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## News Recap & Peak Into The Week

-March 10, 2025-

### ***Brightening Cold Days***

#### ***with Joyful Encounters...***

Driving around town and spotting little ones from the local daycare center out for a walk always puts a smile on her face.

As a high school student, her daughter worked at one of the centers. She always enjoyed the twice-daily strolls, despite having to outfit a dozen wiggly children in coats, hats, gloves and boots.

With the recent time change, she knows it won't be long before everyone can venture outside without cold-weather gear. Of course, she can only imagine how the teachers must feel as they anticipate the welcome shift in seasons.

Eager to flee cooped-up times and ever-fickle New England temperatures, she'll keep her fingers crossed for warmer days -- and maybe even some puddle stomping -- in the weeks ahead. She knows all it takes is a bit of soothing sunshine and happy little faces to chase away the last of winter doldrums.

### ***The Week Ahead...***

**Monday, March 10 -- Planning Board**, 7:30 p.m. -- Key topics: **Continued Bellforge Arts Center site plan hearing** on proposed renovation and repurposing of former Medfield State Hospital infirmary and chapel;

review of **draft bylaws for Town Meeting** (accessory dwelling unit bylaw and floodplain bylaw) and **Wayfinding Committee** update; **liaison reports** as needed for Affordable Housing Trust, School Building Committee and Historical Commission; and informational reports as needed on Medfield State Hospital re-development status and Rte. 109 sidewalks.

[Tuesday, March 11 -- Select Board](#), 1 p.m. -- Key topic: **Site visit** at former **Medfield State Hospital** (meet at back parking lot near field and North Street, per agenda). The focus is on Trinity redevelopment project and confirmation of northern MSH property boundaries, according to information from March 6 Affordable Housing Trust meeting.

[Tuesday, March 11 -- Board of Health](#), 5 p.m. -- Key topics: **Town Administrator update** (likely related to budget/health department reorganization); Facilities Department projects for stormwater/drainage compliance review (**garage at Council on Aging/The Center** and **modular unit for Parks & Recreation Department**); site plan review for stormwater/drainage compliance for three sites -- 194 Pine St., 47R Elm St., and **Montrose School**; discussion items related to **tobacco regulations updates**, Charles River Public Health District and Sustainable Medfield; and various approvals for burial agents and food permits.

[Tuesday, March 11 -- Library Trustees](#), 5 p.m. -- Key topics: Staff reports; director report, including **budget**, completed projects (website, **public access catalog**), ongoing projects (adult collection rearrangement, website, new e-mail service) and upcoming projects (**director goals**); and other business (Open Meeting Law best practices).

[Tuesday, March 11 -- Medfield Housing Authority](#), 6:30 p.m. -- Key topics: Approval of February and March payables; **executive director report** (unspecified); approval of 2025 rates\*; approval of maintenance extension from state; final approval of adjusted minutes for **Massachusetts Attorney General** response; update on **maintenance position hiring**; and **pavilion update** (a Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School project); and other business. (*\*LNI is noted on agenda, but may be a typo -- LMI is low- or moderate-income*).

[Tuesday, March 11 -- Warrant Committee](#), 7 p.m. -- Key topics: Overlay and investment accounts; free cash and updated financial policy scorecard; **future potential tax impacts from major capital needs**; warrant articles related to **senior and veteran exemption** and **tax work-off amendment**; warrant articles related to zoning bylaws for flood plain district and **accessory dwelling units** (ADU); update on other town meeting warrant articles; Town Finance update; and Capital Budget Committee and School Building Committee updates.

[Wednesday, March 12 -- Zoning Board of Appeals](#), 6 p.m. -- Key topics: *Agenda not available at time of writing; likely no hearings.*

[Wednesday, March 12 -- Parks & Recreation Commission](#), 6 p.m. -- Key topics: Modular unit update,

Metacomet Tennis Courts, Parks & Recreation future building, future capital Parks & Recreation Plan and seasonal summer jobs.

[Wednesday, March 12 -- Medfield Energy Committee](#), 7 p.m. -- Key topics: **Grant updates** for Green Communities, Mass Saves Municipal Energy, and Decarbonize Roadmap; data for town annual report; update on **high school solar canopies and zero emission vehicle policy**; specialized energy code education plan update; **electric vehicle show** for Climate Week; committee 2025 goals; and solar arrays underway.

[Thursday, March 13 -- School Committee](#), 6 p.m. -- Key topics: *Agenda not available at time of writing.* Possible topics include **superintendent contract**; fiscal-year **2026 budget update/possible reductions**; vote to adopt amendments to policy ACAB regarding sexual harassment, Title IX and discrimination; Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) presentation; **graduation requirements/competency determination**; collective bargaining update (Unit B-teacher aides); **high school solar canopy** continued discussion; and mobile phone/social media task force update. ([School Committee meeting documents will appear here when posted closer to date.](#))

## Town Employees Respond to Multiple Emergencies

Medfield Police, Fire and Public Works staff members had their hands full last week with **back-to-back emergencies** requiring repairs, traffic management, safety checks, road clearing and other duties.

Midday on Thursday, March 6, a **water main** near 266 Main St. and Rolling Lane broke. According to town announcements, water service was temporarily shut off for a number of hours to isolate and repair the break. After water was restored, many residents needed to flush out any brown water that occurred.

On Friday, March 7, **wind gusts estimated at 40 to 60 mph** caused a large tree to fall onto a section of Route 109/Main Street between the Peak House and Shaw's Plaza. The tree took down electrical lines knocking out power in the plaza, adjacent businesses, and area homes for about 10 hours. The road was closed during this time but finally opened by about 9 p.m. Parents reported that Blake Middle School and Medfield High School also lost power due to the weather-related event. The height of the windstorm was around 1 p.m. according to weather studies for Medfield. However, all of Massachusetts was under a High Wind Warning or Advisory on March 7.

On Friday, March 7 or Saturday, March 8, a large tree also fell on the **Baxter Park area**.

[This National Grid article provides more information about the recent windstorm.](#)

## Developer files application for Plain Street 40B homes

On Feb. 28, Zoning Board of Appeals received an application for a Comprehensive Permit (40B) for a 24-home development called "Winder Estates" at 86 Plain St. -- site of the former alpaca farm.

The proposal calls for demolition of the existing single-family house and outbuildings on the heavily wooded 14.86-acre property. The developer is Benjamin Virga.

Of the 24 proposed units, six would be affordable to those making 80 percent or less of the Area Median Income.

[A project description is available here.](#)

A [public hearing has been scheduled for April 2 at 6 p.m.](#), and comments on the project are due by that time.

The ZBA filing follows town receipt of a Dec. 10, 2024 [MassHousing project eligibility letter](#) which also allowed for comments prior to issuance.

In a recent e-mail to Medfield land-use boards and town officials, Director of Land Use & Planning Maria De La Fuente stated, "Since the ZBA acts in place of municipal boards whose local regulations would normally apply, obtaining comments from you is critical for the ZBA to reach an informed decision and craft appropriate conditions of approval."

The developer has requested [numerous waivers](#), with many that are wetlands related. As a result, Conservation Commission is expected to play a significant role in issuing comments.

[Additional 86 Plain St. project files can be found here.](#)

This [informational "frequently asked questions" document](#) from City of Melrose helps to explain the overall 40B review process.

## Opens Plot Registration

Plots are now available for the 2025 season at Medfield Community Garden on Plain Street off Route 27.

Registration for garden spaces recently opened, and will end when the last of 75 plots is filled.

Gardens are 300 or 600 square feet, loaner fencing is available for first-timers, and expert advice is available for anyone who needs it.

According to Neal Sanders, long-time co-manager of Medfield Community Garden, "One of the great benefits of living in Medfield is lots of trees with wonderful shade. But if you have a desire to grow your own vegetables, shade is the enemy of your harvesting anything more than some leafy greens."

Sanders points out that the site offers an acre of rich soil, on-site water, and all the sun needed for a prosperous vegetable garden.

Medfield Community Garden has been located on Conservation Commission land at the former Holmquist Farm for more than 20 years.

The morning of **Saturday, March 29** at Medfield Public Library, the talk "**How to Have a Great Vegetable Garden,**" will be offered.

For more information about Medfield Community Garden, or to register for a plot, [e-mail Sanders at this address](#).

## Select Board Holds Brief Meeting

### Mostly on Contract Approvals

With one member absent from the March 4 Select Board meeting, the gathering lasted only about 30 minutes and was focused primarily on contract approvals.

Significant discussion items have been deferred to the March 18 Select Board meeting (see "Further Ahead" section below).

**March 4 contract-related actions** covering a variety of items related to:

- \* Fire alarm system replacement and window repairs at Medfield Public Library;
- \* Engineering design for Council on Aging garage at The Center;
- \* Baxter Park electrical work;
- \* Stormwater engineering plan/design for Parks & Recreation Department modular at Hinkley Park;
- \* Department of Public Works services; and
- \* Grant-writing consultant for Medfield Outreach.

The Select Board also approved:

- \* **Medfield Youth Baseball & Softball Opening Day parade** on Sunday, May 4 with a 3:30 p.m. kickoff at Dale Street School.
- \* **Comcast grant application to enable 15 Medfield addresses to gain high-speed Internet access** through the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program. (Targeted addresses are located all around town with a range of streets represented. According to MBI data, Medfield has 3,929 locations with access to Internet speeds of at least 100/20 megabits per second, but 15 locations have been identified as lacking the service.)

In addition to action items noted, Select Board members received the following brief status reports:

- \* **Council on Aging (COA) garage at The Center** – Project has been delayed, but will soon go through permitting process.
- \* **Parks & Recreation Department modular at Hinkley Park** – The project is estimated to be ready for site plan review by town boards at end of March. Goal is to install modular by June 1 in time for summer camp use. Paving of parking lot is also needed, but that work will take place after modular installation.
- \* **Baxter Park repairs** – After electrical issues are addressed, a flagpole repair will be needed. (The March 4 meeting was held prior to one or more trees falling on the park property due to recent windstorm).
- \* **Onyx basketball facility idea for Hospital Road** -- Select Board members noted they have received letters both for and against the project, including one from Medfield High School cross-country team which uses the site.

(While the agenda also included a public hearing for a door-to-door sales license for SunRun, the

representative seeking approval never appeared.)

For more information on March 4 meeting, refer to:

[Select Board meeting packet](#)

[Medfield TV meeting recording](#)

SBC Covers Town Meeting Prep,

Key Next Steps as Agenda Items

Medfield School Building Committee (SBC) met on March 5, and took up key items for discussion, including **action items related to May 2025 Town Meeting** and documents needed for submission to **Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA)**.

While MSBA invited Medfield into its program in December, the **MSBA Eligibility Period for Medfield will not officially begin until April 1**. As a result, many of the SBC discussion items have been focused on submitting mandatory information to MSBA as close to that date as possible.

Action items discussed at the recent SBC meeting include:

- **\* Confirming MSBA-compliant language for Town Meeting warrant article that requests additional feasibility study funding of \$400,000.** If the 2025 request is approved, the SBC will have about \$1.5 million for a Dale Street School feasibility study thanks to additional appropriations in prior years;
- **\* Continued analysis of previous Preferred Schematic Report (PSR)** submitted to Massachusetts School Building Authority in 2020 to determine which project information can be reused and/or modified;
- **\* Preparing for March 18 Select Board update** during which the board will need to identify who among it will serve as a non-voting SBC member, and also appoint a facility manager, so that the committee configuration complies with MSBA requirements;
- **\* Working through a task list for the next SBC meeting on April 2**, including review of updated MSBA-required documents or information, such as educational profile questionnaire, maintenance and capital planning report, and a separate MSBA questionnaire that Co-chair Mike Weber stated he

had just received from the authority. Weber noted that the additional questionnaire seeks to confirm grade configuration, and other information that had been originally provided in the Statement of Interest submitted to MSBA in spring 2024.

At its February 5 meeting, the committee had also targeted its **April 2 meeting** to continue discussing and possibly voting on an **enrollment projection to submit to MSBA**. A month ago, members favored putting forth a **"high" projection of 500 students in 4th and 5th grade** based on **2031-32 school-year data** provided by consulting firm **FutureThink** a year ago.

As previously noted in this publication, while Dale Street School enrollment is **currently 384 students** for the 2024-25 school year, FutureThink had projected an enrollment of 395 students. As a result, a 2031-32 projection of 500 students for building design purposes would represent a 30 percent enrollment increase based on current actual student numbers.

Since **kindergarten data** is also helpful for gauging future Dale Street School enrollment, SBC member and resident Robert Worth, principal of Burrell Elementary School in Foxboro, is in the process of collecting information on the number of children currently eligible for kindergarten -- both for his school, and for Medfield. Worth noted that so far, the Medfield number seems lower than expected, but he's not confident in its value.

Supplementing meeting information: **Medfield 2025-26 kindergarten registration closed on Feb. 28**, but additional registrations are typically accepted beyond the closing date if space continues to be available. As a result, by the April 2 SBC meeting, Superintendent Jeffrey Marsden should be able to share **how the kindergarten enrollment to date compares to trends in previous years**. This data would then allow the SBC to compare actual numbers to FutureThink projections to help guide its MSBA submission.

On the communications and community engagement front, it was reported that **seven "Neighborhood Captains" have been recruited** (but more are needed -- see newsletter link below for information on how to sign up).

Sources for further information:

[Medfield TV recording of March 5 meeting](#)

[Current Medfield enrollment data as reported to state](#)

[FutureThink Medfield enrollment projection report](#)

[MSBA requirements for eligibility period \(module 1\)](#)

## [Medfield SBC newsletter-February issue with "Neighborhood Captain" information](#)

*Mark your calendar...*

### March 19 Candidate Forum

#### Features Contested Seats

With two **contested races** for the 2025 Town Election – School Committee and Library Trustees – Medfield TV has scheduled a public forum on **Wednesday, March 19** at Chenery Hall, 2nd Floor Town House, to help voters get to know candidates a bit better.

In addition, Medfield TV is scheduling **interviews with Select Board** and **Town Moderator** candidates running uncontested that will also take place on the same day and location. All uncontested candidates have been invited to participate.

Former town moderator **Scott McDermott** has been helping with the event. He will be moderating the forum and conducting interviews.

#### Candidates Participating

**School Committee:** Caroline Waisberg and Roseli Weiss. (Michelle Kirkby will not be participating; Sophia Viglas is tentative.)

**Library Trustees:** Caryn Picarillo, Phil Tuths (incumbent), Sarah Westhoven and Richard White (incumbent).

**Select Board:** Eileen Murphy

**Moderator:** Mike Pastore

#### Town Election information

Town Election is **Monday, March 31**. Polls open from **6 a.m. to 8 p.m.** at The Center at Ice House Rd.

The [specimen ballot is available here](#). It includes on a town charter amendment question that would change the Moderator term from one year to three years beginning with the 2026 annual election.

### *News Briefs & Reminders...*

- \* The town put [Metacomet Tennis Court reconstruction project out to bid](#). Due date for responses is April 1. The project involves work on four courts that will necessitate school tennis teams relocating to other facilities while the work is underway.
- \* On **Tuesday, March 11** from 5 to 7 p.m., **State Rep. Josh Tarsky** (precincts 1 & 2) is holding office hours in the first floor Warrant Room at Medfield Town House.
- \* On March 6, **Conservation Commission** voted to continue its hearing to March 20 on a Trustees fence project at **Rhododendron Reservation**, 65 Woodridge Rd. The commission also discussed following up on a variety of Wetlands Protection Act-related issues involving 37-39 Green St. (tree cutting, filling in wetlands and mitigation), 6 Grist Mill Rd. gravel placement, 40-42 (and possibly 46) Elm St. alleged violations of tree/other growth cutting; and Rail Trail beaver controls. A commissioner also sought to provide Zoning Board of Appeals with a request to seek adherence to 50 ft. no-disturb zone, and protection of extensive vernal pool during future reviews of **86 Plain St. 40B project**.
- \* Medfield town boards, committees and commissions are watching the **March 31 deadline that ends remote meetings**. With the option of virtual meetings, more citizens have become engaged in town affairs, according to Town Administrator Kristine Treirweiler. [Massachusetts Municipal Association, a business coalition, and other entities](#) have been lobbying state leaders to preserve remote and hybrid meeting options.

### *Reminders...*

- \* **Medfield Outreach** [community-wide survey](#) will help to determine use of opioid settlement funds. The survey is anonymous and should only take 10 minutes. Resident feedback will be used to help shape future programming to address mental health and substance use in Medfield. Medfield Outreach will also be collecting feedback on the same topic through listening sessions led by the SAFE Coalition on March 13, 15 and 18, at different times and locations. [More details available here.](#)
- \* [Medfield Outreach also welcomes Stephen Hill](#), a renowned speaker on mental health and substance-use prevention. The virtual presentation will be held on **Monday, March 17**, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Attendees can learn information about fostering resilience and promoting health in youth. [Register here.](#)
- \* **Select Board interviews with internal Fire Chief candidates** are scheduled for **Tuesday, March**

**18** during the regular board meeting.

- \* The dog licensing deadline is **April 1** before late fees are applied to the \$10 cost. [More information, including a registration form, can be found here.](#)

### ***Further Ahead...***

*(Dates/topics based on town calendar, public hearing notices, or prior meeting information; subject to change)*

#### **Monday, March 17:**

-- Planning Board

#### **Tuesday, March 18:**

-- Select Board (*Onyx basketball facility discussion, 86 Plain St. 40B project, School Building Committee update, fire chief candidate interviews, Grist Mill Rd. conservation restriction/easement*)

#### **Wednesday, March 19:**

-- Medfield Historical Commission

#### **Thursday, March 20:**

-- Conservation Commission (*Montrose School*)

#### **Monday, March 24:**

-- Pedestrian Traffic & Safety Advisory Committee

-- Planning Board

**Tuesday, March 25:**

-- Warrant Committee (*Town Meeting articles*)

**Monday, March 31:**

-- TOWN ELECTION

**Tuesday, April 1:**

-- Warrant Committee/Select Board (*2025 Town Meeting Warrant Hearing*)

-- Board of Health

**Wednesday, April 2:**

-- Council on Aging Board

-- School Building Committee

-- Zoning Board of Appeals (*86 Plain St. 40B hearing*)

**Thursday, April 3:**

-- Conservation Commission

***Community Events & Initiatives...***

**GARDEN CLUB offers pruning talk**

March is a great month for pruning specific types of trees and shrubs. At 10 a.m. on **Wednesday, March 12** at United Church of Christ, 496 Main St., **Medfield Garden Club** will be hosting a presentation on **pruning theory and practice** to help guide gardeners. The talk will feature David Ropes, a certified arborist and

operations manager with Tree Specialists, Inc. in Holliston. He is also a member of the American Society of Consulting Arborists. Admission at the door is a \$5 donation for non-Medfield Garden Club members; club members are free.

Looking ahead: Medfield Garden Club is holding its annual Art 'N Bloom from April 11 to 13 at Medfield Public Library. [More information is available on the club community events calendar.](#)

### **ZULLO GALLERY continues summer registration**

Families still have the opportunity to register their children for summer art classes at the Zullo Gallery, led by local instructor, Kurt Jackson. [The registration site is here.](#)

A variety of week-long classes across the span of grades kicks off in July. Classes include drawing-mixed-media-(grades 1-4), artist-studio (grades-1-3), cartoons-clay (grades 3-6), and beginners-digital-art-class (grades 4-7).

*(Note: Zullo Gallery summer classes will take place regardless of building status. The gallery space is guaranteed for some time beyond last day of classes.)*

### **MEDFIELD FOUNDATION Seeks Summer Camp Support**

Since 2017, the Medfield Foundation Camp Fund has raised more than \$55,000 to help over 60 local families offset camp costs for their children, including for summer camp sessions offered through Medfield Parks & Recreation. [Donations to the Camp Fund can be made here](#) or by sending a check to Medfield Foundation, P.O. Box 745, Medfield MA 02052. Checks should be made payable to Medfield Foundation, Inc. and "CAMP" should be written on the memo line. Camp Fund questions can be [e-mailed here](#). Families that need financial help toward Medfield-based camp costs can contact Medfield Outreach via phone at 508-359-7121 (extension 3421 or 3422), or by [e-mailing the team here](#).

### **ORGANIZERS LAUNCH Fairy Walk 2025**

This year's Fairy Walk will be held at **Hinkley Park** on **Saturday, April 12** from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. [More information is available here.](#)

Due to work that had been anticipated at former Medfield State Hospital campus (including Bellforge), both the Fairy Walk and Medfield on the Charles Car Show moved their respective events to new locations. (The car show location is outside of Medfield, but not yet known.)

**Planning a community event?** E-mail information to [MedfieldInsider@gmail.com](mailto:MedfieldInsider@gmail.com) by 5 p.m. the Friday prior to publication

each Monday morning. Brief details in the body of an e-mail is appreciated, along with a PDF flyer and simple photo.

## Medfield Insider -- Past Issues

[March 10](#) -- B'ball facility mtg recap., ADU bylaw, Grist Mill Committee info., candidate forum & ballot

[Feb. 24](#) -- Basketball facility mtg info., ATM articles, candidate forum, Town/Fire/COA news, BOH reorg

[Feb. 17](#) -- Dover rail trail, health insurance jump, SC mtg recap, opioid fund use, candidate Qs form

[Feb. 10](#) -- Election candidates, Fire Chief process, West/27 roundabout, Trinity/Bellforge & SBC updates

[Feb. 3](#) -- Hospital Rd. basketball site, Rte. 27-West roundabout, Community Market, OML violations

[Jan. 27](#)-- Fire Chief retiring, TS sticker increase, snow work, Harding vote, police update, town budgets

[Jan. 20](#) -- R.Costello death, Harding intersection vote, Trinity MSH update, MPS English learning review

[Jan. 13](#) -- 98 Pine mtg recap, Montrose update, MHA/Rosebay-no Select Board, volunteer fair success

[Jan. 6, 2025](#) -- 98 Pine 40B, School Resource Officer doc, Rosebay transparency, Fire cadet program

[Dec. 30](#) -- Top 10 topics 2024/questions 2025, Harding Rd redesigns, youth gambling, library passes

[Dec. 23](#) -- New property values, holiday schedule, giving list, Town Admin newsletter, key action items

[Dec. 16](#) -- Supt. contract talks, nomination papers, MSBA invite, enrollment, 40Bs status, MWAHS data

[Dec. 9](#) -- Park St Books new owner, Bellforge update/infrastructure, Rosebay on Pound St. notice

[Dec. 2](#) -- Property value jump, enrollment drop, lead/copper water testing, EPA pending regs w/turf

[Nov. 25](#) -- Pfaff discussion/demise, stalled MWAHS results, Rep. Garlick party, hate hotline open

[Nov. 18](#) -- Pfaff \$700K repair, Wilkins Glen/Hinkley fire, Butterfly news, SC start time vote, MSH award

[Nov. 11](#) -- Election results/MCAS ballot divide, more Pfaff, Dale site & school start time votes, fire alert

[Nov. 4](#) -- Election day info., Pfaff wall alert, drought/fire safety, Elm St. & BOH topics, new Harley cycle

[Click here to access back issues from July 2, 2020 through Oct. 28, 2024.](#)

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