



E-NEWS



A LOOK BACK AT THE MONTH THAT WAS AND THE MONTH THAT WILL BE IN SWANSEA



The Town of Swansea is starving for local coverage on all that is happening in our great community and as a result will be providing a monthly update recapping our board/committee meetings, providing department updates, advertising upcoming events, spotlighting employees and projects, and highlighting local businesses. This e-newsletter will be published on our website at the end/beginning of each month and feature a subscription service so that it can be emailed to anyone interested in receiving it. Please email media@swanseama.gov to receive the newsletter directly in your inbox.

BUDGET PROCESS

Budget approvals have begun for the FY25 fiscal year. Budgets are presented to the Board of Selectmen for a first review. They then send approved budgets to the Advisory and Finance Committee, which is tasked with presenting a balanced budget for voter approval at **Town Meeting, schedule for May 20, 2024**. A&F is scheduled to begin meeting on February 7.

Popular terms:

Tax Levy— This term refers to the revenue a community raises through real and personal property taxes. This is usually the largest source of revenue, but notably not the only source that goes into developing the annual budget.

Proposition 2 1/2—Proposition 2 1/2 was a measure put in place in the 1980s statewide to prevent giant increases in taxes from year to year. Municipalities have a levy limit each year that cannot exceed 2.5% over the prior year. Municipalities who do not tax to the limit each year have excess levy capacity. The 2.5% increase is measured against the previous year’s *limit*, not the previous year’s budget.

Certified Free Cash — Certified Free Cash refers to a leftover balance of funds that the Town has. It is overseen by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue each year. These funds are compiled by receipts and revenues, returned funds within the operating budget, miscellaneous receipts and more. Spending out of certified free cash requires votes at Town Meeting.

Follow us on Social Media—Facebook, & Instagram



Check out our dedicated news websites:

swanseaportal.com

swanseapolice.com

REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS

Click below for all real estate transactions from 2023

[2023 Recap](#)



COMING DOWN THE PIKE

There will be two hearings of the Planning and Zoning Boards in February to permit a new retail/restaurant development on Rt. 6 across from Burger King. Included on the site will be **a Chipotle and a Starbucks**. Construction expected to start, pending approvals, this year with an **opening early next year**.

BUILDING PERMITS

Click below for residential and commercial building permits issued over the last month

[January 2024 Permits](#)



POLICE LOGS

https://www.swanseama.gov/departments/police_department/dispatch_logs/dispatch_log_january_2024.php



ROUTE 118 REDESIGN



The Town held a public workshop to discuss the options for the Route 118 (Swansea Mall Drive) redesign on January 10th. This was the second of such meetings whereby the Town provided alternates formed and shaped by comments from the first session.

Please visit the project-specific website for more information about

the project and ways in which you can offer feedback: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/43ccc72e0d174d369a42c7035d856e33/page/Home/>

We are also seeking your feedback on a possible name change for this road, currently Swansea Mal Drive. Please see this month's poll question here to offer your opinion:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1bbs5E0UaZWS05WZdOA4xp72IUYsh0QWJAp6mE3EQvI4/edit>



February

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | |
|--------|--|---------|--|----------|--------|---|----|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 Chinese New Year  | |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14  | 15 | 16 | 17 | |
| 18 | 19 Presidents' Day Town Offices Closed | 20 | School Vacation Week | | | | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | | | |

See board/committee meeting calendar here: <https://www.swanseama.gov/calendar.php?view=month&month=10&day=01&year=2023&calendar>

TOWN/GOWN

The Town has recently availed itself of the tremendous opportunities available at area higher educational opportunities, specifically with Bridgewater State and Stonehill. The Town engaged Bridgewater students in a Risk Management course where areas of focus included Property & Liability, Personnel, People and Processes, Systems & Technology, Financial, and Strategic Risks. This was the second year of this partnership and both sessions have resulted in valuable recommendations that the Town has begun to implement. Last year, based on one of these recommendations, the Town sought and received cybersecurity training for employees to arm staff with the necessary tools to combat bad actors. This year we are examining our current systems for vulnerabilities and necessary upgrades as well as seeking to make the volunteer experience easier and more attractive to prospective applicants (more on that in the feature below).



With Stonehill, we have pitched a Computer Science Capstone to develop an app that will be beneficial not only to members of the community but for local government officials serving our 'customers'. Whether users are looking for the time or location of a local meeting, a community event going on that weekend around town, the latest community news, finding a new favorite hiking trail, or report issues in their neighborhood like broken sidewalks, potholes, hazardous trees, unauthorized construction, clogged catch basins, or flooding, having the ability at your fingertips through an app is paramount for local government to provide optimal customer service and management. Hopefully we are selected!

BOARD/COMMITTEE VACANCIES

There are various volunteer opportunities available in Town as numerous vacancies exist on different boards and committees. This is a great way to not only get involved with your Town but also provide a civil service that is very beneficial to the community. Click here for a list of those **vacancies**. To learn more about each board's role in the community, visit our website: https://www.swanseama.gov/residents/volunteer_opportunities/index.php

Historical Commission
Open Space Committee
Soil Conservation Commission
Swansea Redevelopment Authority*
Advisory and Finance Committee (appointments by the Moderator)
American with Disabilities Act
Beach Committee
Swansea Cultural Council

*Urgent need

FEBRUARY 2024

*American Heart
Month*



**Heart Disease is the leading cause of
death in the United States**



This February, the Swansea Board of Health will be participating in American Health Month, and providing a number of resources and events to help you learn how to lower your risk of heart disease and stroke. Watch the Town Facebook page and Swansea Board of Health website for additional resources!



Swansea Board of Health
Swansea/Somerset Town Nurse
Swansea/Somerset Animal Shelter

Events

National Wear Red Day - Friday 2/2

Blood Pressure Clinic and Stroke Resources

2/7 - 10 to 11 am @ Swansea COA

Library Talk: Heart Disease and Stroke

2/15 - 2 to 3 pm @ Swansea Library

Heart Healthy Giveaway

2/26 - 3 to 5 pm @ Swansea Library

Get Heart Smart This February

American Heart Month 2024

Heart Disease and Stroke are leading causes of death in the United States, but you have the power to take action and protect yourself. Small heart-healthy actions like adding more movement to your day and choosing health foods can make a big impact on protecting your heart. Join the Swansea Board of Health in learning more about heart disease and what steps you can take to keep your heart healthy!

Types of Cardiovascular Disease

Heart Disease refers to several types of conditions including coronary artery disease (CAD) and arteriosclerosis.

Heart Attack occurs when the blood flow to a part of the heart is blocked by a blood clot

Stroke occurs when blood supply to a part of the brain is blocked, or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts.

Heart Failure, also known as congestive heart, means the heart isn't pumping blood as well as it should.

Arrhythmia refers to an abnormal heart rhythm which can be beating too slow, too fast, or irregularly.

Heart Valve problems can include a number of conditions, like when a heart valve doesn't close properly, open enough, or when the valve leaflets bulge or prolapse back into the upper chamber.



Risk factors

It is estimated that **half of all Americans** have at least 1 of 3 key risk factors for heart disease: **high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking.**

Health Conditions including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes mellitus and obesity can increase your risk of cardiovascular disease.

Risky behaviors include limited physical activity, tobacco use, and eating a diet high in saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol

Preventing Heart Disease

By living a healthy lifestyle, you can help keep your blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels under control, and in return, lower your risk of heart disease and heart attack.

Finding What Works for You

Heart Healthy Foods

Increase fruit and veggie intake and find healthier alternatives for your favorite snacks/meals.

Reduce Stress Levels

Light some candles, turn on music or your favorite show, and indulge in your favorite stress relieving tactics.

Manage Health Conditions

Work with your healthcare provider to set up a management plan that works for you.

Get Regular Physical Activity

Walking, yoga, and playing with kids/pets for 20 minutes a day are easy ways to increase movement throughout your day

Limit Alcohol Intake

Alcohol can increase blood pressure. It is recommended that men drink no more than 2 drinks a day, and women drink no more than 1.

Stay Away from Smoking

Tobacco use greatly increases your risk of heart disease. Speak with a doctor about ways to help you quit.



Town of Swansea Selectmen's Office



CHRISTOPHER R. CARREIRO, Chairman
ROBERT C. MEDEIROS, Vice Chairman
STEVEN H. KITCHIN, Clerk

MALLORY E. ARONSTEIN
Town Administrator

A PROCLAMATION

LET IT BE KNOWN, that the Town of Swansea hereby officially recognizes February to be American Heart Month and urges all citizens to take this month to focus on their hearts and learn how to protect themselves, their loved ones and the community from cardiovascular disease.

WHEREAS, on December 30, 1963, President Lyndon B. Johnson proclaimed the first American Heart Month, to take place in February of 1964, and Congress, by joint resolution, requested the President to issue an annual proclamation designating the month of February as American Heart Month; and

WHEREAS, the first Friday of every February is federally designated as "National Wear Red Day". On this day, our nation stands together and, just as cardiovascular disease knows no borders, creates a blanket of red spanning across the country; and

WHEREAS, heart disease is the leading cause of death for men, women, and most racial and ethnic groups in the United States, accounting for 1 in every 5 deaths within our country. It is estimated that a heart attack occurs every 40 seconds, and every 3 minutes and 14 seconds, a person dies from a stroke; and

WHEREAS, eighty percent of cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke, is preventable. Healthy diet, physical activity, avoidance of tobacco products and the monitoring and control of risk factors, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol and high blood sugar, are just a few of the many ways we can help reduce our risk of heart disease; and

WHEREAS, American Heart Month motivates the citizens of the United States to take action to protect ourselves against heart disease. Small heart-healthy changes to our lives, like adding more movement throughout our day or choosing healthy foods options, can have a big impact on protecting our hearts; and

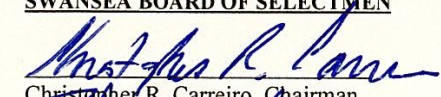
NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Swansea, Massachusetts, in recognition of the importance in our part of the fight against cardiovascular disease, do hereby proclaim February to be

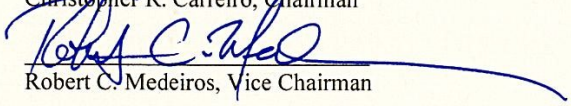
AMERICAN HEART MONTH NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY – FEBRUARY 2, 2024

in the Town of Swansea and encourages our citizens to join together and show their support against cardiovascular disease by wearing the color red on Friday, February 2, 2024.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, we therefore sign our names officially and cause the Seal of the Town of Swansea to be affixed on this 23rd day of January in the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Four

SWANSEA BOARD OF SELECTMEN


Christopher R. Carreiro, Chairman


Robert C. Medeiros, Vice Chairman

Steven H. Kitchin, Clerk

FROM THE ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

February is American Heart Month, so it is a perfect time to make sure your pet's heart remains healthy too!!!

Heartworm is caused by foot-long worms (heartworms) that live in the heart, lungs and associated blood vessels of affected pets, causing severe lung disease, heart failure and damage to other organs in the body.

The DO's and DON'T's of Heartworm Protection



Knowledge and proper care keep dogs heartworm-free.



DO have your veterinarian test your dog each year for heartworm infection. It takes roughly 6 months for an infection to be detected with a standard heartworm test, so if your dog becomes infected, this schedule helps ensure early diagnosis and treatment.

DO give your dog his or her heartworm preventive on time, every time. Whether you give a monthly pill or spot-on medication—or you visit your veterinarian for a semi-annual injection—being consistent is essential. Not only is your dog protected, but you stay in the prevention habit.

DO make sure the product you rely on actually is a heartworm preventive. With so many parasite protection products on the market, it's easy to get confused. Far too many people assume their flea and tick product is protecting their dog from heartworms when it isn't.



DON'T skip testing just because your dog is on year-round heartworm prevention. While this will likely keep him or her heartworm-free, if you miss a dose, are late with it—or your dog spits out or rubs off the medication—it could create an infection opportunity.

DON'T stop prevention just because you haven't seen a mosquito lately. Heartworm preventives work retroactively, eliminating new infections that were transmitted months earlier. Rather than guessing at when it might be "safe," keep your pet on prevention year-round.

DON'T forget that many heartworm pills and spot-on products protect against other parasites. Some protect pets from intestinal worms; others also protect against fleas and certain ticks and mites. Talk to your veterinarian about what product offers the protection your dog needs.

Think 12. Show your love for your pets by giving them 12 months of heartworm prevention and having them tested for heartworm every 12 months.



Think 12 is a registered trademark of the American Heartworm Society.

www.heartwormsociety.org



When the infected mosquito bites another dog, cat, or susceptible wild animal, the infective larvae are deposited into that animal. These larvae then go on to become adult heartworms in approximately 6 months. Once mature, heartworms can live for 5-7 years in dogs and 2-3 years in cats.

Right now, heartworm disease can only be prevented through the regular and appropriate use of preventive medications, which are prescribed by your veterinarian. These medications are available as a once-a-month chewable, a once-a-month topical, and either a once or twice-a-year injection.

Heartworm is much easier to prevent than treat! Please talk to your veterinarian on how to keep your pet protected from heartworm disease.

MMA ANNUAL MEETING

Staff attended the MMA Annual Meeting and Trade Show this year, which was chock full of great workshops and networking opportunities. This will lead to the following initiatives to implement:

- ◆ Reviewing sites to convert into multi-family housing to meet the needs of the public.
- ◆ Facilities management techniques and tools
- ◆ Digital equity efforts to allow internet connection for all
- ◆ Exploration of expanding diversity, equity and inclusion programs for hiring employees and outside vendors.
- ◆ Update on Labor Laws impacting municipal leadership and organizational needs.
- ◆ Reviewing state finance projections and economic trends to better position the Town of Swansea in our budget preparations for FY25 and beyond.
- ◆ Learning about state goals and initiatives to understand funding priorities of the Legislature, the Governor and the MMA to align Swansea's shovel ready projects with anticipated funding sources.
- ◆ Spurring competition by meeting new vendors and making new conditions for necessary projects and needs, such as engineering, guidance on municipal broadband, discounted furniture opportunities, solid waste solutions, municipal services outside of traditional town hall facilities, and more.

STATE BUDGET CUTS

9C cuts – the Town received earmarks for three projects that were affected by the Governor's cuts, which are solely under her authority. Each of the them say a 50% reduction to project funding. The three projects are updating the bocce courts at Swansea Memorial Park, installing traffic signage for crosswalk and pedestrian safety around Town, and installing sidewalks along Stevens Road at Base Lodge and Ridge Lane. Of the three, the sidewalk project will likely not be completed due to lack of adequate funding.

RETIREMENTS & OPENINGS

The Town would like to thank the following individuals for their service upon their upcoming retirements: Police Chief Marc Haslam, Conservation Agent Colleen Brown, and Executive Assistant in the Selectmen's Office Janet Helley. We commend you all for your many years of service and are a most grateful community for your contributions towards Swansea's success.

The Town is advertising for the vacancies on our website below. The Town is also seeking applications for facilities maintenance workers and a Health Inspector.

FLOODING PHOTOS

Another month and another round of damaging storms. The Town is routinely seeking grants to combat the effects of flooding seen around Town and has conducted various planning endeavors to address prioritization in project development and funding. Whether it be overtopped culverts, beach erosion, or impassable roads, these are all important and in need of fixing. Pictures are worth a thousand words, especially when making the case in a grant application to mitigate the effects of storm damage. By attempting to adapt to climate related storm events, we can be more resilient as a community, which will improve the quality of life for all.

If you have any pictures of flooding or trees down, please send them to media@swanseama.gov



Comptons Corners

Pearse Road



BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

February 10th is the Chinese New Year, which will kick off the year of the dragon. If you would like to celebrate, here are our Chinese restaurants in Town to immerse yourself into the culinary culture.



Vickie's Swansea Chinese Restaurant, located at 207 Swansea Mall Drive, has been opened for 29 years and was won several Top 100 Chinese Food Restaurant Awards in the country!

<https://vickiesswanseama.com/>

Hoy Tin is located at 630 GAR Hwy and has been there for over 40 years. Known for its casual atmosphere and great drinks, in addition to its delicious food options, it is a must-try!