# South Street Sentinel



December is almost here, and that means the holiday magic is about to burst into full swing! From twinkling lights and cozy get-togethers to the traditions that warm our hearts, this is the time of year when our whole community shines its brightest. Whether you're sipping cocoa by a crackling fire, dashing through the snow for festive adventures, or simply spreading cheer wherever you go, December brings us together in the most joyful ways.

This month's newsletter is loaded with all the joyful details you'll need—can't-miss events like our Tree Lighting Celebration, plus fun ways to take part in the traditions we treasure most. So mark those calendars, gather your crew, and get ready to make this the merriest, brightest, most magical December!



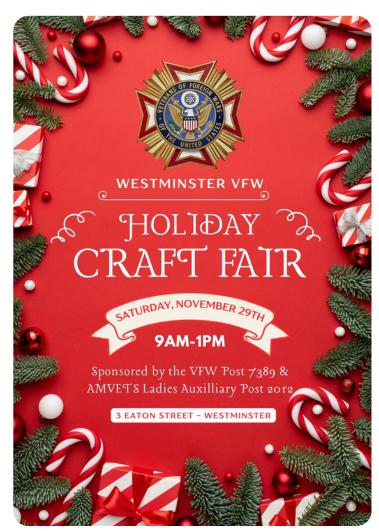


CONNECTING AND BUILDING COMMUNITY

WESTMINSTER TOWN HALL



LIONS CLUB CHRISTMAS TREE SALES BEGIN THE WEEKEND OF NOVEMBER 23RD – This year the Lions Club will have about 100 smaller (6-7 foot) trees for \$65 and 100 premium (7-8 foot) trees for \$85. The team will be on site each weekend so long as trees last (may only be a couple weeks so plan ahead and get yours early) to help tie up trees or assist with loading in or on vehicles. Trees can also be bought on the honor system during outside hours using the honor system. See directions on signs in the lot for details. Thank you for helping us help those in our community in need by purchasing a tree from your local Lion's Club or Westminster!





THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL







#### Westminste 3 EATON STREET

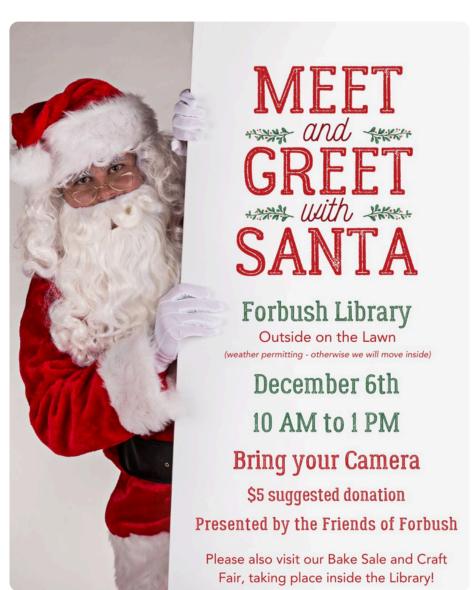
8AM - 11AM

- \* PHOTOS WITH SANTA
- \* HOLIDAY MUSIC
- \* LION'S CLUB HOLIDAY LOTTERY TREE RAFFLE
- \* PANCAKES & SYRUP, HAM, COFFEE & JUICE (\$6 PER PERSON)

Proceeds to benefit the Westminster Food Pantry



luncheon by McNally's, with raffles, door prizes, and a 50/50. Cost for the luncheon is \$15 and raffles will be sold separately. All proceeds go to support the Westminster Food Pantry! Sign-up at the front desk. Payment is due at the time of sign-up. All are Anyone donating raffle prizes, please contact the Senior Center!













Join the Westminster Village Foundation on Sunday, December 7th from 6-8PM at BLUEPRINT! The Wachusett Jazz Quartet will be

performing in the side room and all are welcome!



Prior to the music, there will be a 4:00PM lighting up of Main Street with holidays lights! See the Town light up in holiday cheer!!



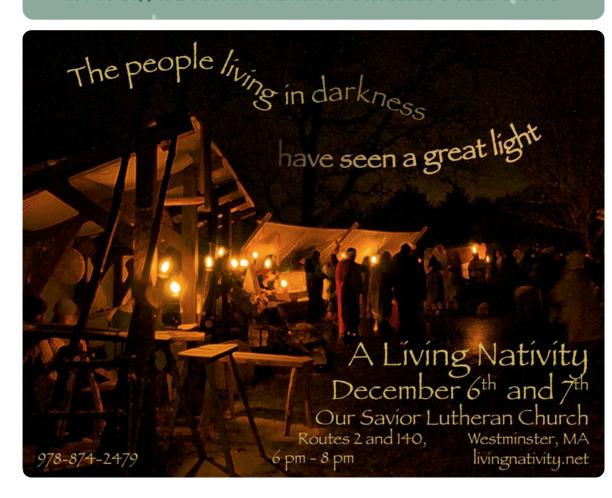




A great place for holiday finds! Special areas for country, classic, vintage, traditional, and new holiday decorations are on sale with bargain prices for decorating and entertaining this season. The Historical Society Gift Shop will be open with several books, prints and our famous Westminster-opoly game, along with so much more!

The Historical Society is located at 110 Main Street

HTTPS://WESTMINSTERHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG





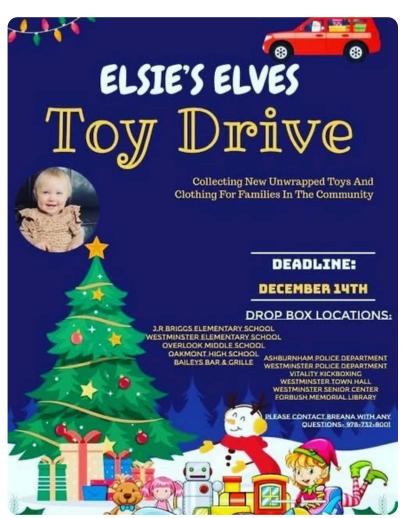






Join St. Edwards the Confessor Church on Sunday, December 14h for their Annual Advent Concert at 4PM. All are welcome.

Also, if you are looking to help local families in need, the Giving Tree is up in the Church lobby. Feel free to grab a tag and help bring the holidays to children in need.





Thank you nature for another beautiful display of the Northern Lights, which many people in town were able to view on the night of Nov. 11th! *Photos* here were taken by Audra Kirtland.





## SUMMARY OF THE VOTES TAKEN FROM THE 11-18-2025 SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

#### **Article 1**

Voted to transfer \$35,000 from Free Cash to pay for prior years bills from FY 21 and 25.

#### Article 2

Voted to transfer \$1,000,000 from Free Cash to Capital Equipment Stabilization Fund.

#### Article 3

Voted to transfer \$1,000,000 from Free Cash to Pension Stabilization Fund.

#### Article 4

Voted to transfer \$100,000 from Free Cash to Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust Fund.

#### Article 5

Voted to appropriate \$2,551,814 to replace roof at Meetinghouse School, along with voting to appropriate \$600,000 from Capital Stabilization account to reduce funds needed to borrow. Town is hoping to receive a partial grant from MA School Bldg. Authority (MSBA), which will further reduce borrowing.

#### Article 6

Voted to borrow \$800,000 from Water Enterprise Fund for design and construction of a water storage tank disinfection and byproducts removal system.

Ellen M. Sheehan, CMMC, CMC | Westminster Town Clerk
Thank you to everyone who attended and made their vote heard!



#### **BOARD OF HEALTH UPDATE**

#### 2026 Yearly Permits - Due January 1, 2026

Letters have been sent out for yearly renewals for Food Establishments, Tobacco Retailers, Septage Haulers, Septic Installers, Title 5 Inspectors, and Trash Haulers. Please contact the office if you have not received this or need an application!

# Westminster Senior Residences Ribbon Cutting



In the midst of residents moving into their new spaces at the Westminster Senior Residences, an official ribbon cutting was held on October 30<sup>th</sup> to commemorate this new addition to Westminster, which has been years in the making. Congratulations to everyone involved along the way – and welcome to our new neighbors!











## The Westminster Council on Aging is Seeking a Back-up Meals on Wheels Driver/Volunteer!

Please call the Senior Center for Details!

We deliver meals on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays around the 10:30am-12:30pm timeframe. Occasionally our driver needs to call out, just like any other employee. In these cases, we need to have a back-up (or two) on call to help deliver the meals. Sometimes we have notice ahead of time, and sometimes it may be last minute. We will train you - it's not difficult - but you do need to be able to drive to various homes around town, as well as carry meals to doors, sometimes involves stairs or steeper terrain. While this is an unpaid volunteer position, you will be reimbursed for mileage! We really need your help! Thank you!



Monday-Friday | 8AM-4PM | Call for a Ride: 978-874-7402 Please note that a 24-hour notice is required. A reminder that as the weather changes, van services align with the Westminster school closings. If the schools are closed, the van WILL NOT RUN. If the schools are delayed, the van WILL BE ON SCHEDULE.







**Halloween Bonfire** – Due to the high winds on Halloween evening, the annual bonfire was moved to Saturday. We had hoped to hold the fire on Halloween; however, wind speeds began to pick up as the evening progressed. Thank you to everyone who assisted and to the community for understanding the need to change the date.



**Seagrave** – Thanks to the hard work of Lt. Alden, Pvt. Salo, and Pvt. Robinson, the 1929 Seagrave made its first appearance for Trick-or-Treating. They worked extremely hard to clean the motor and carburetor to get the truck back to running condition.



**Unitil Emergency Preparedness Meeting** – On Wednesday morning, members of the Police, Fire, and Emergency Management Departments attended Unitil's annual Emergency Preparedness Meeting. They provided updates on infrastructure replacement, new initiatives, and other items that affect first responders.



**Apple Cider Booth** – Thank you to our Emergency Management Volunteers who staffed the Apple Cider table during Trick-or-Treat. We served 20 gallons of cider during the event and handed out quite a bit of public-safety material. Thanks to our volunteers for the time they donate to make our community a safer place.

Tactical Emergency Casualty Care – Recently, members of the department participated in the first day of the TECC class presented by AD Quality EMS. This course provides a solid foundation in tactical field medicine with a focus on ASHER (Active Shooter and Hazardous Event Response). We have been working for over five years to bring this training in-house. There are two trainings that meet the standards to which fire departments are held: Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (TECC) and Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC). The latter is geared more toward military and law enforcement due to its "care under fire" components. Last fiscal year, the Police Department was also able to have their members participate in a law-enforcement-oriented TECC course.



**TECC Day 2** – Members attended Day 2 of the TECC Class. This class was taught by AD Quality EMS with the lead instructor being a retired fire officer and 18D Army Medic (Special Forces Medical Sergeant). Members were able to perform live skills such as a needle cricothyrotomy. This is an emergency airway technique where a large need is inserted into the neck to bypass the upper airway due to trauma or another obstructive causes. Other skills that were covered were assessment and treatment of massive hemorrhage (bleeding), patient extrication and coordination with law enforcement during an active shooter event.



Reported Brush Fire – Late Friday evening the department was dispatched for a reported brush fire on Worcester Road. When crews arrived on scene, they found a large pile of pallets and construction debris on fire with a group of individuals around the fire. Engine 1 extinguished the fire with assistance from Princeton's Tankers who were called for additional water. The individuals were made aware of the open burning regulations. PLEASE BE SURE TO FOLLOW ALL OPEN BURNING RULES! \*stock image, not of the actual scene.



We are also hiring a Building Commissioner. Please see our <u>website</u> for details:



#### TOWN OF WESTMINSTER

#### JOB POSTING



Position: Building Commissioner
Position Type: Full-time/Benefited
Hours/Week: 35 hours per week

Rate of pay: \$85,477 - \$95,385 (anticipated hiring range, commensurate with qualifications and experience)

#### Duties/Responsibilities:

The Building Commissioner is responsible for the planning, organizing, and supervision of inspection work to ensure compliance with life safety, structural, light, ventilation, and other pertinent local and state regulations. The Building Commissioner oversees the issuance of required permits applicable to building construction and reviews plans for zoning compliance. The Building Commissioner also serves as the Town's Zoning Enforcement Officer including signage, nuisance, and enforcement of the Town's Zoning Bylaws and is required to perform all similar or related duties.





Please see the job descriptions for positions within the Westminster Police Department. Anyone interested should send their cover letter, resume and job application to HR@westminster-ma.gov.



TOWN OF WESTMINSTER

#### PART-TIME PUBLIC SAFETY DISPATCHER



\$25.58/hour • Per diem



EMS, and the public.



- High school diploma or equivalent
   High school diploma or equivalent
- 1+ year relevant experience (or equivalent training/experience)
- Strong communication skills; ability to stay calm under pressure
- Computer and multi-line phone proficiency
- · Knowledge of local geography
- Preferred: prior dispatch experience, E-911
  Telecommunicator certification
- Must pass required dispatch assessments

Employment Application



#### **CERTIFICATIONS:**

APCO, EMD, FSD, LED, CJIS NexGen; CPR and First Responder.

Send your Cover Letter, Resume, and Job Application to: hr@westminster-ma.gov



#### TOWN OF WESTMINSTER

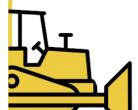


Position:
Position Type:
Hours/Week:
Rate of pay:

Part-time Police Patrolman Part-time/non-benefited Up to 19 hours p/wk \$31.41 p/hour

#### Duties/Responsibilities:

The Westminster Police Department seeks a motivated, dependable, community-oriented officer with strong communication and computer skills. Candidates should present a positive public image, work well with children, citizens, and colleagues, and demonstrate independence, professionalism, and integrity. Applicants must follow all departmental policies, show strong problem-solving abilities, and actively support our community-policing model. Duties include patrol, preliminary investigations, traffic enforcement, and related law-enforcement tasks.



## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

#### Don't Recycle Plastic Bags, Foam & Wraps!

These items jam machinery and cause issues at recycling facilities. Keep them out of your curbside bin! Other things that cannot be recycled:

- ~ Plastic bags & wraps
- ~ Styrofoam™
- ~ Packing materials
- ~ Electronics

~ Textiles

- ~ Hoses & cords
- ~ Metal cookware

Drop off plastic bags at local stores or pack-andship centers. If no option is available, toss them in the trash.

> NO PLASTIC BAGS OR FILM IN THE RECYCLE BIN!









Winter will soon officially kicked into gear, raising commute and safety concerns for anyone on the road. Luckily for our Town, we have an amazing team maintaining the streets... from pre-storm

preparations to post-storm clean-up and everything in between. Please respect the crew when you see them out on the roads, move over when needed and do not pass plows! If you see fallen branches on the road, please call the Police Dept: 978-874-2900.



#### SOLID WASTE DROP-OFF CENTER

165 Fitchburg Road - Route 31 Westminster

#### **HOURS:**

Monday: 7:30am-3pm Tuesday-Thursday: Closed

Friday: 7:30am-3pm Saturday: 7:30am-1pm Sunday: 9:00am-1pm



\*Please check the town website or sign up for town alerts in the case of closures due to weather, etc.



# Town Fuel Assistance Apps will be available at the Senior Center and Town website as of December 1st!

The Westminster Select Board has instituted an Emergency Home Heating Assistance Program (EHHAP) for eligible Westminster residents. Funding for the program is provided from monies available in the Fred Smith Poor Fund as well as the Giles Fund. To be eligible, residents must have lived in Town for the past six months or longer and must meet income eligibility guidelines established by the most recent HUD lowincome limits for the Westminster area. Applicants are able to receive a benefit once during the season.

The EHHAP will be administered through the Emergency Home Heating Assistance Committee, appointed by the Select Board. Information provided will be kept confidential.

### ADDITIONAL HOME HEATING ASSISTANCE OPTIONS:

New England Farm Workers Council (NEFWC): 978-342-4520

Salvation Army: 978-342-9407

Joe for Oil: 877-563-4645

MOC LIHEAP: 978-342-4520 fuelassistance@wocinc.org

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you need assistance! We are here to help!







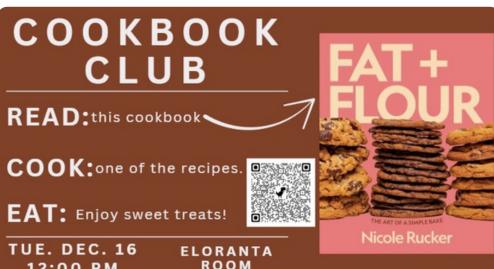
TUE-THU: 10AM-8PM

FRI: 10AM-5PM | SAT: 9AM-2PM

SUN & MON: CLOSED

#### SIGN-UP FOR OUR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER ON OUR WEBSITE: FORBUSHLIBRARY.ORG!







## CHRISTMAS Concert

SATURDAY, DEC. 13 11:00 AM ELORANTA ROOM









Closing at 1:00PM on December 24<sup>th</sup> for Christmas Eve

CLOSED December 25<sup>th</sup> for Christmas Day

Closing at 1:00pm on January 31st for New Year's Eve

CLOSED January 1<sup>st</sup> for New Year's Day







Thanks to generous support from local language teacher Emily West, Forbush is pleased to offer 4-week passes to <u>Mango Languages</u>.



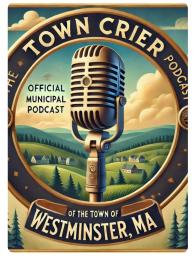
Over 70 languages available!

Passes available at the circulation desk.





Plan ahead for the holiday vacation weeks ahead! Remember that our library offers passes to many local museums! Visit <u>HERE</u> for more details on how to secure your passes and save a little \$\$!





The Town Crier will take a brief break through the holiday season. We'll be back with new episodes by the end of December and running as normal before the new year. In the meantime, enjoy the holidays and feel free to catch up on past episodes wherever you get your podcasts and keep the suggestions, questions and ideas coming to <a href="mailto:podcast@westminster-ma.gov">podcast@westminster-ma.gov</a>. Click below to review past episodes!

NEW EPISODES EVERY TWO WEEKS!
LISTEN IN WHEREYOU GET YOUR PODCASTS:

#### Hosted by Town Administrator Stephanie Lahtinen



#### We want to hear from you!

Have an idea for a podcast? A topic that you think should be covered in an upcoming episode? Are you a member of a club or group in town with a special event coming up you'd like to share? We want to know! Please reach out to Stephanie Lahtinen with your comments or ideas: <a href="mailto:podcast@westminster-ma.gov">podcast@westminster-ma.gov</a>.





WEDNESDAY, DEC. 24

CHRISTMAS EVE

**ALL GRADES!** 



THURSDAY, DEC. 25 THRU FRIDAY, JANUARY 2

WINTER BREAK

**ALL GRADES!** 

A huge thank you to the Westminster Elementary School Student Council, along with their advisor, Cori Litalien, for organizing a recent food drive. They received an enormous amount of donations from Meetinghouse School, Westminster Elementary School, staff, and families. We are humbled by the response from the community and so appreciative of all the donations. THANK YOU!



Hello Spartan Community,

The Oakmont National Honor Society continues to run the Learning Lounge in the Oakmont library Monday-Thursday, 2-3 pm. No sign up necessary! Just walk down to Oakmont at dismissal. With the first term gone, now is a

great time to clean out backpacks, organize study time. We can help with it all! Please consider Learning Lounge for

your student(s). There's even snacks!

See you in the Learning Lounge!

Mrs. Paula Stefanakos English Teacher NHS Advisor



The Oakmonitor is a paper written for students by students including news articles, sports updates, pop culture commentary, and more. Click the image above for a link to the publication.















Support your Oakmont Spartans and Overlook Eagles View all of the athletic team schedules <u>HERE!</u>



On Sunday, November 2nd, the Oakmont-Overlook Marching Spartans competed for the last time in their fall 2025 season at NESBA Finals. This competition was held at the Lawrence Veterans Memorial Stadium and featured an array of bands, including performances from the UMass Lowell and WPI Marching Bands. After an extremely exciting season, the Marching Spartans landed in second place for Division V with a platinum medal and a score of 95.77. This was the first platinum medal that Oakmont has achieved in ten years, and has set the bar high for the future of the band. Congratulations to the Oakmont-Overlook Marching Spartans and stay tuned for future performances!

FOR MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS!

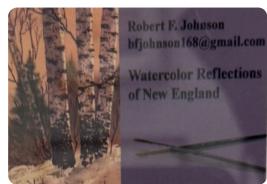
### Currently Featured Artist: Robert Foster Johnson





#### AT THE TOWN HALL

Robert Foster Johnson, a New England artist. has exhibited his paintings in galleries and museums. He has works in collections throughout the United States, Europe, Asia and South America. Mr. Johnson has taught extensively throughout his career.



All of the works shown below are available for purchase.
Contact Robert at the email to the left for details!

































### A LITTLE NOTE FROM OUR COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR AS WE HEAD INTO THE HOLIDAYS... A COPY AND PASTE FROM LAST YEAR!

When my son was little, Fridays were legendary. Every week, I'd meet him at the bus stop dressed in a new costume or with an over-the-top themed setup on the side of the road. The look on his little Kindergarten face—was it joy or utter embarrassment?—sparkled brighter than any holiday light and filled me with a happiness I'll never forget.

Fast forward six years, and while those moments are now treasured memories, I've never stopped chasing the magic of those "simple holidays" that spread joy to my son and everyone around us.

Sure, Thanksgiving kicks off the season, and December is packed with Christmas and New Year's festivities, but did you know there's a whole lineup of quirky and unexpected holidays this month, too? While we gather for the big celebrations, why not take a moment to savor the smaller joys along the way?

December is full of meaningful holidays and important causes, but for this article, we're turning our attention to the lighter (and tastier!) side of things. Let's face it—sometimes you just need to hit pause on the hustle and bustle, channel your inner kid, and embrace a little whimsy. So, without further ado, here are 31 days of fun and foodie-inspired December holidays to help you think outside the box and savor the season!





December 1st: "National Twin with your Dog Day" (Think Facebook posts!)

December 2nd: "National Skip School Day" (Bad idea!) How about "Play Basketball Day!"

December 3rd: "Let's Hug Day" (because who doesn't need a hug!) Or if you're not that type, I guess settling for "National Green Bean Casserole Day" would suffice!

December 4th: "National Cookie Day!" (One I think we can ALL agree should be celebrated!)

December 5th: "National Blue Jeans Day" followed in the evening by "Bathtub Party Day!"

December 6th: "National Microwave Oven Day" (Friday night popcorn & a movie anyone?!)

December 7th: "National Joy Day" (The purpose of this list!) "National Slime Day" (Get the glue & borax!)

December 8th: "Pretend to be a Time Traveler Day" (Where would you go!?)

December 9th: "Christmas Card Day" (A great chance to get those cards sent out!)

December 10th: "National Salesperson Day" (Say thanks when you head out shopping!)

December 11th: "National Have a Bagel Day" (Breakfast is served!)

December 12th: "Gingerbread House Day" (Always a kid favorite - try the pre-molded ones!)

December 13th: "National Cocoa Day" (Like a warm, delicious hug from the inside!)

December 14th: "Monkey Day" (000-000-aah-aah - let the littles bounce around the house!)

December 15th: "National Cupcake Day" (More sweet treats!)

December 16th: "National Stupid Toy Day" (Admit it, our childhoods were filled with them!)

December 17th: "National Maple Syrup Day" (Pancakes anyone!?)

December 18th: "Answer the Telephone like Buddy the Elf Day" (INSERT NAME, What's your favorite color!?)

December 19th: "National Re-gifting Day" (Just be sure not to re-gift to the person who gave it to you!)

December 20th: "National Games Day" (Monopolize the laughter! I know, dad joke!)

December 21st: "Don't Make your Bed Day" (This could make you either really happy or really stressed!)

December 22nd: "National Cookie Exchange Day" (See December 4th - same!)

December 23rd: "National Christmas Movie Marathon Day" (A great way to kick off vacation week!)

December 24th: "Last-Minute Shoppers' Day" (Don't rush me, I have it all under control!)

December 25th: "National Pumpkin Pie Day" (Or 'Thanksgiving lovers trying to take over Christmas Day!')

December 26th: "National Thank You Note Day" (This one goes without saying!)

December 27th: "Make Cut-out Snowflakes Day" (Seemed more legit in MA than "Visit the Zoo Day!")

December 28th: "National Call A Friend Day" (Better than hiding on a phone for "National Download Day")

December 29th: "Still Need To Do Day" (Isn't this all day everyday!?)

December 30th: "National Bacon Day" (No offense to the animal lovers, but... bacon!)

December 31st: "Make Up Your Mind Day" (This MIGHT be possible since it's also "No Interruptions Day!")



All Town Offices will be **closing at 12PM** on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. We will be **CLOSED** on Christmas Day and New Year's Day! Enjoy the holidays!



Town Offices will be **CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING** on
Thursday and Friday, November
26th & 27th

### Share Your Story...

Have news to share? We'd love to hear from you! Reach out to our Community Services Director, Audra Kirtland, at akirtland@westminster-ma.gov.

**Please note:** While we welcome your submissions, the Town reserves the right to decide what gets published.











Click below to bring you to our
Town Calendar page or
(https://www.westminsterma.gov/calendar/month)

December

December					
	M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4	<u>5</u>
•	8	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	11	<u>12</u>
Ļ	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	17	18	<u>19</u>
	22	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>
;	29	30	<u>31</u>		



Agendas, Meetings, and Minutes

Stay up to date on our recent meetings and upcoming agendas.

# OPENINGS!

www.westminster-ma.gov/humanresources/pages/current-positions

**BOARD AND COMMITTEE VACANCIES: CLICK HERE!** 



#### **TOWN HALL HOURS**

Monday: 7:00am-7:00pm Tue-Thur: 7:30am-4:30pm Friday: CLOSED



TOWN HALL

11 SOUTH STREET
WESTMINSTER, MA 01473

EMAIL US

