

Great Public Turnout due to Water Discussion
Ayer Board of Selectmen Meeting
October 16, 2018
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First and foremost, I would like to wish Vice-Chairman Chris Hillman a speedy recovery. Chairwoman Livingston announced that he will be out until December at which point he will either be joining in person or over the phone. He is hoping to make it to the town meeting on Monday before taking full time off. We all wish Mr. Hillman a speedy and successful recovery, and we can not wait to see him back.

The following dates should be noted by all. The general election is November 6, 2018 from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm. Absentee Ballots will be available through November 5, 2018. Early voting will be coming up soon in October. All voting will be done at the Ayer Town Hall as usual.

The Board was honored to have representatives from the Middlesex Retirement Board at the meeting. They discussed with the Board all the benefits the members from the town of Ayer receive. There was a lot of good information, including that the annual allowance is \$18,000. If you want to learn more about the Middlesex Retirement Board, please visit their website, www.middlesexretirement.org and feel free to contact someone who works for the Retirement Board as found on the website.

Congratulations are in order for Ayer Shirley Regional High School graduates William and Edward Ernst. They were recognized for becoming Eagle scouts. Both of them have held many leadership positions during Boy Scouts, and are both part of Order of the Arrow, which is the high honor society for Boy Scouts. William constructed helmet and bat racks for the Babe Ruth and softball fields at Pironee Park and Edward cleaned up the ASRHS cross country course and added mile markers. If there are any other Boy Scouts who have received this honor recently, please contact the Board of Selectmen. They would love to recognize you. This also goes for any Gold Award recipients for Girl Scouts. Congratulations again Edward and William.

Before getting to the hot topic of the night, Superintendent Mark Wetzal of the Department of Public Works came to discuss a few things. The first was parking management in downtown Ayer and some residential roads. There could be residential parking areas in the future to prevent the roads from being filled with just commuters. This will be further discussed with Police Chief Murray.

Reminder to all that the Ayer transfer station is available to all Ayer residents who bought a permit for it. New permit fees and bag fees are being discussed, but do not worry, the hours of operation are also part of the conversation. Also included in the conversation is whether or not to let Devens residents use the transfer station. The rates would reflect the fact that they are out of town. No decisions have been reached on these topics yet either.

Now the biggest conversation of the evening , the water quality of Ayer. Superintendent Wetzel also presented this issue, and there was a large turnout for this portion of the meeting. The most important thing is that the water IS SAFE to drink. The water is tested for over one hundred contaminants, some of them daily. If there ever was a problem that makes the water not safe, everyone would be notified.

This being said, there were still many complaints about the color and the smell of people's water in the area of Groton Shirley and Wright Rds. The DPW stresses that if your water is discolored or smells bad, call them. Call 978-772-8240, in order to file a complaint. All complaints are being filed into a database so each road can be considered for new pipes based on which roads need them most. As well as calling, check your house filter if you have one. Also, don't use bleach in the washing machine. The DPW has Red-B-Gone to remove water stains from toilets, sinks, and dishwashers.

If you call, someone will come out to flush your hydrants. Even the people coming to voice their concerns about the water praised the DPW's response team. They said they have never had a problem with the people coming to their house. Also when calling, you will be asked where your house is, when was the water problem first noticed, is there any color, and is all water dirty or just cold water? Knowing these questions ahead of time will speed up the process, and the DPW appreciates all of the patience.