-	-	77,991.68
300	THOMPSON, KIMBERLY	94,108.17	-	-	94,108.17
300	TOELKEN, MORGAN	4,219.00	-	-	4,219.00
300	TRZPIT, CAITLIN	61,625.81	-	-	61,625.81
300	TRZPIT, JESSE	85,950.16	-	-	85,950.16
300	TRZPIT, KELLIE	31,446.58	-	-	31,446.58
300	TRZPIT, RYAN	61,365.20	-	-	61,365.20
300	URBANEK, ELIZABETH	69,336.60	-	-	69,336.60
300	VADNAIS, CHERYL	33,702.15	-	-	33,702.15
300	VADNAIS, JOSEPH	34,499.90	-	-	34,499.90
300	VALLEE, CHARLENE	11,607.00	-	-	11,607.00
300	VANTANGOLI, NICHOLAS	81,930.68	-	-	81,930.68
300	VASILIADIS, ANTHONY	2,954.00	-	-	2,954.00
300	VEALE, CAROLYN	25,093.55	-	-	25,093.55
300	VEALE, KAYLA	21,274.10	-	-	21,274.10
300	VIERA, ROBERT	14,470.65	-	-	14,470.65
300	WAGNER, LISA	3,591.60	-	-	3,591.60
300	WALKER, JESSICA	23,105.30	-	-	23,105.30
300	WALLACE, CAMRYN	997.50	-	-	997.50
300	WALLACE, OLIVIA	17,944.79	-	-	17,944.79
300	WALSH, ERIN	52,632.32	-	-	52,632.32
300	WALSH, KELLY	78,557.96	-	-	78,557.96
300	WARBURTON, DONNA	36,384.20	-	-	36,384.20
300	WATSON, CARMEN	34,391.52	-	-	34,391.52
300	WATTU, AMY	8,592.13	-	-	8,592.13
300	WEATHERWAX, BARBARA	15,090.74	-	-	15,090.74
300	WEGGE, DONNA	25,899.36	-	-	25,899.36

DEPT #	NAME	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	TOTAL
300	WEIRBRICK, HEATHER	82,179.14	-	-	82,179.14
300	WEISSMAN, CHRISTINE	31,967.94	-	-	31,967.94
300	WEISSMAN, ELENA	95.00	-	-	95.00
300	WELLER, ROSEMARY	39,066.32	2,373.44	-	41,439.76
300	WEST, STEPHANIE	63,036.68	-	-	63,036.68
300	WETNICKA III, JOSEPH	35,508.61	1,349.13	-	36,857.74
300	WHITE, REBEKKA	23,678.70	-	-	23,678.70
300	WILLIAMS, MAEGAN	66,671.98	-	-	66,671.98
300	WILLIAMS III, JOSEPH	78,286.17	-	-	78,286.17
300	WOODWARD, ALEXANDRIA	49,180.04	-	-	49,180.04
300	WYZIK, CASSIDY	2,561.00	-	-	2,561.00
300	YARDLEY, JANUARY	91,823.88	-	-	91,823.88
300	YEAGER, LINDSAY	52,898.10	-	-	52,898.10
300	YOUNG, ANNE	36,207.36	-	-	36,207.36
300	YOUNG, SADIE	36,527.94	-	-	36,527.94
TOTAL SCHOOL DEPARTMENT		\$ 12,126,620.09	\$ 13,533.53	\$ -	\$ 12,140,153.62
GRAND TOTAL		\$ 17,744,384.50	\$ 637,443.37	\$ 322,392.06	\$ 18,704,219.93

ADA COMMISSION

Members of the ADA Commission are appointed by Selectboard for a three-year term. The current members are:

Ruth McGrath	Chair	2025
Heidi Reed	Clerk	2025
Patricia Ranner	Member	2025
Brittini Robidoux	Member	2025
Nancy Talbot	Member	2026

The ADA Commission works to make Ware Disability friendly. We work within the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Architectural Access Board to solve issues, provide suggestions and advice, and help individuals, agencies, businesses, and other organizations identify physical and communication barriers.

The Ware ADA Commission just completed our first full year! In that time, we accomplished a lot. In addition to the organizational and membership goals that we met, we completed The Town of Ware Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan. This plan includes barrier removal solutions for the Town's public buildings and facilities. It also includes recommendations based on compliance with the current Federal and State standards. The ADA Commission has taken that report and begun working on solutions in Ware. Our goal is to meet every solution and standard in the report.

In addition, we had a table at the Town of Ware's Resource Fair. The ADA Commission is bringing The Americans with Disabilities information to the residents of Ware. We have a very active Town webpage with a list of links that will help disabled residents. We are working hard and are always open to new members. We meet on the first Wednesday of each month at the Ware Senior Center. Meeting information and Zoom links can be found on the Town's website.

BOARD OF ASSESSORS

Gerald F. Fountain, Jr.	Term Expires 2025
Theodore P. Balicki	Term Expires 2026
Devin M. Peterson	Term Expires 2024

The Board of Assessors is composed of three (3) Assessors who are elected by the voters. The terms of office are staggered to provide for the election of one (1) Assessor every three (3) years.

In September 2021 the Town hired RRG Systems of Leominster to assist the Board in the absence of a Principal Assessor. The Interim Principal Assessor is Kate Winkler, who was hired in 2023. Kate is working towards her Massachusetts Accredited Assessor Designation.

The Assessors do not create value, nor do they determine taxes. But rather follow the procedures set out by the Department of Revenue. The level of taxation is determined by the municipality itself. Town Meeting appropriations voted by Town citizens determine the tax rate.

Assessors have a legal responsibility to reflect the changes occurring in the marketplace based on sales in the prior calendar year. They are required by Massachusetts law to list and value all real and personal property as of January 1 each year. The valuations are subject to “ad valorem” taxation on the assessment roll each year. The “ad valorem” basis for taxation means that all property should be taxed “according to value”. Valuations in Massachusetts are based on “full and fair cash value” or 100% of fair market value.

Every five (5) years the Assessors are required to submit values to the Department of Revenue for certification. An Interim Adjustment is conducted for the years in between a revaluation. The revaluation for FY2024 has been completed.

In addition to Real Estate and Personal Property values the department administers and is responsible for Deed Transfers, Mapping, Motor Vehicle Excise Tax, Chapter Land, Personal Exemptions, Property Exemptions, Real & Personal Property Abatements, Apportionments, Supplemental Taxes, and Revised and Omitted Values.

ABATEMENT & EXEMPTIONS GRANTED IN CALENDAR YEAR 2023

ABATEMENTS

Levy Year	2023 *FY2024	2022 *FY2023	2021 *FY2022	2020 *FY2021
Motor Vehicle Excise	\$24,767.58	\$20,085.03	\$24,221.12	\$7,525.30
Real Property	\$5,651.81	\$12,725.79	\$7,699.86	\$0
Personal Property	\$129.68	\$0.00	\$1,934.86	\$1978.00
Senior Tax Work Off	\$6611.00	\$11,373.00	\$11,373.00	\$0.00

PERSONAL EXEMPTIONS

Levy Year	FY2024	FY2023
Clause 17C½	\$4,025.00	\$2,100.00
Clause 22's	\$68,142.27	\$63,239.29
Clause 37A	\$2,500.00	\$ 3,000.00
Clause 41C	\$3,000.00	\$ 8,500.00

The Board of Assessors Office completed 427 Building Permit & Cyclical Inspections in 2023.

Fiscal Year 2024: July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

Tax Rate \$16.33

CLASSIFIED TAX LEVIES

	Class	Percentage %	Valuation	Levy
1	Residential	84.9837	910,416,089.00	14,867,094.73
2	Commercial	8.2267	88,131,633.00	1,439,189.57
3	Industrial	2.8729	30,776,650.00	502,582.69
4	Personal Property	3.9167	41,958,892.00	685,188.71
	TOTAL	100.0000	1,071,283,264.00	17,494,055.70

APPROPRIATIONS & SOURCES OF FUNDING

TOTAL AMOUNT TO BE RAISED	
Appropriation from raise & appropriate	\$ 40,154,244.27
Other amounts to be raised	\$ 629,155.30
State and County Cherry Sheet charges	\$ 1,423,248.00
Total amounts to be raised:	\$ 42,206,647.57

ESTIMATED RECEIPTS AND OTHER SOURCES	
Cherry Sheet estimate receipts	\$ 16,151,520.00
Estimated receipts	\$ 2,792,195.20
Offset receipts & enterprise funds	\$ 2,426,242.02
Appropriation from Free Cash	\$ 2,945,834.65
Appropriation from available funds	\$ 396,800.00
Total estimated receipts and other sources:	\$ 24,712, 591.87

TAX RATE SUMMARY

Total Amount to be Raised	\$ 42,206,647.57
Total Estimated Receipts and Other Revenue Sources	\$ 24,712,591.87
Tax Levy	\$ 17,494,055.70

FY2024 Maximum Allowable Levy - \$17,525,104

Excess Levy Capacity - \$31,048.30

BOARD OF HEALTH

Board of Health Members:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>
John Desmond	Member
Jennifer McMartin	Chair
Michael Juda	Vice-Chair

Personnel:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>
Thomas Kularski	Animal Inspector & Rabies Control Officer
Nancy Talbot	Burial Agent
Dr. Scott Siege	School Doctor/Physician Advisor

Mission Statement and Background:

The mission of the Ware Board of Health is to address public health needs, protect and improve the health and quality of life in the community, offer education resources, and promulgate and enforce local, state, and national regulations as required by law.

The Quabbin Health District is a comprehensive regional health department serving the communities of Belchertown, Pelham, and Ware. The district was established in 1980 by a town meeting vote and was formed under Section 27A of Chapter 111 of the Mass. General Laws. It is a joint effort by the three communities' local boards of health to provide their towns with the public health professionals and services needed to create healthy communities. The district provides public health services for the roughly 26,267 residents within these communities' 120 square mile area. The district provides each town with the shared personnel, equipment, and other resources to perform the required public health duties.

Through the Quabbin Health District, the Ware Board of Health provides:

- one full-time Director of Public Health, Andrea Crete
- one full-time Administrative Assistant, Betty Barlow
- one full-time Health Inspector, John Prenosil
- one full-time Public Health Nurse, Kirsten Krieger

The Ware Board of Health meets the third Wednesday of every month at 6:00PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room located in the Town Hall on 126 Main Street. Office hours are Monday – Friday from 8:30AM – 4PM.

The Quabbin Health District's services to Ware include but are not limited to: communicable and reportable disease surveillance via an online epidemiological network (MAVEN), public health investigations, public health messaging, 24-7 public health emergency response, seasonal flu vaccination clinics, tobacco control, substance abuse prevention programs, and state-mandated public health inspections and complaint management. You can visit the Quabbin Health District website for more information on services at: <https://quabbinhealthdistrict.com>

Animal Inspector Report:

Rabies is a viral disease that can affect all mammals, including humans. The virus attacks the central nervous system and can be secreted in saliva. Because rabies affects people as well as animals, control of this disease has become a top priority for the Division of Animal Health. Massachusetts law requires that owners of cats and dogs vaccinate their pets for rabies. A municipal animal inspector is nominated under MGL c. 129 by the Board of Health and approved by the Department of Food and Agriculture's Bureau of Animal Health. Animal Inspector duties include investigating and issuing rabies quarantine orders; investigating animal complaints; and conducting yearly barn inspections.

For additional information on rabies quarantines please visit:

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/agr/animal-health/rabies-control-program/>

Rabies Quarantines for 2023:

10-Day Quarantines:	9
45-Day Quarantines:	2
4-Month Quarantines:	0
Barn Inspections:	21

I have completed inspections of 19 private residences for farm animals.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the residents who allowed me access onto their property to inspect the above animals.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Kularski

Animal Inspector and Rabies Control Officer, Town of Ware

Burial Agent Report:

The burial agent for a community is responsible for examination of a death permit prior to its execution on behalf of the Board of Health. A review of information for any errors or omissions must be done prior to the permit being issued to any funeral director or person seeking a permit upon the death of an individual within the community. All permits are now done electronically through the state Department of Public Health.

The following information is provided to the Board of Health of Ware and the residents of Ware for all permits issued during the period January 1 to December 31, 2023:

Burial Permits Issued:	45
Interments for which a permit was issued by another community in MA or out of state for burial in a Ware cemetery:	0
Removal/Transportation/Relocation of a burial into another location (in state or out of state):	0

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Talbot

Burial Agent – Town of Ware

Quabbin Health District Reports:

The report below details the services the Quabbin Health District provided to the Town of Ware for the 2023 calendar year. Please contact the Board of Health by phone at 413-967-9615 or email bbarlow@townofware.com with any questions, comments, requests for additional information, and to relay any specific public health concerns in Ware.

Board of Health Activity & Inspections:

Food Inspections	
(includes routine and complaint)	103
Mobile/Temporary Food Event Inspections	11 Mobile Food Trucks; 2 Temp Events
Beaver Trapping Permits	0
Body Art Establishment Inspections	1
Nuisance Inspections	16
Housing Inspections	32
Housing Condemnations	1
Voucher Housing Inspections	3
Soil Testing	23
Septic Final Component Inspections	17
Septic System Plan Reviews (new construction)	5
Septic System Plan Reviews (Repair)	11

Administrative Assistant Report:

One duty of the Administrative Assistant is to advise applicants on requirements for permitting or licensure, obtaining the necessary information; recording data; collecting fees; and issuing licenses or permits to applicants who qualify, as determined by the pertinent inspector.

The following is a listing of the various permits issued by the Board of Health office during 2023:

Bakery Licenses	2
Catering Licenses	0
Ecology Can	4
Farmer's Market	0
Food Establishment Licenses	34
Frozen Dessert Licenses	3
Funeral Director Licenses	6
Milk & Cream Licenses	41
Mobile Food Server Permits	11
Mobile Home Park Licenses	1
Motel License	0
Pasteurization of Milk Licenses	0
Perc Tests (new)	13
Perc Test (repair)	10
Permanent Cosmetic Tattoo License	0
Pool Permits	0
Residential Kitchen Permits	6
Retail Food Licenses	14

Septic Hauler Licenses	7
Septic Installer Licenses	14
Septic Installation permits (new)	5
Septic Installations permits (repair)	11
Tanning Salon Permits	1
Tattoo Artist License	4
Body Piercing	2
Tattoo Parlor License	1
Temporary Food Permits	24
Temporary Housing	0
Tobacco Permits	11
Type II / Limited Food Permits	3
Trash Collection Permits	7
Trash Transportation Permits	0

Respectfully Submitted,

Betty Barlow
Administrative Assistant, Quabbin Health District

Public Health Nursing Report:

Communicable Disease Surveillance

The public health nurse (PHN) is also responsible for and has been conducting MAVEN infectious disease surveillance. This requires checking in daily for notifications of infectious diseases occurring in Ware. The types and numbers of communicable diseases reported in the Town of Ware for 2023 are listed below by the disease/illness and the number of cases (residents suspected, probable, and confirmed to have an infectious illness/disease).

Case classification terms:

Confirmed event: clinical and/or laboratory evidence fulfills all criteria required for a true case.

Probable event: available clinical and/or laboratory evidence meets most, but not all, of the criteria required for a confirmed case.

Suspect event: available clinical and/or laboratory evidence meets some, but not all, of the criteria required for a definitive classification of the case.

****Please note, at-home COVID-19 testing is not reported to MA DPH, therefore these numbers may not accurately represent community spread of COVID-19.*

*C = confirmed, P = probable****

**Total number of MAVEN cases for the Town of Ware 1/1/2023 – 12/31/2023
(including Confirmed (C), Probable(P), and Suspect (S))**

Infectious Illness	Date Range	Number of Cases
COVID-19 age < 18 years	1/1/2023 – 12/31/2023	30 – C, 3 - P
COVID-19 age > 18 years	1/1/2023 – 12/31/2023	178 – C, 20 - P

2023 All Other MAVEN Infectious Illnesses Report for Ware

Disease Name	Confirmed (C)	Probable (P)	Suspect (S)
Babesiosis	2	0	1
Borrelia Miyamotoi	1	0	1
Calicivirus/Norovirus	1	0	0
Campylobacteriosis	1	2	0
Group A streptococcus	1	0	1
Hepatitis C	2	1	0
Human Granulocytic Anaplasmosis	4	0	0
Influenza	42	0	0
Lyme Disease	0	9	21
Powassan virus infection	1	0	0
Salmonellosis	1	0	0
Tuberculosis	10	0	0
Varicella	0	1	0

Public Health Nurse Activities – Ware 2023

MAVEN Infectious Disease Surveillance:

- MA Department of Public Health – Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiology Network

Nurse Wellness Clinics:

- Ware Senior Center, Quabbin Wire & Cable, Recovery Center of Hope, Gandara Center (Cornerstone Recovery)

Community Organizations and Committees worked with:

- Ware TRIAD, Ware River Valley Domestic Violence Task Force, Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance, Drug Free Communities, Quaboag Valley Food Policy Council Leadership Committee, Quaboag Hills Community Health Improvement Plan Leadership Committee, Hampshire Public Health Preparedness Coalition, Western Mass Hoarding Task Force, Ware Age and Dementia Friendly Community Coalition, Baystate Health Community Benefits Advisory Council

Educational Presentations:

- Safe Storage and Disposal of Medications, Safe Aging at Home, Ticks and Mosquitos, Blood Pressure, Emergency Preparedness, Nutrition Basics

Trainings:

- Opioids and Opioid Rescue Trainings, American Heart Association CPR AED trainings

Tabling Events and Activities Participation:

- Grenville Park Mobile Food Bank Distributions, Post-Overdose Outreach

Submitted by,

Kirsten L Krieger RN, BSN,
Public Health Nurse, Quabbin Health District
Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Ware Board of Health,

Andrea Crete; MPH, RS
Director of Public Health
Quabbin Health District

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

The Building Department's primary function is to serve the best interests of all the people with continued demonstration of integrity, honesty, and fairness in all transactions towards achieving code compliance. Improving safety continues to be the goal in all aspects of code enforcement.

The department is headed by the Building Commissioner, Anna S. Marques, who carries out the duties set forth by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts State Building Code. This role also upholds the Town of Ware Zoning Bylaw as the Zoning Enforcement Officer. The provisions of this Bylaw promote safety and protect the community through regulations addressing the location and use of structures and land. The Building Department works in conjunction with other departments for code enforcement.

The Building Department welcomes Christen Carter to the role of Administrative Assistant. She brings to the department over 10 years of valuable experience in permitting and customer service in this industry.

The Building Department services are offered during the same hours as Town Hall availability, Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:00pm, with observed holidays. Communication may be in the form of in-person, by phone or email. Detailed contact information may be found on the Town's website www.townofware.com under the Building Department page. Christen is able to assist with any questions (online and on paper form) regarding the filing of permits. She's also the contact for the Gas, Electrical, and Plumbing Inspectors. Zoning questions and complaints may also be brought to Christen's attention for proper consideration. On Building Code, Zoning Bylaw Determinations, and meetings with the Building Commissioner, they may be scheduled as an option to emailing or calling. Though the department is open during the Town Hall's operating hours, the Commissioner may be out on inspections, meetings or on a site visits. It is highly recommended to call ahead and schedule a time.

BUILDING

Building permits are required when a proposed scope of work to a building or structure includes construction, reconstruction, alterations, repairs, removals, or demolition of. In 2023, there were 488 Building Permits issued for such scopes of work. Fourteen periodic inspections of existing buildings were conducted. Nineteen sign permits were issued as required by the Town of Ware Zoning Bylaw and nine tent permits were issued.

GAS

Edward Kent has remained as the Gas Inspector (11 years). Richard Holden has also served this year as the Gas Inspector. He was a strong asset to our Town in his short time with us. We offer our sincerest and deepest condolences to his family upon his recent passing.

There were 59 gas permits issued bringing in \$2,960 in fees.

ELECTRICAL

Don Manseau continues in his role as the Electrical Inspector (20 years). Ken Higney continues as the Alternate Electrical Inspector (33 years). There were 336 electrical permits issued bringing in \$39,923 in fees.

PLUMBING

Ed Kent serves as the Plumbing Inspector. There were 135 plumbing permits issued bringing in \$6,605 in fees.

Permits	2020 Revenue	2021 Revenue	2022 Revenue	2023 Revenue
Building Permits	\$68,171	\$89,105	\$92,506	\$107,485
Electrical Permits	\$27,386	\$20,173	\$22,214	\$39,923
Plumbing Permits	Under BOH	Under BOH	\$1,235 (partial year)	\$6,605
Gas Permits	\$5,065	\$3,570	\$3,235	\$2,960

CEMETERY COMMISSION

To the People of Ware:

2023 was a difficult year for the Cemetery Commission. Two DPW workers assigned to the cemetery left their employment for other opportunities. While the town meeting's funding of a full-time employee who shares their time with the Park Department has helped to properly maintain the cemeteries, a reliable full-time employee is essential. The town is fortunate that John Piechota is the manager of the Ware cemeteries, as well as the parks. The Commission is glad to have his involvement when advising the DPW and Town on cemetery needs.

There were two major maintenance issues this year. The first had to do with the lawnmower which maintains the 26 acres of grounds that need to be mown and trimmed at Aspen Grove alone, along with four smaller cemeteries maintained by the town. John's discussions with the Town Manager and Finance Committee resulted in an Article being placed on the Warrant and passed at Special Town Meeting on November 27th so the necessary equipment could be ordered for use in April 2024.

The second issue involved one of the buildings: a storage barn with a tower, which housed a historic fire alarm bell that was originally hung on North Street. The building was deemed unsafe to both employees and to private property along the Aspen Grove boundary. The Commission shared its concerns with the Building Inspector, DPW, and Town Manager about the building stability and the potential for liability claims, should the building collapse. An Article for funds to demolish the building was passed at the Special Town Meeting. The bell will be preserved as part of the town's history.

In the Spring of 2023, Frank Bateman contacted the Commission about bringing Wreaths Across America to the cemeteries of Ware. A meeting was conducted at the Town Hall, resulting in a recommendation to the Selectboard to approve this special event for the municipal cemeteries of Ware (Aspen Grove, East Church, and Ware Center). The program was completed December 16th, commencing at Veterans Park before decorating the veterans' graves at the cemeteries with the sponsor-donated wreaths. The event not only brought honor to all the veterans buried in Aspen Grove but promoted a new awareness of the magnificence of the cemetery itself.

Respectively Submitted,
Ware Cemetery Commission

Craig Simmons
Paul Harper
Roy Erickson

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Conservation Commission is the official agency specifically charged with the protection of Ware's natural resources. The Commission advises other municipal officials and boards on conservation issues related to their areas of responsibility. The Commission is responsible for reviewing permits to work near and within wetlands, floodplains, riverfront areas, ponds, and lakes, by implementing the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

Permit review includes performing site visits, reviewing project maps, discussions with applicants, environmental and construction professionals, and consultation with Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection representatives. The Commission is also authorized to undertake planning, acquiring and managing open space, and encouraging and monitoring conservation and agricultural preservation restrictions. The Commissioners are volunteers given the permission to administer the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

Commissioner	Title	Term Expiration
Mark Swett	Chair	2024
Thomas Barnes	Vice-Chair	2023
Kristin Rosenbeck	Member	2025
Dennis Cote	Member	2025
Robert Krasnecky	Member	2026

Paralee Smith provides administrative support to the Conservation Commission and is the main contact during office hours at the Commission's Town Hall office. Ms. Smith initiates and coordinates requests, submissions, and communications, with respect to site inspections and filings with the Commission as required.

John M. Prenosil is the Conservation Agent. Mr. Prenosil schedules and conducts site inspections with applicants to determine what filing, if any, is required under the Wetlands Protection Act. Mr. Prenosil provides guidance to the applicant during site visits, and if required, to the Commission during public meetings.

The following filings are on record for the 2023 reporting period:

Site Inspection Requests	29	Emergency Certifications	--
Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA)	9	Enforcement Orders	5
Notice of Intent (NOI)	9	Wetland Complaints	3
Right of First Refusal Review	3	Wetland Violations	5

The Ware Conservation Commission will continue to assist all existing projects in meeting the associated performance standards of their permits and provide guidance to ensure these projects have successful conclusions.

COUNCIL ON AGING

1 Robbins Road 413-967-9645

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Ware Council on Aging to identify the total needs of the community's elder population, to link services to those needs, and to improve the quality of life of our seniors.

Staff

John L. Zienowicz, Executive Director
Janine Leis, Social Services Coordinator
Alton Davis, Chef
Holly Orzech, Finance Coordinator
Gerry Clough (ret. 9/23)
James Walker, Custodian

Funding Sources Weekly January 4 to December 31, 2023

- **Town Funded:**
 - Executive Director 40 hours
 - Social Services Coordinator 40 hours
 - Chef 19 hours
 - Custodian 9 hours
- **State Formula Grant Funded:**
 - Finance Coordinator 19 hours
- **WestMass ElderCare Grant:**
 - Van Dispatcher 19 hours

Volunteers staff our reception desk, Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:00pm. The van operates Monday through Friday with drivers provided by the Quaboag Connector from 8:00am to 1:00pm. For the year 2023, the van returned to providing rides only, except for Amherst Survival Center deliveries.

Senior Center Hours:

Jan 1-Dec 31, 2023:	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	8am-4pm	8am-8:30pm	8am-4pm	8am-4pm	8am-8:30pm

Business Hours:

Jan 1-Dec 31, 2023:	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	8am-4pm,	8am-4pm	8am-4pm	8am-4pm	8am-4pm

Summary

Volunteers

The people who give of themselves daily to make the Senior Center the success that it is can never be thanked enough. In 2023, 30 Ware Senior Center volunteers gave 6,238 hours of their time, which was a cost equivalent of \$201,562.18. Eighteen of our current volunteers are also members of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of the Pioneer Valley. We report the time they spend volunteering at the Senior Center monthly to a larger statewide database that provides vital

information to state and federal governments as to the importance of seniors in the healthy functioning of their communities. Many of our volunteers are also consistent users of our facility, programs, and services. So even when they are not “working”, they are here participating. They are true ambassadors of why Senior Centers are so important in the community. We continue to look to add more volunteers to our staff and our committees. So, if you or someone you know may be interested, please feel free to contact us.

Friends of Ware Seniors Inc.

As senior centers cannot fundraise for themselves, we are heavily dependent upon and grateful for our Friends of Ware Seniors Inc. (FWSI) group. The FWSI is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit entity that has a very specific function per IRS regulations. They can generate unlimited funds through any legal means (such as donations, raffles, events, trips), etc. however, any funds they raise must be spent on the entity that they are chartered to raise funds for. In this case, the seniors of Ware.

This relationship has been invaluable over the years. It is the efforts of our Friends group, which allows the Ware Council on Aging to operate our Meal Assistance Program. For example, in 2023, the Friends raised \$7,625.34 for this cause. This program helps to subsidize the cost of daily lunches for qualified seniors who cannot afford to pay for lunch every day.

They are responsible for booking and paying for the many entertainers that have come to the Senior Center for our special events and all the wonderful gifts and prizes that are available to the seniors in attendance. The Friends also purchased a brand-new washer/dryer combo unit for the kitchen.

Social Services

The Senior Center Social Services Program offers assistance to seniors and/or family members who are in need of information regarding the following topics:

- Health Insurance, Mass Health, Medicare, Medicare Supplemental Plans, Prescription Plans
- Assisting Living/Nursing Home Placement Assistance
- Fuel Assistance
- Protective Referrals for Elders at Risk
- Food Stamp Applications/SNAP
- Maria Hastings Grant
- Social Security/SSI
- Farmers' Markets Coupons
- Amherst Survival Center Food Distribution
- TRIAD
- The Food Bank of Western Mass. Brown Bag Program
- Senior Housing/CHAMP Applications
- Salvation Army Good Neighbor's Fund
- QHCC Community Fund

Janine Leis, Social Services Coordinator for the Town of Ware, provided 665 service units to 261 Ware seniors in 2023. Outside of her duties here, Janine had an eventful 2023 as she earned an MS in Social Work after completing her graduate studies at Westfield State University.

Janine is Certified in SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) and assists seniors with Medicaid/Medicare applications as well as answering questions about the Affordable Care Act as it pertains to seniors. Janine is also CAC certified which allows her to have direct access to the Mass Health portal, which means she can process and track applications for all ages that qualify, with expediency and health insurance enrollments are near instantaneous.

The Ware Senior Center is also a Regional Provider for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, which means that we can access the state's Department of Transitional Assistance database to enter SNAP applications directly into the system, thereby cutting the response time in half for people in the Quaboag Hills Region who are waiting to get food stamps. This service is available for all ages that meet the eligibility requirements, not just seniors.

Janine represents the Senior Center as a member of TRIAD, a program of law enforcement/first responders and senior volunteer representatives working together to provide support and protective services to the Ware seniors. Janine also represents the Ware Council on Aging on the Advisory Board for WestMass Elder Care in Holyoke.

We also serve as the regional proctor for the Salvation Army's Good Neighbor Fund, which is an emergency fuel assistance fund available for those that do not qualify for standard fuel assistance. Janine can review a simple application and determine if an emergency voucher can be provided.

Community Wellness

In 2023, we continued a cherished tradition in the form of the S.A.F.E. Presentations, which were done in person by the Ware Fire Department as a public service for the Seniors of Ware. Throughout the year, informative and interactive presentations on a wide variety of fire safety topics given by Lt. Laura Fandry and TJ Berninger of the WFD had a great impact on the seniors. Since this coincided with lunch, it turned into some interesting dinner theater! We were saddened to hear of TJ's transfer to the Metro Boston area and we wish him to be safe and successful.

We received a \$2,000.00 CARES Grant from WestMass ElderCare to do community engagement and support for caregivers of people with Alzheimer's and/or dementia. Janine Leis collaborated with the staff of the Memory Care Unit at Cedarbrook Village to host a luncheon and informational seminar for people who are currently living with or caring for people afflicted with either Alzheimer's or dementia.

Speaking of the return of old friends, in November we were so happy to welcome back HomeFront Strong (*formerly the Brookfield Institute*) and help them resurrect the Veteran's Day Breakfast. The HomeFront Strong group incurs all costs, as we provided the building and kitchen staff so that the breakfast can be free of charge to all veterans and their families, active or retired. It is a wonderful opportunity for the staff and volunteers of the Senior Center to give back to those that have sacrificed so much for us. This year there were five Quilts of Valor presented to five local veterans in recognition of their service to our country.

We finished the year off strongly by collaborating with Kirsten Kreiger, the Quabbin Region's Public Health Nurse to host two Covid/Flu vaccine clinics here at the Senior Center in November. This was the result of a \$10,000.00 grant that we received from the National Council on Aging (NCOA) to provide either Covid, flu or both vaccines to at least 100 seniors/disabled citizens in our town by April of 2024. Thanks to Kirsten's efforts, we were able to hold events at Cedarbrook Village and the Ware Senior Center and 82 seniors have been vaccinated so far, with more clinics planned for early 2024 with an emphasis on reaching home-bound individuals who aren't able to get out to the clinics.

Throughout all of 2023, each month, we welcomed the services of Allison Williams LPN, a licensed foot care nurse that provided one on one-foot care to the seniors by appointment. Thanks to Allison's professionalism and thoroughness, demand has increased for her services to a point where we have had to add several more days per month to her appointment calendar in 2024.

Deb Avery from Heritage Hearing of New England continued to come to the Senior Center to provide monthly hearing clinics and hearing aid repairs by appointment.

The establishment of office hours here at the Senior Center by Kirsten Krieger, the Public Health Nurse for the Quabbin Region has been a huge success. Kirsten has been using our medical office as a base for bi-monthly health screenings and informational talks. This has been extremely valuable, as the seniors are now able to meet on a regular basis with a licensed nurse to discuss their health concerns and monitor such important health indicators such as blood pressure, glucose levels, and weight. Having such ease of access and being able to track vital indicators over time can help prevent more catastrophic health issues in the future.

An exciting addition to the wellness services that we offer is our newly formed relationship with Manda Day, the proprietor of Mobile Dental Hygiene Services of Western Mass, LLC. Manda is here on the second Friday of every month, by appointment only.

You may already be receiving dental care at your own dental office. If so, we recommend you continue with that care. If you do not have a dentist, then this is an opportunity for you to receive dental hygiene care.

Mobile Dental Hygiene Services of Western Mass is an on-site dental health service. The services offered are dental screenings, oral cancer screenings, dental education, blood pressure screenings, teeth cleaning and polishing, removable appliances (dentures) inspected and cleaned in an ultrasonic bath, fluoride treatments and assistance with finding a dental office.

MassHealth Dental Insurance will be billed for services provided when applicable. Private pay patients must make payments at the time of service by cash or checks payable to Mobile Dental Hygiene Services of Western Mass, LLC. All billing will be at the end of the day that treatment was provided. All patients will receive a treatment sheet indicating what services were provided and for what value. **This service is for seniors and veterans. Accepting Mass Health and private pay only.** Fee schedule available from the front desk or Manda upon request. Call 413-967-9645 to make an appointment.

Seniors may also borrow free medical equipment such as walkers, crutches, wheelchairs, commodes, and shower seats by contacting the Senior Center. The equipment is on loan for as long as needed.

FOOD INSECURITY

Brown Bag Program

On the second Friday of each month, the Food Bank of Western MA provides a pallet of food items, which are transferred into brown paper bags by a team of volunteers and distributed to income-qualified seniors that live in Ware. The Brown Bag Program is available to income-qualified seniors that live in Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire counties, however the Ware distribution services mainly seniors in Ware, as Palmer and Belchertown have their own deliveries. In 2023, the number of senior households participating in this program was 96. This program has been in place for over ten years and continues to be a big help to seniors in need.

Amherst Survival Center Program

We continue to collaborate with the Amherst Survival Center on a federal grant to address food insecurity in vulnerable seniors, a partnership that started back in May of 2020. Each week a truck delivers boxes of food items to one of four locations: the Ware Housing Authority at Valley View, Church Street Senior Housing, Hillside Village and the Ware Senior Center. The boxes are prepared at the Amherst Survival Center for everyone on the list and are prepared to their needs with a variety of foods, personal care items, and pet food. Once delivered, the sites are then responsible for distributing the food items to the individuals. Since no seniors live at the Senior Center, we employ the help of a rotating fleet of volunteer drivers to load up the boxes and deliver them to the doorsteps of the seniors in need. This program now provides monthly deliveries of two boxes of food items to over 120 senior households per month. This could not continue to thrive if it were not for the volunteers from Monson Bank, Country Bank, Town Hall, and many of Ware's senior, who give of their time to help deliver the boxes.

Farmers' Market Coupons

We are an annual access point for the USDA's Farmer's Market Coupon Program through WestMass Elder Care. In August of 2023, our annual allotment for our seniors was increased to 50, which meant that more seniors from Ware can now participate and have access to locally grown fresh produce.

Meal Program

We have been able to adjust to the higher costs of producing a home-cooked meal and continue to keep the fee to a reasonable \$3.50. Prior to March 18, 2018, the fee was in the form of a suggested donation, however, the Council on Aging decided in August of 2018 to create a standard fee along with a meal assistance program. This would afford disadvantaged seniors and disabled persons the opportunity based on the Federal Poverty Guidelines to apply for a reduction or elimination of the meal cost, to be subsidized by donations mainly from the Friends of Ware Seniors Inc. and Country Bank. By instituting a standard fee, the meal program has thrived and the disabled and seniors who need access to a balanced meal every day are able to do so at little or no cost to them. In 2023, the Senior Center served 6,186 meals to Ware Seniors. 274 were Reduced Fee Meals and 897 were Free Meals.

Chef Alton Davis and his staff of volunteers prepared meals daily. Each month he created menus reviewed with the Executive Director to ensure a well-balanced menu and adherence to state guidelines regarding vitamin content and sodium restrictions. All meals are cooked on site by Chef Davis and a corps of volunteers, six of whom participate in the Senior-Tax-Write-Off program through the Town of Ware.

Outside of the one salary for the Chef and the cost of utilities, the lunch program does not receive any further Town funding. The program operates with fees from those who participate in the program each day and by generous donations from The Friends of Ware Seniors Inc., Country Bank, and philanthropic citizens. Big Y also contributes bread and pastries to the Senior Center, which are distributed to the seniors and used in the daily menus.

Transportation Program

Prior to 2022, transportation remained a vital service that we offered to Ware seniors with our 12-passenger van within the town limits. By the start of 2023, several factors changed the way we approached the transportation system. Not only had demand grown steadily and more seniors had gotten used to utilizing public transportation, but also the closing of the Mary Lane Hospital and the shifting of resources to Palmer forced us to look for alternative methods to transport seniors to the services they require.

We had already formed a working relationship with the Quaboag Connector that had them picking up the seniors who needed rides outside of our operational hours or service area. The introduction of Ecolane software and GPS units to the van fleet made the necessary merger of the two systems a seamless transaction. Currently, all the van service scheduling is through a central dispatch at the Quaboag Connector with the Senior Van being focused on providing rides for seniors and the disabled in a much broader area than was previously possible.

In 2023, this arrangement provided 4,689 rides for seniors, the vast majority of whom were getting people to employment opportunities, medical appointments, senior center activities, lunches, and shopping. We also continue to use the Senior Van for delivery service for those with vital needs.

In 2023, monthly deliveries of Brown Bags and boxes of food from the Amherst Survival Center were delivered to our most vulnerable seniors via the Senior Van.

Fuel Assistance

2023 brought a welcome addition to the Senior Center with the surprise of having Community Action ask for office space in the Senior Center to process new fuel assistance applications. As Janine normally processes around 100 new applications per season, on top of the recertification applications, this will take a large burden off her shoulders. While re-certs begin arriving in August and new applications start in November, the open enrollment period for Medicaid/Medicare, MassHealth, and Obamacare begins November 1st and lasts until January 23rd. This partnership will make our Social Services department much nimbler and more available during the busiest time of the year.

Maria Hastings Grants

The Maria Hastings Grant Committee was formed in 2013 to honor a bequest by the late Maria Hastings, which dictated that funds she bequeathed to the Town be used for seniors in need. The current committee members, John L. Zienowicz, Janine Leis, Nancy Talbot, and Tracy Meehan, review each grant application for eligibility and forward the request to the Selectboard for final approval. Grants up to \$300 are available to those seniors who meet the income criteria. Seniors, their family members, or friends may request the funds, which are for small needs such as air conditioners, bathroom tub bars, porch railings, etc. Applications for 2024 are available by contacting the Senior Center. Both Janine and I are available to discuss eligibility requirements, and we look forward to answering your questions.

Activities

Many seniors come to the senior center not only for meals, but to participate in the variety of activities offered at the center. Exercise classes in the form of Tai Chi, Chair Yoga, Line Dancing for Beginners, and Line Dancing. Strengthening Bones and Bodies class is offered twice per week at the Valley View Apartments Community Room. Each activity accommodates different levels, so seniors can choose what level is most comfortable for them.

Pickleball, which actually started indoors here at the Senior Center, continues to grow and be successful in town. The growth in popularity prompted the Parks and Recreation department to obtain grants to convert a rarely used tennis court into two Pickleball courts. In the winter of 2023, the Great Hall in Town Hall began housing two indoor courts.

Art Class taught by Joanne Bradley, Crocheting/Knitting, Scrapbooking, and Quilting clubs allowed for socialization as well as the production of some beautiful work. We also have a large puzzle table for people looking for a little less excitement.

For those who preferred card games, there was Pitch, Whist and Scat, all of which have a large following. A Pitch game with a large gathering was also available on Tuesday and Friday nights. Our Pool Table was always available during business hours.

Do not forget you can always go shopping in our Thrift Store Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 12:00pm; there are many bargains to be had. The Friends of Ware Seniors Inc., under the guidance of Sue LaBarge, has reorganized the entire operation and our volunteers have done a fantastic job at changing the look of the store and how inventory is controlled, and new items are coming in and going out much faster.

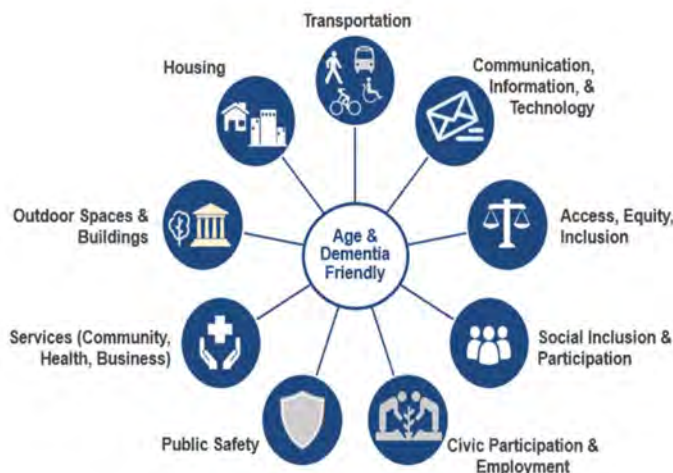
Every month we produce a newsletter, which contains news of upcoming events occurring at the center or within the surrounding areas. If you would like to receive a copy, please contact Janine Leis at the Senior Center 413-967-9600.

Other

AARP Age Friendly States and Communities

On March 3rd of 2021 the Town of Ware became the 513th community to enroll in this national initiative. The AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities “provides a structured

process that guides change and serves as a catalyst to educate, encourage, promote, and recognize improvements that benefit residents of all ages and life stages. Enrollment in the network provides member communities with resources to become more age-friendly by tapping into national and global research, planning models and best practices.” – Nancy LeaMond AARP. Within the Age Friendly designation are nine Domains of Livability and each domain has its own action committee and section of the action plan to embrace and implement.



Over the past year, our Housing Committee has provided input for Ware’s Senior Housing Plan by participating in listening sessions and group meetings.

The Access, Equity, and Inclusion group was instrumental in having an ADA audit of all town buildings and spaces by an independent agency to make Ware a more inclusive community for all. The department heads have received the results and recommendations of the audit for implementation.

The Public Safety group continues to provide sand and salt buckets to seniors that request them. They are also working on procuring Kidde Lock Boxes for senior home safety. The Transportation group continues to provide guidance to the Quaboag Connector for the growing numbers of seniors/disabled citizens using the service and continues to apply for and receive grants to help fund the operations of the service through agencies such as WestMass ElderCare, MADOT, and the PVTA.

The Communication, Information and Technology (CIT) group was able to secure a grant from the Massachusetts Broadband Institute for \$98,000.00 to address digital equity for the seniors of Ware. The grant is co-authored by the COA’s from Barre and Warren and will address three key components: technology, training, and access.

While we have a core group of determined volunteers taking on the tasks of the nine committees, we could always use more. If you are interested in getting involved in helping Ware to become an even better town to age in place and you feel your talents fit in nicely with one of these committees, please feel free to reach out.

Contributions/Donations

We would like to thank the staffs of Country Bank, Monson Savings Bank and ReSource Waste Services of Ware for their generous donations. We also wish to thank Country Bank's Jodi Gerulaitis and the "CB Crew" staff for the many hours they have volunteered as drivers for the Amherst Survival Center Food Program and serving lunch to the seniors at our larger party functions.

We also thank Big Y markets for the donations of breads and pastries that we receive from them every day except Wednesday as well as the incredible effort their pharmacy staff puts forth in making our Covid/Flu Vaccine clinics a huge success.

We are always thankful for all the help received from both the business community and private citizens throughout the year and the local businesses and individuals in the community who donate their time, money, and durable goods to help support the center.

2024 Goals

2024 is an opportunity for the Senior Center to move into the 21st century. We intend to do home visits and assessments, while teaching seniors how to interact online so the telehealth and social services can happen from the comfort of their homes.

We have completed Phase I of the IT modernization of the building, having the building wired throughout for total Wi-Fi access for our patrons. Phase II will involve more technology in the building for classes, meetings, presentations, and events.

Since being awarded \$98,000.00 from the Massachusetts Broadband Institute in late 2023, we began working with Country Bank IT Department under the supervision of SVP Peter Morales to create and implement a 16-hour introduction to technology and the internet training course that will be available to all seniors free of charge. Each eight-week session will be at the E2E space on Main Street. Classes will begin in the Spring of 2024.

We do recognize that this coming year will be difficult for many people; the cost of everything has gone up dramatically and it affects those on a fixed income more than most. We do understand that it will not be business as usual by any means, but plans are being made to incorporate more opportunities for our Social Services to make a difference.

We will continue to look at the long-term plans for the Senior Center and how this building can best serve the Ware community.

Respectfully submitted,
John L. Zienowicz, Executive Director
Ware Council on Aging / Ware Senior Center

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

David Grace, Director
Morgan Thiphavong, Intern

The mission of Information Technology is to provide strategic vision, leadership and support solutions to the management and municipal employees of the town of Ware, Mass. The Information Technology (I.T.) Department is responsible in providing the infrastructure for business automation, the governance for the use of the network and operating systems and assistance in providing the operational departments the functionality they need.

The I.T. Department services approximately 120 individual users and 150 computers and servers. The core functions of the department are Network Architecture & Application Server Administration, Disaster Recovery, Server configurations (imaging & backup), PC updates, antivirus maintenance, service contract management and lastly budget management (Quote & Purchase). Above all are security, intrusion and cyber-attack prevention on the town's personnel, financial and strategic systems.

The Town of Ware's I.T. infrastructure consists of a core network (domain) called "townofware". This core network holds our user and application data, as well as the financial applications that are required to run the major departments of the town's government. Each department requires specific software applications to properly operate and manage daily business and to collect revenue for the town. Each employee that works in town offices works via computer from 8:00am to 4:30pm daily.

The primary location for the "townofware" is at the Town Hall. Here the main servers, of which there are eight, operate and control the core functions of the network and applications databases. Dedicated servers for Tax Assessment and Accounting are also located here. All application and user data is also stored electronically at the Town Hall. The Town Hall is connected to the internet via Comcast fiber. There is a fiber connection between the Town Hall and Police Station. A dedicated fiber line is in place between the Police and Fire Stations. These high-speed connections are used for data backup and recovery in the case of an environmental disaster or catastrophic hardware failure. The systems in place allow us to recover from such an event in a matter of minutes, not months as was the case a few short years ago.

The Town also has several other locations that have their own network infrastructures and dedicated servers but are still linked into the town's overall network. The Fire Station, Police Station, Water Department and Senior Center have specific hardware that is required to coordinate and maintain operations and, in some cases, generate revenue for the town (water and sewer bills, ambulance, etc.).

All other locations (Parks, DPW, WWTP and Barnes Street) are connected via the internet into the Town's network using a secure VPN (Virtual Private Network). The Police Department also has a sophisticated network to coordinate the police activities and to tie into State and Federal government databases.

The priorities of this year are a continued focus on security, compliance, and infrastructure. In addition, several hardware and software updates were completed. Below is a list of the projects that have been completed during this last fiscal or calendar year:

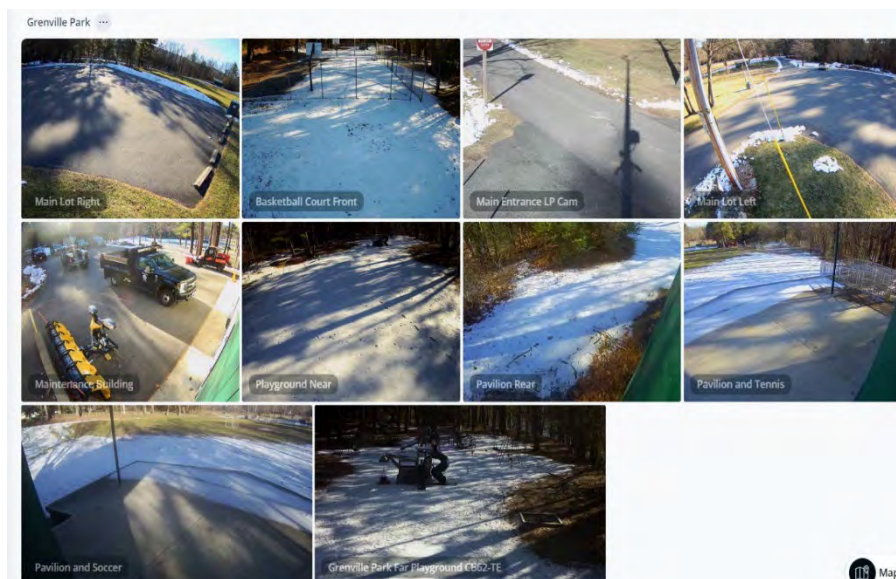
- **Police Server Upgrades**

As part of the Server rotation process, we successfully completed the installation of the new server at the Police Station. With the new fiber connection between the Police and Fire locations, we are able to process more data faster for backups and the WestComm Dispatch operation. We also upgraded the network switches and incorporated dual redundant UPS battery backups.



- **Grenville Park Security Cameras**

This past year we were able to install 10 IP based cameras at strategic locations throughout the park. These cameras are easily controlled via a web-based application and via cell phone. Full storage and backup capabilities are built into the system.

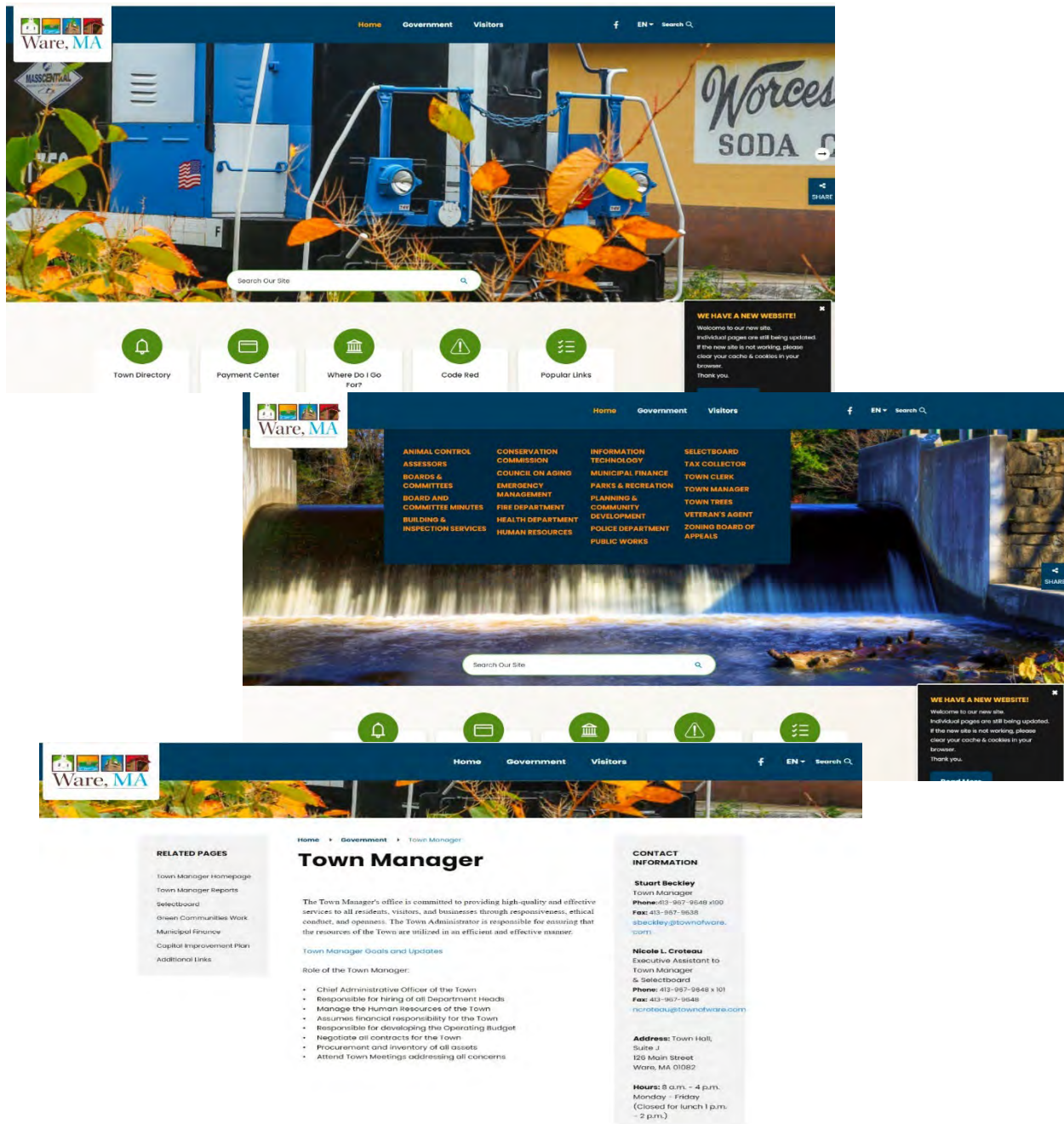


- **CMD DataVault**

CMD DataVault is a cloud-based data backup service. This augments our existing Backup and Disaster Recovery systems by also keeping our critical files in the cloud and away from potential security threats as it is an encrypted application.

- **Website redesign & Upgrades**

This year we successfully completed a complete redesign of the existing townofware.com website. This allowed us to take advantage of several new features and capabilities that Revize, the company that hosts our site, had to offer. This effort was primarily driven by Intern Morgan Thiphavong. She has been a true value to the team.



- **WestComm Integration**
With the completion of the fiber connections between Police and Fire locations, the WestComm Dispatch integration was able to be completed and is fully operational.
- **Computer Upgrades**
I.T. Director has completed the upgrade of another 25 computers, based on warranty expiration.
- **IT Intern**
This year the department was able to hire an I.T. Intern, Morgan Thiphavong, whose primary focus was to support me in the redesign of the Town's website. She has since graduated from Pathfinder High School but continues to work for department on a part-time basis.
- **Cybersecurity**
We were able to take advantage of the grant for cybersecurity awareness training offered through the Massachusetts IT group. This year we did a modified training that took place in the Fall of 2023. This continued training is critical, since it can be used for new employees, as a refresher for existing users and is also required for insurance purposes. The upcoming fiscal year's priorities will be to continue to monitor the security, firmware and software needs of the existing systems, a continuing round of cyber-security training and needed upgrades for some specific servers. These efforts will come in various forms, which include
- **Town Hall Server Upgrades and Operating Systems**
As part of the rotation process, this coming year will focus on replacing the primary server at the Town Hall. This server holds the primary financial and data functions of the Town. As part of this process, we will also be upgrading the operating systems of all the servers from Windows Server 2016 to Server 2023.
- **Wi-Fi Upgrades**
Currently we have Wi-Fi hot spots in all town buildings, which are several years old. The plan is to replace and/or upgrade the access points to support the current Wi-Fi standards.
- **Town Hall, Police and Senior Center Wiring and Network Upgrades**
The plan is to re-wire the Town Hall, Police and Senior Center location with CAT6/7 cables. Many of the existing cables were installed prior to 2010 and cannot support the required bandwidth for our phone and computer systems. As part of the upgrade, we will also be replacing the network switches and these locations to manage the traffic.
- **Computer Upgrades**
We will be continuing the upgrade process to replace aging desktop computers, based on warranty expiration date. As Director, I will also harvest some of the internal components to augment existing computers by replacing the "old" hard drives with new and faster solid-state drives. Also increase the memory (RAM) on those PCs that are lacking it.
- **Continued Town of Ware Website Improvements**
We still have one more thing to implement in the new website design, and that is the implementation on on-line forms. Our plan is to eliminate the need to complete forms in a handwritten manner but to integrate the online fillable forms into the process.

Respectfully submitted, David Grace, Director

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mission Statement: The Finance Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the Town Manager and Selectboard. The Committee is comprised of five appointed members with three-year terms, whose primary responsibility is to work with the Town Manager to present a balanced budget at the Annual Town Meeting.

Member	Title	Term Expires June 30th
Ken Willette	Chair	2026
Terry Smith	Vice-Chair	2024
S.K. Robinson	Member	2025
Kelsey Sidur	Member	2025
Mitch Kupperman	Member	2025

The Finance Committee met several times during the 2023-2024 fiscal year to review the town budget, make recommendations on Special Town Meeting articles and approve transfers from Finance Committee reserves.

Ken Willette continues to serve as Chair, and Terry Smith as Vice Chair. Mitch Kupperman was appointed by the Selectboard to fill a vacancy and joins S.K. Robinson and Kelsey Sidur to fill out the Committee.

The Finance Committee devoted extensive time to researching the proposed sale of Ware's Water and Wastewater Enterprise utilities. The Selectboard and Town Manager invited the Finance Committee to be part of the discussion and analysis of the value of moving forward and seek proposals from qualified parties to own and manage these utilities. As the Committee evaluated the current needs of the water and wastewater utilities, it supported moving forward to learn how a sale could support the Town's overall financial stability.

While several interested bidders participated in the pre award discussion and review, only one firm submitted a bid. This proposal would pay \$9 million to the Town for the two utilities. Upon receipt of this information, the Finance Committee, in conjunction with the Town Accountant, DPW Director, and Town Manager, began a deeper analysis. We found that while the Town would receive a welcome infusion of \$9 million dollars, there would still be expenses borne by the Town, but these expenses were almost covered by the property tax paid by the private operator and reductions in Town funded salaries and operating expenses.

At each step of our analysis, we identified the transferring of what is seen as a critical element of our infrastructure from a not for profit, municipal operation to a for profit, private operation, was something residents had deep concern about. While there was universal acknowledgement both utilities needed major capital improvements, the loss of local control and the potential negative impact on users and the Town outweighed the benefits of a sale.

In late October, the lone bidder asked to substantially revise their proposal, purchasing only the water utility, and managing, but not taking ownership of, the wastewater utility. The Selectboard rejected this request, terminating any discussion about the sale of the utilities.

As a committee, we have been advocates for addressing the capital needs of the Town and Water and Wastewater Enterprises. Through the privatization review, the needs of these utilities were amplified by the review of past studies, recent engineering analysis, and the Capital Projects outlined by the bidder. The Finance Committee provided a recommendation to the Selectboard that the Town begin addressing the priority capital needs and table any further privatization efforts.

The Board, after further deliberation, did table further privatization efforts and established a committee to assess and prioritize the capital needs of the water and wastewater utilities, providing guidance for Articles on future Town Meetings.

In December, working with the Town Manager, we established our meeting calendar for the FY25 budget review process.

During the January meetings, the Committee began reviewing the Certified Free Cash. This is money remaining from previous Fiscal Year budgets, completed grants, and other revenue sources that were received. In accordance with Town Financial Policies, certain percentages of the certified amount are required to be deposited into the Towns Reserve, Stabilization, and other accounts that help stabilize our financial operations. The remaining balances are available for use in reducing the money needed to be raised through property taxes for the FY25 budget, funding one-time capital purchase, and allocation to future development activities. It is expected some Free Cash will be applied to the FY25 budget request and funding specific Capital needs.

The Committee met with the Selectboard and acknowledged their continued effort as Water and Sewer Commissioners. Using data from the Tighe and Bond rate increase schedule, they continue to monitor the established rates and are moving forward with updating the rate schedule. This has resulted in a surplus in both the water and wastewater retained earnings accounts, providing a funding source for needed projects and improvements.

During the months of March and April, the Committee met with the Town Manager and department heads to review the Town Manager's proposed budget. At the conclusion of the department reviews, the Committee and Town Manager worked on finalizing the recommended budget for presentation to the Selectboard and Town Meeting. The FY25 budget process worked well. There was good collaborative dialogue with department heads and the Town Manager.

I want to recognize the School Superintendent Mr. Michael Lovato, Business Manager Andy Paquette, and School Committee Chair Chris Desjardins for their approach to this year's budget. The Superintendent had many conversations with the Town Manager during the budget process and had several conversations with me before their presentation to the Finance Committee. This open conversation guided them in presenting a budget closely aligned with the Town Manager's recommendation. When the gap between what was to be requested and what was recommended by the Town Manager, they looked internally to close it, resulting in agreement with the Town Manager's recommended budget allocation. Given that state COVID assistance education funds have been eliminated and other funding sources plateaued, this collaborative process allowed Ware to have a school budget reflective of the needs of our community and respectful of the taxpayers.

The recommended FY25 budget includes funding the last staff position needed by the library to achieve compliance with state requirements for minimal operating hours. This was a three-year initiative and Ware will no longer be at risk of losing its Library State Accreditation.

This budget does not fund several positions requested by department heads, including:

- A new full time Police Officer
- A new full time administrative assistant for the Police Department
- Two new firefighter positions
 - NOTE: The Selectboard had endorsed the Fire Chief submitting a grant application to fully fund these two positions for three years. If successful, they could be on board by summer of 2025. At the expiration of the three years, the Town would be responsible for fully funding them, estimated at \$200,000 annually.

This budget also saw reductions:

- COA Activities Director, currently vacant and removed from the budget at the suggestion of the Director.
- Veterans' Agent funding due to reduced demand for services.

This budget fully funds all collective bargaining agreements, and the salary increases for collective bargaining employees as part of the Towns Recruitment and Retention program. It also has funds to ensure the results of the ongoing wage study for employees outside the collective bargaining units will be funded.

The Pathfinder School District assessment had a small reduction from previous years.

Looking to future concerns, the Town joined WestComm Regional Public Safety Dispatch and has benefited by state funding to meet the \$200,000 participation fee. Starting in FY26, we will have to fund 25%, 50% in FY27, 75% in FY28 and 100% in FY30.

In closing, the Finance Committee was disheartened by the resignation of Town Accountant Tracy Meehan. Tracy served the Town for many years and assisted the Finance Committee through every budget process, including answering every question, providing numerous reports, and analyzing complex data. We thank her for being there as a colleague and friend and wish her all the best in her future endeavors. We welcome Kim D'Amato as our new Town Accountant and look forward to working with her and the Town financial team.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ken Willette
Finance Committee Chair

FIRE DEPARTMENT

200 West Street Station 413-967-5901 Office 413-967-9631

To the Citizens of Ware,

It is hard to believe that another year has passed and 2024 is upon us, this last year has seen some unique challenges and some significant changes. We have had several changes in our staffing this past year with the resignation of T.J. Berninger and the military deployment of Daniel Tenggren. The new positions that were created at the 2022 Town Meeting were filled by Firefighters Flynn and Gagnon, but with the departures of Berninger and Tenggren, the need to fill those positions required continuing the search. As of this report, we may finally be able to fill these two openings. Two candidates have been offered the positions and are in the final stages of completing the hiring process and expect to be in place before the end of April 2024. This will finally bring our department up to its full-time staffing levels.

Our call force, while small remains very committed. I am hoping to increase its membership, and to move forward with the process of fully integrating the call force into both the fire and EMS sides of the house. With the increasing demand for EMS responses and an increased dependence on mutual aid to meet our demands, having call members that are not part of the EMS response system is no longer an efficient means of operation. This will come with some additional expense for training and to maintain the needed EMS certifications, but if successful will enhance the service that we can provide our citizens.

I am very pleased to announce that the three students, enrolled in paramedic school last year, have completed their training and have obtained both National Registry and Massachusetts certification, congratulations to Firefighters Jake Perron, Dakota Harper and Eric Allard on a job well done. We are also fortunate enough to have three more career members in paramedic school this year as well. This was the result of two seats that were part of a grant received by the Western Massachusetts Fire Chiefs Association and the third from a grant received from Baystate Wing. I would like you to wish Firefighters Will Adams, Matthew Spellman and Joesph Tuminelli, success in their efforts going forward.

Our transition to the WESTCOMM Regional Dispatch Center continues to go forward. We are beginning implementation of the communications build-out and look forward to improving our communications infrastructure. There is still a lingering concern from some regarding the loss of local control of our dispatch, but I must remind our citizens that without the service they are providing the Town, our response capabilities would be greatly reduced and further increase our need to rely on mutual aid.

The building remains in good shape, although we have had to invest heavily in the heating and air conditioning systems over the past two years, as the result of extensive wear and tear. The connection between the apparatus bay and main building has an on-going water issue, created by the design of the building. The gaps between the buildings were filled with a type of foam that has repeatedly cracked with the heating and cooling of the building yearly.

This has allowed for water to enter from the roof joints and along the sides between the building, despite continued attempts to seal the voids. We are looking into a permanent fix for this as with continued water penetration the building will start to deteriorate, and the sizable investment made by our citizens will be diminished.

We were not able to secure a grant to replace the breathing air compressor and will need to plan for it to be replaced as a capital item. We are still in process of replacing turn-out gear and are moving forward with replacing some outdated and no longer serviceable equipment. We have been successful in obtaining two grants, one to replace our twenty-year old ice rescue sled and to obtain additional rescue equipment, and the second to allow for the safe mitigation of lithium-ion battery related incidents.

Our call volume continues to rise steadily. Our total responses were 2,461 for 2023. EMS accounted for 2113 responses, 18 structure fires, 4 vehicle fires, 9 weather related events and 317 alarm activations/ public assist. Of our total responses 63 times we went mutual aid and 30 times we received mutual aid as part of the call volume.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the citizens of Ware for the continued support of our service. I wish to acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of our members. Without your support and their commitment to public service, the Town of Ware would not be the community I am proud to call home.

Respectfully,

James E. Martinez
Fire Chief/ED
Town of Ware

GRANTS COORDINATOR

Below is a summary of funded and unfunded proposals submitted from January – December 2023:

Grants Received CY2023:

- **Stanton Foundation** – \$31,000; Dog Park Improvements
- **Community One Stop** – \$95,000; Millyard Re-Development Plan
- **MA Small Bridges Grant** – \$100,000; support for Beaver Lake Bridge
- **MA PARC Grant** – \$97,136; Grenville Park Pavilion and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Improvements
- **Office of Elder Affairs – Digital Literacy Grant** – \$98,750; IT support for seniors in Ware, Warren, and Hardwick/Barre
- **Regional Economic Development Organization (REDO)** – \$9,025; Funds for a PA system for public events
- **Brownfields Grant – EPA Clean-Up Grant** – \$500,000; Brownfields Site Cleanup at former Ware Manufactured Gas Plant site next to Memorial Field
- **Safe Routes to School** – New solar powered school zone signs near public schools' campus
- **Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant – with PVPC** – \$23,660
- **Federal Safe Streets 4 All (SS4A)** – \$40,500; For the creation of Safety Action Plan which is required to apply for future SS4A construction projects.
- **Jail Diversion Grant – in collaboration with Ware and Palmer Police Departments** – \$79,000; Funds for counseling program designed to support Police Departments on mental health related calls.

Total Grants Received (11): \$1,074,646

Grants Declined CY2023:

- **FEMA - AFG Grant** - \$90,405
- **MA Trails Grant** - \$47,814
- **DOT - RAISE Grant** - \$1,856,800
- **DER Culvert Grant** - \$418,441

Total Grants Declined (4): \$2,413,460

Respectfully submitted,

Jay Mooney
Grant Coordinator

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Role of the Ware Historical Commission/Mission Statement:

The Ware Historical Commission is the town's agency responsible for identifying, evaluating, and protecting the historic, architectural, and archaeological assets within the Town. The Historical Commission maintains a link to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, which in turn is overseen by the National Park Service and the United States Department of the Interior.

Areas for which The Ware Historical Commission is responsible:

- Assist in the administration of the Preservation Projects Fund, a fund established to assist in carrying out projects and programs for preserving the historic character of the Town.
- Maintain an inventory of Ware's historic assets, which currently includes information on over 600 properties. Updates are made to the inventory throughout the year as more historical properties are researched and additional information is added to properties currently listed.
- Protect properties listed on National and State Registers of Historic Districts.
- Assist the Town in managing the Demolition Delay Bylaw.

Accomplishments and Challenges:

Nenameseck Square Fountain: Consulted regularly with John Piechota, Parks Department on the condition of the fountain, park, and fence.

Friends of the Ware Town Hall: The Friends of the Ware Town Hall reported a good year with plenty of support from towns people. They are working to repair the lamp outside the Town Hall, and in the Great Hall, repair the windows, balcony railing and restore the Steinway piano.

Main Street Facades: Attended meetings to discuss the plans to update the facades and beautify Main Street.

Town Hall Bells: Continued to support the bells with a maintenance plan.

Display Case: Displayed historic artifacts in the case that is in the hallway of the Ware Town Hall near the Tax Collector's and Assessor's offices.

Scenic Road By-Law: Met our new Town Planner, Paralee Smith to discuss our bill and work to get it ready for adoption by the Town.

The Town Hall: Our new sign for the Ware Town Hall is ready for installation.

Historic Signs: Look into replacing four (4) signs that are showing their age.

250th Anniversary of our Country: Three of our members are on the Committee; began purchasing materials for the celebration.

Route 9 Overlay District: Made our feelings known regarding the possible Business Overlay District that went through our Ware Center Historic District by attending Planning Board meetings and writing letters.

Book Hunt: Plans are in the works for another book hunt this year! Books will be purchased, and the hunt will take place in the Spring.

The Commission Responds: Memorial Day observation / Schmidt Trust – Quabbin Memorial parade was attended by members.

After a demolition request was made by Baystate Hospital, a public meeting was held to discuss whether these buildings were historically significant. If so, the law says a pause before demolition is in order to find a buyer willing to rehabilitate or reuse these buildings at 85 and 89 South Street. The Commission voted yes.

The Commission Advises: Continue the plans for getting the Quabbin Cemetery on the National Register.

Met many times with members of the Baystate team and Western Mass Demolition Company; toured the buildings and secured several items that would have been discarded otherwise, and met with the Building Commissioner, Members of the Hospital Committee and Town Manager.

Worked with Shannon Walsh, our PVPC representative on a Parks Service grant.

Other Projects: Worked on our goals from the Preservation Plan for the next 10 years. It's posted on the town website.

Updated our historic inventory of our archives several times. Framed and restored a donated photo of the Town Hall that predates the inclusion of the Storrs Clock in the tower. (1901).

Short-term goals:

- Keep a watchful eye on the buildings on Main Street for possible help from the Commission.
- Restore/protect items in the basement in the fall-out shelter.
- Attend meetings as needed for the Parks and Planning Commissions and to keep our great working relationship; keep a steady line of communication open.
- Assist the Town Manager with RPF's for historic buildings and a possible new grant for the Town Hall.
- Work with the Friends of the Ware Town Hall Committee.
- Pass the Scenic Road By-Law.
- Meet monthly with representatives from Baystate to try to resolve the demolition plans for the Mary Lane complex and Gilbert house.

Long-term goals:

- Continue to preserve as many of the historical buildings and landscapes that make up the unique character of Ware.
- Create a plan for maintaining the Ware Town Hall.
- Repair the antique fountain in front of Ware Town Hall.
- Create a library of important documents and publications.
- Cooperate with the Board of Governors for the Ware Center Meeting House, the Friends of the Ware Town Hall, Friends of the Young Men's Library, Friends of Quabbin, and the Ware Historical Society.

- Nominate the Quabbin Cemetery to the National Register of Historic Places.
- March in the parade at Quabbin Cemetery on Memorial Day.
- Research and coordinate a review and update of our inventory of historic houses and structures.
- Promote efforts to restore scenic river views along South Street and East Main Street.
- Continue the Commission's involvement in the care of Nenameseck Square Fountain in co-operation with the Ware Parks Department.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ware Historical Commission

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Human Resources Department Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Human Resources Department to provide quality service to the public and all employees for their human resources needs in the areas of recruitment, hiring, compensation, classification, training and development, labor relations, worker's compensation, and unemployment.

The Town of Ware, through its Human Resources Department, is committed to attracting and retaining a knowledgeable and diverse workforce, fostering professional development, promoting a harmonious work environment, and assisting employees in their professional goals through education, training, and awareness.

The Department will provide information, resources, support, and counsel to all Town Departments with a high level of professionalism, integrity, and sensitivity to the needs of the employees.

In 2023, the Human Resources Department implemented a new FMLA Policy which includes Parental Leave and Pregnancy-Related Reasonable Accommodation. The Department also implemented a Public Records Policy which outlines the procedural maintenance and processing of public records.

Town staff participated in several training classes in 2023 including:

- CPR/ First Aid training, led by the Board of Health Nurse, Kirsten Krieger
- Microsoft Excel training
- Public Records Request training
- Active Shooter training, led by Ware Police Officer Ryan Downing

In the year 2023, the Human Resources Department has recruited the following positions:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| • Community Health Intern | • Administrative Assistants (3) |
| • IT Intern | • Police Officers (5) |
| • Planning Intern | • Firefighters (4) |
| • Van Drivers (3) | • Assistant Building Inspector |
| • Drug Free Communities Program Director | • Custodian |
| • Youth Engagement Coordinator | • DPW Laborer (4) |
| • Community Development Director | • Parks/Cemetery Laborer |
| • Interim Assessor | • Senior Center Finance Coordinator |
| | • Senior Center Activities Coordinator |

In the coming year the department will implement new HR software, continue to improve, and implement Town policies and procedures, offer new and on-going training and education to staff, and improve staff communication.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Przypek, Human Resources Director

PARKS COMMISSION

Mission Statement

Our goal is to keep all facilities maintained clean and safe for all to enjoy throughout the year.

Grenville Park

The Park is open rear round with the back section closed to vehicle traffic seasonally. The Park Department does keep the back clear of snow and sanded for walking pleasure. We ask all too please observe the speed limit, no parking, leash law and one-way signs for the safety of everyone. We host a variety of youth sports organizations in the park. Baseball, football as well as soccer are played in Grenville Park on various fields here. The park also hosts fireworks and a concert series. The park has walking trails and offers a state boat ramp as well as handicap fishing access in the heavily stocked Ware River. The park continues to host the local mobile food distribution on the 3rd Tuesday of every month. People can drive through and have a minimal person to person contact while receiving food. The new playground project was completed and has been very popular and well received. We have been awarded another grant for some parking improvements for the playground as well as ADA accessibility and a pavilion near the playground. The camera system is completed and helps to minimize vandalism in the park. Pickle ball continues to be very popular both inside, at Town Hall, and outdoors at the park.

Deardon Memorial Field

Memorial Field continues to be the location for Ware High School baseball, as well as other youth sporting organizations. The field is equipped with a lighting system to offer the ability for evening events. We are working to finish the grant for basketball court and irrigation to be completed by end of June.

Reed Memorial Pool

The Town pool is still currently closed, and options are being looked at to replace the pool. The Town grant writer has submitted a grant to fund this huge project and we will find out if this will be awarded this summer.

Beauregard Playground

The playground is in desperate need of upgrades and repairs due to the age of materials. Another grant has been written for possible spray deck and playground improvements. The Park Commission is committed to addressing the current stage of the playground.

Veterans Memorial Park

Located on Main Street, the park continues to be used for different functions throughout the year from Memorial Day Parade to the Holiday Flare. Veterans Park will be receiving some improvements as well, seating, lighting, a new monument, possibly irrigation and other smaller improvements this spring.

Nenaseck Square

The fountain continues to run in summer months and the square is decorated for the holidays.

Kubinski Field

This field is under the division of the DPW. However, the baseball diamond is maintained by the Park Department as long as funding continues. This field has limited usage since the lights are not operational. Also, this field is in the Town's drinking water area and must follow strict rules so as not to jeopardize the water system.

Dog Park

The Dog Park is still heavily used on a daily basis but is still in need of a friend's group to help oversee and implement rules and care for the park. We have been awarded funding from the Stanton Foundation for shade structures and landscape improvements.

The Park Department has been and will continue to be a team player when it comes to helping the Town out. We help other departments whenever we can to ensure we all work together to make WARE the best we all can.

The Park Commission wishes to thank John Piechota, the Park Manager, for his work and dedication to the Parks Department. John and his crew have done an exceptional job in keeping the Park's facilities maintained and safe.

Respectfully submitted,

William Imbier, Chairman, Park Commissioner
Kimberly Swarts, Park Commissioner
John Piechota, Park Manager



Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School District

240 Sykes Street, Palmer, MA 01069 • (413) 283-9701 • www.PathfinderTech.org

Eric Duda

Superintendent-Director

PATHFINDER REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School District Committee, along with Superintendent Eric Duda, is pleased to present this report to the citizens of the nine-town District. The School Committee consists of the following members: Julie Quink from Hardwick serving as Chairperson, David Droz from Palmer serving as Vice Chairman, Robert Lavoie from Palmer, Lorraine Alves from Belchertown serving as Secretary, Francesco Dell'Olio also from Belchertown, April Judicki from Granby, Marie Barbara Ray from Ware and Richard Fly (who began serving as a Ware member in March 2023), R. Keith Valley from Monson, John Nason from Warren, Martin Goulet from New Braintree, Jeffrey Nelson from Oakham, and Student Representative Morgan Brown from Palmer.

Community Outreach and Admissions

The Community Outreach and Admissions department achieved success in the past year. In addition to managing enrollment, this department oversees all community engagement efforts, communication, event planning, and media relations. Pathfinder Tech's enrollment as of October 1, 2023, reached 643 students, marking an overall increase from October 1, 2022. Total application numbers also rose from the previous year, indicating a continued heightened demand for career and technical education. The application figures up to December 31, 2023, suggest a potential record number of applications for the incoming Class of 2028. Overall, there has been a noticeable growth in the total number of applications.

During Summer Bridge (new student orientation), approximately 176 students attended over three days in July and August. Students engaged in icebreaker activities, facilitating introductions and connections. Staff tours provided insights into all aspects of Pathfinder Tech. Placement tests were administered to finalize class schedules. Students received Class of 2027 t-shirts and left their mark by writing their first names in chalk on the cement outside the school. A group picture commemorated the beginning of their journey at Pathfinder Tech. Pathfinder Tech also maintained a presence at the Belchertown Fair for the second consecutive year. Cosmetology students volunteered for face painting and manicures, and visitors had the chance to win a Cribbage Board crafted by the Advanced Manufacturing program. In November and December, annual events such as the 8th Grade Showcase and Career Night were held. The Showcase hosted 210 visiting students, offering them a taste of life at Pathfinder Tech, and allowing them to take home their handmade projects. Career Night saw over 600 students and families in attendance. Both events were highly successful. Additionally, the community outreach department continued its efforts to engage with the community through Pathfinder Tech's social media platforms, sharing updates on events, fundraisers, department achievements, student highlights, and athletics updates.

2023 (FY24) Budget Information

In 2023, the School Committee approved a final FY24 budget of \$15,443,177, marking a 5.70% increase over the FY23 Budget. All nine towns within the Pathfinder Regional District unanimously approved their assessments during their 2023 Town Meetings and Council Meetings, adhering to the regional school budget statute. Budget formulation and town assessments are determined based on the previous school year's October 1 enrollment.

Throughout 2023, Pathfinder Tech extended Free School Lunch services through a combination of the federal Community Eligibility Provision and new state funding, significantly benefiting students facing financial instability partly due to the COVID pandemic's economic repercussions. Moreover, leveraging the final year of federal COVID Relief Funds, the school provided additional student support, including health services, counseling, technology upgrades, and capital purchases, largely funded by public and private grants, donations, and gifts totaling over \$700,000.00.

While some concerns of the pandemic have waned, students continue to grapple with its social, emotional, and economic aftermath. Pathfinder Tech prioritizes data-driven decision-making to reallocate resources as needed, striving for fiscal responsibility amid finite state and local budget resources. Efforts include cost reduction strategies like health insurance plan adjustments, grant acquisition, utility net metering contracts, community partnerships, and internal infrastructure projects.

Ultimately, Pathfinder Tech's dedication to fiscal prudence ensures the delivery of high-quality technical education, providing graduates with a competitive advantage in the workforce or postsecondary pursuits.

Competitive Grants Overview

In early 2023, Pathfinder Tech secured a competitive Skills Capital grant of \$188,000 to overhaul the cafeteria line. This initiative introduced new service stations equipped with advanced cooking and holding technology, enabling the provision of healthier meals to students while offering culinary students the chance to work with fresh ingredients. Additionally, a second Skills Capital grant totaling \$491,905 was utilized to renovate the HVAC/R Technical Program, completely refurbishing the facilities, and outfitting them with state-of-the-art equipment to enhance student training.

Further competitive grant awards facilitated various enhancements, including the provision of additional mental health services for students, the implementation of a Math Acceleration Academy during school breaks to bolster MCAS scores, the renovation of the staff lounge, the acquisition of kitchen equipment, the inaugural hosting of the Pathfinder Tech Arts and Culture Night, support for robotics competition expenses, scholarships for Advanced Manufacturing students, and the enrichment of MTSS initiatives. Cumulatively, these competitive grant awards exceeded \$900,000, funding innovative improvements and initiatives beyond the general fund budget.

Cooperative Education and Vocational Technical Highlights

In 2023, Pathfinder Tech's Cooperative Education Program engaged 71 students, while 33 students participated in the WIOA program, contributing significantly to the local labor market.

Pathfinder Tech students excel in hands-on learning, applying analytical skills in real-world scenarios. Through the work request system, municipalities and residents of Pathfinder Tech's member towns can submit requests for discounted services.

In 2023, nearly 600 work requests were received, with around 70% of Technical Programs accepting requests from member towns. The programs provide services within the district, resulting in substantial taxpayer savings.

- The Automotive Technology program serviced 312 vehicles, saving community members over \$145,000 compared to industry rates, including maintenance for the Palmer Police Department.
- The Carpentry program saved approximately \$35,000 on various projects, including residential constructions and signage.
- The Collision Repair and Refinishing program saved nearly \$15,000 servicing 46 vehicles and repaired police cruisers for Palmer, hosting a successful 30th Annual Car Show.
- The Cosmetology program generated around \$8,200 through client visits.
- The Culinary Arts program's restaurant, Perso, achieved \$45,000 in sales and \$6,000 in catering, volunteering to serve the Belchertown Senior Center.
- The Electrical Program completed 25 community projects and campus electrical tasks.
- The Horticulture Program organized Spring and Winter sales, decorated Storrowtown Village, designed floral displays for the Springfield Museum of Science, participated in town cleanups, and hosted floral design classes.
- The Plumbing & Pipefitting Program completed five new construction plumbing jobs, collectively saving customers \$14,400.
- The Programming and Web Development program addressed 643 help-desk tickets and undertook web design projects for external clients.

Select Student Accomplishments

Spring 2023 Highlights:

- All six Business Technology students who participated in the Massachusetts Business Professionals of America State Leadership Conference achieved top-five placements in their respective events.
- Two Hospitality Management students ranked in the top ten at the DECA state-level conference, with one advancing to the DECA International Career Development Conference.
- Ten students from the CAD/Pre-Engineering Program obtained their Certified SolidWorks Associate Certification, while four earned the Certified SolidWorks Associate-Additive Manufacturing Certification, and two attained the Certified SolidWorks Professional Certification.
- Eight Health Assisting Juniors successfully passed the demanding Certified Nursing Assistant (CAN) Exam.
- At the Massachusetts FFA Competition, a team of two students placed 2nd in Duo Chainsaw Demonstration, and one student secured 2nd place in the Food Science & Technology Career Development Event.

- During the SkillsUSA Massachusetts District V Leadership Conference, students clinched a total of 17 medals, including 1st and 2nd in Automated Manufacturing Team, 1st in Health Knowledge Bowl Team, 2nd in Mobile Robotics Technology, 3rd in Automotive Refinishing Technology, 3rd in Plumbing, 3rd in Power Equipment Technology, and 3rd in Urban Search and Rescue Team. Those who secured 1st and 2nd places earned spots at the SkillsUSA MA State Leadership Conference.

Fall 2023 Highlights:

- The Pathfinder Tech Freshman class celebrated their technical program assignments during the Pathfinder Tech Program Signing Day, signing certificates committing to learning technical skills and demonstrating workplace professionalism.
- In September, the Horticulture Program and FFA students received the Kevin Brown Founders Award for their float entry in the Belchertown parade.

Select Student Activities

The initial months of 2023 buzzed with student activities! Throughout January, February, and March, students engaged in fundraising efforts for their classes. They organized Krispy Kreme sales, conducted a Valentine's Day Flower sale and candy guessing game, and coordinated restaurant dine-in nights at Antonio's Pizza in Belchertown. On April 14th, an amusing late Pi Day celebration took place, where students witnessed one teacher and one administrator receive a pie to the face from the Senior class president and the student representative of the school committee during an assembly. Proceeds from the "pie-to-the-face" ticket sales supported the Administration Scholarship Fund.

In April and May, class fundraising events included a bottle and can drive along with a soup fundraiser. The Class of 2023 hosted the Senior Prom at Zukas Hilltop Barn in Spencer, Massachusetts on May 12th, creating cherished memories. The Junior Prom, organized by the Class of 2024, took place at UMASS Amherst Mass Mutual Center on May 19th.

The Autumn of 2023 further fueled our school spirit with additional spirit days and weeks in October, November, and December. Events included a pink-out day for Breast Cancer Awareness month, a Halloween costume contest, and gym decorating ahead of the pep rally. Themed days like country western, favorite holiday, and PT apparel day saw enthusiastic participation from both students and staff, showcasing their school spirit! Our third Annual Fall Pep Rally was a tremendous success, preceded by a Homecoming Dance that brought together hundreds of our students for a memorable evening of fun and dancing!

The Pathfinder Tech Student Council collaborated with the community to support local charities through a food drive in November and a hat and mitten drive in December, along with raising a monetary donation to Breast Cancer Awareness.

The Classes of 2024 and 2025 initiated fundraising efforts for their upcoming proms through Krispy Kreme and Big Fundraising Ideas sales, while the Class of 2026 organized a PT Jibbet fundraiser.

To conclude 2023, the Drama Club hosted their 2nd annual PT Talent Show, showcasing a diverse array of talents from speed painting to singing to instrumental performances. Wrapping up the year, our talented Culinary Arts Department in collaboration with the Hospitality Department treated both students and staff to a delightful Holiday Buffet.

Athletics Department

The Athletics Department maintains its commitment to providing a no-fee program, enabling all students to participate without any personal expenses for participation. The sports offered include baseball, basketball, cheerleading, football, golf, lacrosse, soccer, wrestling, and softball. Moreover, cross-country, ice hockey, girl's lacrosse, and field hockey were accessible through a cooperative agreement with Amherst, Monson, and Palmer. These offerings, which commenced in the Fall of 2022, attracted twelve enrolled students.

Curriculum and Professional Development

Data-driven intervention strategies remained a primary focus in 2023 and carried forward into 2024. Collaborating with the Data Team, Progress reports, and Trimester reports were analyzed to tackle the high rate of student course failures. Extra help sessions during school vacations were introduced to offer students additional opportunities to catch up on missed work or receive assistance with specific assignments. Individual student schedules were tailored based on their specific academic needs.

In the 2023-2024 school year, a new instructional coaching program was established to support students in grades 9 and 10 in English and Math. Two instructional coaches dedicated their time to collect departmental data and assess student mastery of covered standards weekly. Students identified as not proficient were provided intervention sessions, temporarily withdrawing from their technical programs. Those who demonstrated proficiency early in the week were exempted from further intervention, while others continued to receive support. Additionally, multiple rounds of Mock MCAS testing were implemented to ensure students were adequately prepared for Spring assessments.

IXL, an online learning platform, saw increased integration across the curriculum in the 2023-2024 school year. Grades 9 and 10 students spent the initial 17 minutes of their technical programs working on IXL skills, while 11th and 12th graders dedicated 30 minutes weekly to technical program practice. Diagnostic testing through IXL aided in measuring student progress and informed data-driven decisions.

Math and ELA curriculum underwent comprehensive restructuring for grades 9 and 10 at the onset of the 2023-2024 school year. Drawing inspiration from successful regional vocational technical high schools, the pacing and sequencing of courses were redesigned. Teachers received stipends and collaborated with the Academic Director over the summer to finalize the new curriculum.

Professional Development sessions continued to be offered monthly after school, emphasizing best practices. Staff could choose from five different presentations led by Pathfinder Tech personnel, facilitating peer learning and knowledge sharing. Professional Development Points (PDPs) for these sessions, along with all other district-delivered professional development, were tracked and distributed through TeachPoint.

Guidance Department

The Guidance Department dedicated efforts to ensure students were prepared for college and careers by enhancing its curriculum and services. Utilizing Xello, an interactive college and career software, counselors guided students in career planning and readiness, closely monitoring their progress. They organized visits with military recruiters, college admissions officers, and coordinated post-secondary options and opportunities.

Emphasizing social-emotional support, the department expanded services with the addition of a new school adjustment counselor. This ensured students had access to responsive support for academic, personal, social, and career challenges. Collaborations with various entities included:

- Care Solace: Provided mental health care coordination for families.
- Ori: Offered a virtual curriculum platform focusing on transition and social-emotional learning.
- BHN Family Resource Center (Ware): Collaborated on tier two interventions and supports.
- Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance: Conducted awareness and training sessions on substance abuse, mental health, and diversity/inclusion. Mental Health First Aid Training was also provided.
- Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT): Implemented a public health approach to identify students at risk of substance misuse.

Managing 504 Accommodation Plans, the department scheduled and facilitated meetings to update plans and ensure effective accommodations. They provided progress data for Individual Education Plans IEP meetings and contributed to student re-entry and safety plans.

In May, Pathfinder Tech celebrated its annual award events, inducting 50 students into the National Technical Honor Society and presenting 137 awards for academic and technical excellence during the Annual Awards Night Celebration.

The Class of 2023 graduated on June 2, 2023, with 124 students receiving diplomas, including one summer graduate. The ceremony awarded 70 scholarships from local supporters totaling nearly \$20,000 to deserving graduates, with 35 class members receiving the John & Abigail Adams Scholarship for outstanding performance on MCAS.

Student Services Department

The Student Services Department at Pathfinder Tech oversees Special Education, Mental Health/Social Emotional Learning initiatives, and English Learners programming.

During the 2023 school year, the department managed the (IEPs) of approximately 155 students. The dedicated team of teachers, paraprofessionals, and student support personnel focused on enhancing their team meeting process and IEP development.

In the realm of Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health, the department adopted ORI Learning, a well-being curriculum for all 9th graders. The MTSS Coordinator identifies areas of need and implements a Tiered System of Social Emotional support.

A full-time School Adjustment Counselor was added to address the social and emotional needs of students. The department maintains its partnership with Care Solace, connecting members of the Pathfinder Tech community with mental health and substance abuse providers.

During the 2022-2023 School year, the Department collaborated with the Office of Public-School Monitoring to conduct a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review (TFM).

The school introduced a Comfort Animal (English Cream Retriever) named “Scout” to the Pathfinder Tech community.

Special Programs Highlights

During the summer of 2023, 45 students from Pathfinder Tech and 22 students from other districts participated in summer school, collectively enrolling in 108 courses across 11 different sending districts. Revenue generated from out-of-district students covered the costs for Pathfinder Tech students this year, with most of the funding for summer schoolteachers coming from grants.

Additionally, we offered in-person summer school courses tailored to students who struggled academically throughout the year, providing extra support for English or math courses.

Our Summer Youth Enrichment Program at Pathfinder Tech experienced its most successful season yet in July! Children aged 9-13 from local towns engaged in 15 diverse technical and educational programs, including Advanced Manufacturing, Baking, Junior Chef, Auto Body, Biking, Plumbing, Drama, First Responders, and Woodworking. Spanning a three-week period, the sessions filled 395 spots, marking an increase of over 100 participants compared to the previous summer.

Adult Evening Education

The School of Adult Evening Education (P.M. Pathways) at Pathfinder Tech celebrated its inaugural year of course offerings with Electrical and Plumbing programs. These initiatives, made possible through a CTI grant from Commonwealth Corporation, align with our mission to engage and inspire the community through valuable educational opportunities.

Both electrical and plumbing programs commenced on January 20th, 2023, and concluded on June 26th, 2023. Achieving a combined graduation rate of 75%, each graduate obtained multiple industry-recognized credentials and a range of trade skills, enhancing their employability in their respective fields. Many graduates secured relevant employment, demonstrating a strong drive for personal and professional advancement.

Collaborative efforts with MassHire Springfield Career Center and the Hampden County Workforce aim to support the remaining graduates in their job placement endeavors. Analyzing workforce needs and utilizing employer-focused communication channels, we strive to foster stronger relationships and higher placement rates.

Upon the completion of the inaugural classes, we reviewed advertising, enrollment processes, course structures, and employment initiatives. Several enhancements were implemented to optimize program success, including an earlier enrollment period, MassHire pre-screening, interview process modifications, adoption of a new all-in-one software platform, and recruitment-focused event planning.

As of October, enrollment for the second year of cohort programs began, with increased efforts in advertisement through social media and radio ads. There was a 34% rise in overall applicants compared to the previous year. This increase in interest underscores the community's demand for additional course offerings. Plans for 2024 include the introduction of new programs tailored to community needs and demands, further solidifying our commitment to providing valuable educational opportunities.

Concluding Statement

As Pathfinder Tech embarks on its 51st year of providing high-quality career and technical education to our member communities, the School Committee expresses its deep pride in the dedication of both staff and students. We extend our sincere gratitude to our legislators, town officials, and the various town meetings for their steadfast support.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Quink (Hardwick), Chairperson
David Droz (Palmer), Vice Chairperson
Lorraine F. Alves (Belchertown), Secretary
Robert Lavoie (Palmer)
Francesco Dell'Olio (Belchertown)
R. Keith Valley (Monson)
April Judicki (Granby)
Martin Goulet (New Braintree)
Jeffrey Nelson (Oakham)
Marie Barbara Ray (Ware)
John Nason (Warren)
Morgan Brown, Student Member
Eric Duda, Superintendent-Director

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

The Planning & Community Development Department (PCD) staff continues to support the Planning Board (PB), Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), Community Development Authority (CDA), and the Open Space Committee. Our accomplishments reflect the commitment and dedication that the Board and Committee members have offered through their time and efforts.

2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE PCD DEPARTMENT

- ✓ Worked with the Grants Coordinator to secure a \$42,740 grant from the Municipality Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program to create a Sub Watershed Masterplan for the Muddy Brook. The Town contracted with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) to carry out the work. This work is currently ongoing into 2024.
- ✓ Worked with the Grants Coordinator and Town of Ware staff to begin the application process for the EPA Community Change Grant.
- ✓ Worked with the Grants Coordinator and Town Manager on the Ware Rural Development Grant for the purpose of the Millyard Infrastructure.
- ✓ Continued to make progress on reviewing the newly proposed Subdivision Regulations.
- ✓ Continued to make progress on the Floodplain Bylaw revisions.
- ✓ Continued to make progress on creating the Scenic Road Bylaw.
- ✓ Implemented several zoning changes at the Annual and Special Town Meetings pertaining to zoning changes with the Rural Residential Business (RRB) Overlay District, and amendments to Sections 3.4 (Overlay Districts) and 4.9 (Overlay Districts Regulations) of the Zoning Bylaws.
- ✓ Participated with the Domestic Violence Task Force of Ware and Hardwick.
- ✓ Coordinated with PVPC to apply for CDBG grants for FY24.
- ✓ Coordinated with PVPC to apply for MVP Action grants and further Muddy Brook enhancements.
- ✓ Coordinated with PVPC to continue progress on the Economic Development Plan for the Town of Ware.
- ✓ Coordinated with PVPC to continue progress on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for FY24.

PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board, consisting of five (5) elected members and one (1) appointed alternate member, met regularly during 2023. Meetings are held on the first and third Thursday of the month. It has always been the Board's best interest to meet as often as necessary to conduct business deemed appropriate under Massachusetts General Laws and the Charter of the Town of Ware. All the meetings were video recorded and broadcast via the local public cable access as well as Zoom.

The principal responsibilities of the Planning Board are to foster sound community growth and development while preserving community character, heritage, and natural resources. To do so the Board reviews and evaluates commercial site plans, subdivisions, subdivision "Approval Not Required" plans (ANR's), proposed zoning bylaws, and zoning map amendments. Responsibilities are contained in the Massachusetts Zoning Act, Chapter 40A, and the Municipal

Planning and Subdivision Legislation, Chapter 40A. Local authority and responsibilities are found in the Town's Zoning Bylaws, adopted, and amended at Town Meetings, and the Board's Subdivision Rules and Regulations.

The Planning Board Members are as follows:

Name	Position	Term Expiration
Ed Murphy, III	Chairman	2024
Richard Starodoj	Vice Chairman	2026
Kenneth Crosby	Member	2025
Christopher DiMarzio	Member	2026
Elizabeth Hancock	Member	2024

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

During the calendar year of 2023, the Planning Board held twenty-one (21) regular meetings and one (1) site visit.

The following is a list of permits the Planning Board has processed this year, not all may have decisions at this time:

Endorsed Approval Not Required (ANR's)

- ANR-2023-01 Sygiel 43 Sczygiel Road
- ANR-2023-02 Makuch Sczygiel Road
- ANR-2023-03 Kularski Osborne Road
- ANR-2023-04 Jackson 82 Osborne Road
- ANR-2023-05 Kozyra Walker & Doane Roads

Special Permit (SP) & Site Plan Review (SPR) Applications

- SP-2023-01: The Special Permit of Frederick T. Smith III requesting a one-year extension for the approved earth removal project located on Greenwich Road, Parcel ID 35-0-12, zoned in the Rural Residential (RR) District. **Approved.**
- SP-2023-03: The Special Permit of Delia Wolfe, requesting to have 9 domestic pet hens, located on 704 Belchertown Road, Parcel ID 25-0-3, zoned in the Rural Residential (RR) District. **Approved with Conditions.**
- SP-2023-04: The Special Permit of Greenwich Road Realty to request an extension at Greenwich Road, Parcel ID 35-12-1, zoned in the Rural Residential (RR) District. **Approved.**
- SP-2023-05: The Special Permit of Jimmy Mosher to construct a two-family home at 34 West Street, Parcel ID 35-10-8, zoned in the Rural Residential (RR) District. **Approved with Conditions.**
- SP-2023-06: The Special Permit of Melink Solar Development to request an extension at 45 Greenwich Plains Road, for previous permits SP-2019-03 and SP-2019-04. **Approved.**
- SP-2023-07: The Special Permit of Stephanie Benmahidi to operate a towing service with small impound yard at 51 West Street, Parcel ID 56-0-31 and 56-0-27, zoned in the Highway Commercial (HC) District. **Approved with Conditions.**

- SPR-2023-01: The Major Site Plan of Walmart Real Estate Business Trust to construct an 8,041 square foot expansion at the current Walmart at 352 Palmer Road, Parcel ID 9-0-164, zoned Commercial Industrial (CI) District. **Approved with Conditions.**
- SPR-2023-02: The Major Site Plan of Palm Coast Capital to construct a Tractor Supply with a 21,930 square foot building at 256 West Street, Parcel 10-0-129, zoned Residential Business (RB) and Suburban Residential (SR). **Approved with Conditions.**

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) consisting of five (5) appointed members and two (2) appointed alternate members, met on an infrequent basis in 2023. The Board meets on the third Wednesday of each month as needed.

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is a quasi-judicial body which operates under the authority of Chapter 40A of the General Laws of the Commonwealth for the purpose of promoting the health, safety, convenience, and general welfare of the Town of Ware. The ZBA reviews application requests for Variances related to relief from dimension use regulations of the Zoning Bylaw, and Special Permits for non-conformities that are stated in the Zoning Bylaw. The Board may be asked to review applications of Appeal submitted by residents or business owners who are aggrieved by a decision made by the Building Commissioner or the Planning Board. The Zoning Board of Appeals reviews requests for Comprehensive Permits submitted under Chapter 40B by developers who wish to create affordable housing.

The Zoning Board of Appeals Members are as follows:

Name	Position	Term Expiration
Lewis Iadarola	Chairman	2024
Jodi Chartier	Vice Chairman	2025
Charles Dowd	Member	2026
Greg Eaton	Member	2026
David Skoczylas	Alternate	2024
S.K. Robinson	Alternate	2025

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

During the calendar year of 2023, the Zoning Board of Appeals held four (4) regular meetings. The Board typically only meets on an as needed basis.

Below is a list of the Appeals, Variances, and Special Permits (Non-Conformities) requests received this year by the Zoning Board of Appeals:

- SP-2023-02: The Special Permit of M&A Real Estate to repair a burned unit and provide cosmetic updates at 135 Main Street, Parcel ID 60-0-219, zoned in the Downtown Commercial (DTC) District. **Denied.**

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Community Development Authority (CDA), consisting of five (5) appointed members, met regularly during 2022. The Community Development Authority have the following powers and duties:

- ✓ Oversee all Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) awarded to the Town and other grants which were obtained through the Planning & Community Development Department.
- ✓ Oversee loans provided to businesses from the Economic Development Fund.
- ✓ Oversee loans provided to individuals through any other loan programs administered such as the Septic Loan Program.
- ✓ Determine which areas of the town constitute decadent, substandard, or blighted and prepare plans for the redevelopment of such areas.
- ✓ Working with stakeholders, prepare plans and oversee implementation of strategies to revitalize the downtown and Millyard areas.
- ✓ Participate in general economic development projects; and any other activities as needed to effectuate positive change in regard to community or economic development.

The Community Development Authority Members are as follows:

Name	Position	Term Expiration
Danielle Souza	Chair	2024
Shayne Perdicini	Member	2025
Brandy Bruso	Member	2024
S.K. Robinson	Member	2024
Kathleen Deschamps	Member	2024

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

During the calendar year of 2023, the CDA held eleven (11) regular meetings to address numerous topics such as:

- ✓ PVPC grants activities including Bank Street infrastructure improvements; housing rehabilitation program; social services including adult education, support for young families, domestic violence education and prevention; discussions on Cottage Street Design and Engineering; and the Façade Improvement Program.
- ✓ Continued our partnership with the QVCDC and QVBAC to support local, small businesses through their loan program and other activities.
- ✓ Allocated CDBG miscellaneous funding to programs such as: the First Time Homebuyer Program, the Veteran's Memorial Carnival, and the Park Avenue Sewer Project.

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

The Open Space Committee, consisting of three (3) resident members in 2022 and two staff members, met only once during 2022. The duties and responsibilities of the Open Space Committee is to oversee information which is used to understand the needs of the community relative to open space and recreation. Current projects include the Ware River Blue Trail and maintaining the Ware Rail Trail. Completed projects include the hard packing of gravel and grading of the remainder of the Rail Trail from Longview Avenue to Robbins Road.

The Open Space Committee has four goals regarding the open space and recreation within Ware and identified as:

- ✓ Goal #1: Provide a broad range of high-quality recreational programs.
- ✓ Goal #2: Manage open space and recreation cohesively and effectively.
- ✓ Goal #3: Preserve town's rural characteristics.
- ✓ Goal #4: Increase public awareness of open space and recreation resources.

The Open Space Committee Members are as follows:

Jodi Chartier	Member
Jason Brooks	Member
Nicholas Bousquet	Member
Stuart Beckley	Staff Member
Paralee Smith	Staff Member

FINAL THOUGHTS

The Planning & Community Development Department has continued to work on the goals and objectives of these various Boards and Committees this Department serves. We will continue to search for funding to help with various planning initiatives in Town that are greatly needed. Community/Economic Development, Open Space Preservation/Outdoor Recreation, large scale Planning & Research, Zoning and other Bylaw updates will continue to be our main objectives. Thank you to all the Board and Committee members who continue to serve as well as the residents of Ware who continue to give us their support.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Paralee Smith

Director of Planning and Community Development

POLICE DEPARTMENT

22 North Street 413-967-3571
Operational 24-Hours a Day / 7-Days a Week

Mission Statement

The Ware Police Department is committed to protecting the lives, property, and rights of all people by working in partnership with the community to fight crime, preserve peace, maintain order, and enforce the law impartially.

The Ware Police Department is dedicated to accomplishing the mission and treating every citizen with respect, compassion, courtesy, and professionalism.

The Ware Police Department has a zero-tolerance response to criminal activity and is determined to be relentless in its pursuit of justice, always remembering that “The police are the public and the public is the police.”

Function

The Ware Police Department is a full-service police department that provides around-the-clock response to calls for service. Functional responsibilities for the Ware Police Department include patrol, answering calls for service, responding to an investigation report of a crime, criminal activity, illegal narcotics violations, sexual assault investigations, investigating motor vehicle accidents, and motor vehicle law enforcement.

Facebook

The police department also posts various notifications on its Facebook site, such as recent or major arrests, along with various events, notices, photographs, and information. There have been some changes to the site and everyone is welcome to view it.

Activities (selected categories) from January 01 through December 31, 2023

Calls for Service / Log Entries: 14,969

Abandoned 911 Calls	826	Misc - Non-Urgent	1,110
Abduction	1	Misc - Urgent	22
Abuse/Abandonment/Neglect	5	Missing/Runaway/Found Person	46
Administrative	1683	Motor Vehicle Citations/Warnings Issued	194
Alarm	297	Motor Vehicle Citations/Warnings Verbal	781
Alarm - Fire Alarm Testing	148	Motor Vehicle Criminal Complaints Issued	14
Animal - Complaints	299	Motor Vehicle Repossessed	4
Animal - Dangerous - In Progress	9	Motor Vehicle Traffic Violations/Stops	1,166
Animal - Injured/Hunted	19	Mutual Aid / Assist Outside Agency	3
Arrest	284	Officer Needs Assist - Non-Urgent	1
Assault - In Progress	23	Officer Needs Assist - Urgent	1
Assault - Past	23	Property - Abandoned / Found	13
Assault - Sexual - Past	10	Property - Check Parks/Building	904/898

Assist Other Agency - Non-Urgent	124	Public Service - Keep - Arranged	33
Assist Other Agency - Urgent	49	Public Service - Keep the Peace - Urgent	10
B&E/Burglary - In Progress	10	Public Service - Well Being Check - Non-Urgent	210
B&E/Burglary - Past	25	Public Service - Well Being Check - Urgent	164
BOLO	44	Robbery - In Progress	1
Custody Issues	12	Safety Hazard/Priority 1	14
Damage/Vandalism/Mischief - In Progress	8	Safety Hazard/Priority 2	37
Damage/Vandalism/Mischief - Past	37	Safety Hazard/Priority 3	19
DART Follow Up	67	Section 12/Crisis	6
Detail / Overtime	373	Service 209A/Harass. Order	184
Directed Patrol	28	Service of Summons	68
Disturbance/Nuisance - In Progress	345	Soliciting	11
Disturbance/Nuisance - Past	68	Suicidal/Attempted - In Progress	33
Domestic Disturbance - In Progress	214	Suicidal/Attempted - Past	3
Domestic Disturbance - Past	28	Summons/Hearings for Criminal Offenses	175
Drugs - In Progress	15	Suspicious Package	3
Drugs - Past	8	Suspicious/Wanted - In Progress	191
DUI/Impaired - In Progress	58	Suspicious/Wanted - Past	96/52
Electrical Hazard	12	Theft/Larceny - In Progress	16
Fire - Investigation	12	Theft/Larceny - Past	114
Fire - Outdoor	33	Traffic Assignment	9
Fire - Structure (Reported)	27	Traffic Incident - Crash - In Progress	154
Fire - Vehicle	4	Traffic Incident - Crash - Past	129
Fraud/Deception	78	Traffic Violation/Hazard/Comp - In Progress	347
Fuel Spill / Odor	1	Traffic Violation/Hazard/Comp - Past	87
Gas Leak / Odor	12	Transport Service	128
General Information	624	Trespass/Unwanted - In Progress	47
Harassment/Stalk/Treat - In Progress	47	Trespass/Unwanted - Past	15
Harassment/Stalk/Treat - Past	126	Violations - Bylaw	105
Incident Reports	475	Wanted 209A Violations - In Progress	9/6
Investigation Follow Up	464	Wanted 209A Violations - Past	25
Juvenile Complaint	10	Warrant Service	69
Mental Disorder/Behavioral	73	Weapons/Firearms – In Progress	5
		Weapons/Firearms – Past	6

Emergency 911

The Town of Ware merged with WESTCOMM Regional Dispatch to handle the Town's E-911 calls for Police and Fire. This is a great benefit for the Town of Ware as E-911 is a profession in itself.

Structure of the Ware Police Department

The Ware Police Department has twenty (20) full-time police officer positions. This includes the Chief of Police, one (1) Lieutenant, three (3) sergeants, one (1) Detective, and fifteen patrol officers, including the S.R.O. (School Resource Officer) and K-9 Unit (pending), 1 SRT (Special Response Team of Hamden County) member.

Goals

To operate the Police Department effectively and efficiently, to increase staffing levels to an appropriate level to be proactive in protecting the community we serve, and to reduce the amount of liability that is associated with departments being understaffed, under-trained, and under-supervised. To continue with proactive drug investigations in hopes of reducing the number of drug distributors and the number of drug overdoses within our community and to remain proactive with domestic violence initiatives to reduce the number of victims and offenders within our community. The ultimate goal is to reduce the criminal activity within our community which will make the Town of Ware a stronger and better community.

Programs/Police Activity/Community Policing

TRIAD

Lieutenant Bertini of the Ware Police Department has continued to be the primary contact person for TRIAD. This program is a partnership between seniors, law enforcement, and protective services to promote older adult safety and reduce the fear of crime that older adults tend to experience. This partnership helps to educate the senior community from being targeted by scams or other deceptive practices. Ware Triad Sand for Seniors program is an initiative with the Northampton District Attorney's Office, Northampton Sheriff's Office, Ware DPW, and the Ware Police Department where seniors sign up for a 5-gallon bucket of sand. The initial bucket is delivered to them with sand and when they run out, they can use the bucket to refill with sand at the public sand pile at the Highway Department. The Ware Police Department will continue to support these programs.

Coffee with a Cop

The Ware Police Department will continue the Coffee with a COP program. This is a meeting between police officers and the public to get to know one another and learn about the things police do in their community and allows an opportunity for those who attend to report incidents or concerns in their neighborhood to the police. These meetings are held at the Senior Center and food and refreshments have been sponsored by Dunkin Donuts and the Ware Police Union.

Jimmy Fund Cancer Walk for Kids

The Ware Police Department participated in the Jimmy Fund; and Dana Farber cancer walks for kids. The walk is located in the City of Boston and over 200 Massachusetts Chiefs of Police completed the walk. This walk generates thousands of dollars from area communities and police departments which are donated to Dana Farber.

The Ware Police Department has Jimmy Fund Canisters placed at numerous local businesses and information can be obtained by calling the Ware Police Department.

Domestic Violence

The Police Department remains committed to Domestic Violence initiatives. A local civilian domestic violence advocate works with the police department to review domestic violence cases. Their responsibility is to contact domestic violence victims and provide assistance and referral information.

School Initiatives

The Police Department is committed to being active in promoting a police presence on the Ware School Campus. The department continues to promote school safety by making students and staff aware that we are part of their community and available to assist them with any safety or security concerns. The Police Department has worked with school staff and State Police to improve school safety and work on updating school lockdown procedures.

Med Return Box

The Med Return Box program has continued to be a success. This medication drop box, which is located inside the Ware Police Department lobby allows people to safely discard unwanted prescription medications, over the counter medications. **NO needles or liquids.** Needles can be dropped off at the Ware Town Hall in the needle drop boxes. This Med Dropbox continues to be used throughout the year by many people within the community.

Christmas for Kids

The Ware Police Chief would like to thank everyone who donated to the program, which was another successful year. The Ware Police Department partnered up with the Ware Fire Department for the Christmas for Kids program. Now in its 20th year, in 2023, the program assisted gifts for approximately 80 families. Special thanks to those who volunteered their time in making this program a success. They spent countless hours in the paperwork and vetting process. To the volunteers and to those who donated money to the program I would like to personally say thank you very much for your donations and your valuable time in making sure children throughout the community had a wonderful Christmas. The following is a list of those who volunteered their time to make this a successful event.

Darlene Gildert
Janey Loehr
Lori Cebula
Lt. Tod Bertini

Sgt. Diana Gliniecki
Ware Walmart Store and Employees
Dean Gildert
Officer Jeannine Bonnayer

FID and LTC Applicants

FID and LTC licenses will be done by appointment, NO CASH will be accepted, CHECKS only.
LTC Cards Issued / Renewed – 1514
FID – 55

DART Program

For the past several years Officer Cacela has been a member of the Drug Addiction and Recovery Team (DART)—a regional task force that includes police officers and recovery coaches across Hampshire County. As part of the DART program, his mission involves battling the opioid crisis on the front lines. This takes the form of reaching out to people post-overdose, providing intervention for at-risk individuals, spreading information about the nature of addiction, and counseling family members of persons in recovery. Furthermore, the DART program enables Officer Cacela to provide 24/7 transportation to detox facilities, medical clinics, and peer-led meetings.

This is an organic position without rigid parameters, and to that end, Officer Cacela has developed a customized approach tailored to the needs of each individual. His initial encounter often involves a cold call at a person's front door. In almost every case the individual is happy to at a minimum sit down with him and explore their options. They are given Narcan (provided free of charge by the DART program through Hampshire Hope) and instructed on its use, coached in harm reduction techniques to lower the risk of a fatal overdose, and educated on the various paths to recovery. Many individuals agree to an introduction with a recovery coach—also members of DART—who have regular meetings with the individuals and act as guides for more advanced recovery methods.

Through the DART program Officer Cacela has registered, funded, and provided transportation for individuals to painting classes and ceramics workshops. This has been received with great success, and we are in talks with organizations to initiate regularly scheduled programs.

In short, the DART program has played a crucial role in reducing the Town of Ware's fatal overdose rate. I hope that we may continue to work in this capacity for many years to come. Thank you.

For more information about the DART program visit: <http://www.hampshirehope.org/dart/>

**Thank you to the Ware Residents for your continued support of the
Ware Police Department.**

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

I am pleased to submit this, my first annual report, that documents some of the major activities of the Ware Department of Public Works (DPW) during 2023.

Besides routine DPW operations including sweeping, brush mowing, tree removal and trimming, line painting, patching, the cleaning and repairing catch basins, maintenance of trucks and equipment, and snow removal operations on Ware's eighty-six miles of road, the Highway Division, under the direction of Highway Supervisor Chuck Niedzwiecki, also completed the following projects:

- Rental of a paver and using bituminous concrete, sections of the roads to be chipped sealed were shimmed in advance. This work was completed with the use of Highway Department equipment and personnel, with only Town Funds.
- Milled and resurfaced Anderson Road with approximately 6,400 feet bituminous concrete, additionally, shimmed and chip-sealed Shady Path Road, Malboeuf Road, Bondsville Road, and Murphy Road using approximately 750 tons of stone. Chapter 90 and WRAP State Aid funds were used in completing these resurfacing projects.
- Removal, installation, and backfilling of new Cape Cod type berms, catch basin and manhole repairs, installations, and raising of the structures to grade, was completed with Highway equipment and personnel.

One new piece of equipment was acquired during 2023: A new ten-wheel dump truck with an all-season body and plow. This is a welcome addition to the snow removal equipment that will ensure our continued high level of performance.

Water Division employees continued to supply the system's 2,321 customers with quality drinking water. The meter replacement program has continued to be successful, replacing old water meters with new remote reading meters. This past year, the Water Department personnel changed approximately 120 meters, leaving approximately 350 meters to be serviced or replaced. Three defective fire hydrants were repaired and replaced, ensuring firefighting reliability. Approximately three water main breaks and four service line leaks were repaired. The crew maintained the system's buildings and grounds and responded to service calls at water users' locations.

The water system's customers continued to experience discolored water because of iron and manganese in the public water supply. The plan to build a new filtration plant, having been voted down in 2021, needs to be reconsidered. Flushing was conducted in the spring, but due to the lack of qualified personnel, the fall flushing was unable to be conducted. The flushing program is designed to clean the pipes in a single direction starting at the Church Street storage tank and moving outward to the edges of town. Streets are isolated using gate valves so water can flow in only one direction thereby scouring the pipes at maximum velocity. The work was again conducted overnight this year to minimize customers' inconvenience quite effectively.

The Town's Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) was constructed in 1965 as a primary treatment plant. It was upgraded to secondary/advanced treatment in 1983, but the equipment at the facility is simply wearing out and is obsolete. The facility's discharge permit expired in September 2018, and a new permit went into effect in March of 2023 that imposed discharge limits for phosphorus, nitrogen, copper, and aluminum that the facility will not be able to meet without substantial capital investment.

The Selectboard acting as Sewer Commissioners have approved ARPA funding for the installation/construction of a new screening device at the WPCP. The screening device will remove unwanted trash and debris so the influent waste stream can be biologically treated. The contract for the installation of the new screen has been awarded and has a completion time of approximately 500 days. The amount of trash, mostly "disposable wipes" the WPCP has been receiving is fouling every pump, check valve, and tank at the facility, including the collection system and the associated pump station at Webb Court. The three full-time wastewater operators are continually removing the debris and maintaining these areas in efforts to avoid process issues, equipment failure, and loss of control over the facility. The screener device installation is the first step of the much-needed improvements to the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

I would like to thank all the DPW employees for their continued hard work and dedication during 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Geoff McAlmond
DPW DIRECTOR

SELECTBOARD & LOCAL LICENSING AUTHORITY

Executive Assistant to the Town Manager and the Selectboard manages all correspondence; answers public inquiries; prepares Selectboard meeting agendas and minutes; and manages all aspects of the ABCC Liquor & One-Day Liquor Licenses, Auto Amusement, Class I, II, III, Common Victualler, and Entertainment licensing. Supports other Committee and Boards as needed.

The following is a list of fees, grants, donations, collected in the office during the 2023 calendar year.

All Licenses	\$ 13,237.50
Comcast Annual Payment	\$ 19,818.00
Parking Permits	\$ 1,455.00
Parking Ticket Payments	\$ 9,818.00
Rental of Town Hall	\$ 480.00
Sales of Surplus	\$ 24,236.00
Total:	\$ 69,044.50

PARKING PERMITS & TICKETS

The office acts as the Parking Clerk who works collaboratively with the Ware Police Department to enforce the Town's Parking Rules and Regulations. Residents may purchase Parking Permits for a fee of \$30.00 per vehicle or at no cost for Veterans. The permits are valid from December 1, 2023, through November 30, 2024. There is no overnight parking on town streets from December 1 through March 31. Parking Permits can be obtained through the Executive Assistant's office, Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm. Only cash and checks are accepted. Permits are required to park in the municipal lots on Parker and Pleasant Street. In 2023, there were 52 permits issued.

SPECIAL EVENTS

A Special Event is any activity that occurs upon public or private property that affects the ordinary use of parks, playgrounds, beaches, fields, buildings, public streets, right-of-way, or sidewalks and it may feature entertainment, amusement, food and non-alcoholic or alcoholic beverages. Examples of Special Events include (but are not limited to) festivals, road races, Farmer's Markets, block parties, carnivals, and parades. While every Town has different procedures, they are typically driven by State regulations. Ware has developed a Special Event Permit. The permit is reviewed by certain departments and then submitted to the Selectboard for approval. Applicants shall apply for a permit 30 days prior to the event. In 2023, the LLA issued 15 Special Event Certificates.

TOLL ROAD PERMITS

Like a Special Event, Toll Road Permits is defined as an event during which members of a group stand in appropriated public roadways to collect small donations from passing vehicles. Any Non-Profit organizations from Ware wishing to conduct a Toll Road, shall apply for a permit 30 days prior to the event. In 2023, the LLA issued 2 permits.

ONE DAY LIQUOR LICENSES

One Day Liquor Licenses under MGL Chapter 138, Section 14 are available to profit and non-profit organizations. A single organization may request up to 30 licenses in a calendar year. In 2023, the LLA issued 32 One Day Licenses.

SELECTBOARD

Caitlin McCarthy	Chair	2024
Joshua Kusnierz	Vice Chair & Clerk	2025
Keith Kruckas	Member	2024
Nancy Talbot	Member	2026
John Cascio	Member	2026

The Selectboard meets regularly on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm in the Selectboard Meeting Room at Town Hall. The Board held 10 Executive Sessions and 24 Regular Meeting in the 2023 year. Below is a summary of events the Board acted on over the course of the year.

January – March

The Board announced the retirement of Police K9 Sampson after 7 years of dedicated service served from December 2015 to March 2023. K9 Sampson is now adopted by Sergeant Diana Gliniecki and still visits the Police Station regularly.

The Board granted permission to Aspen Street Rod and Gun Club to amend their ABCC license from a “Club” to a “General On-Premises.”

April – June

The Board granted the Weir River Social Club permission to change their ABCC listed manager and director.

The Board issued an RFP in May for purchasing the Town’s water, sewer and wastewater facilities and assets. Although later in the year, the Board withdrew the RFP, denied the one applicant, and will pursue other options.

As the Fiscal Year 2023 comes to an end on June 30th, new or re-appointments to various Boards and Committees are made. In June, the Board voted to increase the water and sewer rates that go into effect November 1st of each fiscal year for the next three years and will be reviewed annually as noted:

WATER RATES:	FY24	FY25	FY26
BASE (for 500 cu feet)	\$41.24	\$45.37	\$49.91
USAGE (for 100 cu feet)	\$6.59	\$7.25	\$7.97
Increase (%)	7.4%	9.1%	9.1%

SEWER RATES:	FY24	FY25	FY26
BASE (for 500 cu feet)	\$66.92	\$76.96	\$92.35
USAGE (for 100 cu feet)	\$7.98	\$9.18	\$11.02
Increase (%)	13.0%	13.0%	16.7%

July – September

July started the new Fiscal Year 2024. There was a dangerous dog hearing scheduled. Sadly, the dog was euthanized at the owner's discretion prior to the hearing date. On a happy note, a new 250th US Celebration Committee was created to celebrate the 1776 United States Declaration of Independence in 2026.

September the Board met with Mr. Peter Durant, Candidate for MA Senate. This was a great opportunity for the Board to discuss upcoming legislation and local funding needs.

October – December

As the Board became familiar with local programs through the Quabbin Health District, an important topic was AED machines. Through the help of grant funds, the Town was able to purchase 2 machines and was able to install them at Town Hall and the Wastewater Treatment Plant. NARCAN boxes were also installed throughout the Town, including one at the Town Hall, the library, and local businesses.

Business growth happened late this year with a new restaurant at the corner of North and Main Streets, LLG LLC d/b/a/ Bellies, originating from Charlton, was granted a Common Victualler, Entertainment License and an ABCC License from the Board. In November the Board granted permits to GMDJ Inc d/b/a/ Ware House of Pizza on West Street. The Board welcomes and wishes the owners and crew the best of luck.

King George Drive, known as a private way, submitted an Article for the Special Town Meeting in November to be accepted as a Town owned road. At the STM, Article 8 passed.

As the year comes to an end, in December the Board had to make an Emergency Order ordering the Building Commissioner, Anna Marques, to immediately enter upon the premises of 6 Aspen Court with the necessary workmen and assistants to secure the structure and premises which was deemed unsafe, pursuant to MGL Chapter 143, Section 7.

The Board is saddened by the closing of all operations at the Mary Lane Hospital this year. The Board understands the meaning and history Mary Lane has had for the residents of Ware.

The Board wishes the best to the residents of Ware in 2024!

Submitted by,

Nicole Croteau
Executive Assistant to Selectboard

TOWN CLERK

It has been over twenty (20) years since I was elected Town Clerk of our community and the things that have changed since I first became clerk are not able to be counted on one hand! The way vital records are created and established, the manner a person is registered to vote in a community and the different manner in which a person may vote are but two of the many.

Each day in the last twenty years I have realized the value of local government more than the previous day. **It is local government that really touches the lives of our citizenry** as we are the ones who make a difference in the lives of those people if we truly care and do our jobs with professionalism. With proper training, we all can help because with knowledge we are able to provide others with answers and direction.

While the last few years have seen changes in the makeup of our community, the residents living here, whether lifelong or newcomers, are always able to receive the help and guidance they seek as this office is one that most will contact for information. I've always made it a point to be in the know and if I don't know that I ask the questions needed to get an answer.

On December 31st, 2023, the total number of registered voters was 7,606, by comparison on December 31, 2002, the total number of registered voters was 2,129. While our population has grown moderately and is 10,006 as of the last Decennial Census of 2020 you can see what has changed. Voter registration is now automatic whenever one does any business with a state agency such as fuel assistance, food stamps or at the Registry of Motor Vehicles; if you are over age 18 it is automatic; and if you are over the age of 16 you will be preregistered to vote. Over the age of 18, you can now register quickly and easily online on the state website.

Each day, voter registrations are processed accounting for more work. Vote-by-Mail and Early Voting options were passed into law in 2022 by the MA State Legislature. No longer is Absentee Voting the only method available if a voter is not able to be present to vote in person on any State Primary or Election Day.

Managing voter registrations, filing and notifications are a part of the regular workday.

Electronic records are created and managed in the Town Clerks office as part of the workday. While we no longer create Birth Records as there is no longer a presence of a hospital here in Ware, those having children have their children's records of birth forwarded here as part of the state system created. The total number of births registered in 2023 for residents of Ware was 89.

Deaths registered for the year 2023 were 120; Marriage Intentions and Certificates Registered were 44.

While registering a dog is mandated by MA State Law, there has been a decrease in dog registrations over the last few years. Many residents have not fulfilled their obligations to license, and it is becoming more difficult to notify dog owners. It is only when Animal Control Officers find a dog or receive a complaint that those delinquents are made to realize the need for licensing. When we receive Rabies Certificate, we notify owners of their need to register the dog, and many pay late fees for years that have passed for which no license was obtained. There are still responsible dog owners who know the importance of keeping their dogs licensed and rabies vaccinations current, however.

Fees as follows were collected for the 2023 year (January to December):

Vital records, etc.	\$19,412.00
Dog Licensing	\$22,757.00
Storage of Flammables	\$ 4,600.00

Keeping residents informed of information to ensure they are aware of changes that may affect them is one of the many things a Clerk's office does so it essential that I stay informed of new laws, changes in existing laws, and many other things. Residents rely on our office for information that is correct and helpful in their day-to-day lives.

In 2024 there will be several elections – the Presidential Primary in March, the local election in April, the State Primary in September, and the General Election in November. All of these allow for Vote-by-Mail and Early Voting and of course have a cost associated.

Once again, I ask residents and voters to try to get involved and be of help to our community by joining a committee, lending a helping hand to an organization that you like or your child's school organization. We all have something to offer even if it is a small way – please do your part to continue to make Ware the community we are!

Nancy J. Talbot
Town Clerk

TOWN COLLECTOR

TAX	Levy Year 2023	Levy Year 2022	Levy Year 2021	Levy Year 2020	Levy Year Prior Years	Totals
Real Estate Taxes	379,545.66	78,355.99	7,180.29	39.21	-	465,121.15
Supplemental Real Estate			431.02			431.02
Rollback Taxes					12,996.98	12,996.98
Personal Property Taxes	26,912.17	2,704.31	8,804.43	1,374.72	5,019.31	44,814.94
Deferred Property Taxes						-
Taxes in Litigation						-
Motor Vehicle Excise	111,874.85	35,854.79	14,160.99	8,276.88	56,257.91	226,425.42
Sealers Weights & Measures	4,245.00					4,245.00
Tax Liens/Tax Title	455,610.66					455,610.66
Tax Possessions	271,385.90					271,385.90
Other Excise Taxes						-
Boat Excise			38.00	20.00	191.00	249.00
Farm Animal Excise						-
Classified Forest Land						-
User Charges Receivables						
Water	78,923.10	36,233.72				115,156.82
Sewer	80,765.93	33,588.74				114,354.67
Water/Sewer Liens	33,866.66	3,491.08	980.95			38,338.69
Utility Liens Added to Taxes						-
Departmental & Other Receivables						-
Ambulance	454,066.49					454,066.49
Special Assessment Receivable						
Unapportioned assessments						-
Apportioned assessments						-
Committed interest added to taxes						-
Apportioned assessments not yet due						-
Suspended assessments						-
Special assessments tax liens						-
Totals	1,897,196.42	190,228.63	31,595.68	9,710.81	74,465.20	2,203,196.74

TOWN MANAGER

To the Residents and Businesses of the Town of Ware,

This past year was one of continued progress and planning. Based on the vision and work of leaders, residents, businesses and service agencies, there is a lot to look forward to in coming years.

Thank you to Town Meeting, the Selectboard and the Finance Committee, who along with the Town's Finance team have increased the Town's fiscal stability and reserves. The Stabilization and Reserve Funds are in a strong position. Following the Town's financial policies has provided annual growth.

Balances

Stabilization Fund \$1,288,303

Capital Stabilization \$1,186,718

Free Cash (July 1) \$2,373,079

In addition, the Water and Wastewater Reserves have currently grown to \$1.6 million based on rate increase from the past two years.

With the support of the Town Meeting, the Selectboard and the Finance Committee, as well as our State legislative partners, the Town has reached a point for planning efforts to be implemented. The number of projects being reviewed for funding – renovation of the pool, redevelopment of the Millyard and Mary Lane site, parks improvements, repair of town buildings, downtown, school needs and infrastructure improvements – has grown on the Town Meeting agendas. There is commitment to invest in renovation and growth that will inspire additional opportunities and improved quality of life for residents and businesses.

Projects and Grant Funds. The Town funded a new playground at Grenville Park and received a grant for additional play structures, access, and a pavilion. Accessibility improvements at the Town Hall and High School were funded. The State, through former Senator Gobi, provided an earmark for improvements to Veterans Park which will be implemented in 2024. Work continues on planning a renovated pool and spray park. The Town was awarded a grant for the reconstruction of sidewalks along Church Street and completed planning that will lead to safety improvements at Pleasant Street intersections. Sidewalk repairs were completed along the East Main Street bridge. Thanks to the work of the Friends of the Town Hall, the Great Hall floor was refinished and then creatively used by the Parks Department for winter pickleball.

There is a lot going on and more that will be happening in 2024. The Town will see economic growth from the approval of Resource Waste and Tractor Supply and increased investment in Downtown and the Millyard. In 2023, the Town continues to support services such as Healthy Quaboag, the Food Bank, and the Quaboag Connector. The Hospital Review Committee is working on solutions to the Mary Lane departure and the deep need for health services in town, while the Historical Commission hopes to preserve the historical property and buildings that have shaped town history. These efforts will shape opportunities for future healthcare.

Thank you to all groups and individual volunteers and those who serve on committees, all who encouraged and created numerous events in town. Events highlight the wonderfulness of Ware, bring visitors and add to the quality of life. Thank you to all who work to show Ware Cares. This is a beautiful town with caring people that will draw growth and investment. Positive outlook and outcome are daily tasks for all of us. Thank you for your help and your belief.

A deep thanks to all Town departments and staff for your hard work, thoughtful insights, and willingness to give extra effort in order to move forward.

I am thankful for the opportunity to serve the town and its residents.

Stuart Beckley, Town Manager

ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION

APRIL 10, 2023

In accordance with the accompanying Warrant, the Inhabitants of the Town of Ware, qualified to vote in the elections of the Town, Precincts A, B, and C, met at the Ware Town Hall, 126 Main Street on Monday, April 10, 2023, at seven o'clock in the forenoon. The Warrant calling the Town Election having previously been posted, according to the Bylaws of the Town, met all legal requirements.

Cards of Instructions for Voters, Cards of Penalties of Corrupt Practices at the Election, Specimen Ballots, etc. having previously been posted in the Town Hall outside of the voting rails, the ballot boxes were set at naught. The polls were declared open by the Wardens Faith Dulak and Philip Malboeuf.

The polls closed at eight o'clock in the evening. The total ballots cast were Six Hundred Eighty-One (681). The election results are as follows for the offices appearing on the ballot:

	<u>Precinct A</u>	<u>Precinct B</u>	<u>Precinct C</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>SELECTMEN FOR THREE YEARS – Vote for Two</u>				
John J. Morrin	65	67	91	223
Nancy J. Talbot	140	128	174	442
Write Ins –				
Jack Cascio	109	101	134	344
All others	1	5	3	9
Blanks	<u>109</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>140</u>	<u>344</u>
Total	424	396	542	1162
<u>SCHOOL COMMITTEE FOR THREE YEARS – Vote for One</u>				
Aaron R. Sawabi	156	145	205	506
Write Ins –				
All others	1	2	2	5
Blanks	<u>55</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>170</u>
Total	212	198	271	681
<u>BOARD OF ASSESSORS FOR THREE YEARS – Vote for One</u>				
Theodore P. Balicki	166	165	223	554
Write Ins –				
All others	0	0	1	1
Blanks	<u>46</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>126</u>
Total	212	198	271	681

BOARD OF HEALTH FOR THREE YEARS – Vote for One

Michael Francis Juda	165	165	222	552
Write Ins –				
All others	0	4	0	4
Blanks	<u>47</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>125</u>
Total	212	198	271	681

PARK COMMISSIONER FOR THREE YEARS – Vote for One

William R. Imbier	156	160	213	529
Write Ins –				
All others	1	0	1	2
Blanks	<u>55</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>150</u>
Total	212	198	271	681

CEMETERY COMMISSIONER FOR THREE YEARS – Vote for One

Roy Paul Erickson	159	158	211	528
Write Ins –				
All others	0	3	0	3
Blanks	<u>53</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>150</u>
Total	212	198	271	681

PLANNING BOARD FOR FIVE YEARS – Vote for One

Christopher J. DiMarzio	159	150	208	517
Write Ins –				
All others	0	2	0	2
Blanks	<u>53</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>63</u>	<u>162</u>
Total	212	198	271	681

WARE HOUSING AUTHORITY FOR FIVE YEARS – Vote for One

Frederick Andrew Daniels	142	147	200	489
Write Ins –				
All others	0	0	0	0
Blanks	<u>70</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>192</u>
Total	212	198	271	681

WARE HOUSING AUTHORITY FOR TWO YEAR (UNEXPIRED TERM) – Vote for One

Nancy J. Brown	149	147	205	501
Write – Ins				
All others	0	0	0	0
Blanks	<u>63</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>180</u>
Total	212	198	271	681

A true copy attest: Nancy J. Talbot – Town Clerk Ware, MA

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

MAY 8, 2023

In accordance with the accompanying Warrant, the Inhabitants of the Town of Ware, Precincts A, B, and C, qualified to vote in Town affairs met on Monday, May 8, 2023, at 6:30pm at Ware High School, 237 West Street.

The quorum requirement per Town of Ware Charter in the amount of One Hundred (100) registered voters was met with One Hundred Three (103) voters present at 6:30pm; the meeting was called to order by the Moderator at 6:37pm.

The Moderator went over instructions on use of the clickers that had been issued to voters when they checked in, a welcome message having been printed in the Town Meeting packet was reviewed as well as instructions for participation in speaking on articles, motions to amend, etc. Exits were noted and a request to silence all cellphones and pagers was requested, as well as a request by the Moderator to raise a hand if desiring to speak and a time limit set for comments by participants and speakers.

A pledge of allegiance was recited by those in attendance and a moment of silence for the passing of Joseph Knight, Ware Planning Board Member; Francis Nevue, Ware Housing Authority Member; Gilbert St. George Sorel, DPW Director and John Trudeau, former Police Officer. All of these individuals had served the community for many years.

The Moderator then asked the Town Clerk to read the Warrant calling the meeting and action as follows was taken under:

FISCAL YEAR 2023

ARTICLE 1. Passed in Favor with One Hundred Twenty One (121) in favor and Seven (7) opposed that the town appropriate Twenty Six Thousand One Hundred Fifty-Two Dollars and Fifty cents (\$26,152.50) to pay the following unpaid bills from Fiscal Year 2022 and to meet said appropriation by transferring Twenty-One Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy Dollars and Ninety Five Cents (\$21,970.95) from available FREE CASH and Four Thousand One Hundred Eighty One Dollars and Fifty Five Cents (\$4,181.55) from Water Receipts Reserved as set forth in the Town Meeting Packet.

Fire	Lamoureux Ford	\$	99.01
Fire	OSI Batteries	\$	72.68
Highway	Peckham Industries	\$	795.72
Highway	CHA	\$	1,500.00
School	Learn Well	\$	953.61
Sewer	Waste Water Services	\$	9,570.30
Sewer	Amazon	\$	275.97
Sewer	Lagrant Electric	\$	4,247.35
Police	Balicki's Auto Body	\$	321.98
Police	North Brookfield Police	\$	212.00
Streetlights	National Grid	\$	29.94

Police	East Brookfield Police	\$	212.00
Immunization & Physicals	Cooley Dickinson Practice Assoc.	\$	70.00
Telephone	Verizon	\$	247.03
Legal	KP Law	\$	1,356.36
Sr. Center	Heat Pro	\$	125.00
Sr. Center	Heat Pro	\$	340.00
Highway	Crossroads Health Group	\$	90.00
Immunization & Physicals	Cooley Dickinson Practice Assoc.	\$	1,452.00
	Total General Fund FREE CASH	\$	21,970.95
Water	EJ Prescott	\$	3,490.10
Water	Lowe's	\$	412.73
Water	Amazon	\$	278.72
	Total Water Enterprise RETAINED EARNINGS	\$	4,181.55

FISCAL YEAR 2023

ARTICLE 2. Passed with One Hundred Six (106) in favor and Nineteen (19) opposed that the Town amend the following line item increases of the Fiscal Year 2023 Town Budget as set forth in the Town Meeting packet:

<u>ACCOUNT</u>	<u>ACCOUNT NAME</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
123-5100	Town Manager Salary	\$ 1,100.00
123-5200	Town Manager Purchase of Services	\$ 2,000.00
135-5200	Town Accountant Purchase of Services	\$ 2,000.00
145-5100	Treasurer/Collector Salary	\$ 11,000.00
152-5100	Human Resource Salary	\$ 2,000.00
220-5200	Fire Purchase of Services	\$ 12,000.00
424-5200	Streetlights	\$ 7,500.00
422-5400	Municipal Fuel	\$ 22,000.00
693-5400	Parks – Supplies	\$ 5,000.00
694-5400	Celebrations – Veterans	\$ 1,000.00
710-5900	Debt Payment Principal	\$ 185,099.00
163-5200	Registrars Purchase of Services	\$ 1,200.00
6500-5150	Water Overtime	\$ 12,000.00
		\$ 263,899.00

And to fund these increases by transfer from the following:

100-5600	Salary Reserve	\$ (14,100.00)
100-5601	Reserve for Overtime	\$ (25,000.00)
914-5100	Health Insurance	\$ (20,000.00)
945-5700	Municipal Insurance	\$ (6,500.00)
162-5400	Elections Supplies	\$ (1,200.00)
	Water Retained Earnings	\$ (12,000.00)
	FREE CASH	<u>\$(185,099.00)</u>
		\$ (263,899.00)

ARTICLE 3. Passed with One Hundred Seventeen (117) in favor and Thirteen (13) opposed that the Town *transfer* Six Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$600,000.00) from **FREE CASH** to fund the Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Liability Trust Fund.

ARTICLE 4. Passed with One Hundred Three (103) in favor and Four (4) opposed that the Town transfer Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000.00) from **FREE CASH** to the Stabilization Fund.

ARTICLE 5. Passed with One Hundred Twenty Two (122) in favor and Four (4) opposed that the Town transfer Three Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$350,000.00) from **FREE CASH** to the Capital Stabilization Fund.

CONSENT AGENDA – ARTICLES 6 THROUGH 13* FISCAL YEAR 2024

***Article 12 was removed from Consent Agenda and taken up separately**

Passed with One Hundred Thirty-Three (133) in favor and Two (2) opposed that the following Articles be approved under the Consent Agenda in accordance with the motions distributed this evening in the Town Meeting Packet.

ARTICLE 6. Voted that the Town accept the reports of Town Boards, Committees and Departments as presented in the Annual Town Report.

ARTICLE 7. Voted that the Town authorize the Treasurer/Tax Collector, with the approval of the Selectboard, to enter into compensating balance agreements during Fiscal Year 2024 as permitted by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53F.

ARTICLE 8. Voted that the Town accept and appropriate any Grant Funds awarded to the Town of Ware under Massachusetts Community Development Fund by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development and authorize the Board of Selectmen and Community Development Authority to expend the funds in accordance with the terms and conditions of any such grant agreements.

ARTICLE 9. Voted that the Town accept all State and Federal Educational Grants in any amount as may be awarded for the direct educational expenditures for Fiscal Year 2024, to be expended by the Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School District.

ARTICLE 10. Voted that the Town accept all State and Federal Educational Grants in any amount as may be awarded for the direct educational expenditures for Fiscal Year 2024.

ARTICLE 11. Voted that the Town authorize the Selectboard and Town Manager to apply for, accept, and expend any grants or donations from State or Federal governments or private agencies, individuals, or institutions.

ARTICLE 13. Voted that the Town establish spending limits for the Town's Revolving Funds as established by the Town's General Bylaw, as adopted by Article 24 on November 13, 2017, for

certain Town departments under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53E ½ for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, as set forth in the Town Meeting packet:

AUTHORIZED REVOLVING FUND	FISCAL YEAR EXPENDITURE LIMIT
Senior Center Rental	\$20,000.00
Ware Public School Athletic Advertising	\$100,000.00
Community Development Septic Repair	\$25,000.00
Community Development	\$120,000.00
Cemetery Maintenance and Burial	\$10,000.00
Bulky Waste	\$15,000.00

ARTICLE 12. Passed with One Hundred Thirty One (131) in favor and Six (6) opposed that the Town appropriate Four Hundred Twenty Four Thousand Fifty-Five Dollars and No Cents (\$424,055.00) to be expended for road repairs in anticipation of reimbursement by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Highway Department under the Chapter 90 State Highway Aid Program and to meet said appropriation by authorizing the Treasurer with the approval of the Selectboard to borrow the sum of Four Hundred Twenty Four Thousand Fifty Five Dollars and No Cents (\$424,055.00) under the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 6 and/or any other relevant sections of the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44.

ARTICLE 14. Passed with Ninety-Nine (99) in favor and Fourteen (14) opposed that the Town fix the salaries of the several Elected Officers of the Town for the Fiscal Year 2024 as set forth in the Town Meeting Packet:

Town Moderator	\$ 250.00
Chairman, Selectmen	\$ 2,705.04
Members, Selectmen	\$ 2,276.64
Chairman, Board of Assessors	\$ 3,876.00
Members, Board of Assessors	\$ 3,162.00
Planning Board Members	\$ 816.00 each member
Members, Board of Health	\$ 654.50 each member

And further that no Town Board of Commission shall be authorized to employ any of its members for an additional salary or compensation except for the Board of Registrars, Finance Committee, Planning Board, and Recreation Commission, and further provided that the Board of Health may appoint one or more of its members to witness percolation tests and deep hole tests and to perform other paid functions required by the Board of Health.

ARTICLE 15. Passed with One Hundred Fifteen (115) in favor and Seven (7) opposed that the following sums be appropriated for the Water Enterprise Fund for FY 2024 as set forth in the Town Meeting Packet and listed below:

Salaries	\$ 358,055.00
Operating Expenses	\$ 482,450.00
Capital	\$ 100,000.00
Budgeted Surplus to Separate Reserve Fund	\$ 13,395.00
Total	\$ 954,400.00

And that \$954,400.00 be raised from Department Receipts to meet said appropriation.

ARTICLE 16. Passed with One Hundred Twenty-Five (125) in favor and Nine (9) opposed that the following sums be appropriated for the Sewer Enterprise Fund for FY 2024 as set forth in the Town Meeting Packet and listed below:

Salaries	\$275,636.00
Operating Expenses	<u>\$664,050.00</u>
Total	\$939,686.00

And that \$928,859.00 be raised from Department Receipts and \$10,827.00 be **raised from taxation** to meet said appropriation.

ARTICLE 17. Passed* with One Hundred Thirty (130) in favor and Four (4) opposed that the Town **raise and appropriation from taxation \$34,853.781.60; \$411,985.00 from available FREE CASH**; \$130,000.00 from the Ambulance Receipts Reserved and \$200,000.00 *from the release of Overlay Funds*; for a total appropriation of \$35,595,766.60 to defray the charges and expenses of the Town including Debt & Interest for the Fiscal Year 2024 and the Town Accountant with the approval of the Town Manager is authorized to **transfer** funds from Reserve For Salary Increase Line Items # 100-5600 and 100-5610 for 2024 salary increases as set forth in the Town Meeting Packet.

*Motion and second to **amend** as follows: to transfer one Zoning Board of Appeals member salary (175-5100) of \$400.00 to the Park's Department Purchase of Services (693-5200, and Moderator salary (114-5100 of \$250.00 to the Park's Department Purchase of Services (693-5200). **Passed** with One Hundred Thirty-Two (132) in favor and One (1) opposed.

ARTICLE 18. Passed with One Hundred Twenty-Two (122) in favor and Seven (7) opposed that the Town appropriate \$30,000.00 to fund the Employee Compensated Absences Reserve Fund.

ARTICLE 19. Passed with One Hundred Twenty-Three (123) in favor and Nine (9) opposed that the Town amend its General Bylaws by adopting the Right to Farm Bylaw as on file with the Town Clerk and included in the Town Meeting packet:

1.0 Legislative Purpose and Intent

The purpose and intent of this By-law is to state with emphasis the Right to Farm accorded to all citizens of the Commonwealth under Article 97, of the Constitution, and all state statutes and regulations there under including but not limited to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A, Section 3, Paragraph 1; Chapter 90, Section 9, Chapter 111, Section 125A and Chapter 128 Section 1A. We the citizens of Ware restate and republish these rights pursuant to the Town's authority conferred by Article 89 of the Articles of Amendment of the Massachusetts Constitution, ("Home Rule Amendment").

This General By-law encourages the pursuit of agriculture, promotes agriculture-based opportunities, and protects farmlands within the Town of Ware by allowing agricultural uses and related activities to function with minimal conflict with abutters and Town agencies. The By-Law shall apply to all jurisdictional areas within the Town.

2.0 Definitions

The word “farm” shall include any parcel or contiguous parcels of land, or water bodies used for the primary purpose of commercial agriculture, or accessory thereto.

The words “farming” or “agriculture” or their derivatives shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- farming in all its branches and the cultivation and tillage of the soil;
- dairying;
- production, cultivation, growing, and harvesting of any agricultural, aquacultural, floricultural, viticultural, or horticultural commodities;
- growing and harvesting of forest products upon forest land, and any other forestry or lumbering operations;
- growing and harvesting of hemp;
- raising of livestock including horses;
- keeping of horses as a commercial enterprise; and
- keeping and raising of poultry, swine, cattle, ratites (such as emus, ostriches and rheas) and camelids (such as llamas and camels), and other domesticated animals for food and other agricultural purposes, including bees and fur bearing animals.

“Farming” shall encompass activities including, but not limited to, the following:

- operation and transportation of slow-moving farm equipment over roads within the Town;
- control of pests, including, but not limited to, insects, weeds, predators and disease organism of plants and animals;
- application of manure, fertilizers and pesticides;
- conducting agriculture-related educational and farm-based recreational activities, including agri-tourism, provided that the activities are related to marketing the agricultural output or services of the farm;
- processing and packaging of the agricultural output of the farm and the operation of a farmer’s market or farm stand including signage thereto;
- maintenance, repair, or storage of seasonal equipment, or apparatus owned or leased by the farm owner or manager used expressly for the purpose of propagation, processing, management, or sale of the agricultural products, and
- on-farm relocation of earth and the clearing of ground for farming operations.

3.0 Right To Farm Declaration

The Right To Farm is hereby recognized to exist within the Town of Ware. The above-described agricultural activities may occur on holidays, weekdays, and weekends by night or day and shall include the attendant incidental noise, odors, dust, and fumes associated with normally accepted agricultural practices. It is hereby determined that whatever impact may be caused to others through the normal practice of agriculture is more than offset by the benefits of farming to the neighborhood, community, and society in general. The benefits and protections of this By-law are intended to apply exclusively to those commercial agricultural and farming operations and activities conducted in accordance with generally accepted agricultural practices. Moreover, nothing in this Right To Farm By-law shall be deemed as acquiring any interest in land, or as

imposing any land use regulation, which is properly the subject of state statute, regulation, or the Town of Ware Zoning By-laws.

4.0 Resolution of Disputes

Any person who seeks to complain about the operation of a farm may, notwithstanding pursuing any other available remedy, file a grievance with the Select Board, the Zoning Enforcement Officer, or the Board of Health, depending upon the nature of the grievance. The filing of grievance does not suspend the time within which to pursue any other available remedies that the aggrieved may have. The Zoning Enforcement Officer or Select Board may forward a copy of the grievance to the Agricultural Commission, which shall review and facilitate the resolution of the grievance and report its recommendations to the referring Town authority within an agreed upon time frame.

The Board of Health, except in cases of imminent danger or public health risk, may forward a copy of the grievance to the Agricultural Commission which shall review and facilitate the resolution of the grievance, and report its recommendations to the Board of Health within an agreed upon time frame.

If there is no populated Agricultural Commission to review and facilitate the resolution of grievances, the Select Board shall be the authority to review and facilitate resolutions to disputes under Section 4.0 of this By-Law.

5.0 Severability Clause

If any part of this By-Law is for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid, such decision shall not affect the remainder of this By-Law. The Town of Ware hereby declares the provisions of this By-Law to be severable.

ARTICLE 20. Passed by a 2/3 Majority in favor (113 Yes and 9 No) to amend the Town's Zoning Bylaws to add a new section: Battery Storage Facilities, as on file with the Town Clerk and included in the Town Meeting packet as follows:

Additions to Section 2.2 (Definitions)

ANSI: American National Standards Institute

BATTERY(IES): A single cell or a group of cells connected together electrically in series, in parallel, or a combination of both, which can charge, discharge, and store energy electrochemically. For the purposes of this bylaw, batteries utilized in consumer products are excluded from these requirements.

BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: An electronic system that protects energy storage systems from operating outside their safe operating parameters and disconnects electrical power to the energy storage system or places it in a safe condition if potentially hazardous temperatures or other conditions are detected.

BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM (BESS): One or more devices, assembled together, capable of storing energy in order to supply electrical energy at a future time, not to include a

stand-alone 12-volt car battery or an electric motor vehicle. A Battery Energy Storage System is classified a Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier3 or Tier 4 BESS as follows:

- A. Tier 1 Battery Energy Storage Systems have an aggregate energy capacity equal to 250KWh or less and, whose purpose is to store energy from residential solar energy systems if in a room or enclosed structure, consisting of only a single energy storage system technology.
- B. Tier 2 Battery Energy Storage Systems have an aggregate energy capacity equal to a 250 KWh or less and, whose purpose is to store energy from commercial solar energy systems if in a room or enclosed structure, consisting of only a single energy storage system technology.
- C. Tire 3 Battery Energy Storage Systems are defined as those that are interconnected to high voltage transmission lines and have an aggregate energy capacity greater 250KWh but less or equal to 10 MWh.
- D. Tier 4 Battery Energy Storage Systems are defined as those that are interconnected to high voltage transmission lines and have an aggregate energy capacity greater than 10 MWh. The facility must comply with the State's most current electrical code (527 CMR. 12.00) and the State's most current Fire Code (527 CMR 1.00).

CELL: The basic electrochemical unit, characterized by an anode and a cathode, used to receive, store, and delivery electoral energy.

COMMISSIONING: A systematic process that provides documented confirmation that a battery energy storage system functions according to the intended design criteria and complies with applicable code requirements.

DEDICATED-USE BUILDING: A building that is built for the primary intention of housing battery energy storage system equipment, is classified as Group F-1 occupancy as defined in the International Building Code, and complies with the following:

- 1) The building's only use is battery energy storage, energy generation, and other electrical grid related operations.
- 2) No other occupancy types are permitted in the building.
- 3) Occupants in the rooms and areas containing battery energy storage systems are limited to personnel that operate, maintain, service, test, and repair the battery energy storage system and other energy systems.
- 4) Administrative and support personnel are permitted in areas within the buildings that do not contain battery energy storage system, provided the following:
 - a. The areas do not occupy more than 10 percent of the building area of the story in which they are located.
 - b. A means of egress is provided from the administrative and support use areas to the public way that does not require occupants to traverse through areas containing batter energy storage systems or other energy system equipment.

Additionally, the addition of Section 4.8.9 to the **SPECIAL USE REGULATIONS (Section 4.8)**

4.8.9 Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)

A. Purpose

The purpose of this bylaw is to provide for the construction and operation of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and to provide standards for the placement, design, construction, monitoring, modification and removal of energy storage systems that address public safety, protection of the Town and private drinking water supply, minimize impacts on scenic, natural and historic resources of the Town of Ware, and provide adequate financial assurance for decommissioning. The provisions set forth in this section shall take precedence over all other sections when considering applications related to the construction, operation, and/or repair of Battery Energy Storage Systems.

B. Definitions – Refer to definitions in Section 2.2.

C. Applicability

1. Building-integrated Battery Energy Storage Systems
 - a.) Battery Energy Storage Systems that are building-integrated, whether a residential or commercial building, energy storage systems shall not be erected, constructed, installed, or modified as provided in this section without first obtaining a building permit from the Building Inspector.
 - b.) Building-integrated energy storage systems may be coupled with rooftop solar or behind the meter applications for peak shaving
 - c.) Building-integrated battery energy storage systems may be located in any zoning district of the Town of Ware.
2. Co-located Battery Energy Storage Systems
 - a) Battery Energy Storage Facilities are encouraged to co-locate with solar photovoltaic installations, energy, power generation stations, and electrical sub-stations.
 - b) Battery Energy Storage Systems associated with on-site power generation shall be permitted in the same districts as Large-Scale Solar Arrays by Special Permit and Site Plan Review.
 - c) If co-located with a solar photovoltaic installation, the BESS shall not exceed the necessary capacity and size generated by the output of the co-located solar photovoltaic installation.
3. Battery Energy Storage systems not associated with on-site solar generation shall only be permitted in the Commercial Industrial (CI), Millyard (MY) and Industrial(I) Districts, and shall require a Special Permit and Site Plan Review from the Planning Board. Battery Energy Storage Systems not associated with on-site solar generation are prohibited in the Aquifer Protection Overlay District.
 - i. The nameplate capacity of an Energy Storage system shall not exceed the total kw of renewal energy being produced on the 3-phase distribution line that the energy storage system will be interconnected to.
 - ii. Modifications to, retrofits or replacements of an existing battery energy storage system that increase the total battery energy storage system designed discharge duration or power rating shall be subject to this bylaw.

D. General Requirements

1. In accordance with Section C above, all Tier 2, Tier 3, & Tier 4 battery energy storage systems shall require a special permit and site plan approval by the Planning Board prior to construction, installation, or modification as provided in this bylaw.
2. The construction, operation, and decommissioning of all battery storage energy storage systems shall be consistent with all applicable local, state, and federal requirements, including but not limited to all applicable environmental, safety, construction, fire, and electrical requirements.
3. A building permit and an electrical permit shall be required for installation of all battery energy storage systems.

E. Application Materials

- 1) In addition to requirements of Section 7.2 Special Permits and Section 7.4 Site Plan Review the application for a Special Permit under this Section 4.8.9 shall include the following:
 - a) A site plan prepared, stamped, and signed by a Professional Engineer licensed to practice in Massachusetts, that shows the following:
 - b) An existing condition plan with property lines and physical features, including topography and roads, characteristics of vegetation (trees – mature, old growth, shrubs, open field, etc.), wetlands, streams, ledge, for the project site:
 - 1) Proposed changes to the landscape of the site, including grading, vegetation clearing and planting, exterior lighting, screening vegetation or structures, driveways, snow storage, and storm water management systems; including total acreage of disturbed area, total vegetation cleared, not including mowed fields;
 - 2) Trees with a DBH of 20” or greater within project parcel(s) shall be identified to determine tree loss, along with inventorying of diseased or hazard trees slated to be removed due to proposed development;
 - 3) Property lines and physical dimensions of the subject property with contour intervals of no more than 10 feet;
 - 4) Property lines of adjacent parcels within 300 feet.
 - 5) Location, dimensions, and types of existing major structures on the property;
 - 6) Locations of the proposed battery energy storage structures, foundations, and associated equipment;
 - 7) The right-of-way of any public road that is contiguous with the property;
 - 8) Any overhead or underground utilities;
 - 9) At least one-color photograph of the existing site; measuring eight (8) inches by ten (10) inches;
 - 10) Locations of active farmland and prime farmland soils, wetlands, permanently protected open space, Priority Habitat Areas and BioMap 2 Critical Natural Landscape Core Habitat mapped by the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) and “Important Wildlife Habitat” mapped by the DEP;
 - 11) Locations of floodplains or inundation areas for moderate or high hazard dams;
 - 12) Locations of local or National Historic Districts; and
 - 13) Stormwater management and erosion and sediment control.

- c) A preliminary equipment specification sheet that documents the proposed battery energy storage system components, inverters and associated electrical equipment that are to be installed, including manufacturer and model. A final equipment specification sheet shall be submitted prior to the issuance of building permit;
- d) One- or three-line electrical diagram showing associated components, and electrical interconnection methods, with all NEC compliant disconnects and overcurrent devices;
- e) Contact information and signature of the project proponent, as well as all proponents, if any, and all property owners;
- f) Contact information and signature of agents representing the project proponent, if any;
- g) Contact information for the person(s) responsible for public inquiries throughout the life of the system;
- h) An operations and maintenance plan for Battery Energy Storage System. Such plan shall describe continuing battery energy storage system maintenance and property upkeep, as well as design, construction, installation, testing and commissioning information;
- i) Energy Storage System technical specifications, including manufacturer and model;
- j) Electrical schematic
- k) Documentation that shows the owner of the Energy Storage System has stie control, which shall include easements and access roads;
- l) Documentation that shows the owner of the Energy Storage System has notified the electric utility of this installation;
- m) Emergency Operations Plan. A copy of the approved Emergency Operations Plan shall be given to the system owner, the local fire department, and local fire code official. A permanent copy shall also be placed in an approved location to be accessible to facility personnel, fore code officials, and emergency responders. The emergency operations plan shall include the following information:
 - 1. Procedures for safe shutdown, de-energizing, or isolation of equipment and systems under emergency conditions to reduce the risk of fire, electric shock, and personal injuries, and for safe start-up following cessation of emergency conditions.
 - 2. Procedures for inspection and testing of associated alarms, interlocks, and controls.
 - i. This includes hazmat appliances for conducting atmospheric monitoring with a scientific officer to support.
 - 3. Procedures to be followed in response to notifications from the Battery Energy Storage Management System, when provided, that could signify potentially dangerous conditions, including shutting down equipment, summoning service and repair personnel, and providing agreed upon notification to fire department personnel for potentially hazardous conditions in the event of a system failure.
 - 4. Emergency procedures to be followed in case of fire, explosion, release of liquids or vapors, damage to critical moving parts, or other potentially dangerous conditions. Procedures can include sounding the alarm,

notifying the fire department, evacuating personnel, de-energizing equipment, and controlling and extinguishing the fire.

5. Response considerations similar to a safety data sheet (SDS) that will address response safety concerns and extinguishment when and SDS is not required.
 6. Procedures for dealing with battery energy storage system equipment damaged in a fire or other emergency event, including maintaining contact information for personnel qualified to safely remove damaged battery energy storage system equipment from the facility.
 7. Other procedures as determined necessary by the Town to provide for the safety of occupants, neighboring properties, and emergency responders.
 8. Procedures and schedules for conducting drills of these procedures and for training local first responders on the contents of the plan and appropriate response procedures.
 - i. Training must be provided and organized by the applicant.
- n) Proof of liability insurance: The applicant shall be required to provide evidence of liability insurance in an amount and for a duration sufficient to cover loss or damage to persons and property caused by the failure of the system.
 - o) A noise study, prepared by a qualified individual with experience in environmental acoustics, to assess the impact of all noise sources generated from the project to abutting properties, and determine the appropriate layout, design, and control measures. The report should include details of assessment methods, summarize the results, and recommend the required outdoor as well as any indoor control measures.

F. Design and Site Standards

1. In addition to the standards for Special Permit and Site Plan Review in the Zoning Bylaw, the applicant shall adhere to the following standards and provide such information on the site plan:
 - a) Utility Lines. All on-site utility lines shall be placed underground to the extent feasible and as permitted by the serving utility.
 - b) Signage. The signage shall include the type of technology associated with the systems, any special hazards associated, the type of suppression system installed, and 23-hour emergency contact information. All information shall be clearly displayed on a light reflective surface. Clearly visible warning signs concerning voltage shall be placed at the base of all pad-mounted transformers and substations.
 - c) Lighting. Lighting of the systems shall be limited to that minimally required for safety and operational purposes and shall be reasonably shielded and downcast from abutting properties.
 - d) Setbacks. Battery Energy Storage Systems not co-located with solar photovoltaic installations shall adhere to a fifty (50) foot setback from the front, side, and rear property lines and shall adhere to a one hundred fifty (150) foot setback from any residential buildings. BESS's shall also adhere to a one hundred (100) foot setback from water wells (both private and public) located either on-site or on abutting properties.

- e) Fire protection. Battery Energy Storage Systems not co-located with solar photovoltaic installations shall be located on properties serviced by the public water system or by a water supply acceptable to the Planning Board and Ware Fire Department.
- f) Vegetation and Tree-Cutting. Areas within ten (10) feet on each side of a system shall be cleared of combustible vegetation and other combustible growth. Single specimens of trees or shrubbery and cultivated groundcovers such as green grass, ivy, succulents, or similar plants shall be exempt provided that they do not form a means of readily transmitting fire. Clearing of natural vegetation shall be limited to that which is necessary for the construction, operation and maintenance of the system and that which is otherwise prescribed by applicable bylaws and regulations.
- g) Noise. The 1-hour average noise generated from the systems, components, and associated ancillary equipment shall not exceed a noise level of 60 dBA as measured at the property line.

G. Safety

1. System Certification. Battery energy storage systems and equipment shall be listed by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory to UL 9540 (Standard for Battery Energy Storage Systems and Equipment) or approved equivalent, with subcomponents meeting each of the following standards as applicable:
 - a) UL 1973 (Standard for Batteries for Use in Stationary, Vehicle Auxiliary Power and Light Electric Rail Applications),
 - b) UL 1642 (Standard for Lithium Batteries),
 - c) UL 1741 or UL 62109 (Inverters and Power Converters),
 - d) Certified under the applicable electrical, building, and fire prevention codes as required,
 - e) Alternatively, field evaluation by an approved testing laboratory for compliance with UL 9540 (or approved equivalent) and applicable codes, regulations and safety standards may be used to meet system certification requirements.

H. Special Permit Criteria

1. The Planning Board may approve an application if the Board finds that the system complies with the Site Plan Review and Approval criteria and with the conditions for granting Special Permits. Battery energy storage systems shall also satisfy the following additional criteria:
 - a) Environmental features of the site are protected, and surface runoff will not cause damage to surrounding properties or increase soil erosion and sedimentation of nearby streams and ponds.
 - b) The Planning Board may also impose conditions as it finds reasonably appropriate to safeguard the town or neighborhood including, but not limited to, screening, lighting, noise, fences, modification of the exterior appearance of electrical cabinets, battery storage systems, or other structures, limitation upon system size, and means of vehicular access or traffic features.
 - c) No occupancy permit shall be granted by the Building Commissioner, nor shall the site be energized or interconnected to the utility until the Planning Board has

received, reviewed, and approved an as-built plan that demonstrates that the work proposed on the approved site plan, including all stormwater management components and associated off-site improvements, have been completed in accordance with the approved plan and certified same to the Building Commissioner.

- d) The Planning Board may, at its discretion, approve an as-built plan upon provision of a type of surety as determined by the SPGA, to secure incomplete work where such work is not immediately necessary for lawful operation of the system without negative effect on public health and safety and surrounding properties.
- e) The applicant shall make every effort to coordinate necessary surveying and finalization of the as-built plans and submission of required construction control documents prior to the conclusion of construction. Notwithstanding the above, a temporary occupancy permit may be granted with the approval of the Planning Board subject to conditions for completion of work imposed by the Board.

I. Decommissioning

1. As part of the applicant's submission to the Board, the applicant shall submit a decommissioning plan, to be implemented upon abandonment or in conjunction with removal from property. The plan shall include:
 - a) A narrative description of the activities to be accomplished, including who will perform that activity and at what point in time, for complete physical removal of all battery energy storage system components, structures, equipment, security barriers, and transmission lines from the property.
 - b) Disposal of all solid and hazardous waste in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations.
 - c) The anticipated life of the battery energy storage systems.
 - d) The estimated decommissioning costs and how said estimate was determined.
 - e) The method of ensuring that funds will be available for decommissioning and restoration.
 - f) The method by which the decommissioning cost will be kept current.
 - g) The manner in which the site will be restored, including a description of how any changes to the surrounding areas and other systems adjacent to the battery energy storage system, such as, but not limited to, structural elements, building penetrations, means of egress, and required fire detection, suppression systems, will be protected during decommissioning and confirmed as being acceptable after the system is removed.
 - h) A listing of any contingencies for removing an intact operational battery energy storage system from service, and for removing an energy storage system from service that has been damaged by a fire or other event.
2. Decommissioning Fund. The owner and/or operator of the energy storage system, shall continuously maintain a fund or bond payable to the Town, in an approved form for the removal of the battery energy storage system, in an amount to be determined by the SPGA for the period of the life of the facility. All costs of the financial security shall be borne by the applicant. The amount shall include a mechanism for calculating increased removal costs due to inflation.

3. An inspection of the completed decommissioned area shall be reviewed by a consultant hired by the Planning Board before approving the decommissioning work in accordance with the Decommissioning Plan. The owner and/or operator shall pay for the cost of this review with such payment being provided by the owner and/or operator prior to the consultant undertaking said review, in accordance with MGL Chapter 44 Section 53G.

J. Abandonment

The battery energy storage system shall be considered abandoned when it ceases to operate consistently for more than twelve (12) months. The system shall be presumed abandoned if the owner and/or operator fails to respond affirmatively within thirty (30) days to a written inquiry from the Building Inspector as to the continued validity and operation of the system. If the owner or operator fails to comply with decommissioning upon any abandonment, the Town, may, at its discretion, and utilize the decommissioning fund for the removal of a system and restore the site in accordance with the decommissioning plan.

K. Severability

If any provision of this By-Law is found to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this By-Law shall not be affected but remain in full force. The invalidity of any provision of this By-Law shall not affect the validity of the remainder of the Ware Zoning By-Law.

Add to Section 4.9.2 Aquifer Protection Overlay District

2. Prohibited Uses:

- a) Disposal of leachable wastes with the exception of subsurface waste disposal systems approved through Title V;
- b) Battery Energy Storage Systems per section 4.8.9

ARTICLE 21. This petition Article failed by a Majority vote. (Establishing a Redevelopment Authority pursuant to MGL Chapter 121B)

ARTICLE 22. This petition Article failed by a Majority vote. (Prohibit the sale of miniature alcohol bottles also known as “nips”.)

ARTICLE 23. Passed by a Majority vote in favor (115 Yes and 3 No) that the Town authorizes the Selectboard to petition the Legislature for a Special Act of Legislation exemption for Eric Robert Esteves, who has already taken the Civil Service Exam, from the maximum age requirement for applying for Civil Service appointment as a Police Officer for the Town of Ware. The Legislation seeks to allow the appointment of Eric Robert Esteves as a Ware Police Officer despite the fact that he surpasses the 32-year age limit on July 22, 2022. This vote specifically authorizes the Selectboard to petition the Legislature for a Special Act of Legislation as follows:

Whereas the deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purpose which is set forth will exempt Eric Robert Esteves from the maximum age requirement for applying for Civil Service appointment as a Police Officer in the Town of Ware, therefore it is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the public convenience.

Section 1. Notwithstanding Chapter 31 of the General Laws or any other general or special law or rule of regulation to the contrary regulation the maximum age of the applicant for appointment as a Police Officer, Eric Robert Esteves of the Town of Ware, shall be eligible to have his name certified for original appointment to the position of Police Officer in the Town of Ware notwithstanding his having reached the age of 32 before taking any Civil Service Examination in connection with that appointment Eric Robert Esteves shall be eligible for appointment to the position of police officer in the Town of Ware provided he meets all other requirements for certification appointment to this position.

Section 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

An further that the Town of Ware authorize the Legislature to reasonable vary the form and substance of this requested Legislation within the scope of the general public objectives of this petition.

ARTICLE 24. This article failed to pass by a Majority vote. (8 Yes and 106 No) (“An Act Authorizing the Selectboard of the Town of Ware to serve as Fire Commissioner and Appointing Authority for the Fire Officers and Firefighters)

ARTICLE 25. Passed by a Majority vote in favor to dismiss this article (100 Yes and 9 No). To have the Town accept Chapter 247 of the Acts of 2022 – a petition article.

ARTICLE 26. This article failed to pass by a Majority vote not in favor (49 Yes and 63 No) (That the Selectboard of the Town of Ware shall serve as Fire Commissioners)

ARTICLE 27. Passed by a Majority vote in favor (98 Yes and 6 No) that the Town transfer \$12,000.00 from available **FREE CASH** to conduct environmental testing on Monroe St., including all costs incidental and related thereto.

ARTICLE 28. Passed by a Majority vote in favor to dismiss this article. (appropriate funds for the Road Repairs Stabilization Fund)

ARTICLE 29. Passed by a Majority vote in favor that the town transfer \$75,000.00 from **FREE CASH** for matching funds for a Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund Grant for structural improvements to Town Hall, including all costs incidental and related theretro.

There being no further action to come before those present a motion was made and seconded to dissolve the Annual Town Meeting of May 8, 2023, and further that we will not reconvene this meeting. Voted all in favor. Meeting ended at 10:09 PM.

A true copy attest: Nancy J. Talbot, Town Clerk

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

NOVEMBER 27, 2023

In accordance with the accompanying Warrant, the Inhabitants of the Town of Ware, Precincts A, B, & C, qualified to vote in Town affairs met on Monday, November 27, 2023, at 6:30pm at Ware High School, 237 West Street.

The quorum requirement per Town of Ware Charter in the amount of One Hundred (100) registered voters was met with more than One Hundred Twelve (112) voters present at the start of the meeting; the meeting was called to order by the Moderator Kathleen Coulombe.

The Moderator went over instructions on the use of “clickers” issued to each voter who was checked in, a welcome and a brief outline of town meetings and procedures as well as speakers being recognized was done. Use of cellphones and pagers being put to silent mode noted, exits from the auditorium, and return of the clickers once the meeting was done.

Action as follows was taken under:

ARTICLE 1. Passed with Ninety-Eight (98) in favor and One (1) opposed that the town appropriate the sum of \$18,673.17 to pay the following unpaid bills from Fiscal Year 2023 and to meet said appropriation by transferring \$1,112.70 from available **FREE CASH** and \$985.00 Water Receipts Reserved and \$16,575.47 from Sewer Receipts Reserved.

Unpaid Bills –

Fire	Town of Belchertown	\$ 500.00
Highway	Lagrant Electric	\$ 244.70
School	College Board SAT	\$ 368.00
Water	Quabbin Analytical Lab	\$ 245.00
Water	Quabbin Analytical Lab	\$ 740.00
Sewer	Waste Water Services	\$ 16,457.97
Sewer	Lagrant Electric	\$ 117.50

Total General Fund \$1,112.70 from **FREE CASH**

Total Water Enterprise \$985.00 from Water Retained Earnings

Total Sewer Enterprise \$16,575.47 from Sewer Retained Earnings

ARTICLE 2. Passed by a Majority Vote in favor (Ninety-One (91) Yes and Three (3) No) that the Town amend the following line item increases of the Fiscal Year 2024 Town Budget:

Account #	Description/Account	Amount
141-5110	Assessors Salary	\$11,200.00
162-5200	Elections Salary	\$ 8,000.00
220-5200	Fire Purchase of Services	\$15,000.00
945-5700	Municipal Insurance	<u>\$40,000.00</u>
		\$74,200.00

And to fund these increases by transfer as follows from: \$74,200.00 **FREE CASH**

ARTICLE 3. Passed by a Majority vote in favor (Eighty-Two (82) Yes and Ten (10) No) that the Town transfer the sum of \$322,481.00 from **FREE CASH** to fund the Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Liability Trust Fund.

ARTICLE 4. Passed by a Majority vote in favor (Ninety-Eight (98) Yes and Two (2) No) that the Town transfer the sum of \$107,493.00 from **FREE CASH** to the Stabilization Fund.

ARTICLE 5. Passed by a Majority vote in favor (Ninety-Four (94) Yes and Four (4) No) that the Town transfer the sum of \$107,493.00 from **FREE CASH** to the Capital Stabilization Fund.

ARTICLE 6. Passed by a Two Thirds (2/3) vote in favor (Seventy-Four (74) Yes and Twenty-five (25) No) that the Town amend the Zoning Bylaws and Zoning Map to create the Rural Residential Business (RRB) Overlay District, as indicated on the map presented during the Planning Board Public Hearing, and to amend Sections 3.4 (overlay Districts) and 4.9 (Overlay District Regulations) of the Zoning Bylaws as available in the Town Meeting Packet and posted in the Town Clerk's Office. (see attachment)

ARTICLE 7. Passed by a Majority vote in favor, as amended, (Ninety-Two (92) Yes and Three (3) No) that the Town authorize the Selectboard to petition the General Court for the enactment of special legislation entitled "An Act relative to the Maximum Age Requirement for Police Officers and Firefighters for the Town of Ware" as set forth below, provided however, that the General court shall be authorized to make ministerial, clerical, and editorial changes of form only to said bill, unless the Selectboard approves amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court, and to authorize the Selectboard to approve such amendments, or take any other action relative thereto.

**AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE MAXIMUM AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR
POLICE OFFICERS AND FIREFIGHTERS FOR THE
TOWN OF WARE**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding Section 58, of Chapter 31 of the General Laws or any other general or special law to the contrary, no person shall be eligible to have his name certified for original appointment to the position of police officer and firefighter in the Town of Ware if such person has reached his forty-fifth birthday on the date of the entrance examination.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

ARTICLE 8. Passed with a Majority vote in favor (Ninety-Three (93) Yes and Four (4) No) that the Town accept as a public way the private way known as King George Drive, as previously laid out by the Selectboard, as shown on plans entitled "As Built Plan of King George Drive in Ware",

dated August 10, 2023, provided title, closing and recording costs are paid by the property owners abutting said road. (see King George Drive Road description and map attached)

ARTICLE 9. Passed by a Majority vote in favor (Eighty-Seven (87) Yes and Two (2) No) that the Town indefinitely postponed this Article (Purchase of financial software to assist in Capital Planning and Budgeting for the Town).

ARTICLE 10. Passed by a vote of Eighty-Five (85) in favor and Three (3) opposed that (a) the Town transfer and appropriate the sum of \$140,000.00 from available **FREE CASH** for the purpose of planning, designing, improving, renovating and/or equipping, including, but not limited to, accessibility improvements including walkways, parking, playground equipment and a pavilion, at the park known as Grenville Park, at 73 Church Street, containing a total of 75 acres of land, more or less, and identified on Assessors Map 23 as Lot 15 including, without limitations all costs incidental or related thereto; (b) transfer the care, custody and control of Grenville Park to the Ware Parks Commission for, and to affirm the dedication said Park to park and active recreation purposes under the provisions of G.L. Chapter 45, Section 3; and (c) authorize the Selectboard and/or its designee to apply for an accept on behalf of the Town funds granted under the PARC Grant Program and/or any other funds, gifts, grants, under any federal and/or other state program in any way connected with the scope of this article, and enter into all agreements and execute any and all instruments as may be necessary or convenient to effectuate the foregoing project.

ARTICLE 11. Passed by a vote of Ninety (90) in favor and Two (2) opposed to dismiss this Article. (Transfer \$12,000.00 from FREE CASH for costs associated with the creation of a Personnel Classification and Pay Plan).

ARTICLE 12. Passed by a Majority vote in favor (Eighty-One (81) in favor and Nine (9) opposed that the Town transfer the sum of \$250,000.00 from **FREE CASH** to purchase and install an Air System Chiller for the Ware High School including design and engineering costs, and all incidental costs related thereto.

ARTICLE 13. Passed by a Majority vote Ninety (90) in favor and Five (5) opposed that the Town transfer the sum of \$23,000.00 from **FREE CASH** to purchases and equip mowers for the Department of Public Works.

ARTICLE 14. Passed by a Majority vote Seventy-Seven (77) Yes and Five (5) No that the Town transfer the sum of \$14,000.00 from **FREE CASH** to demolish and remove the barn at the Aspen Grove Cemetery, and to pay for any incidental costs related thereto.

ARTICLE 15. Passed by Eighty-Eight (88) Yes and Three (3) No to indefinitely postpone this Article. (To appropriate funds for repairs to Town facilities including any design and engineering costs).

There being no further action needed a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm.

A true copy attest: Nancy J. Talbot – Town Clerk

SPECIAL STATE PRIMARY

OCTOBER 10, 2023

In accordance with accompanying Warrant, the inhabitants of the Town of Ware, qualified to vote in the elections of the Town, Precincts A, B & C, met at the Ware Town Hall, 126 Main Street on Tuesday, October 10, 2023, at seven o'clock in the forenoon. The Warrant calling the Special State Election having previously been posted according to the Bylaws of the Town, and State Laws met all the legal requirements.

Cards of Instructions for Voters, Cards of Penalties of Corrupt Practices at the Elections, Specimen Ballots, etc. having been previously posted in the Town Hall outside of the voting rails, the ballot tabulators were set at naught. The polls were opened by the Wardens Faith Dulak and Philp Malboeuf.

The polls closed at eight o'clock. The total ballots cast were Three Hundred Sixteen in person and One Electronically for a total of Three Hundred Seventeen (317) for the following offices listed by Party Ballot:

DEMOCRAT

	Precinct A	Precinct B	Precinct C	Total
<u>Senator in General Court – Worcester and Hampshire District</u>				
Jonathan D. Zlotnik	40	15	34	89
Blanks	0	1	0	1
Write Ins –				
Todd Smola	1	0	0	1
Peter Durant	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	41	16	36	93

LIBERTARIAN

Senator in General Court – Worcester and Hampshire District

Blanks	0	0	0	0
Write Ins				
Peter Durant	1	0	1	2
All others	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Blanks				
Total	1	0	2	3

REPUBLICAN

Senator in General Court – Worcester and Hampshire District

Bruce K. Chester	12	14	12	38
Peter J. Durant	46	70	67	183
Blanks	0	0	0	0
Write Ins	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	58	84	79	221

A true copy attest: _____
Nancy J. Talbot – Town Clerk

SPECIAL STATE ELECTION

NOVEMBER 7, 2023

In accordance with the accompany Warrant, the Inhabitants of the Town of Ware, qualified to vote in the elections of the Town, Precincts A, B & C, met at the Ware Town Hall 126 Main Street on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, at seven o'clock in the forenoon. The Warrant calling the Special State Election, having previously been posted according to the Bylaws of the Town and State Laws, met all the legal requirements.

Cards of Instructions to Voters, Cards of Penalties of Corrupt Practices at the Elections, Specimen Ballots, etc. having been previously posted in the Town Hall outside of the voting rails, the ballot tabulators were set at naught. The polls were opened by the Wardens Phillip Malboeuf and Faith Dulak.

The polls closed at eight o'clock. The total ballots cast were Nine Hundred Ninety-Four (994) for the following office listed on the ballot:

	Precinct A	Precinct B	Precinct C	Total
<u>SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT – Worcester and Hampshire District</u>				
Peter J. Durant	146	209	264	619
Jonathan D. Zlotnik	123	90	160	373
Blanks	0	1	0	1
Write Ins				
Jason Petraitis	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	269	301	424	994

A true copy attest: _____
Nancy J. Talbot – Town Clerk

TOWN TREASURER

Cash Reconciliation for June 30, 2023		
Town Treasurer's Cash and Investments		21,600,412.82
Other trust funds not in custody of Treasurer		-
Total Cash and Investments		21,600,412.82
Accountant's / Auditor's Cash and Investments (Per balance sheet)		
General Fund		13,097,193.66
Special Revenue Funds		44,435.20
Capital Projects Funds		48,145.73
Enterprise Funds		2,470,561.96
Trust and Agency Funds		5,940,076.27
Total per general ledger		21,600,412.82
Reconciling Items		
Warrants Payable		-
Deposits in Transit		-
Total Adjusted Accountant's/Auditor's Cash and Investments		21,600,412.82
Treasurers Report		
Cash on hand 07/01/2022	19,115,826.87	
Cash on hand 06/30/2023		21,600,412.82
Tax Titles held 07/01/2022		
New commitments	497,166.85	
Payments	(41,556.19)	
Moved to Possessions	-	
Tax Titles held 06/30/2023		455,610.66
Tax Possessions held 07/01/2022		
New Possessions		271,385.90
Sold at Auction		-
Tax Possessions held 06/30/2023		271,385.90

Quaboag Connector Total Trips (Rides) Break Down 2017 - 2023

Ecolane Tracking – Started Using Software April 2021

While using the **Ecolane software** from **April 2021 – December 31, 2023** – There have been **30,946** rides that were scheduled and completed.

The Quaboag Connector has completed a grand total of **64,566** rides to date. **Date ranges from Jan. 2017– Dec. 31, 2023**

Of these trips: **Palmer Rides to Work** rides equal **118** provided for **December 2023**. Total is included in the chart above.

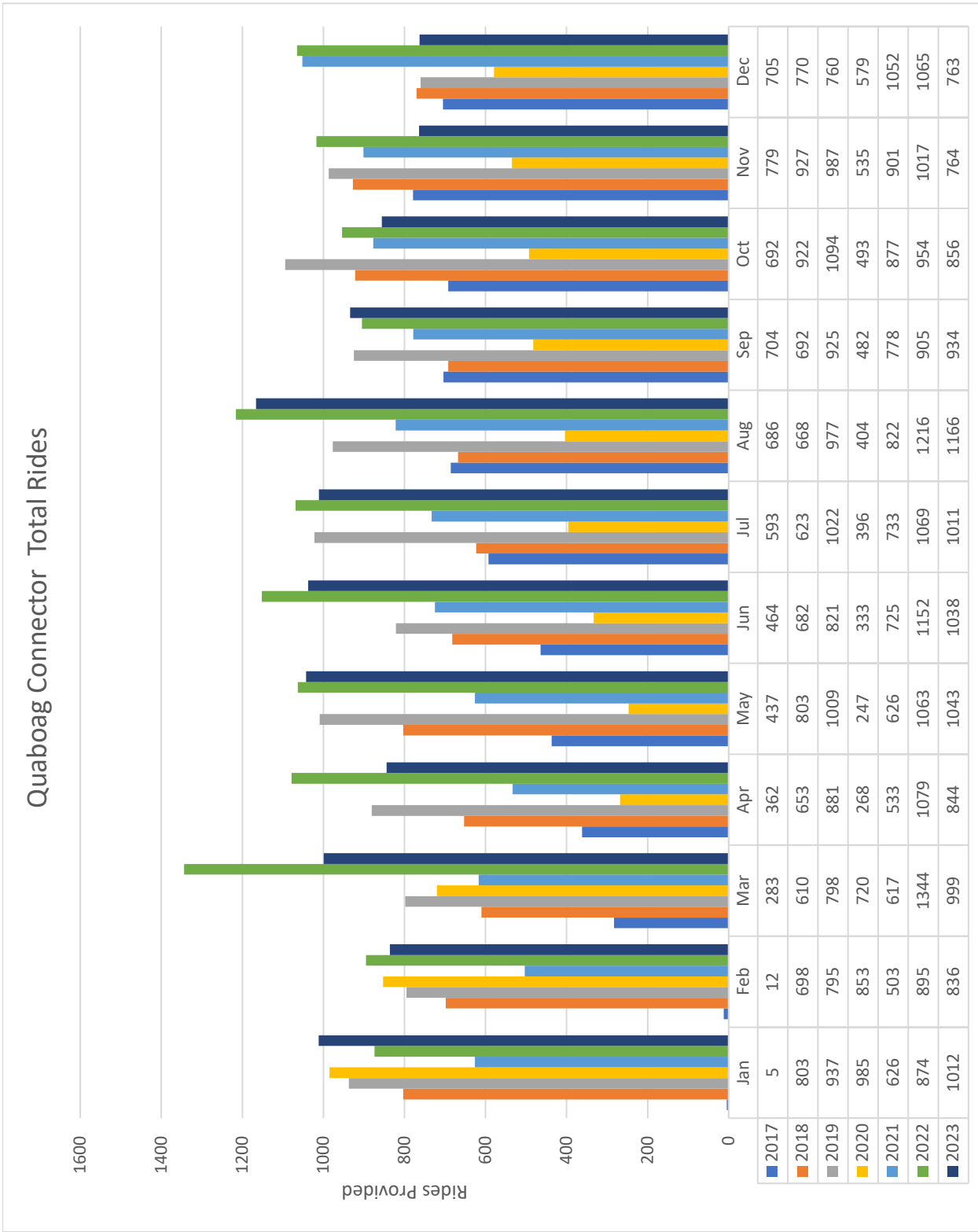
Of these trips: **Senior Van** rides equal **144** for the month of **December 2023**. Total is included in the chart above.

Of these trips: **Baystate van** rides equal **111** for the month of **December 2023**. Total is included in the chart above.

Of these trips: **Veterans** rides equal **86** for the month of **December 2023**. Total is included in the chart above.

Of these trips: **Quaboag Connector** rides equals **328** for the month of **December 2023**. Total is included in the chart above.

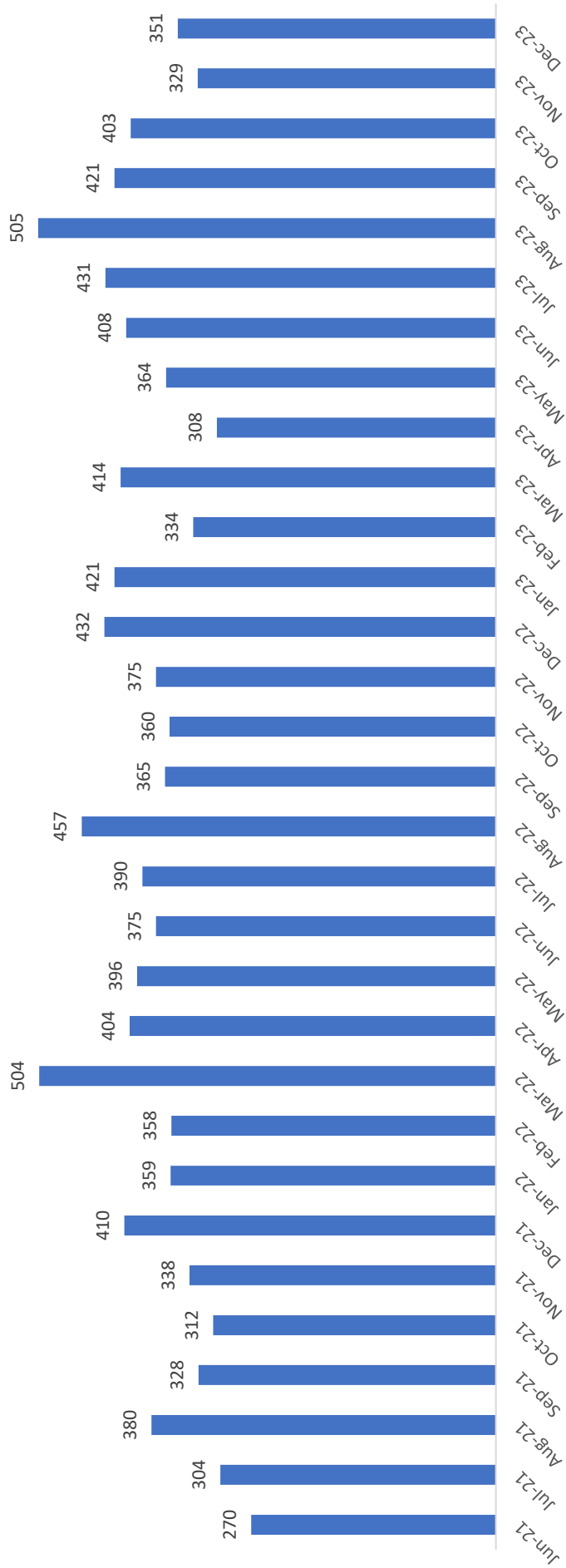
Trip Count Report - This report counts only completed trips.
Date range: 01/01/2017 – 12/31/2023. Provider types: Baystate, General Public, Palmer Rides to Work, Senior and Veterans



Trip Count Report Over 60- This report counts only completed trips.
Date range: 06/01/2021 – 12/31/2023. Provider types: Baystate, General Public, Palmer Rides to Work, Senior and Veterans

Quaboag Connector Ridership Over 60 | 2021-2023

■ Trips Over 60



Of these trips: **Senior Van rides equal 144 for the month of December 2023.** The total is included in this chart.

QUABOAG HILLS SUBSTANCE USE ALLIANCE & HEALTHY QUABOAG PROJECTS

Based on concerns about the impact of substance use in our communities in 2014, individuals and agencies established the Quaboag Hills Substance Use Task Force. The Town of Ware was a key founder and supporter of this regional effort and has continued to serve as a major partner and the primary fiscal agent since that time. In 2017, the Task Force was renamed the *Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance*. The Alliance is a diverse group of representatives from public safety, law enforcement, public schools, higher education, early childhood programs, businesses, health care, clergy, treatment providers, town officials, civic leaders, youth organizations, and families affected by substance use. We continued to support expanded and effective substance use prevention, intervention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery services in our region. In the rural Quaboag Hills geographic service area, the Alliance works in close collaboration with its local and county-wide partners at the margins of Hampden, Hampshire, and Worcester Counties. QHSUA serves the towns of: Barre; Belchertown; Brimfield; Brookfield; East Brookfield; Hardwick; Holland; Hubbardston; Monson; New Braintree; North Brookfield; Oakham; Palmer; Spencer; Wales; Ware; Warren; and West Brookfield. The Alliance's mission is to prevent and reduce substance misuse, especially among youth; to break down stigma associated with substance use disorder; to reduce health problems resulting from substance use disorder; to contribute to community efforts to expand access to treatment services; and to value all pathways to recovery.

The Alliance continued to be funded by a 10-year Drug Free Communities (DFC) Support Program grant (\$125,000 per year for 10 years) from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC); a 5-year, \$300,000 per year Strategic Prevention Framework-Partnership for Success (SPF- PFS) prevention grant and a 4-year (\$48,000 per year) Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking (STOP) grant from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The Alliance also received \$20,400 in funding from the National Association of City and County Health Officers (NACCHO) and the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts (PHIWM) to conduct the "Implementing Overdose Prevention Strategies at the Local Level" project in its Hampden County towns. We have also received funding from the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts (\$22,000) and the Public Health Services Commissioned Officers Foundation (\$5,000).

Since its founding, QHSUA has had the goal to support and advocate for a peer-driven recovery center in our region, as is available in many other cities across the state. QHSUA is a key partner in the regional Recovery Center of Hope (RCH) and supports grant-seeking and advocacy for such comprehensive services. The Western Massachusetts Training Consortium is the RCH program manager and fiscal agent. The Center expanded with more state funding in late 2023 and is in downtown Ware.

From 2022 to December 2023, the QHSUA was an active member of the National Institute of Health's HEALing Communities Study in partnership with Western Mass Training Consortium and Boston Medical Center. In Hampshire County, Ware and Belchertown were the study's selected communities. This study aimed to dramatically reduce opioid overdose deaths in participating communities with interventions that looked at the effectiveness of coordinated systems of care designed to increase the number of individuals receiving medication to treat Opioid Use Disorder, increase the distribution of naloxone (brand name Narcan), and reducing high-risk opioid prescribing.

Regionally, the Alliance continued to partner with the Hampshire County Heroin and Opioid Prevention and Education (HOPE) project co-lead by the Northwestern District Attorney; the Strategic Planning Initiative for Family and Youth (SPIFFY) Coalition, addressing underage drinking and marijuana use in Hampshire County; and is a member of the Hampden County District Attorney's Addiction Task Force (HCAT) and the Worcester County District Attorney's Opioid Task Force.

In 2022 and into 2023, the Town of Ware continued to serve as the fiscal agent to support several broader community health initiatives, under the umbrella of Healthy Quaboag, including:

- The Better Together grant, a 3-year (\$200,000 total) grant from Baystate Wing Hospital to address education to employment with a focus on career readiness for children, youth, and young adults. The Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation and Holyoke Community College are key partners. This collaboration is designed to reduce poverty and increase community health by engaging youth and young adults in improving access to the resources needed to improve educational and vocational outcomes and achieve living wage employment. In 2023, planning for providing a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) course with Holyoke Community College was a primary activity.
- The Quaboag Hills Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), a 3-year project funded at almost \$68,000 per year. A CHIP is a roadmap that is part of a long-term effort to enhance the health of a community and is developed collaboratively by the community and focuses on addressing and improving priority health issues. The Quaboag Hills Community Health Improvement Plan is a collaborative project of the town of Ware, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, and the Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation. The project is funded and supported by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and Health Resources in Action. The CHIP vision is that all Quaboag Hills region residents will have equitable opportunities to participate in a process addressing social determinant of health inequities in our region. A key focus is to engage with the rural populations that frequently experience inequities due to isolation and long distances to social services and health centers. In 2023, the CHIP determined that Transportation, Mental Health, Housing, and Access to Health Providers were the top 4 priorities and established and implemented Working Groups to address each of these topics.
- The Rural Vaccine Equity Initiative (RVEI); a 3-year project funded at \$75,000 per year. The project is designed to help devote more and appropriate resources to rural communities to address their unique needs for COVID-19 vaccination and mitigation and support needed infrastructures. Funded by the Mass Department of public Health's State Office of Rural Health (SORH) and the New England Rural Health Association, this initiative supports community-based organizations (CBOs), provides rural specific technical assistance, MDPH staff to assist with navigating resources, and a peer learning network. This three-year initiative allows rural communities to both meet immediate needs for COVID- 19 mitigation and implement long-range strategies to ensure resiliency from the factors that created and continued to contribute to poor outcomes during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Quaboag Valley Food Policy Council, with Ware as the fiscal sponsor (grant of \$30,000), was expanded and grew from 2022 to 2023. The Council continued to focus on reducing hunger and food insecurity while it increases the availability of healthy foods at an affordable cost in the Quaboag Valley region. The towns served are Belchertown, Brimfield, Brookfield, East Brookfield, Holland, Monson, North Brookfield, Palmer, Wales, Ware, Warren, and West Brookfield. The overall goal of the Food Policy Council is to bring together food producers, food consumers, food distributors, and policy makers to assess and examine food access within the

Quaboag Valley Region. The Council addressed the immediate and pressing needs of the community for food in an urgent way, while also continuing to focus on systems, policies, and actions to make the food system more equitable and accessible, and to further prevent and reduce food insecurity. In 2023 to 2024, the Council engaged in a comprehensive community food assessment process with the Central Mass Regional Planning Commission and the Collaborative for Educational Services. The Council was again funded by the Mass Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) in early 2024.

Submitted by:

Gail Gramarossa, MPH, CHES

Prevention & Community Health Director for the Town of Ware

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICE

The Office of Veterans Service continues to reach out into the community to let Veterans and widows know of the services offered by the Commonwealth through the Town of Ware.

The number of people seeking assistance has slowed some since things have opened, one of the biggest problems right now is housing (with rents skyrocketing).

The office continues to find alternate income resources for those in receipt of Chapter 115.

The Office filed 23 VA claims over the last year with about 90% of them being adjudicated in favor of the Veteran/Widow. If you are an honorably discharged Veteran and have a medical condition you think was caused by your military service, you should fill out a claim for compensation.

As always if you know of any Veteran or spouse of a Veteran in need of some services, please have them contact me at the number above.

It is a pleasure to work for a Town that cares so deeply for its Veterans! Remember Freedom is not Free!!

Sincerely,

Mark Avis
VSO

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS SUMMARY

In the Ware Public School Community, we are committed to serving our community by ensuring that students receive a quality education that equips them to make informed decisions for their future careers and lives beyond high school. We strive to maintain transparency by providing the community with accessible data and information, holding ourselves accountable for our actions.

Achievements: We firmly believe in celebrating the accomplishments of both students and staff as a cornerstone of fostering a culture of excellence within the Ware Public School Community. Our approach is strategic, ensuring that we recognize and celebrate the positive contributions of staff and students across various domains, including attendance, academics, character, and achievements on platforms like iREADY.

Data-Driven: As we progress through the academic year, it's imperative that we collectively recognize the significance of data-driven decision-making in enhancing our interactions with students. Emphasizing the importance of data utilization, we aim to adapt and improve instructional practices to better meet the needs of our students.

Safety: Ensuring the safety of children and staff is our top priority in our roles. To achieve this, we have collaborated with the Ware Police Department and Ware Fire Department to update each school's safety plan. These comprehensive plans encompass various components that have been practiced and communicated to every staff member within the building. Our goal is to ensure that all personnel are fully aware of the updated procedures and prepared to respond effectively in any situation.

Goals: The goals outlined below have been derived from the preliminary strategic plan initiated prior to July 1, 2023. The information provided will be presented to the School Committee for review, and the community will also have an opportunity to offer feedback before final adoption. These goals are intended to guide our efforts over the next five years. A formal action plan will be developed to ensure that we are aligned and meeting our target as we move forward.

1. The Systematic Adoption of High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) and Associated Curricular Resources Across all Grades and Content Areas.
2. The Seamless Integration of Instructional Practices into the Learning of Daily Targeted Content Objectives.
3. Reduce the variance between organic student written and oral expression to parallel grade-level listening and reading comprehension standards assessed by MCAS and required for success after graduation.
4. Strengthen partnerships with families to support student success and enhance community involvement in education.
5. Increase the quantity and quality of the overall daily attendance rates among all students.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael P. Lovato
Superintendent

WARE JUNIOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Ware Junior Senior High School (WJSHS), home of “The Ware Way,” serves approximately 500 students in grades 7 through 12. During the 2023-2024 school year, Mr. Scott Slattery serves as Interim Principal and Mr. Michael Fazio serves as Vice Principal with Mr. Thomas Shamgochian as the Dean of Students and Athletic Director.

We were able to welcome approximately 80 (new/grade 7) incoming students and their families to the WJSHS Learning Community during this school year.

We have been able to provide additional academic supports for all students through major expansions within our technology and infrastructure. Each student continues to receive a Chromebook and internet access has been made available for all who might need it. We continue to utilize Canvas as our Learning Management Platform System. We have paired Canvas with Edgenuity, which provides us with additional curriculum supports, adding utility to many of our courses.

This year, Ware Junior Senior High School continues to partner with Holyoke Community College offering students the opportunity to participate in our popular CNA course, along with some additional college level courses that students can take and are eligible to receive college credit. The current administration has met with the president of the college to pursue ways to expand its offerings to our community. We are continuing to utilize our Project Lead The Way, Innovative Pathways, Computer Science and Code.org Grants, which have provided us with the opportunity to bring innovative courses to our students in the areas of Engineering, Manufacturing, and Computer Science. Some of the specific courses include Engineering, CAD, Computer Science and Computer Programming. We are planning on adding additional courses in the area of computer science to our current program of studies for next school year.

Our school continues to work with our Manufacturing Partnership Council to bring local businesses into our schools and to provide connections for all that are involved. Students have been provided with networking opportunities with companies such as Quabbin Wire, Vibram, and FlexCon among many others. We are thankful for the dedicated relationships that we are able to have in our community. This partnership has also been instrumental in assisting us with the development of our Maker Space. This space has become home to our CAD, manufacturing, and engineering programs. We were able to grow on our Manufacturing Day here at the school by tripling in size and participation of our local companies. We were also able to invite Palmer High to bring their students to the event.

Ware Junior Senior High School students continue to be community service-oriented, especially members of the National Honor Society, National Art Honor Society, Spanish National Honor Society, Student Council, and the Junior/Senior High School Leadership Council. These organizations work to give back to both the school and the community at-large through several events. Some of these events include clothing drives, food drives, school supply drives, raising money for a variety of charities and one of our favorites, hanging the Christmas lights. Through the enthusiasm and dedication of several of our teachers and students, our school now houses a food/clothing closet. This space is open to any student who would like to take advantage of the

plethora of offerings that are made available through the generous donations that have been received.

We are thrilled to report that we have been able to increase student engagement by having our weekly scheduled Student Advisory period. This opportunity is made available to our students and has been well received and attended. We currently have over two hundred fifty students participating in our advisory program.

We continue to offer an after-school program that runs four days per week. We were able to secure a grant through our partnership with the 21st Century Community Learning After School Program. There are nearly sixty students enrolled in this program and we are adding new students every week.

One of the initiatives for the new administration was to improve on a positive student culture for our students. We have celebrated kids and recognize the good things that they are doing. Anything from making honor roll to improving personal attendance. We have amazing students here and they deserve the recognition.

Another new program that we are proud of is our “Mentoring Program”. We have several faculty members that have taken in a group of students to help them get through their high school career with a little extra support and care from one of our amazing teachers.

We have also implemented a new assessment to the district called iReady. This is given three times a year (pre, middle and post year). This allows us to track students in Math and ELA. It allows for students to be able to improve on an individual basis and it creates a personalized improvement course in each subject for each student, so they can work on it as needed.

Ware Junior Senior High School educators will continue to hold students to high academic, civic, and social expectations, while working to meet each learner’s individual needs as each one prepares for his or her future.

Athletics at Ware Junior Senior High School continue to thrive due to our systems, dedicated coaches, past success, administration, unwavering family, and community support. While neighboring schools have had a decrease in the number of student-athletes participating we have shown a steady increase each year. In the fall we offer Girls Volleyball, Golf, Football, Cheer, Boys Soccer and Girls Soccer. In the winter we offer Cheer, Boys Basketball and Girls Basketball and co-op with neighboring schools for Boys and Girls Swimming and Wrestling. In the spring we offer Boys Volleyball, Baseball and Softball.

Our students in Ware are the best in the class and will continue to make our community a special place that I am happy to call home.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Scott M. Slattery
Interim Principal
Ware Junior Senior High School

WARE MIDDLE SCHOOL

In a safe, and challenging environment, we strive to build a bridge between Elementary and Secondary learning. We encourage open communication, mutual respect and good citizenship promoting lifelong success.

Ware Middle School is the middle school for the Ware Public Schools, with a current enrollment of 264 students in grades 4, 5, & 6. The building implements three educational models to ensure that students are supported developmentally and academically. Our fourth-grade students learn four core subjects within a contained classroom with one familiar teacher. As students transition to fifth grade, they learn four core subjects implementing a team approach with teachers presenting ELA/Social Studies and Math/Science together. Our sixth grade is set up to prepare them for their transition to Junior High with all learners having the opportunity to rotate between four content area classrooms. All students participate weekly in Physical Education, Digital Media, Library, Art, and Music classes.

Academics

English, Math, Social Studies, and Science are the cornerstones of our academic plan at Ware Middle School. We are focused as a staff on assessing students, discussing their individual needs, and setting goals to improve their learning. We utilized the data gathered from all assessments to drive our instruction and worked with our families to strengthen bonds of communication related to their child's academics. We have seen definitive gains on i-Ready, BAS, DIBELS 8, and MCAS testing scores throughout all grade levels. The information collected through student assessments continues to drive instruction and ultimately results in higher levels of student achievement. Through assessment students are grouped by ability and instructional need in order to better facilitate learning activities that meet the needs of every student. This allows us the ability to provide interventions for every student to continually progress as individuals toward and beyond grade level expectations.

Our staff utilizes Houghton-Mifflin Wonders for ELA within their grade levels and augments the readings through selected young adult literature books. Guided reading and skills-based learning occurs on a continuous basis and several of our staff members have been trained on Linda-Mood Bell, an integrated reading program. All grade levels utilize Go Math curriculum with access to i-Ready to strengthen students' content area knowledge.

Student Incentive Programs

The Middle School continues to offer programs in our continuous effort to meet the needs of our students. WMS provides students with a program which encourages students to follow the Six Pillars of Character – Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. We challenge students to manage themselves to demonstrate Respect, Kindness, and Honesty throughout the school year. Prior to all evening events parents, students, and teachers sign a behavior contract ensuring that they follow the established expectations which include using respectful language with adults and peers, no physical altercations, and completing all work provided during the school day.

Ware Middle School strives for all students to develop their love of reading with friends, families, or quietly on their own. We have continued a tradition started at SMK, which announces all students' birthdays, and each student has the opportunity to select a book and bookmark to develop their own personal libraries at home.

SMK & WMS have partnered with the Springfield Thunderbirds and will once again this year take part in their "Stick to Reading Program". This is a language-arts reading program that encourages children in grades K through 6 to read for fun. Every student who completes six hours of recreational reading over the course of 6 weeks is awarded a free ticket to a Thunderbirds game in April and reduced tickets for family members to attend, along with a visit from the Thunderbirds mascot, Boomer.

Ware Middle School is always on the move, whether making sure that all children have nutritional meals for breakfast and lunch during the school year and summer. We are fortunate that the students at the Ware Public Schools are provided with the opportunity to take part in the Universal Breakfast/Lunch Program which provides a meal to every student each free of charge. On any given day, our cafeteria provides 125 breakfasts and more than 190 lunches.

The staff at Ware Middle School offer before and after school tutoring support for students in ELA and Math. As a building, the Middle School is used during non-school hours for PTO events, Title 1-night events, recreational league sports, basketball games, and community groups.

Safety

Safety of the students at WMS is always our number one priority, utilizing our partnership with the Ware Police Department and Fire Departments. We continue to learn the most up to date information on how to handle problems if they were to occur and are working closely with law enforcement to coordinate our efforts. As a district we will actively practice and take part in 4 fire drills to ensure that staff and students are prepared for the unexpected.

Every staff member monitors students continually in a concerted effort to safeguard the physical well-being of the students. It is equally important that the emotional safety of the students is also protected. This is addressed through the reinforcement of the Six Pillars of character which have been previously mentioned as well as curriculum elements which are taught at various points of the year.

Staff Development

WMS staff continue to take part in professional development and training to ensure that our students continue to develop through experience and exposure to strong academic content. We continue to deepen student knowledge as we present curriculum in English Language Arts and Mathematics which align with state and national standards. Teachers continue to be engaged in professional development and collaborative meetings as the transition throughout the school year. Teachers and administrators have spent time formulating team and individual goals aimed to further enhance quality of education. This is another endeavor that has required learning and teamwork along the way.

MCAS

Our 4th – 6th grade students will take the next generation of the MCAS Math, ELA, and 5th grade Science Assessments beginning in April of 2024. Ware Middle School teachers and administrators have spent time analyzing the Spring 2023 MCAS results implementing an item analysis of all student responses to develop focus areas from the information gathered. This analysis has assisted in driving the upcoming year's instruction. Those students who need an alternative assessment will do so utilizing an MCAS ALT model, by creating binders which provide examples that students can demonstrate they are accessing their grade level content. This process begins in the Fall and is in the process of being put together for our most needy learners.

Student Leadership Council

We strongly believe that leadership begins at a very early age, and it is our desire to nurture students as they grow and develop. The Ware Middle School Leadership Council is led by Mrs. Elizabeth Musnicki who guides 16 student representatives from grades 4-6. The Leadership Council is responsible for the daily building announcements and leading students in the Pledge of Allegiance each morning, they offer after school events and are responsible for set-up, clean-up, monitoring of any snack station, and meeting and greeting students as they enter.

The Ware Middle School Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The Ware Middle School PTO for 2023-2024 will continue to provide funding and volunteer personnel for a variety of field trips, projects, and programs in order to provide an abundance of educational experiences for all our students. The officers include, Mrs. Katie Rasys, PTO President, Mrs. Kim Senecal as Vice President, Mrs. Jacki Koczur as Treasurer, and Ms. Melissa Esteves as Secretary.

Over the course of the 2023-2024 school year the Ware Middle School PTO has offered students with the opportunity to take part in the following after school activities: The Monster Mash, Open Gyms, Reindeer Games, Family Paint Night, and will end the year with a grade 4-6 dance.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kimberly S. Thompson
Principal
Ware Middle School

STANLEY M. KOZIOL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The Stanley M. Koziol Elementary School seeks to provide a nurturing, positive, safe, learning community for all students. We encourage & support students to develop respect for self & others, to grow intellectually in content knowledge & problem-solving skills, & to become informed & active citizens of their community.

STANLEY M. KOZIOL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Stanley M. Koziol Elementary School is the elementary school for the Ware Public Schools. SMK continues to contain classes of grade levels Preschool through Grade 3 as of the 2023-2024 school year. We currently have 3 Preschool classrooms, 4 Kindergarten classrooms, 4 First Grade classrooms, 4 Second Grade classrooms, and 4 Third Grade classrooms. Total student enrollment is 384 as of January 24, 2024.

SAFETY

The safety of the students at SMK has always been our number one priority. In conjunction with our District's Safety Officer, we have participated in practicing lock down drills and shelter in place protocol. Administrators have received intense training involving the Ware Police Department in coordination with the Massachusetts State Police relating to evacuation drills. We continue to learn, using virtual meetings, the most up to date information on how to handle problems if they occur and we are working closely with law enforcement to coordinate our efforts. Throughout the year we have developed a strong partnership with the Ware Fire Department who conducts fire drills, as well as teaching all students the importance of fire safety at home.

Every staff member monitors students continually in a concerted effort to safeguard the physical well-being of the students. It is equally important that the emotional safety of the students is also protected.

ACADEMICS

Literacy, math, and writing are an integral part of the curriculum at SMK. The information collected through student assessment continues to drive instruction and ultimately results in higher levels of student achievement. The Ware Public Schools Grades Kindergarten through 6th currently implement the Reading program called Wonders by McGraw-Hill and are in our 5th year of implementation. Students who need additional reading support receive small group services from our Reading Specialist and Special Education Teachers assigned per grade level. Teachers in Kindergarten through 3rd grade are continuing to utilize practices supported by DESE and Mass Literacy in their respective practices. Literacy centers are also a common trend in our elementary classrooms.

Writing occurs across many disciplines here, including math, science, social studies, art, physical education, and music. The Wonders Program itself offers students multiple opportunities to write within the literacy block. In addition, classrooms have a separate writing block. We are continuing to use good literacy practices learned through our previous participation in DESE's Early Literacy Program with a focus on writing and student engagement strategies.

Kindergarten through 3rd grade utilizes the program "GoMath", which has proven to be an engaging and interactive approach to teaching and is linked directly to the state standards for math.

The District is also in the 4th year of utilizing a program called “ST Math” in Grades K-6th. ST Math is a visual instructional online program that uses the brains innate spatial-temporal (ST) reasoning to solve mathematical problems. Each grade level has a targeted number of minutes to achieve weekly and students are rewarded with incentives provided by “Jiji the Penguin”, which is the program's mascot. Students who need additional math support receive small group services within the classroom with the Math Interventionist/Coach.

MEASURING PROGRESS WITH STUDENT GROWTH

SMK staff measures student progress regularly to ensure instruction is being delivered at the appropriate developmental level. Student progress is measured through multiple assessments including: DIBELS, PAST, QPS, i-Ready, Progress Monitoring, “GoMath” Chapter Assessments, pre & post writing assessments, MCAS, Bracken Readiness Assessment and BAS.

STUDENT INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

The Elementary School continues to offer many programs in an effort to meet the needs of all students. “SMK Superstars” program encourages students to follow the Six Pillars of Character – Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. Students are nominated by their classroom teacher, recognized, and awarded with a certificate each month.

Mrs. Hill, our Adjustment Counselor, uses the Six Pillars of Character in her “Character Counts” program. Mrs. Hill also works with all students to be “Bucket Fillers” at SMK. This concept is based on the idea that each of us has an invisible bucket. It is constantly being filled or emptied, depending on what others say or do, as well as what we say or do. Students are recognized several times during the week when they are filling other students’ buckets.

We will once again participate in the “Stick to Reading” Challenge presented by the Springfield Thunderbirds this year. This reading initiative encourages children in Grades K through 6th to read during one month and record all books. Every student who submits a reading log will receive one free ticket to a Thunderbirds hockey game in April.

Through a partnership with the Collaborative for Educational Services and the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, SMK has been awarded a grant funded 21st Century Community Learning After School program. This program is structured to provide students with additional learning and enrichment opportunities beyond what might otherwise be available to them. The program operates from 3:15pm to 5:30pm daily with evening transportation available to those students in need. After school offerings include LEGO Challenge, Creation Station, Storybook STEAM, Fantastic Fables and Working Inside Out.

We are involved in making sure that all children have nutritional meals for breakfast and lunch during the school year and summer. Ware Public Schools takes part in the Universal Breakfast & Lunch Program, which provides a meal to every student free of charge. The SMK Elementary School Building also provides space and facilities for the KidStop Program, which offers before and after school care for students in Grades K through 6th.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

SMK staff are continuing to strengthen their understanding of the importance of strong foundational reading skills and phonics development in the scope of teaching reading. The ability to offer students comprehensive reading instruction that covers all pieces of teaching reading is a powerful tool for students beyond SMK.

In addition, we have partnered with Clark Consulting to deliver performance-based coaching live in a classroom setting with a focus on strategic conversations and linguistically driven instruction. We want all students to answer questions in complete sentences; provide evidence, examples and explain their thinking; and use authentic and academic language when engaging in their own learning.

Educators continue working with the Teacher's Evaluation System per their contracts. We have spent time formulating team and individual goals aimed to further enhance the quality of instruction and education of students. This is another endeavor that has required learning and teamwork along the way.

MCAS 2024

Our grade 3 students will take part in MCAS this spring; specifically, two ELA Sessions that will take place in April and two Math Sessions that will take place in May. This assessment will be computer based. Students who need an alternative assessment will do so through the state approved MCAS ALT pathway.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The School Council is comprised of school administrators, school staff, parents, and community members. We have been able to hold two meetings this year, so far. The council meets on one Monday a month.

STUDENT COUNCIL

SMK has a Student Council this school year for grades 2 and 3 students. Students were allowed to apply to represent their respective classrooms. They meet one Thursday a month. There are 8 students on the Student Council.

THE STANLEY M. KOZIOL PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The Stanley M. Koziol PTO will continue to facilitate funding and volunteer personnel for a variety of field trips, projects, events, and programs to provide an abundance of educational experiences for all our students. The officers include Mrs. Jasmine Robinson, President, Margaret Orszulak, Vice-President, Kate Fluegge, Treasurer, and Meghan Lagimoniere, Secretary. Meetings take place on the first Monday of the month and are held in the SMK Library at 5:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pamela Iwasinski

Principal

Stanley M. Koziol Elementary School

YOUNG MEN'S LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Young Men's Library Association is to provide materials in multiple formats to facilitate life-long learning and enjoyment for the patrons of the library. In addition, the library serves as a learning center for the community, providing educational programming and access to multiple sources of information in both print and electronic formats.

Statistics:

In FY 2023 the library circulated 24,771 physical items, as well as 3,106 e-books and 2,251 e-audiobooks. Of the physical items checked out of the library, 8,863 were checked out from the Children's Room. The library circulates wireless hotspots for free mobile internet service for the patrons, which are very popular. We have a total of 10, and they went out 156 times. We also have begun to circulate jigsaw puzzles for adults and children which went out 54 times.

Last year the library received 3,064 items from other libraries for our patrons. We sent out 5,239 of our items to other libraries. The total of these items was 8,303. We circulated 1,998 items to patrons from other towns who use the Ware library.

Last year there were 11,215 visits to the library. We are starting to see our visitor counts increase but are not yet at the levels from pre-pandemic. 920 people came in to use the library computers. While most people have phones, many don't have printers and often need to print things out. We are not keeping statistics, but we also have many people who either email things to the library to print out so they can pick them up, or who come in to print from their phone to our photocopier. The library also sends and receives faxes and several people per week come in to use that service.

134 new library cards were added last year. There are currently 2,860 registered borrowers at the library. Of those 2,198 are residents of Ware.

Collection Development:

The total number of items reported to the state as owned by the library is 253,587. This includes all the e-books and e-audiobooks in the Central and Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing (CW Mars), the library consortium that provides computer services to local libraries and allows us to share books and electronic material collection as well as our items. The number of physical items owned by the library is 44,181. The library is purchasing fewer DVDs than in the past, as circulation for them has not rebounded to pre-pandemic levels. We are also purchasing more Wonderbooks, which are books with built-in audio players for the Children's Room, as well as Vox books, similar items from a different vendor. These continue to be one of our most popular items in the Children's Room. As the library budget grows, we need to make sure we spend enough on materials to satisfy state requirements, so we have begun to purchase more e-books and e-audiobooks instead of just relying on CW/Mars to buy for the whole system. CW/Mars offers us a program called Overdrive Advantage which allows us to purchase titles and share them with the whole system, but if we own a title and one of our patrons wants it, they can place a hold and their hold has priority over other holds in the system. Each month the library purchases items that our patrons have holds on, especially if there are not many copies within the system.

The Children's Librarian has been given a budget each month for electronic materials for children as well as her regular book budget.

During this fiscal year, the library added 1,836 items. This included 785 adult books, 783 children's books, 22 young adult books, 109 large print books, 98 adult audiovisuals and 39 children's audiovisuals.

Programming

This year the library was able to do much more programming than in the past few years. We had 4 adult programs with a total attendance of 34 people. This included local authors J. R. Greene and Elena Paladino talking about Quabbin History and the Quabbin Health District nurse on mosquitos and ticks. For children, we had a total of 75 programs, with a total attendance of 1098. This included weekly story times, a popular monthly song program with a local musician, and special events for Halloween and Christmas. We did a couple of cupcakes decorating classes that the kids loved. For Summer Reading this year we had 88 participants. Some of the programs included Tiny Tiles Mosaics, where the children made a tiled mosaic on a rock, a popular kite making program at Grenville Park, and kits to make homemade sprinkles. The Children's Librarian continued to make the Make and Take craft kits that became popular during COVID-19, preparing a total of 1,184.

Other Library News:

The Massachusetts Cultural Council offered a Cultural Sector for Recovery Grant that the library was eligible for because we are a non-profit organization. The purpose of the grant was to help cultural, and arts organizations recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. There were not a lot of requirements for applying for the grant other than a short application with details about what we do here, and the need to send in a couple of years of tax returns. The amount of the grant was not announced until all applications had been received. In the end, the library received \$31,080. The best part of this grant is that it was unrestricted funds. We have put the grant funds aside to help with upgrading the furnace and other maintenance issues.

In FY23 the library completed a 5-year strategic plan. The plan was developed with a committee of library users and other residents. As part of creating the plan, survey forms were sent to Ware residents with the Ware River News, as well as being made available at the library, at locations around town, and online. This information was used to create a plan that was submitted to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). Having a plan on file makes the library eligible for some state and federal grants that are administered by the MBLC.

The goals established in the Strategic Plan are listed below. If any town residents are interested in further information about the planning process, or the results of the survey, they are welcome to contact the library.

1. Improve marketing of the library, including better publicity and consideration of renaming and/or rebranding.
2. Increase programming and appeal for children, teens, and adults.
3. Explore ways to raise funding for future library expansion, either through existing plans to expand at the current location or construction of a new library at another location.
4. Make the library completely accessible to people with disabilities, as per ADA guidelines.

5. To assure that the library trustees serve as an active, informed board who support the library's mission, programs, and services.
6. To make local history items useful and accessible.

The strategic plan took about a year to create, but it was time well spent. The survey produced a lot of valuable feedback about what the residents of Ware would like to see from the library, and we will be working to improve library services to better fill the needs of the community. The library will be submitting yearly Action Plans to the MBLC to state the areas we will be working on to accomplish the goals in the plan.

The library has been working for several years to index all the historical books, photographs, letters, papers, and other materials at the library. We have an index on our website of the materials that have been indexed so far that can be searched by keyword or subject. During this fiscal year, we have been working on a comprehensive list of the photographs taken by local photographer Charles Eddy and his family, and other local photographers. That list should be available on the library website sometime in 2024.

Thank you.