

Country Journal

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A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

September 24, 2026 | Vol. 48, No. 22 | 75¢

www.countryjournal.turley.com

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Principal Sullivan to leave Gateway

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

Dr. William Sullivan, Principal of Gateway Regional School, announced his resignation in an email to families, students and staff on Tuesday, Sept. 8, and to the general public at the Wednesday, Sept. 9 meeting of the Gateway Regional School Committee.

Sullivan is leaving to accept the position of Curriculum Coordinator at Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School in Charlton. His last day at Gateway will be Friday, Sept. 25.

Sullivan came to Gateway Regional School as an assistant principal in July 2022 and was named principal in January 2024. He holds a Bachelor's degree in history/psychology from Rivier University and a Master's degree in secondary education and social studies from Plymouth State University.

He also earned a second Master's degree in curriculum and teaching from



Dr. William Sullivan

Fitchburg State University and has an Ed. D. in Educational Leadership from Liberty University. Before coming to Gateway, he taught eighth grade social studies at Williams Middle School in Longmeadow.

"I have absolutely loved my time at Gateway," Sullivan emphasized in a recent interview. "As my very young family begins to get older, I want to be home to see them. I feel like this is a great next opportunity for me to grow as an instructional leader and work with teachers to improve outcomes for students."

Sullivan said that his work with staff and students to reimagine the high school experience, with funding and guidance from the Barr Foundation, was a highlight of his work at Gateway. "We had to confront some things that we weren't doing well," Sullivan said. "We had the ability to reflect on where we needed to grow and the

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CUMMINGTON



Turley Publications photos by Ryan Drago

Artists Sergei Isupov (left) and Kadri Parnamets created the ceramic sculpture "Miss Comet" that was featured during the Cummington community event Riverfest.

Riverfest returns to Main Street

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer

The community of Cummington brought back Riverfest on Saturday, Sept. 19.

The festivities happened throughout Main Street in Cummington, which become a rural hub where art, history and ecology are celebrated. The event made its debut

last year and was heavily inspired by being in close connection to the Westfield River.

Organizers Maude Haak-Frendscho and Kate Eiseman agreed that creat-

ing Riverfest was all part of having "a celebration of place and community."

The event is made possible thanks to sever-

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BLANDFORD

Select Board approve Conservation Restriction

By Mary Kronholm
Correspondent

Select Board met Monday, Sept. 14 with representatives of NextEra Energy for the second time this summer to request approval of proposed conservation restrictions on their solar field property on Otis Stage Road.

The property is on the Blandford/Otis town line and cannot be seen from the road. There has never been any public access to the property.

Springfield Water and Sewer Commission will hold and benefit from the Conservation Restriction, conserving approximately 50 acres of Miller Swamp, which abuts other conserved land.

The CR is required by the Mass Department of Environmental Protection storm water mitigation and will permanently protect a wetlands area.

According to NextEra the "overall benefits" include storm water and flood plain protection, water quality and supply, wetlands, habitat and biodiversity protection as well as open space protection.

Conservation Chair Richard Gates told the board that commission had



Turley Publications photos by Mary Kronholm

Highway Department employee Ryan Keach works on repair maintenance for the sidewalk that runs from Main Street (Route 23) to the Town Hall on Russell Stage Road. The walkway has been in need of repair.

not seen the area since 2019 and asked for a tour of the property. NextEra Energy General Manager Joel Walker agreed to a tour.

The board approved the request.

Halloween party

Board member Corinne Shartrand announced a Halloween Party set for Saturday, Oct. 31 from 1-2:30 p.m. at the Town Hall gym. The event includes music, games, a costume party and she said she would ask the Fire Department to join in. She is looking for volunteers and judges. Contact her or the Select Board to do so.

Town Administrator report

Town Administrator Cristina Ferrera told the board contracts for the Post Office chimney repair and the roof repair at the Town Hall have been submitted, waiting for scheduling. Highway Superintendent Ray Hultay is on track. She expressed thanks to all who joined in to help search for the missing person.

Board member Ted Cousineau asked if the shrubs at the kitchen window could be cut back as they block the sunlight.

Other business

C e m e t e r y

SELECT BOARD, page 6

HUNTINGTON

Library trustees approves five year strategic plan

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

The Huntington Library Trustees voted to approve a five-year strategic plan compiled and prepared by Library Director Amanda Loiselle, in collaboration with the Trustees.

The plan was approved with no changes at the August 19 Trustees meeting. The Strategic Plan forecasts library needs and direction for 2027 through 2032. It includes the library's history and mission, a brief history of the town, a community profile and describes the planning process.

Five goals are outlined: to maintain an inclusive library, to strengthen town connections, to reimagine space for all generations, to expand access and impact, and to promote cultural engagement and collaboration.

The appendices include the community survey and data collection methods used to inform the plan.

The report concludes with a SOAR Summary, which came out of a community focus group facil-

itated by Michelle Eberle, a Massachusetts Library System Consultant.

The summary outlines the strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results that were identified during that focus group. Identified strengths included the staff, technology support, a diverse collection, the creative use of space, resources, the new website and the Artist of the Month series.

Opportunities included community outreach, connecting people with shared experiences, outdoor space (the pollinator garden, seating), collaboration with schools, non-profits and the town's recreation programs, increased donations to the Friends of the Huntington Public Library and advocacy through storytelling.

Identified aspirations were to improve salaries, benefits and the workspace for staff; have an accessible community meeting space; serve as the cultural hub of the community, offer an outdoor gathering space with a path to the town's playground, focus on reading and knowledge, and offer a makerspace.

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