

BARRE GAZETTE

USPS 044560

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

July 23, 2026 | Vol. 192, No. 17 | \$1.00

www.barregazette.turley.com

End of year transfers approved by FinCom

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

HUBBARDSTON – The Finance Committee met last Tuesday where they voted to approve year-end transfers to account for budget shortfalls in certain line items ahead of the July 15 deadline to execute them.

At the July 14 meeting, Finance Committee Chair Seth Knipe said the transfers were submitted by town Accountant Marcia Bohinc, who was hired in the winter to help reconcile prior fiscal years' books. Knipe said the estimated amount available for transfer was \$20,020, and the total line item transfers totaled at \$19,621.

Knipe said one of the biggest financial challenges in the last year was a lack of money allocated for debt service, leaving the town with a \$58,000 deficit, which will still be about \$40,000 even after the transfers. Knipe said the town still has a snow and ice deficit of over \$50,000 as well, but it is legal to carry one over.

He said any other negative balances will go onto a recap, where the total of the deficits comes off the top of whatever the state certifies as free cash. He said the total deficit between debt service and snow and ice is over \$90,000.

Knipe said free cash is

See HUBBARDSTON
page 10



Barre Senior Center director Betty-Jo O'Brien and a U.S. Air Force Reserve veteran stands by the colorful red, white and blue quilts presented to veterans on July 11.

Veterans received *Quilts of Valor*

By Ellenor Downer
Editor
edowne@turley.com

BARRE – A quilting group at the Barre Senior Center set about to fill a tall order of ten hand made Quilts of Valor for ten Veterans in Barre and the surrounding area.

It concluded with a Quilts of Valor presentation on Saturday, July 11 at the Barre Senior Center. Veterans receiving

quilts included: W. Robert Bentley, Chuck Carmelo Coppolino, Dennis G. Fleming,

Pamela J. Gonsalves, David R. Hardaker, Scott Lagrant, Ralph Morrison, Anthony P. Musnicki. Betty-Jo O'Brien and Craig Wojcik.

The recipients represented U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Marines, U.S. Navy, U.S. Navy Seabees and Massachusetts Army

National Guard.

Each recipient received a quilt of red, white and blue fabric with patriotic designs. Quilts of Valor Massachusetts State Coordinator Theresa Perreault, filling in for Joan Schwerin, made the presentations to each Veteran, one at a time.

Family members and friends assisted in wrapping the Veterans in their quilts. Perreault said it was "important to use this quilt

and not hang it in a closet."

Members of the Barre Senior Center quilting group included Eileen Bohigian, Linda Eastwood, Pam Hinckley, Cathy Miknaitis, Ann Mitus, Carole Stanley and Judy Wypych.

The mission of the Quilts of Valor Foundation is to cover Service Members and Veterans touched by war with com-

QUILTS page 6

Planning Board hears solar project proposition

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The planning board held a public hearing July 8 where representatives from Bohler Engineering and ECA Power presented a plan to install a solar facility and battery energy storage systems on the property of the Valley View School, located at 91 Oakham Road.

Rick May, the executive director of Valley View School, said the school is excited for the project so they can be environmental stewards. He said they already have a recycling program and there is a greenhouse coming.

The representative from ECA Power, Martha Diezemann, said the company is based in Waltham and has 40 completed projects, mostly in Massachusetts, and about 100 more in the works.

The representative from Bohler Engineering said this project is a five megawatt AC, 100 megawatt DC solar program including two BESS systems. He said they have applied with National Grid, and the project is expected to come online in 2028, where the power generated will be sent to existing lines, new poles and sent to National Grid for community use.

He said certain qualified residents would be able to

N. BROOKFIELD
page 12

FinCom approves reserve fund transfers

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

RUTLAND – The Finance Committee met last Tuesday to finalize reserve fund transfer requests before the July 15 deadline for both those requests and interdepartmental transfers.

The two reserve fund requests were presented to the committee to offset deficits for Central Mass Regional Emergency Communications Center wages and an invoice from AT&T.

According to Town Administrator Heather Butler, the wages deficit for CMRECC was \$39,710, and was originally approved as a year end transfer from the health insurance line for \$20,000. She said that transfer is null and void as of the July 14 meeting since the deficit came in larger than expected, and that \$20,000 will appear as free cash.

Butler said the town was going to use the money in the CMRECC procurement line, which had \$29,000 in it to offset the wages, but there were some other year-end transfers that took everything but \$6,000 from that line. She said the town would still

use the rest of that money, but also needed to pull from the reserve fund to complete the payment.

Butler said there will be reimbursements sent to the town through a state 911 grant, which will go toward making the town "whole." She said once the reimbursements come in, the town takes what was committed at the July 14 meeting back.

Butler also clarified that fiscal year 2026 is the last year the town collects assessments from the other towns in the district including Hubbardston, Oakham, Barre and Warren, and fronting the costs. She said the district is going to act as an independent agency from FY 27 forward, and will be adding eight new towns to it.

The committee approved this reserve fund transfer request.

The second reserve fund transfer was an invoice from AT&T, which Butler said was caused in part by incomplete set up of the phone lines with the new provider because of turnover in the town administrator department.

Butler said the former provider, Crocker Communications, is still providing service to three phone lines.

Butler said there is now a \$37,000 bill from AT&T because the line was under

See RUTLAND page 7



This is a view of the Quabbin Reservoir from the visitor's center.

Submitted Photos

Leaders present case for Quabbin Reservoir funding

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

BELCHERTOWN – Local leaders gathered at the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center to present their case to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority board of directors for additional funding for the towns bordering the Quabbin Reservoir.

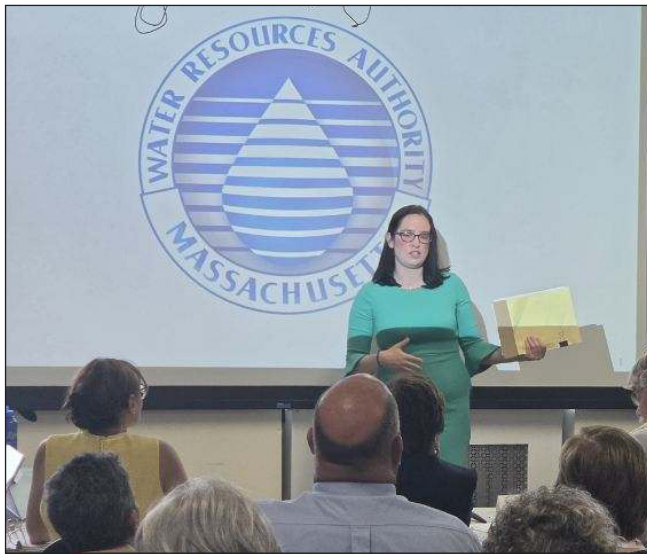
The discussion centered on Senate bill S546 and House bill H1042, which would, in part, create a \$35 million trust fund for the dozen Quabbin towns to receive annual pay-

ments, and give the towns more representation on the MWRA.

Attendees included state Rep. Aaron Saunders, state Sen. Jo Comerford, state Sen. Peter Durant and state Rep. Todd Smola. Members of local leadership such as select boards from several Quabbin towns gave speeches, with the exception of Phillipston and Wendell.

The first to speak was Saunders, who represents the 7th Hampden District, including Belchertown. He talked about how the Quabbin is a water extraction operation, with

QUABBIN page 7



Hardwick Town Administrator Justine Caggiano spoke at the July 10 meeting.



SPORTS

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS

www.sports.turley.com

St. Joe's suffers late-season loss

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

THORNDIKE – In what might've been a preview of a Tri-Country League playoff matchup, Teddy Bear Pools and Spas broke open the final meeting of the regular season against St. Joseph's by scoring nine runs across the fifth and sixth innings, rolling to an 11-1 victory at St. Joe's Field in Thorndike, last Friday night.

"We split with St. Joe's during the regular season, and we'll probably be seeing them again in the playoffs," said Teddy Bear Pools player/manager Ryan Magni. "The first three innings of tonight's game was almost like a playoff game. Then we were able to break it open against their relief pitchers.

Even though Friday's make-up game was played at St. Joe's Field, Teddy Bear Pools served as the home team because their own field was unavailable. The game ended with two outs in the bottom of the sixth inning due to the ten-run mercy rule.

Teddy Bear Pools entered the final week of the regular season sitting in third place in the league standings with a 13-5-1 record one point behind second place St. Joseph's. The Saints had a 14-4 overall record.

Peoples Bank (15-3-1), who are looking to capture the league championship

title for the 13th consecutive season, was sitting in first place.

Teddy Bear Pools could move into second place with a win against BankESB on Thursday night and if St. Joe's losses their final two regular season games.

The Saints had the opportunity to move into first place if they defeated the DOC Spartans on Monday and Peoples Bank on Wednesday.

The top two finishers in the league standings earn a first round bye and the first place team will get home field advantage throughout the playoffs, which are all best of three series.

Teddy Bear Pools righthander Matt Drobiak, who graduated from South Hadley High School, was the winning pitcher in last Friday's game. He went the distance, allowing one run on just one base hit with three walks and two strikeouts.

"My defense made the plays behind me in tonight's game," said Drobiak. "This is a big win for us, and it feels great. We're hoping to play them again in the playoffs."

Teddy Bear Pools took a 1-0 lead against St. Joe's with two outs in the bottom of the third inning.

Magni, who started in centerfield, drew a lead-off walk. Then St. Joe's lefthander Jackson Hayes retired the next two batters

See St. JOE'S page 10

Mutiny finishes up first dual league season

LUDLOW – Earlier this month, the New England Mutiny, which features soccer players from all over the region as well as some players from out of state, finished up their season, unfortunately failing to reach any postseason play despite playing in two leagues this season.

The Mutiny participated in both the USL as well as the UWS, nearly doubling its number of games this season. The Mutiny hope to have better luck next season with the added schedule.

Turley photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com
Laci Lewis fights to keep possession.



Addyson Earl hustles after the loose ball.

PeoplesBank defeats Teddy Bear Pools



Darien Rosado is safe as he slides home.



Jake Jachym sends a pitch home.



Ray Toth gets the grounder to short.



Alex Gochinski cleanly fields a grounder.



Robert Ninotti fires a throw across the diamond.