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WARE RIVER NEWS

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Voters support nonbinding public safety complex

By Paula Ouimette
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WARREN – Voters took action on 27 articles at the Special Town Meeting last week, including six nonbinding questions about public safety buildings.

Public safety buildings

Board of Selectmen Chair Richard Eichacker gave a presentation about the need for improvements to the town's public safety infrastructure at the Nov. 19 special town meeting held in the Quaboag Regional Middle High School auditorium.

"This is an issue the town has been discussing for more than 20 years," he said.

Eichacker said the town has spent considerable time getting information out to residents about potential building sites and designs for a new police station or combined police and fire public safety complex. He said five public forums have been held to get feedback from residents.

Eichacker said while articles 22-27 are nonbinding questions and do not mean a project has been approved, it does help the board understand the type of project voters want to support.

Eichacker said if voters ultimately decide they want to move forward with only the police station, the town will need to address the Fire Department's needs in the future. He said choosing to take no action on either project won't be a long-term solution.

"Doing nothing doesn't mean needs will go away," he said.

Eichacker said the estimated costs for the project proposals do not include any potential grants which could

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Donation helps to restore Paige Building

By Paula Ouimette
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HARDWICK – The Barre Savings Charitable Foundation recently donated $10,000 to the Paige Building Friends to help continue the group's efforts to restore the historic building on the common.

The check was presented by BSCF President Stephen M. Brewer to Friends members Warren Johnson, Sherry Johnson and Ed Hood on Nov. 18.

"We've been raising money as much as we can," Warren Johnson said. "It's a good building. We're restoring it historically."

This includes making repairs to the roof, foundation and painting the exteri-

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Turley Photos by Paula Ouimette

The Paige Building Friends received $10,000 from the Barre Savings Charitable Foundation to continue restoration efforts of the Paige Building on the Hardwick common. Shown from left are Ed Hood, Stephen M. Brewer, Warren Johnson and Sherry Johnson. AT LEFT: This display documented the Paige Building Friends' efforts to restore the building.

SB adopts CCC equity mandates, HCA policy

By Paula Ouimette
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WARE – Attorney Nicole Costanzo presented a draft of the Cannabis Control Commission Equity Mandates and Host Community Agreement policy to the Selectboard.

At the Nov. 17 Selectboard meeting, Costanzo said this policy is a requirement of the CCC's social equity regulations. She said the policy also includes an HCA application and scoring rubric.

"The policy essentially establishes that the Selectboard will comply with the Cannabis Control Commission's social equity mandates, giving priority to those candidates that have been designated social equity businesses by the Cannabis Control Commission," she said.

Once adopted, the policy will be available on the town's website, www.townofware.com, and in the Town Hall and Town Manager's bulletin board.

Costanzo said the application and the evaluation forms could be amended to address local concerns.

Selectboard Vice-Chair Ken Willette proposed charging a fee to review applications, similar to the special permit process. The board will continue the discussion on imposing an application fee at a future meeting.

The Selectboard voted to approve and adopt the policy.

Plowing/sanding unfinished roads

The Selectboard reviewed recommendations made by the Planning Board on plowing and sanding unfinished subdivision roads. Selectboard Chair Josh Kusnierz said these are roads that are not owned by the town, which are evaluated for their condition to see if they can safely be treated during the winter.

Unfinished subdivision roads that will be plowed and sanded include Coldbrook Drive, Lee Road, Wildflower Drive and Briar

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Healthcare Advisory Committee reviews Baystate letter

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
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WARE – The Healthcare Advisory Committee met last Thursday where they reviewed a letter from Baystate President and CEO Peter Banko updating the Selectboard and Town Manager about the projects ongoing in Ware.

The letter stated that the Convenient Care on West Street is targeted for a May 2027 opening and will include X-rays and labs along with walk-ins, appointments and weekend and evening hours. Further, the letter stated they have a five-year lease with Big Y Foods Inc. for the property at 144 West St. and Raymond R. Houle Construction will oversee the project.

The letter also stated that Baystate Health is in the process of getting urgent care certification from the Department of Public Health and plans to start recruiting support staff in February.

The letter also gave an update on their family medicine residency program, which Baystate Health stated will expand to Baystate Wing in Palmer, with the resident health center to be located at the Mary Lane Hospital site with adequate funding. Banko stated the practice of a physician is strongly linked to the area of their residency.

The letter stated Baystate Health, like many other organizations, has applied for the Rural Health Transformation Plan

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Subcommittee expands superintendent search

By Paula Ouimette
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WARE – Superintendent Search Subcommittee Chair Ryan Howard gave the School Committee an update on its progress to select applicants for the position of Superintendent.

At the Nov. 18 meeting, Howard said the subcommittee reviewed all candidates and selected candidates to interview.

"There were 16 applicants, of which 13 were currently licensed to act as a superintendent in the state of Massachusetts. Of those 13, five have prior experience as a superintendent, which was posted as a requirement for the job position…of those five, we invited four applicants to interview," he said. "Of those four candidates, one has accepted."

> **"THE CRITERIA THAT WE'RE HOLDING THESE APPLICANTS UP AGAINST IS PRETTY RIGOROUS."**
>
> **MEL WHITMAN**
> **SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER**

Howard said since there is only one candidate to interview, the subcommittee does not believe it is able to present adequate choices to the School Committee to select a finalist. He said the subcommittee recommended changing the requirements in the job posting from experience as a superintendent being "required" to "preferred."

"We felt that this would expand the pool of candidates such that we would find more qualified candidates to choose from," he said.

School Committee member Mel Whitman recommended reopening the job posting to get more applicants. Both Whitman and School Committee member Kevin Slattery were in favor of accepting the subcommittee's recommendation to change the language in the posting to "preferred."

"The criteria that we're holding these applicants up against is pretty rigorous," Whitman said.

Slattery said there were several applicants that could be considered for the position if the language was

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SPORTS

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Dalton Marquis takes a carry into a crowd of players.



Ware's defense completes a combined tackle.



The defense tries to drag down a ball carrier.

Orioles win rematch with Indians



Nathan Kelly makes a block on the line.

BELCHERTOWN – On Friday, Nov. 13, the Belchertown High School football team outslugged Ware in a nonplayoff matchup 40-36. Belchertown got a three touchdown pass game from Coleman Longley as completed nine passes for 138 yards. Longley also rushed for two touchdowns and 137 yards. Ronan Mosher had two touchdown receptions for the 8-2 Orioles. Ware, which fell to 4-6 heading into Thanksgiving, got 106 passing yards from quarterback Troy Jurczyk. He also threw for three touchdowns and rushed for 79 yards. Ian Hogan had two touchdown receptions and Dalton Marquis would rush for 109 yards in the game.



Quarterback Troy Jurczyk drops back after taking the snap.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

The Ware offense lines up to start a play.

Outstanding season for Panthers ends in quarterfinals



Charley Chauvin looks to pass by an opponent.



Makenzie Casey tries to stop a bouncing ball.



Kelsey Nickson tries to clear the ball.

SOUTH DEERFIELD – In the 2026 season, offense was never in short supply for the Quabbin Regional High School field hockey team. The Panthers, who went an impressive 16-2 overall in the regular season, were shut out for the first team all season long in the quarterfinals of the Division 4 State Tournament at Frontier Regional High School on Sunday, Nov. 15. Quabbin trailed 1-0 into the second half, trying feverishly to get into Frontier's circle. But Frontier managed to snag a second goal late in the game to secure the win, and the Panthers were not able to get on the board. Quabbin's record overall was 18-3 this year.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

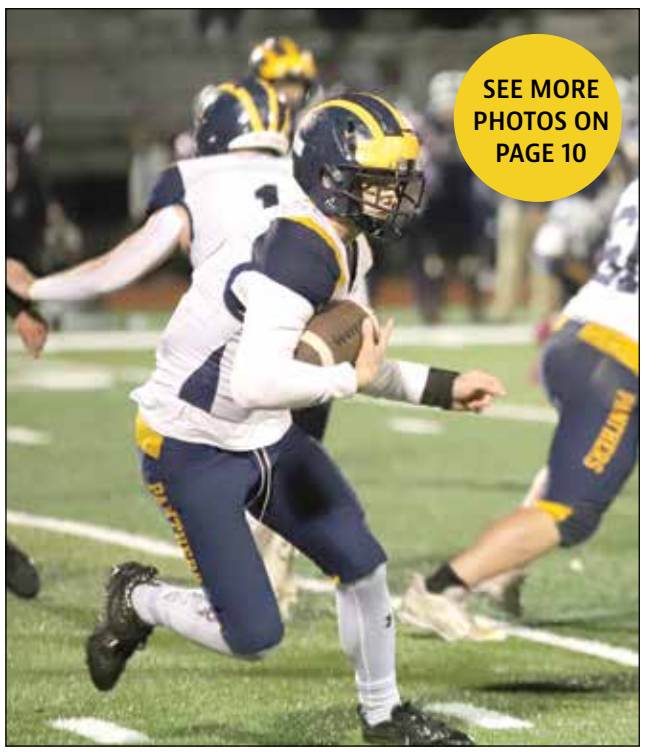
Ellie Poulin winds up for a free hit.



Abby Rogowski guides the ball through midfield.



Violet Kelley tries to get the ball by a defender.



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Zakk Mielnicki goes on a carry.

Panthers edged by one score in Week 10



ORANGE – On Thursday, Nov. 12, the Quabbin Regional High School football team felt to Mahar Regional in a nonplayoff game 22-15. Quabbin spotted Mahar 15 points early in the game, which was hampered by on-and-off rain throughout. Quabbin's defense shored up in the middle of the game and the Panthers managed a pair of scores by Jacoby Venne, one on a pass and one on a rush to tie the score 15-15. But Mahar got a touchdown in the fourth quarter to re-take the lead and the win.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

Leo Bates takes the ball to the left side.