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Durant and Teabo vie for senate seat

By Paula Ouimette
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Two candidates are running for the State Senate seat for the Worcester & Hampshire District at the upcoming Tuesday, Nov. 3 State Election.

Incumbent Peter Durant of Spencer is seeking reelection and he is being challenged by newcomer Shannon Teabo of West Brookfield.

A Meet the Candidates forum will be hosted by the Ware Business & Civic Association and Beyond, Ware Community Television and Turley Publications on Wednesday, Oct. 21. The forum will be broadcast on Ware Community Television (www.waretv.org), and an article will appear in the Oct. 29 issue of the Barre Gazette.

During the forum each candidate will be given the opportunity to answer questions and talk about themselves.

Below are the statements submitted by each candidate, explaining their reasons for seeking election to the State



State Sen. Peter Durant

Senate.



Shannon Teabo

State Sen. Peter Durant

For the past three years, I have had the privilege of serving the 22 communities of the Worcester and Hampshire District.

In that time, we've made real, meaningful progress, and I'm running for reelection because there's still so much more we have to get done.

My public service started in local government, when I sat on the Finance Committee and became a selectman in my hometown of Spencer, after years as a small business owner. That's where I learned the struggles of a small town, what town budgets look like from

the inside, and what happens to that budget when Beacon Hill issues a mandate but doesn't pay for it.

I took those lessons to the State House in 2011 as a state representative, and on my very first day, a tornado ripped through the towns I represented. I learned very quickly how diverse and complex this job is, and that more often than not, the issues find you, not the other way around.

Since that day, through 12 years in the House and now in the Senate, I have been on the ground every day working for the people I serve.

Sometimes that means helping families who never expected to need it. When homeowners across the district found themselves at risk of losing their homes to foundations crumbling from pyrrhotite-tainted concrete, I championed legislation to help them, and we passed it through the Senate unani-

mously.

I am pressing hard for it to become law. We're also working on PFAS contamination in the water supply of several of our towns, and a lack of healthcare options in the western part of the district.

I take watching over your tax dollars seriously, which is why I continue to push for the legislative audit voters demanded. I'm also working toward a fairer formula for towns with PILOT agreements, where large shares of state-owned land leave them with a fraction of what full taxes would bring in.

And I've put that Spencer lesson to work pushing back when Beacon Hill oversteps. When one town didn't adopt the zoning the MBTA Communities Act requires, the state moved to withhold funding from the Wachusett Regional School District, punishing students in five towns for a decision none of their school committees made. I called that out publicly, and the administration reversed course.

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Oakham STM takes place Oct. 26

By Ellenor Downer
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OAKHAM – A Special Town Meeting takes place Monday, Oct. 26 at 7 p.m. in the Oakham Center School, Deacon Allen Drive.

The Town Clerk reminds residents, who are not registered to vote, the last day to register to vote to be eligible to vote at the STM is Friday, Oct. 16 at 5 p.m.

The STM has five articles on the warrant. Article 1 asks voters to amend the purpose of the appropriation previously approved under Article 3 of the Sept. 6, 2025 Special Town Meeting in the amount of \$50,035.

The \$50,035 allotment was to equip a new Highway Department truck with a plow and wing package including all costs incidental and related thereto. This article would allow the appropriation to be used to equip two new Highway Department trucks with plow and wing

packages including all costs and related thereto. No additional appropriation required.

The next three articles seek transfers from the General Stabilization fund. Article 2 asks voters to transfer \$2,454.31 or any other sum to pay bills from a prior fiscal year. This article requires a 9/10 vote since it involves paying prior fiscal year bills.

Article 3 asks voters to transfer \$2,500 or any other sum to cover budget deficit resulting from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts final conference budget being less than anticipated. This article requires a 2/3 vote.

Article 4 asks voters to transfer \$2,319.91 or any other sum to cover a deficit in the Emergency Management Grant Account for FY 2025. This also requires a 2/3 vote.

The final article 5 seeks approval from the town

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Select Board interviews town administrator candidates

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
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HUBBARDSTON – The Select Board interviewed two candidates for town administrator at their meeting last Wednesday, following a search and recommendation by the town administrator search committee.

The town has not had a permanent town administrator since December 2025, having interim town administrators Sean Fitzgerald and Tim Bragan since then. The candidates interviewed on Oct. 7 included Matthew Boiteau and James Ryan.

Matthew Boiteau

Boiteau was interviewed first, and introduced himself as an Army veteran who served for over six years and did three tours overseas, before spending time as an operations manager for the United States Postal Service out of the Franklin post office.

He then worked as a data analyst for the Town of Shrewsbury before taking up his current position as the Assistant Town Manager in Concord.

Boiteau said he has a degree in political science and oversaw about 30 people in a union environment in the postal service, and in the town manager's office, Boiteau said he's worked with several departments including the financial team to build budgets.

Boiteau said he did some research on Hubbardston, and understands that about 60% of their budget goes to the Quabbin Regional School District, leaving the other 40% for the municipal budget.

Boiteau said he knew about the municipal building project for 48 Gardner

Road, and is working on a certificate for project management. Boiteau also said he understands some of the town employees are new.

"I provide clarity, consistency and follow through," Boiteau said. "It would be a real honor to serve the Town of Hubbardston."

Boiteau said in his role, he has gone out into the field and reviewed the status of projects with department heads and where their budgets are at, saying he'd do the same thing in Hubbardston. He said he is working with an economic vitality manager in Concord who knows state contacts, and also has a network of town administrators from the area he would work with.

"If you guys give me a task, I'll give you an answer," he said.

He noted some projects he's been working on, such as revitalizing MCI Concord and revitalizing the town's town house, which was a tense situation because the facilities managers and residents who were made responsible for it wanted different things, but he worked to balance the two sides and make the project start to run smoothly.

Boiteau said he worked to build the fiscal year 2027 budget in Concord, and in Hubbardston he would engage with the accountant, treasurer/collector, and finance committee to get a full picture of the budget. He said Concord did priority budgeting rather than line item budgeting.

He said the role of the town administrator is to provide guidance to the select board, and if there are projects that need to be done, they should be put on his plate. Boiteau also talked about grants, and the importance of keeping track of them, where the money is going and making sure any matches are paid on time.

Boiteau said if he were

hired, he would set a 90 day plan to meet staff, understand responsibilities, align interests and goals, and attend as many board and committee meetings as possible. He described a "three pronged approach" of "people, priorities, progress."

Boiteau noted his lack of experience as a weak point, but said he is good at researching and would attend professional development events through things like the Massachusetts Municipal Association, and would also learn how to engage with residents.

"I hold myself to a very high standard," he said.

When asked about handling a very difficult situation, Boiteau said he'd manage the situation when there are chaotic moments and rely on department heads to formulate a plan. Boiteau said he did logistics in Iraq during service.

"There's very little that rattles me," he said.

Boiteau said he has experience in union situations since there were several in the postal service, and noted that sometimes people in unions will argue what a contract states, such as what routes to do and the timing of them, and it's important to document situations like that correctly.

"We all have jobs, they all have to get done," he said.

Boiteau also said he has experience with human resources situations in the military and in the postal service, where he managed the day-to-day, and he said he would pursue any accreditation or training needed as a town administrator.

Speaking about technology, Boiteau said he has leveraged several types of it including Microsoft Lists and various dashboards that track projects and costs, along with another dashboard that tracks

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Board of Selectmen discusses opioid settlement funds

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
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NORTH BROOKFIELD – The Board of Selectmen met last Tuesday and discussed the first steps in figuring out where to spend money that was acquired by the town through a federal opioid settlement, according to Chair Jamie Gilman.

There was not a specific number given at the Oct. 6 meeting as to how much the town received, but Gilman said there was a preliminary

meeting of officials that could become an opioid task force in the future.

Gilman said the meeting, which happened in mid-September, consisted of Peter Orsi, who is an EMT and a selectman in town, representatives from the Hoston Free Public Library, the principal of the North Brookfield High School, and other non-profit representatives from North Brookfield and other areas.

Gilman said the meeting talked about opioid addiction and its effect on North Brookfield, and the school

was advocating for drug education.

There are seven strategies for the funds that were outlined at the meeting including treating opioid disorder, supporting those in recovery, finding connections to care and harm reduction, assisting those in the criminal justice system, supporting pregnant or parenting women and their families, including babies with neonatal absence syndrome, preventing the misuse of opioids and imple-

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Submitted photo

Members of the Quabbin Regional Hike School Hiking Club and their chaperones pose at the summit of Mount Moosilauke, elevation 4,802 feet.

Quabbin Hiking Club climbs Mt. Moosilauke

By Madeleine Boisselle
Quabbin Regional High School Class of 2027

Over the weekend of Oct. 2-4, the Quabbin Regional High School Hiking Club ventured north to Benton, New Hampshire, which is nestled on the western side of the White Mountain region.

Fourteen students and four chaperones spent two nights at the Wildwood

Campground on the Kancamagus Highway.

While the weather was a bit rainy on the first day, the students and faculty's spirits remained high, as the group was excited to make the most of every second within the wilderness. After pitching their tents on Friday, the club visited the historic Basin in nearby Lincoln, which featured various waterfalls and flumes for all to enjoy.

On Friday night, the club also participated in a "Search and Rescue" presentation hosted by The Pemigewasset Valley Search and Rescue Team which taught the students valuable skills on how to be safe and prepared when hiking.

Thankfully, on Saturday the rain ended and the group was ready for the tough

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SPORTS

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Panthers shut out West Boylston

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BARRE—For the first time in six years, the Quabbin boys' varsity soccer team is on track to finish the regular season with a .500 record or better.

A convincing 5-0 victory over Mid-Wach (D) rival West Boylston at Alumni Field last Tuesday afternoon moved the Panthers within two wins of securing their first .500-or-better regular season record since 2020. The Panthers had a 6-2-1 overall record and a 4-1-1 league mark following their third shutout victory of this fall. They're also seeking to make their first appearance in the Division 3 state tournament.

"We only need two more wins to qualify for the state tournament for the first time," said second-year Quabbin head coach Bill



Jacoby Dilling collides with the goalie after sprinting towards a potential shot. Turley photos by Jeffrey Haynes

Crowther. "If we do earn a postseason berth, I'll be thrilled for the entire team, particularly the four seniors who have helped lead this group. It's been an exciting

season so far." Quabbin finished the 2020 campaign with a winning record, but the postseason tournament wasn't held that season due to the COVID 19

Pandemic. The Panthers finished the 2019 regular season with an 8-7-1 overall record and earned the No. 8 seed in the Central Mass. Division



Goalie Silas Stukuls Barrieau makes the catch and the stop.

3 Tournament. Their season ended in heartbreaking fashion, however, with a 3-2 penalty-shootout loss to ninth-seeded Northbridge in a first-round match at home. This year's team was

ranked 44th in the MIAA Division 3 state tournament power rankings that was released on October 9. The

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Brady Williams watches his shot as it leaves his hands.

Unified basketball action

BARRE – Last Thursday, Quabbin Regional High School's Unified basketball program got its season underway with a matchup against Wachusett Regional.

The Panthers will also host Gardner coming up on Oct. 22 before having a couple of road matches.

Colby Hill dribbles his way towards the net.



Xavier Wade loads up for his shot.



Tyler Norling scans his options as he moves up court. Turley photos by Jeffrey Haynes



Sadie Ouimette reads a pass to a teammate.



Emma Thompson gets ready to take her shot.



Pile up occurs, as Oxford recovers the fumble

Quabbin football falls on the road to Oxford

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

OXFORD—Since a 28-20 home victory during the 2023 regular season, the Quabbin Panthers have enjoyed little success on the gridiron against the Oxford Pirates.

The Panthers managed to stay within striking distance through the first half of last Friday night's non-league road matchup, but the Pirates put the game away with three second half rushing touchdowns on their way to a 41-7 victory.

"I thought we played pretty well during the first half," said Quabbin head coach Mike Besaw. "Then their size and strength wore us down in the second half. The kids battled very hard in tonight's game, but the scoreboard



Jack Grenier, breaks the tackle. Turley photos by Cameron Robertson

doesn't show it." Quabbin (1-4), who had several players suffer injuries against Oxford, lost their third consecutive game since celebrating a 20-14 victory

ry at Quaboag Regional on September 18 in another non-league game. They've allowed 40 or more points in all four losses.

The Panthers have also lost the previous three meetings against the Pirates (4-1), who are ranked sixth in the MIAA Division 8 power rankings.

The visitors from Barre won the coin toss and deferred until the second half.

Oxford junior Adam Sliwoski received the opening kickoff from Quabbin senior Jacoby Venne.

Sliwoski then handed the ball off to freshman Chris Graham on a reverse play. Graham sprinted down the left sideline before being tackled at the Panthers 19.

After junior Brady Dennis



Brady Dennis stiff arms the defender, on the kick return.

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