

MEET CANDIDATES from page 6

opportunities for students? How does the school district do this already?

Whitham said you have to look at what vocational and technical schools offer, and then try to offer something different. She said the same kind of educational path is not the same for everyone.

"Some people respond better to vocational and technical training, some people respond better to the arts, some people just want to go straight academics," she said. "You've got to look at what your competition offers and then you've got to offer something equally as valuable but different."

Slattery said it's not always easily accessible for local students to attend vocational and technical schools and she said Ware Public Schools have a strong focus on STEM learning, offering engineering classes and more.

"Those things are building blocks to helping the kids decide exactly what they need for avenues," she said.

DuBois said it's hard to compete with the programs that vocational schools have, but they should focus on Ware's strengths, which includes academics.

He spoke about the school district's firefighter/EMS program, which caused it to stand out amongst area schools.

"That was really kind of catering to the areas of either interest or need or want," he said, which he was happy to see.

Being a small school district also has its advantages, including open communication and greater access to administration and staff for families. How can the school district continue to improve upon this, and help families feel support-

ed and heard?

Slattery said because it's a small community it's very tight-knit and there is an open door policy with all staff and administration.

"They are always open, always willing to meet with you," she said, from her experience as a parent in the school district.

DuBois said he would also like an open door policy for the School Committee. He said he applauded the efforts the committee has taken already for the public to submit questions, comments or concerns to the committee to be read during meetings.

"There are some areas that can be improved upon as far as access to those things," he said, including website redesign.

DuBois said knowing that elected committee members are supporting families both publicly and privately, can help them feel heard and advocated for.

Whitham said moving School Committee meetings back to in person would also help families feel heard.

Having lived in town for 10 years, Whitham said her family has felt welcomed and accepted by residents and school officials. She said celebrating each person's differences is key to feeling that way.

The pandemic has had a lasting impact on both students and educators across the country. Many students are facing mental health issues, or have fallen below the state's standards for education. How do you think the school district's administration and School Committee could work to provide supports for these students (and educators)?

DuBois said the Superintendent has provided reports on the students' progress and it's trending upward.

"Overall, I think we're on the right track," he said.

Whitham said isolation and loneliness are big issues children are facing right now, which can contribute to the overall health and wellbeing of children. Technology can further isolate children.

Whitham said long periods alone with an electronic device is "not helpful" to mental health.

"I feel like a conversation needs to be had...with families about the use of technology and the importance of coming to school and interacting with others," she said. Attendance is also crucial.

She said there are also deficiencies and gaps in learning in third grade students and up that still need to be addressed.

Slattery said the school district has seen gaps, especially involving third graders and testing.

She said the I-Ready Assessment Program was brought in by the Superintendent to evaluate students in kindergarten through grade nine. The program creates individual lessons plans for each student and helps teachers identify gaps in learning.

"That is, I think, one of our best things we've done so far, with huge support to the staff and their dedication to following through and doing that extra work and the administration who introduced it to us," Slattery said. "No student should be without the tools they need to survive, to be successful."

Several residents have written to us, asking if the school district is teaching critical race theory to students. What is the School Committee's role in overseeing curriculum, and should the community have input about what is being taught? If a parent or legal guardian of a student has an objection to something that is being

taught, do they have the ability to "opt out" and how would they go about doing so?

Whitham said there is no public school in the commonwealth teaching critical race theory and encouraged parents to engage with their student's teachers to learn about what is being taught in the classroom.

"Teachers are trying to provide a solid education for the students of Ware and everywhere else in Massachusetts," she said.

Slattery said that is not part of any curriculum she is aware of, and encouraged people with concerns to reach out to the Superintendent.

DuBois said he does not see this as a concern at all, and agreed with Whitham and Slattery that this is not part of the curriculum.

The school district has taken steps to address student attendance this school year, recognizing those that have "perfect attendance." What are some other ways the school district could improve student attendance and engage families in the education process?

Slattery said teachers and administrators are personally reaching out to students who are not attending school.

"They are taking their time, they're trying to connect with those students to give them reason to come back," she said. "We have multiple methods of communication going out from the administration directly to student homes."

Slattery said teachers have even gone to student's homes to speak with them and their families and helped them successfully return to school.

"They are trying their hardest... they're not giving up on it," she said.

DuBois said the teachers and administrators are doing a great job

to encourage attendance and meet students' individual needs.

"I think they're doing exceptional, as far as getting kids back to school, making sure they show up on time, making sure they show up ready for the day," he said.

Whitham said the best way to improve attendance is to build relationships.

"Kids want to come to school; when there's something to come to school for, even if that's a smiling face," she said. She said with younger students, there are more factors that can prevent them from coming to school, including issues at home or lack of transportation.

She said these factors can also affect older students, but the student could also be choosing not to come to school.

Whitham stressed that good teachers are what makes students want to come to school every day.

"Teachers make school successful," she said.

School Committee meetings continue to be held remotely, which can offer an advantage to those unable to attend in person, but can limit interaction between the committee and the public. Should School Committee meetings return to in-person, or should a hybrid format be offered? What are the advantages and disadvantages of remote, in-person and hybrid meetings?

DuBois said getting the School Committee meetings back in person would be important for sharing ideas, as well as concerns. He said there is a middle ground, by continuing to offer remote access to meetings.

"There are ways to accommodate the accessibility needs of people, and that's probably the best path forward," he said.

Whitham said many other

school committees are also facing this challenge.

"I do believe that it's really important to get the actual School Committee in one place, in a building, where people can show up," she said. She agreed that having digital access was also important.

Slattery said as a longtime School Committee member, it was "extremely rare" that people would attend the meetings, but she agreed there should be moments where in person is necessary. She agreed that a hybrid model would work for both the committee and the public.

What do you believe is the school district's greatest strength, and how would you promote this to increase enrollment and bring in school choice students?

Whitham said the biggest advantage the school district has is its size and convenient campus.

"There's a tremendous sense of pride and community that comes with this school district," she said.

To draw in school choice students, she said the school district needs to offer something families and students are seeking that isn't available anywhere else.

Slattery said the school district offers high level classes and appealing extracurricular activities.

"I think our strongest suit is the passion that our community has for our school," Slattery said. The teachers are also the reason students would want to experience the school district, she said.

DuBois agreed with Whitham and Slattery and said continuing to offer competitive and "out of the box" programs would continue to make the school district appealing to families.

public notices

Town of Ware Notice of Public Hearing Planning Board LEGAL NOTICE SP-2024-06

NOTICE is hereby given that the Ware Planning Board, acting as the Special Permit Granting Authority, will hold a Public Hearing on THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 2024 at 7:15 PM on the application of Daniel and Amy Luksha, for a Special Permit (SP-2024-06) of a proposed attached accessory dwelling unit under Section 4.8.D.7, of the Zoning Bylaw, and pursuant to MGL Chapter 40A. Pursuant to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, this hearing will be conducted in person and via remote means, in accordance with applicable law. This means that members of the Planning Board as well as members of the public may access this meeting in person, or via virtual means. In person attendance will be held in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, 126 Main Street, Town Hall, Ware, MA. It is possible that any or all members of the public body may attend remotely, with in-person attendance consisting of members of public. The meeting may be accessed remotely via zoom. Go to https://zoom.us/join or join by phone. Phone Number: 929-205-6099; Meeting ID: 784 604 1861; Password: 01082.

SITE LOCATION: 2 Quarry Street, Ware, MA. Said premises being further described in deeds recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds, Book 14785, Page 260. Property is also identified as Assessor's Parcel # 18-0-01. Zoned: Rural Residential (RR).

A complete copy of the application can be found at the Town Clerk's office and on the Planning & Community Development Department website under Recent Filings. Anyone interested or wishing to be heard on the application should appear at the time and place designated.

WARE PLANNING BOARD Ed Murphy, Chairman 03/21, 03/28/2024

Notice of Public Hearing Planning Board LEGAL NOTICE SP-2024-07

NOTICE is hereby given that the Ware Planning Board, acting as the Special Permit Granting Authority, will hold a Public Hearing on THURSDAY, April 4, 2024 at 7:25 p.m., on the application of Bond Construction Corporation, for a 12 month extension of previously granted Special Permit for earth removal under Section 4.8.5, of the Zoning Bylaw, and pursuant to MGL Chapter 40A. Pursuant to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, this hearing will be conducted in person and via remote means, in accordance with applicable law. This means that members of the Planning Board as well as members of the public may access this meeting in person, or via virtual means. In person attendance will be held in the Board of Selectman's Meeting Room, 126 Main Street, Ware, MA. It is possible that any or all members of the public body may attend remotely, with in-person attendance consisting of members of public. The meeting may be accessed remotely via zoom. Go to https://zoom.us/join or join by phone. Phone Number: 929-205-6099; Meeting ID: 784 604 1861; Password: 01082.

SITE LOCATION: 219 Babcock Tavern Road, Ware, MA. Said premises being further described in deeds recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds, Book 12833, Page 207, and Book 07177, Page 314. Property is also identified as Assessor's Parcel 4-0-14 & 4-14-2. Zoned: Rural Residential (RR).

A complete copy of the application can be found at the Town Clerk's office and on the Planning & Community Development Department website under Recent Filings. Anyone interested or wishing to be heard on the application should appear at the time and place designated.

WARE PLANNING BOARD Ed Murphy, Chairman 03/21, 03/28/2024

HARDWICK PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 40A, Section 5, the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on April 9, 2024 at 6:30 PM at Hardwick Elementary School, 76 School House Drive, Gilbertville, to consider amending the Town of Hardwick Zoning Bylaw, per proposal from Casella Waste Systems. Proposal can be found on the Hardwick town website www.hardwick-ma.gov. All interested parties are asked to attend.

This Legal Notice can also be viewed at http://masspublicnotices.org Jenna Garvey, Chair Hardwick Planning Board 03/21, 03/28/2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Hampshire Probate and Family Court 15 Atwood Drive Northampton, MA 01060 (413)586-8500 Docket No. HS21P0419EA Estate of: Raymond Bernard Dulak, Sr. Also known as: Raymond B. Dulak, Sr., Raymond Dulak Date of Death: 12/17/2018 CITATION ON PETITION FOR ORDER OF COMPLETE SETTLEMENT

A Petition for Order of Complete Settlement has been filed by Carol J. Dulak of Ware, MA requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance of a final account, a determination of heirs at law, the allowance of a proposed distribution, First and Final Account and other such relief as may be requested in the Petition.

IMPORTANT NOTICE You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/18/2024.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance

and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

WITNESS, Hon. Diana S. Velez Harris, First Justice of this Court. Date: March 19, 2024 Mark S. Ames Temporary Register 03/28/2024

NOTICE OF INTENT TO FILE FOR FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Gilbertville Water District (GWD) proposes to file an Application for Federal Financial Assistance with the USDA, Rural Development (RD).

This application for financial assistance is for funding under the Rural Utilities Service, Part 1780 Water and Waste Loans and Grants (CFDA 10.760).

The application is anticipated to be submitted by March 30, 2024.

The specific elements of the project include preparation of a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) and Environmental Report (ER) in accordance with RD requirements. Submission of the reports will be followed by contract documents and construction of a new water storage tank.

Costs relative to preparation of the PER and ER are \$25,830. The GWD portion of the costs for preparation of the PER & ER are \$6457.50. The remaining \$19,372.50 will be funded by Rural Development. The esti-

mated cost to design and construct the new water tank is \$1,400,000.

The District is securing grants and loans for the project from USDA Rural Development.

Any comments regarding this application should be submitted to the Gilbertville Water District at gpa80nn@icloud.com; garystine6641@yahoo.com; or by leaving a message at 774-200-9751 within fifteen (15) days of this publication. 03/28, 04/04/2024

Town of Ware Sealed Bids FY 2024 Hydrant & Valve Replacements

The Town of Ware will receive sealed bids for furnishing materials and services as needed for the yearly period from May 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024, and July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. The bids are for the replacement of Fire Hydrants and Valves including related work. Specifications and Bid Forms are available at the Town of Ware, Town Manager's Office, 126 Main St., Ware, MA 01082. Bids shall be submitted and addressed to the Town of Ware and marked "FY 2024 Hydrant & Valve Replacements". Bids will be received at the Town Manager's office until 11:00 A.M., April 25, 2024, at which time they will be publicly opened and read. The Town of Ware reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids and call for new bids. Bids shall be evaluated based on responsive-

ness to the criteria, terms and conditions contained in this IFB and its attachments. Failure to follow the instructions, meet the criteria, or agree to the terms and conditions contained in this IFS may be cause for rejection of the bid as non-responsive. Contractors are required to comply with the Commonwealth of Mass. Department of Labor and Industries Prevailing Wage Rates in accordance with Mass. General Laws, Chapter 149, Sections 26 and 270. The Town of Ware is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. 03/28/2024

Town of Ware Notice of Public Hearing Planning Board LEGAL NOTICE SP-2024-03

NOTICE is hereby given that the Ware Planning Board, acting as the Special Permit Granting Authority, will hold a Public Hearing on THURSDAY, April 4, 2024 at 7:05 PM on the application of Melink Solar, for a Special Permit for annual renewal (SP-2024-03) of a ground mounted solar array under Section 4.8.3, of the Zoning Bylaw, and pursuant to MGL Chapter 40A. Pursuant to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, this hearing will be conducted in person and via remote means, in accordance with applicable law. This means that members of the Planning Board as well as members of the public may access this meeting in person, or via

virtual means. In person attendance will be held in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, 126 Main Street, Town Hall, Ware, MA. It is possible that any or all members of the public body may attend remotely, with in-person attendance consisting of members of public. The meeting may be accessed remotely via zoom. Go to https://zoom.us/join or join by phone. Phone Number: 929-205-6099; Meeting ID: 784 604 1861; Password: 01082. SITE LOCATION: Greenwich Road, Ware, MA. Said premises being further described in deeds recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds, Book 9018, Page 321. Property is also identified as Assessor's Parcel #40-0-79. Zoned: Rural Residential (RR).

A complete copy of the application can be found at the Town Clerk's office and on the Planning & Community Development Department website under Recent Filings. Anyone interested or wishing to be heard on the application should appear at the time and place designated.

WARE PLANNING BOARD Ed Murphy III, Chairman 03/21, 03/28/2024



Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.

Grid of letters for word search: D B M S E N E M A S, E R I C B O D Y G U A R D, P U S H A T L E V E E, I N H U M A N I T I E S M R, C E A S E S C A N T C A B, T I P S P E N N K A K I, A C I D S D O N E E, U M P I R E M O R A S S, N A I V E S A N A A, C L A Y C O C A A B E D, L O S B O R E C A B A N A, A D P A L A T A B I L I T Y, S O K E S A C A L I T, P R O S E C U T E Z E R O, O R A T E D E D E N

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