



# E-NEWS

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

## WELCOME TO THE FIRST EDITION!



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](mailto:media@swanseama.gov) to receive the newsletter directly in your inbox.

## BOARD AND COMMITTEE RECAPS

### Board of Selectmen

- ◆ A pinning ceremony was held for new Firefighter, Matthew Thayer. Congratulations and welcome aboard!
- ◆ Sgt. Mark Foley, a Swansea resident, was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. Sgt. Foley is a 25 year veteran of the Swansea Police Department and has been a sergeant since July of 2012. He is a firearms and use of force instructor, serves as one of the department's firearms licensing officers, is currently the court liaison, and will be assigned as commander of operations.
- ◆ Monitoring Emergency Shelter situation; Task Force of relevant departments established.
- ◆ Solid Waste fees to be set at October 3rd meeting..
- ◆ Improvements to sidewalks on Bark St, south of Stevens Rd, commenced in early August and will be followed by repaving of the road in October. The engineering phase was just completed and the \$400,000 construction phase is funded through MassDOT's Complete Streets Grant program. Swansea was accepted into the Complete Streets Program in 2021.

### Planning Board

- ◆ A 14,000 sq ft 12-unit indoor contractor facility behind CVS was approved.

Follow us on Social Media—Facebook, & Instagram



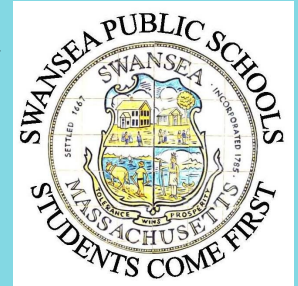
Check out our dedicated news websites:

[swanseaportal.com](http://swanseaportal.com)

[swanseapolice.com](http://swanseapolice.com)

# Swansea Public Schools Update

The opening of the 23-24 school year has gone well so far, despite some hot days and a few bussing issues. Fall sports are well underway and our teams are being competitive in their divisions! Case High Drama will have their first production, URINETOWN commencing the weekend of October 13. The Case High School Marching Band will be competing at the National level in November and we wish them well in their endeavors. We have welcomed our preschool students and Kindergarteners to our Cardinal family and they are excited to partake in the great learning opportunities that we provide at the early childhood level! Our school's open houses have taken place which allowed caregivers to see all of the great things happening within our classrooms.



Swansea Public Schools is entering the feasibility study phase of our proposed school expansion project. The schools will be requesting \$2 million dollars in funding in order to complete the mandated process and move us toward the next big step of school expansion. This request will be on the Special Town Meeting agenda on November 6. Townspeople should know that the funds need to be allocated and then the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) provides reimbursement of approximately 54.7% of the total funding. This is significant in that the total cost to the town will be approximately \$900,000. The feasibility study will yield an Operation Program Manager (OPM), a Schematic Design firm and an architect so that at the end of the feasibility study period, we will know what the school will look like, where it will be located, how much it will cost, as well as, a timeline for completion of the project. Support for the feasibility study phase is crucial in order for us to take the next steps in building a new school. More information will be shared by the School Building Committee in public forums as we move through the process.

We look forward to continued collaboration with all town entities as we move through this school year and beyond!

Be well,  
Superintendent Robidoux



## REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS

Click below for real estate transactions from the month of May  
August 2023



## POLICE LOGS

[https://www.swanseama.gov/departments/police\\_department/dispatch\\_logs/dispatch\\_log\\_september\\_2023.php](https://www.swanseama.gov/departments/police_department/dispatch_logs/dispatch_log_september_2023.php)



## BUILDING PERMITS

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



September 2023 Permits

## CAPITAL BUILDING COMMITTEE MUNICIPAL COMPLEX UPDATE

The Capital Building Committee is hosting an informational session on Wednesday, October 18th, at 6pm at the Brown School to provide information about the proposed Municipal Complex project, which will contain a combined Town Hall/Annex/COA in one facility and a separate Highway Garage on the same site. Financial details will be explained. Renderings shown and questions answered. A vote on whether to approve this project is anticipated to take place at the **November 6th Special Town Meeting**. Stay up to date on all the Committee reports, minutes, presentations, videos of existing conditions and more at the dedicated project website: <https://buildingprojectsswanseama.gov/>

## HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN



The Town is updating its Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is a policy document to help us prepare for various natural hazards that may occur and mitigate against extreme weather conditions to preserve public safety. Learn more about these efforts and ways in which to provide comments by visiting the Town's website: [https://www.swanseama.gov/residents/emergency\\_preparedness/index.php](https://www.swanseama.gov/residents/emergency_preparedness/index.php)





# October

*Fall is upon us*

## FIRE SAFETY MONTH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 ANIMAL SHELTER YARD SALE	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 COLUMBUS DAY	10	11	12	13	14
15 PUBLIC SAFETY DAY (Station 2)	16	17 SOWAMS HERITAGE AREA INFO SESSION (White Church)	18 MUNICIPAL COMPLEX INFO SES- SION (Brown School)	19	20 TRUNK OR TREAT (Memorial Park)	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31 	See board/committee meeting calendar here: <a href="https://www.swanseama.gov/calendar.php?view=month&amp;month=10&amp;day=01&amp;year=2023&amp;calendar">https://www.swanseama.gov/calendar.php?view=month&amp;month=10&amp;day=01&amp;year=2023&amp;calendar</a>			

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH—Beef Stew

Courtesy of Beth Leonardo, Treasurer/Collector

### Ingredients

2 tablespoons olive oil  
2 pounds cubed beef stew meat  
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour  
4 cups water  
2 cups beef broth  
1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper  
4 cups cubed local potatoes  
2 cups chopped carrots  
1 teaspoon dried rosemary  
1 cup fresh corn kernels  
1 cup fresh green beans, cut into 1 inch pieces  
1 cup chopped turnip (optional)  
2 cups chopped fresh tomatoes (optional)

### Directions

Heat oil in large pot. Add beef and flour, stirring to coat beef. Brown. Add water, broth, salt, and pepper. Heat to boiling, reduce heat, and simmer 1 hour. Stir in potatoes, carrots, and rosemary; Simmer 1-2 hours. Add corn, green beans, and simmer for 30 minutes longer.

## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

**MEDEIROS FARM:** Final concepts, based on public input, were provided, which show a variety of active recreational uses such as soccer fields, a basketball court, playground, skate park, dek hockey rink, disc golf course, bandstand, bocce, gaga pit, seasonal ice rink, pickleball courts, and a walking trails. The State has provided \$750,000 for construction and the Swansea-Somerset Youth Soccer League will be providing funding for the soccer fields. Additional funds will be sought as the project progresses for the various proposed amenities from State grants. Construction plans will be created next with an anticipated fall commencement.



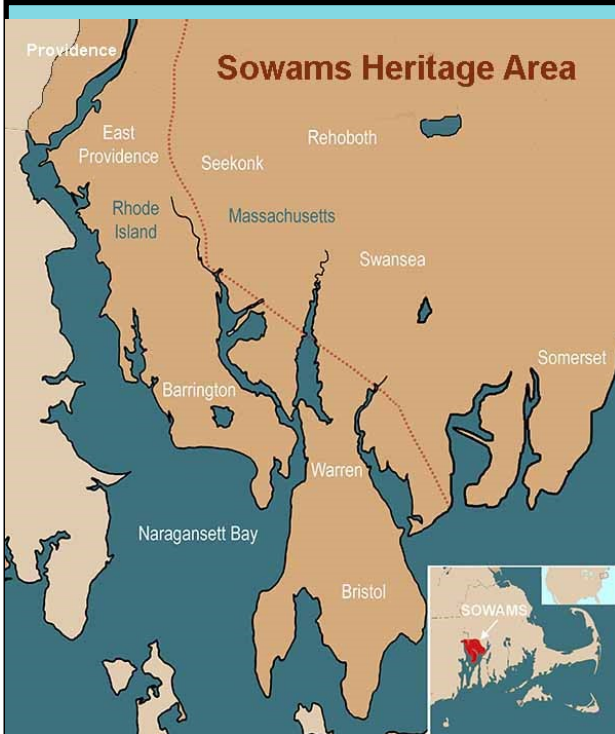
**WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROJECT:** The Town is partnering with UMass Dartmouth's Coastal System Program, School for Marine Science and Technology (SMAST) on a citizen-based volunteer water quality monitoring of the Cole River and Lee River Estuaries, as they are listed as impaired by DEP to excessive nitrogen. SMAST will provide training and testing of samples and the Harbor Advisory Committee has provided the vessels, operators, and volunteers to collect the samples. Year one samples were collected this summer and will continue over the next two summers. Implementation items to address the water quality will be recommended by SMAST.



**HARBOR PLAN:** The Town received an \$80,000 grant from the State's Seaport Economic Council to draft a Harbor Plan, which will outline waterways policies to ensure all users and uses are effectively managed. A Plan for Swansea's waterways is paramount for protecting and enhancing our water resources, whether they be our rivers or coves. The Plan will contain a vision for our waterways, goals in line with that vision, and implementation measures to realize those goals. These will all be developed through a broad array of stakeholders including representatives of the various water-based clubs utilizing our rivers and coves, members of the Town's Beach Committee and Conservation Commission, the Harbormaster/Shellfish Warden, State agencies involved with waterways regulations, conservation-minded non-profits and members of the public. After development of the stakeholders group, an existing conditions inventory will be conducted followed by a public outreach effort. The establishment of a vision and set of goals will be followed by an action-item list that will ultimately be reviewed by the Planning Board and brought before the Board of Selectmen for approval. Upon approval, this Plan will be utilized as the basis for water-related policy decisions, bylaw and regulation amendments, and possible capital expenditures.



## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT



**SOWAMS AREA HERITAGE PROJECT:** The Sowams Heritage Area Project is undertaking an initiative to develop a National Heritage Area (NHA) in Sowams, the ancestral homeland of the Massasoit Ousamequin who welcomed the Pilgrims in 1621. The project is led by a regional coalition of town planners, tourism entities, historical societies, environmentalists, Tribal leaders, and other volunteers from the nine towns and cities that today comprise Sowams, along the northeastern shore of Narragansett Bay. NHAs protect and promote a region's history, heritage and culture and use those assets to advance local economies through tourism, recreation and community development.

Upcoming Community Conversations about the project will be held on Tuesday, October 17th at 3:00pm at the First Congregational Church (The White Church) on Rt. 6 and Hope and Main in Warren, RI on Wednesday, October 18th at 7:00pm

For more information, click here: <https://sowams.org/>

**Open Space and Recreation Plan Final Draft**—Public input is sought on our Final Draft of the Open Space and Recreation Plan (see link below), which contains an inventory of our existing amenities, goals and objectives, along with an action item list. Comments should be submitted by October 16, 2023 to Danica Belknap at SRPEDD, our regional planning agency who assisted with the Plan's preparation. She can be reached at [dbelknap@srpedd.org](mailto:dbelknap@srpedd.org)



 [FINAL DRAFT PLAN 09-15-2023](#)

# COUNCIL ON AGING UPDATE



## MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT OCTOBER 15—DECEMBER 7

Medicare Open Enrollment begins October 15th and runs through December 7th with new coverage beginning on January 1st, 2024! Prepare to be flooded with mail, e-mail, telephone calls and television advertisements, all designed to persuade you to

join their plan. All seek to connect you to a “licensed insurance agent” *who is NOT affiliated with Medicare* and may NOT provide you with unbiased advice. Not all plans are created equal and plans can change from year to year. Even if you’re happy with your existing Medicare Advantage plan or your Medicare Part D drug plan, you should know that **these plans contract with Medicare for ONE year**. Each year, they’re allowed to make changes to their coverage. They may change their premiums, deductibles or co-pays. Drug plans may even change their formulary—a drug covered by the plan, may NOT be covered next year. Swansea COA Independent Medicare Insurance counselors are available to help you understand your plan and review other options you may have. Appointments fill quickly. In order for us to provide you with assistance, a Part D drug form MUST be completed and returned to us before appointments can be scheduled to allow us to complete the necessary work prior your appointment. You will also need to create a MyMedicare.gov account (MMA). The Part D form and instructions on how to create your MMA are available at the COA or on our website: [https://www.swanseama.gov/departments/council\\_on\\_aging/important\\_forms\\_\\_documents.php](https://www.swanseama.gov/departments/council_on_aging/important_forms__documents.php).

Please call 508-676-1831 for more information.

## SWANSEA’S SENIOR GARDEN

The Swansea COA recently welcomed Senator Michael Rodrigues to our center for the Grand Opening of our Senior Garden. This garden was made possible through the Senator’s SouthCoast Community Grant Foundation. Over seventy (70) seniors have benefited from garden harvests consisting of zucchini, summer squash, cucumbers, an assorted variety of tomatoes, basil, banana peppers and more! We thank the Senator,



the Highway Department and the COA staff for all their efforts toward making this such a huge success!

## DUNKIN’ DONATION (Wilbur Avenue)

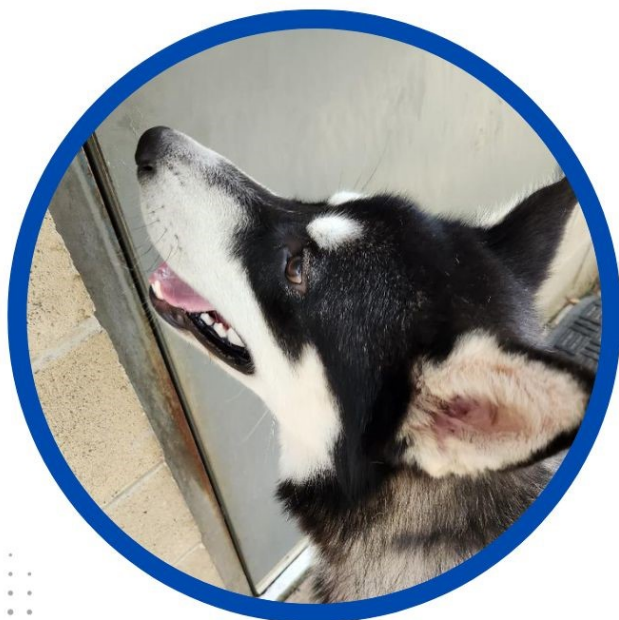
The Swansea COA was recently honored to celebrate in the grand reopening of Dunkin’ on Wilbur Avenue. We were beyond grateful and so appreciative to Stacey Dessert (owner) for her extremely generous donation of \$1,000 to our center for use toward future senior programming.







## SHELTER SPOTLIGHTS



### KODA

Koda is a 10 month-old Alaskan Malamute, who is full of life and a very happy boy! This boy does need some training, as he has lived most of his life outdoors. Koda is a big boy at around 95 pounds, so we recommend a family with no small children. He can be a bit mouthy and jumpy and seems to be calmer around men.

# MEET KODA AND RANDY!

### RANDY

Randy is a 2 year-old neutered male, who is full of energy and enthusiasm! He is a bit of an escape artist, so he does need a home that will be cautious with doors and windows. He does need to be the only pet in the home, but rest assure he will be more than enough to love!!!!



*If you are interested in Randy or Koda, or want to meet any of our other furry friends, call the shelter at 508-674-5731!*



# SWANSEA HEALTH DEPARTMENT HURRICANE SAFETY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

## DAMAGE AND DANGERS

Hurricanes can cause tornadoes, heavy rains, rip currents, storm surges, high winds (74+ mph), inland and coastal flooding, and damage to building structures



CHECK OUT THE  
WHOLE NEWSLETTER  
ON THE TOWN WEBSITE  
UNDER "BOARD OF  
HEALTH"



## WATCH VS. WARNING

### WATCH

Hurricane watches indicate that hurricane conditions are possible within 48 hours of the watch

### WARNING

Hurricane warnings indicate sustained winds that are at least 74 MPH are expected to affect a specific area within 24 hours of the warning

## HOW DO I STAY SAFE DURING A HURRICANE?

- Avoid driving or going outdoors
- If you must leave your home, do not walk through flowing water or drive through flooded roads
- Stay updated with emergency information from the media
- Evacuate immediately if you are advised to do so
- If you evacuate, **BRING YOUR PETS**
- If you are told to shelter in place,
  - Stay inside and away from windows
  - Listen to local TV/radio for updates
  - Be prepared to evacuate if weather conditions worsen



## BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Every month we will highlight businesses in this section that are either having a grand opening, celebrating a milestone anniversary, or within a seasonally appropriate industry worth recognizing, which is the case this month. With fall upon us, we are celebrating our farmstands that are bustling with this year's harvest and fall-related activities:

Almeida's Vegetable Patch, Johnson's Roadside Farm Market, Stony Brook Farm, & Simcock Farm.

Family owned and operated since 1928, Almeida's Vegetable Patch, which harkens back to a different era along the bustling Rt. 6 corridor (110 GAR Hwy), offers on-site and locally grown produce. In addition, this time of year you can visit their corn maze and pickup fall-decorating staples, such as pumpkins, mums and haybales. And don't forget to come back in a few months to pickup a tree or wreath for Christmas. To learn more about their history and offerings, visit them online at <https://almeidavegetablepatch.com/>

Johnson's Roadside Farm Market at 445 Market St. has been offering seasonal fruit and vegetables since 1982 grown on their 20-acre farm. In addition, their homemade pies are a must-try during the upcoming holiday season. And their local offerings are plentiful, from meats to cheeses and many other locally produced items, you are sure to find something to snack on or make for dinner. For more information, see their website at <https://www.johnsonroadsidemarket.com/market.htm>

Stony Creek Farm, located at 1210 Wilbur Ave. offers grass fed beef, fresh eggs, birthday parties, horse boarding and a weekly farmers market. The market, open Sundays from 10a-2p, offers a variety of local products, pony rides, a free petting zoo and live music. Find them online at <https://www.facebook.com/StonyCreekFarmandGrassFedBeef>

Simcock Farm, at 293 Marvel St, is a 4th generation working farm with an ice cream stand offering delicious flavors against a beautiful backdrop. Behind the stand, you can visit the farm animals who will more than likely come visit you. In addition to the ice cream stand, other agrotourism activities include a sunflower maze in the late summer and fall events such as pick-your-own pumpkins, a corn maze, and hayrides along with their Spooky Sundae evening event. Visit them online at <https://www.simcockfarm.com/>

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

The Town of Swansea welcomes John Viarella, as its new HR Director, who has 25+ years experience in both the public and private sector. John has worked for the City of Revere and most recently the Town of Lakeville. His past experience building an HR department from the ground up with Revere will come in handy as this will be Swansea's first HR Director. He will be tasked with providing general administration and maintenance of the personnel policies and procedures of the Town. His duties will also include sustaining a diverse workforce committed to quality public service, diversity/equal opportunity, benefits, and civil service. When asked by the BOS why he chose public service over the private sector, Mr. Viarella said "the difference in working with a municipality is the work matters more, ultimately affects the people that live, work, and do business in the town which you represent and has a better feeling to it."

The Town would also like to welcome new Deputy Tax Assessor Jim Sullivan. Jim enters this new position with a wealth of experience in the field of both residential and commercial appraising. His prior experience will be an asset to the town and enable an in-house person to follow up on open permits, new construction projects and revaluations. While researching open permits his duties will include observing any changes not reflected on the property record cards including the quality and condition of the improvements and updating the record cards accordingly. Utilizing tools such as NearMaps to determine when the previously unknown changes occurred will provide a timeline to accurately reflect these changes on the field cards. Working under the direction of Michael Minardi, Principal Tax Assessor, Mr. Sullivan will be assisting in a multitude of assessing responsibilities to ensure the town has the proper distribution of property taxes for the residents of Swansea.

Please say hello to them when visiting Town Hall. Best of luck John and Jim!