

MUNICIPAL MONTHLY

DECEMBER 2020



Meet Acton's K-9 Officer Zane!

Like him on Facebook! <https://www.facebook.com/OfcZane>

**COVID-19 INFORMATION CENTER**

**ACTON
TOWN SERVICES HOTLINE**

DIAL
978-929-6600

NEW TOWN SERVICES HOTLINE HOURS

Monday-Thursday: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Friday: 8:00 AM - 2:30 PM

TOWN HALL AND HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING HOURS OF OPERATION

ALL TOWN BUILDINGS ARE CLOSED TO THE
PUBLIC UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Sunday: Closed

Monday: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Tuesday: 8:00 AM - 7:30 PM

Wednesday: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Thursday: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Friday: 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Saturday: Closed

Town Offices Closed December 25, January 1

CURBSIDE APPOINTMENTS NOW AVAILABLE

Citizens can call or email to make an
appointment:

FINANCE

Assessor's: 978-929-6621, assessor@actonma.gov

Collector's: 978-929-6622, collector@actonma.gov

LAND USE

Building: 978-929-6633, building@actonma.gov

Conservation: 978-929-6634, nr@actonma.gov

Health Dept.: 978-929-6632, health@actonma.gov

Planning: 978-929-6631, planning@actonma.gov

Recreation: 978-929-6640, recreation@actonma.gov

TOWN OF ACTON, MASSACHUSETTS TOWN MANAGER'S UPDATE

First and foremost, on behalf of Town staff, I would like to wish you and your families a safe and happy holiday season. This year has demonstrated unprecedented challenges for us all, but the Acton community has remained resilient and I am confident our best days are ahead.

We continue to strive to provide quality service for the community, however as we enter into the holiday season, we have made some modifications to our services. As you may be aware, this Summer we introduced the Acton Town Services Hotline, a service which provides the community with trained staff to answer any question related to our municipal services and can direct you to the appropriate department if necessary. The hotline is staffed Monday through Thursday from 8 AM to 5 PM and Friday from 8 AM to 2:30 PM. Please note, the number for the Hotline has been changed to 978-929-6600.

The popular Walk-Up Window Service for our Land Use and Finance Departments has slightly changed as well. We are asking the community to schedule an appointment in advance, by calling or emailing (see the Department Directory on the last page of this Municipal Monthly) the respective departments of which you intend to conduct business.

We have also enhanced the COVID-19 Information Center located on the town website. In addition to the update published each week, a new dashboard has been created with current case numbers updated once per day. Please visit actonma.gov/COVID19 for more information. Acton is currently designated as a "Medium Risk" community, and as cases continue to rise across the Commonwealth, it is vital we take all necessary precautions to prevent any additional spread of the virus. We are urging residents to continue following all public health protocols to protect themselves and others.

I am pleased to announce the promotion of Captain Anita Arnum to serve as Acton's next Deputy Fire Chief. Deputy Chief Arnum is replacing former Deputy Chief Robert Vanderhoof, who retired in March after 42 years of service. She is both the first woman to hold this rank and the highest ranking women in the history of the department. In addition to her primary responsibilities of assisting with fire operations, prevention and administrative duties, Deputy Chief Arnum will serve as the Town's Emergency Management Director.



Finally, I am proud to announce the successful efforts of Town staff to receive grant funding for various projects and initiatives. Since August, the Town has been awarded \$3.3 million from state and federal agencies to develop a climate action and capital improvement plan, efficiency upgrades to municipal and school buildings and fleets, regional microenterprise and social service support, and most recently, infrastructure improvements to support affordable housing project in South Acton. We continue to seek alternative funding methods to provide financial relief while continuing to improve the quality of life for all residents.

Sincerely,

John S. Mangiaratti
Town Manager

CONNECT WITH US!

Join our online community and stay in the know with exclusive news and updates on:

@ActonMAGov



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

SHERRY MORTON-PELLEY

Please welcome the Town of Acton's newest full-time Public Safety Dispatcher, Sherry Morton-Pelley. Sherry began her career in public safety in 1992 as a part-time police officer for the Townsend Police Department. Sherry then transitioned to full-time dispatching and has worked for Ayer, Boxborough, and Stow. Sherry comes from a family dedicated to public safety. Her husband is a Sergeant with the Boxborough Police Department, and her daughter is following in her footsteps as a Dispatcher for Boxborough Police Department. Sherry is very excited to start in her new position with the Town of Acton and we welcome her to the Communications Center. Sherry began her in-house training on September 29.



COMMUNITY RESOURCES

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FOR RESIDENTS

Applications are being accepted for Emergency Rental Assistance and Mortgage Assistance Programs.

These programs will provide temporary financial assistance in the form of a grant and will be administered through a collaboration with the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO).

Acton Residents who are at or below 100% of the area median income (AMI), which is \$119,000 for a family of four, are eligible to apply. Application assistance such as printing, copying and scanning will be available through the Community Resources Office. Mortgage assistance applicants must be up-to-date with their property taxes and sewer betterment, and must live in single-family homes or condominiums that are owner occupied.

For additional information on these programs or to request application assistance please visit rhsousing.org or contact Laura Ducharme by e-mail: lducharme@actonma.gov.



MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (MAP)

The Mortgage Assistance Program (MAP) is now available to help residents financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program will provide up to \$3,000 in a one-time grant for mortgage relief to eligible Acton residents.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis up until Friday, Dec. 18. For

additional information or to request an application, please contact Laura Ducharme at the Community Services Office at (978) 929-6651 or email

lducharme@actonma.gov, or contact the Regional Housing Services Office at INFO@RHSOhousing.org



SPREAD JOY AND CHEER THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Make a difference in a child's life.

Opportunities are available to sponsor local children & families in need this holiday season. Please contact Laura Ducharme, Community Services Coordinator @ 978-929-6651 or lducharme@actonma.gov for more information.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Massachusetts Dept of Fire Service recommends:

- Make a fresh cut an inch or two off the bottom of your tree before placing it in the stand. This will help with absorption. **Water a live tree every day.** When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly.
- Turn off the tree when leaving your house or sleeping and place your tree away from heating sources like fireplaces, woodstoves, radiators or portable heaters. Make sure you don't block your second way out of a room in case of emergency.
- Purchase electric holiday lights that are listed by an approved testing agency and follow the manufacturer's directions.
- Remove your tree soon after the holidays.
- According to the U.S. Fire Administration, one-third of home Christmas tree fires are caused by electrical problems and one-quarter start when the tree is placed too close to a heat source such as a fireplace, woodstove, radiator or space heater.



WE WISH EVERYONE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!



Follow Acton Fire Department on Social Media @ActonFireDept_PIO

VOLUNTEERS SOUGHT

Do you want to get involved in making Acton a better place to live? There are many boards and committees in Town run by volunteers many of them in need of new members. This is your chance to make a difference! There are both Ad Hoc and ongoing committee slots available. Examples include the ANS Advisory Committee, the Historic District Commission, the Dog Park Committee, and the Recreation Commission. There is sure to be a board that can use your knowledge and skills. There is no better way to give back to your community than volunteering.

Applications may be filed online from the Town's website at

<http://www.acton-ma.gov/formcenter/town-managers-office-5/volunteer-application-43>.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

2021 Real Estate and Personal Property Taxes

Due Dates:

Feb 1, May 1, August 1 and November 1

Bills are mailed at least 30 days in advance.

**View, Receive,
or Pay your Bill**

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Acton's MinuteVan transportation services have remained in operation throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The buses are cleaned and sanitized regularly, and only 2-3 riders are scheduled on the bus at one time.

Residents who need a ride can call CrossTown Connect Dispatch (978-844-6809) during normal business hours (Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to 4:30PM) to schedule a ride. Please provide at least 24-hours notice to allow for dispatch to book your trip.



NATURAL RESOURCES

Take the "I Hiked Acton's Trails" challenge and earn a sticker and/or a sew-on patch! <https://actonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2666/I-Hiked-Actons-Trails?bidId=>

Become a Senior Trailblazer and take a few short, fun easy trails for senior citizens! People who take all 4 walks will earn a certificate from the Acton health Division.

<https://actoncoa.com/DocumentCenter/View/1058/Trail-Blazers-2020>

**Get to know them!
Introduce them
to your friends and family.**

**Earn the
"I HIKE
ACTON'S
TRAILS"
Badge
and sticker!**



SHARPS AND MEDICINE DISPOSAL

You can safely dispose of sharps which include: needles, syringes, lancets, and other injection devices that are used to penetrate the skin for the delivery of medications. There is a Sharps collection container (formerly located at Town Hall) is now located at the Public Safety Facility (PSF), 371 Main Street, Acton (978-929-7711), between the two entrance doors in the protected, covered area.

The CVS located at 400 Mass Ave, Acton (978-263-3385) will accept unwanted prescriptions and over-the-counter medications for disposal. Recommend the unwanted prescriptions/medications be placed in a baggie with coffee grinds or kitty litter so fluids do not leak, etc. while being transported and disposed at CVS.



HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

A FEW REMINDERS FROM THE DPW/ HIGHWAY DIVISION

WINTER PARKING BAN

Residents are reminded that a winter parking ban is in effect from November 1 until April 1. On-street parking is not allowed between the hours of 1:00 AM and 6:00 AM. The parking ban also includes the Municipal Parking areas located behind the W. Acton Fire Station (258 Central St.), S. Acton Fire Station (54 School St.), Railroad Street, rail trail terminus at Maple Street, and at the end of Sylvia Street. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.



WINTER MAINTENANCE

Please remember that our crews have to travel on snow covered, slippery untreated roads to get here at any hour of the day or night. Please be patient as the crews will be out as soon as possible to begin the snow & ice operations.

FIRE HYDRANTS



Fire hydrants are under the control of the Acton Water District. The Water District asks residents with hydrants in front of or near their property to please clear the snow away from the area so that in an emergency the hydrant will be accessible. Questions regarding snow removal near hydrants should be directed to the Acton Water District at (978) 263-9107.

MAILBOXES AND BASKETBALL POSTS & NETS

Mailboxes installed in the Town right-of-way are placed at the owner's risk. Each mailbox installation should be sufficiently solid to withstand snow-clearing efforts by the Town. It is the responsibility of the owner of the mailbox to clear the snow around the mailbox to assure mail delivery by the U.S. Postal Department. If the snow banks are too high to shovel, place a temporary box beside the road until the snow has melted enough to allow access to the mailbox. Please check that your mailbox and post are secure and in good condition prior to the snow season.

Please remove your basketball posts & nets away from the edge of the road before the snow & ice events. These can cause damage to Town vehicles and also interferes with snow removal operations. The Town cannot be held responsible for damage caused to them.

SAND AND SALT

A mixture of sand and salt is available to residents (no contractors) at the designated area located at the Highway Division, 14 Forest Road. Please use caution while entering and exiting as vehicles and equipment are prevalent. Please bring your own shovel and container.

More information is available in the Winter Maintenance publication that can be found on the Town of Acton website or by clicking [here](#).

ACTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

ACTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY IS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.



Library staff are actively working on our plans to phase in our in-person services. Our highest priority is the health and safety of our library patrons and library staff. We will be following public health guidelines and working closely with other town departments, our library network, and neighboring libraries to determine when it will be safe to begin certain in-person services. In the meantime, please continue to check our website, follow us on social media, or sign up for our newsletter.

For the latest information in Acton, please visit <https://www.actonma.gov/704/COVID-19>

BROWSING BY APPOINTMENT TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED

Due to a rise in COVID-19 cases, Acton Memorial Library is temporarily suspending all in-person browsing appointments. The good news is we are able to add more on demand curbside hours!

ON DEMAND CURBSIDE PICKUP

Introducing On Demand Curbside Pickup! You no longer need an appointment to pick up your holds that are "Ready for Pickup" from Acton Memorial Library.

TO GET BOOKS AND OTHER ITEMS FROM AML

Go to find.minlib.net and request items online. If you need to create or reset your library password, please click [HERE](#). If you need assistance selecting materials or placing holds online, please call the Reference Department at 978-929-6543 and leave a message. We will return your call.

Please wait for an email or phone call saying your holds are ready. You can only pick up items that are READY FOR PICKUP. You can also check the status of your holds by logging into your account online: <https://find.minlib.net/iii/encore/myaccount>

When your holds are ready, come to the library anytime during curbside hours Monday-Saturday 10:30 AM - 5:30 PM and Sunday 2:00-5:00 PM. No appointment needed.

When you arrive at the library, call 978-929-6655 option 2. Tell us your last name and library card number. Wait outside and the library staff members will put your materials outside on tables in front of the main doors. You can pick up your items from the table after the staff member goes back inside the library.

Please be patient. We anticipate that on demand curbside pickup will be very popular!

The library is open for curbside pickup only.

Stay up-to-date with announcements and library info by following us on Facebook, Instagram (@ActonLibrary) and Twitter (@ActonMemLibrary), or by going to www.actonmemoriallibrary.org

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

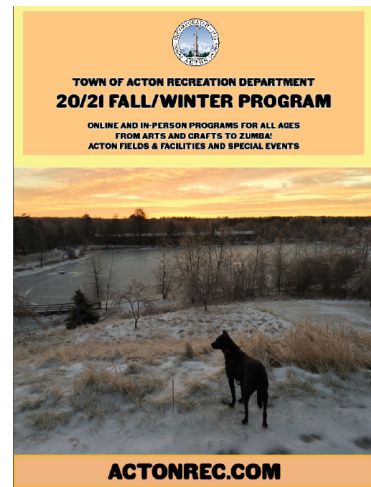
There are a variety of online classes being offered starting in 2021! Easy online registration and information for all program offerings can be found by visiting actonrec.com. We have a fantastic variety of classes for all ages, most of which are being offered virtually from arts and crafts to Zumba!

NEW: Recreation Dept. Drop Box
Located at the front double door entry - 50 Audubon Drive, Acton



Please e-mail recreation@actonma.gov with any questions or call (978)929-6640. Due to COVID-19, the staff is working hybrid and is able to assist you during normal business hours. If you need to see a staff person, an appointment can be made. Any recreation paperwork may now be dropped in the new drop-box located outside the front double door entryway at the Recreation Department located at 50 Audubon Drive.

Thank you for supporting our programs, events and park facilities!
Building a sense of community through quality recreation!



Did you know that we have gift certificates that make great gifts! Beach memberships, concert tickets, NARA Camp and the many programs that we offer!



LETTERS FROM SANTA

Santa loves getting letters and is waiting to hear from you!

Send letters via US postal service, email, or drop-box. Be sure to include your name & return address -- all responses will be sent via mail. Please send your letters by December 11th to make sure Santa has time to write back.

Drop-box and Mail Letters to:
Acton Recreation
50 Audubon Drive
Acton, MA 01720

Email Letters to:
recreation@actonma.gov

His helpers at Acton Recreation will make sure he gets his mail and writes back!

Town of Acton Recreation Department

EDUCATION ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

PLAY

LEARN

ENGAGE

FOR ALL SCHOOL CHILDREN IN GRADES 1-6

The Remote Learning Center provides a safe and alternative environment during the hybrid school year with asynchronous learning and qualified child care providers.

Our Program Offers:

- ✓ Supervision and Assistance with Remote Learning Assignments
- ✓ Arts & Crafts
- ✓ Games
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Outdoor Games
- ✓ & More!

SEMESTER 1
NOVEMBER 2-DECEMBER 23*

Pick Gold or Blue Cohort
Limit of 13 students per cohort
*If school is closed we are closed.

CHOOSE YOUR DAYS!

Cohort Gold: Mon-Wed-Thursday

Cohort Blue: Tues-Wed-Friday

Remote Learning

This program is certified by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education as an Educational Enrichment Center.
REGISTER: ACTONREC.COM

Our new Education Enrichment Program is a certified Massachusetts Department of Early Education program being offered by the Rec. Dept. to help parents and students in our community.

Now accepting registrations for JAN 2021. You can pick one, two, three or more days weekly.

COUNCIL ON AGING

The Acton Senior Center/Council on Aging continues to offer programs virtually and as drive-through events this month. COA staff can be reached by telephone at 978-929-6652 and email seniorcenter@actonma.gov. Like us on Facebook, [@actoncoa](https://www.facebook.com/actoncoa), to keep up with the latest COA news!



Town Manager John Mangiaratti's weekly cable and radio show **"Java with John"** **Fridays at 10:00 AM** continues to be a terrific way to keep up with what is going on in Town. If you would like to receive weekly or monthly phone calls from staff or volunteers just to touch base or chat, please give us a call.



Minuteman Senior Services offers weekday carry-out meals as well as Meals on Wheels delivery, and the COA distributes Open Table meals by request.

Our popular **Holiday Tea** will be a drive-through event on Tuesday, December 8, followed by a virtual holiday harp performance. The **Holiday Drive-through Lunch** is Tuesday, December 22.

Programs taking place via Zoom this month include: Christmas Music of the 1940s, watercolor painting class, "At the Piano" classical music with Sivan Etedgee, virtual Memory Café, works of Langston Hughes, Mindfulness Meditation, and a Words Galore series offering word games and trivia. There is also a Dancing Through the Decades interactive program that will air on ActonTV. Regularly occurring groups/classes continue to meet via Zoom: Terri's Tips, Computer Club, book group, chess lessons, and Laugh for Your Health. A large selection of exercise and movement classes taught by COA instructors is available through ActonTV on its cable and YouTube channels.



It is SMOC Fuel Assistance application season (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program). If you are age 60 plus, contact COA Senior Services Coordinator Beverly Hutchings for more information: 978-929-6652 or bhutchings@actonma.gov.

For more details on any of these programs and services, please view our December newsletter at www.actoncoa.com.



K-9 Officer Zane visits the COA!



Thanksgiving Lunch Drive-through!

DIRECTORY OF TOWN DEPARTMENTS

ACTON TOWN SERVICES HOTLINE - 978-929-6600

Department	Phone Number	E-Mail
Acton Nursing Services	978-929-6650	nursing@actonma.gov
Assessors	978-929-6621	assessor@actonma.gov
Building Division	978-929-6633	building@actonma.gov
Cemetery Division	978-929-6642	cemetery@actonma.gov
Citizens' Library	978-929-6654	wacl@actonma.gov
Collector/Treasurer	978-929-6622	collector@actonma.gov
Community Resources	978-929-6651	lducharme@actonma.gov
Council on Aging	978-929-6652	seniorcenter@actonma.gov
Engineering Department	978-929-6630	engineering@actonma.gov
Fire Department	978-929-7722	fire@actonma.gov
Health Division	978-929-6632	health@actonma.gov
Highway Department Transfer Station	978-929-7740 978-929-7742	highway@actonma.gov
Human Resources	978-929-6613	hr@actonma.gov
Information Technology	978-929-6612	it@actonma.gov
Memorial Library	978-929-6655	Visit: actonmemoriallibrary.org
Municipal Properties	978-929-7744	mpo@actonma.gov
Natural Resources Division	978-929-6634	NR@actonma.gov
Planning Division	978-929-6631	planning@actonma.gov
Police Department	978-929-7711	police@actonma.gov
Public Facilities	978-929-7744	mpo@actonma.gov
Public Works	978-929-7740	highway@actonma.gov
Recreation Department	978-929-6640	recreation@actonma.gov
Town Clerk	978-929-6620	clerk@actonma.gov
Town Manager	978-929-6611	manager@actonma.gov
Veterans' Services	978-929-6614	vso@actonma.gov
Water District	978-263-9107	Visit: www.actonwater.com