

BARRE GAZETTE

USPS 044560

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

October 29, 2026 | Vol. 192, No. 31 | \$1.00

www.barregazette.turley.com

FinCom gives 2 ½ override presentation at STM

Voters approve money articles and amend another

By Ellenor Downer
edowner@turley.com

OAKHAM – Voters approved three articles seeking money from the General

Stabilization Fund for a total of \$7,274.42.

At the start of the meeting, state Sen. Peter Durant and state Rep. Donald Berthiaume presented a replica of the Declaration of Independence to the town of Oakham. The state had the replica printed on period style paper and used period type to present to every city and town in the state for the nation's 250th anniversary.

Select Board Michael Brunelle said the document would hang in Town Hall.

Voters unanimously approved \$2,454.51 to pay bills from a previous year. Since the bills were from a previous fiscal year, the article required a 9/10 majority vote. Moderator Mark Turnbull said he would try the "easy way" first by calling for a voice vote. When he received all "ayes" with

no "nays," he declared the motion passed.

The other two articles also sought funds from the General Stabilization Fund and required a 2/3 majority votes.

Voters approved \$2,500 from the General Stabilization Fund to cover a budget deficit resulting from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts final budget appropriation being less than

anticipated.

They also approved \$2,319.91 to cover a deficit in the Emergency Management Grant Account for Fiscal Year 2025. It covered the purchase of a laptop computer.

The first article on the warrant asked to amend the purpose of the appropriation previously approved under Article 3 of the Oct. 6, 2025 Special Town Meeting,

The original article appropriated \$50,035 to equip a 10-wheel Highway Department truck with a plow and wing package. This article asked voters to amend the article to purchase two six wheel Highway Department trucks with a plow and wing package.

Highway Superintendent Michael Granger said the

See OAKHAM, page 5

BOH hears update on PFAS findings

By Paula Ouimette
pouimette@turley.com

HARDWICK – The Board of Health discussed recent PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) levels detected during regular landfill monitoring on Lower Road.

"One of the monitoring wells, and the 402 Lower Road well, came back with PFAS above the drinking water standard," Licensed Site Professional Scott Parker said at the Oct. 8 meeting.

He said regulations require that they sample any well within 500 feet of those wells with high concentrations, which has been completed. One well at 403 Lower Road had elevated PFAS levels, which increased the sampling area radius and identified detectable levels at a well at 498 Lower Road.

Parker said bottled water must be provided to properties where PFAS levels

See HARDWICK, page 6

Haunted Haston



Turley Photo by Paula Ouimette

Hazel, age 2, dressed up as Sleeping Beauty at the second annual Haston Haunted House held this past Friday evening. See story and more photos on page 7.

Food Collaborative Thanksgiving distribution will be held Nov. 19

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

NORTH BROOKFIELD – It was announced at the Board of Selectmen's meeting last Tuesday that a Thanksgiving food distribution will be held by the North Brookfield Community Food Collaborative on Nov. 19, one week before Thanksgiving Day.

The distribution is set to start after 2 p.m. on that date.

Karen Farrington, the director of the volunteer organization, said the collaborative has been feeding about 174 people per week for the last two years, and many of the people being served are seniors or families.

"Food insecurity does not discriminate," Farrington said.

She said the projected meals this year is 240, up

from 220 last year, and they will get the turkeys delivered, but are looking for donations for the rest of the meal such as stuffing, green beans, cranberry sauce and instant mashed potatoes.

The board approved a town-wide food drive with boxes to be placed at the town offices, police station, fire station, library, senior center and post office.

The collaborative says yes to everyone, Farrington said, and serves many neighboring towns because volunteers are "road warriors," and drive out to people in need. She said the collaborative is sustained by rescued food from all over the state.

Project updates

Executive Assistant Mary Beth Kularski gave an update on projects happening around town. The Gilbert Street and North Main Street paving project extending past Ward Street

should be finished by the end of the month.

Kularski said a Shared Streets and Spaces project for sidewalk improvements on School Street was awarded to contractor MEC Industries, and they have to complete a retaining wall design before the project is shovel ready.

Kularski said a pavement management project is being done with Stantec, and it will develop a 10-20 year plan on improvement priorities along with identifying funding needs. She said fieldwork for this project is set to begin in November with completion by April of next year.

She said a presentation will be done at a Board of Selectmen meeting at some point in the process.

The board approved a 10 foot easement for a Lashaway substation project being done by National Grid

See N BROOKFIELD, page 7

First Meetinghouse Committee continues discussions on future use of building

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer
zachf@turley.com

HUBBARDSTON – The First Meetinghouse Preservation Committee met last Tuesday to discuss upcoming events at the site, and whether it is feasible for

those events happening in November and December.

Currently, there are Hubbardston Theater auditions and tree lighting related festivities scheduled during the month of November and a Gingerbread Fair fundraiser being put on by the meetinghouse committee on Dec. 12.

A motion was made during the Oct. 20 meeting by committee member Susan Worth to hold a Black

History Month event during either the first or last week of February, similar to one that was held in Lancaster last year, where local historians speak of black history in central Massachusetts.

That motion did not pass because of concerns with the safety of the building brought up by committee member Mike Stoll.

See HUBBARDSTON, page 7

SANDHILL CRANES seen in Hardwick



Turley Photo by Paula Ouimette

Four sandhill cranes were seen in a field in Hardwick this past Sunday afternoon. Sandhill cranes migrate to the southern U.S. states and northern Mexico between the months of October and December and return to Massachusetts between March and April.



PAID POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT

Peter Durant

State Senate

PROTECTING OUR WALLETS

- ✓ Earned a perfect voting record of protecting taxpayers from tax increases
- ✓ 100% rating in standing up for local small businesses
- ✓ Fully funding our schools
- ✓ Sponsored legislation for Crumbling Foundations

SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- ✓ Fighting for increases to Chapter 70 Education Funding and Rural School Aid
- ✓ Fighting for increases to Local Municipal State Funding
- ✓ Securing Budget Earmarks for Local Police and Fire Departments

PROTECTING OUR RIGHTS

- ✓ Supporting our sportsman and protecting their rights
- ✓ Support small business

GETTING THE
JOB DONE FOR US



PAID FOR BY THE COMMITTEE TO RE-ELECT PETER DURANT

SPORTS

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS

www.sports.turley.com

Panthers fall on the road at Clinton

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

CLINTON — Bill Crowther made his first visit to the Clinton Veterans' Athletic Complex as the Quabbin boys' varsity soccer coach in September of 2025. It was not a very memorable experience as the Panthers suffered a 4-1 loss to the Clinton Gaels on a rainy afternoon.

The bus ride back to Barre was much more enjoyable for the Quabbin coaching staff and players following this year's visit to the Clinton High School grass soccer field. Trailing 4-2 at halftime, the Panthers refused to fold, scoring three times in the second half to earn a 5-5 draw against the Gaels in a Mid-Wach D showdown, last Tuesday night.

"We really don't have very good memories of this field, especially after losing here last year," Crowther said. "Even though tonight's game ended in a tie, it was probably the highlight of our season so far. Clinton is an outstanding soccer team and they're well coached."

Entering the match, Clinton, who had a 10-2-1 overall record, had won their last seven matches. They've outscored their opponents, 27-3, during that span. They had also won their first seven league contests, including a 4-0 shut-out at Quabbin Regional on Sept. 24.

Clinton needed to defeat the Panthers (8-2-3, 5-1-2) for a second time this season to lock up their first league title since 2017.

The Gaels struck first with a pair of goals from the senior duo of Klynger Rocha and Joao Oliveira during the first twenty minutes of the opening half.

Quabbin, who finished in second place in the league standings, got on the scoreboard with a corner kick goal during the 23rd minute. Senior captain Jacoby Dilling booted the ball into the center of the box from the left side, and junior Jake Doty headed it into the net for his third goal of the season, trimming the Panthers' deficit to -2-1.

The Gaels responded quickly, as junior Brayan Villegas converted a header to put Clinton back in front by two goals.

With a little more than ten minutes remaining in the first half, Quabbin junior goalie Silas Stukuls Barrieau suffered a leg injury. Barrieau, who was named as a captain in the middle of the regular season, was replaced by senior Nathan Cruz, who had never played the goalie position before at the varsity level.

Clinton scored another goal to take a 4-1 lead before Barrieau, who made a total of 15 saves, limped back onto the field. Despite being injured, Barrieau

See PANTHERS, page 11

Panthers enter final week undefeated



Maya Putnam jumps up to redirect the ball.

BARRE – Last Tuesday, the Quabbin Regional High School girls soccer team defeated Clinton 5-2. Two days later, the Panthers scored an 8-2 win over Ayer Shirley, also at home. The Panthers are 13-0-1 and have yet to suffer a loss in 2026. The Panthers have three more games scheduled in the regular season before starting the state tournament. Up next, the Panthers face Monty Tech on Thursday, Oct. 29 at 6 p.m. on the road.

Larrah Gagne looks around the defender for her options.

Turley photos by Jeffrey Haynes
Saylor Bissonnette elevates to win control of the ball.



Saylor Bissonnette powers home a scoring shot.



Allie Lipiec heads the ball upfield.

Pioneers fight to scoreless draw

PALMER – Last Monday afternoon, the Pathfinder Tech girls soccer team had a 0-0 tie against Smith Academy and are 7-2-2 for the regular season. Pathfinder did not qualify for the Western Mass. Tournament, but will make the state tournament this year. The girls will have nonplayoff matchups against Hampden Charter, Cape Cod Tech, and Mt. Everett to close out month before facing an opponent in the state tournament.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Aubrey Ortiz goes after a loose ball.



Amber Roman tries to clear the ball away



The Pioneers face Athol last Monday afternoon.



Whisper Wagher fights with an opponent for the ball.



Goalie Madison Boulrice pounces on a shot.

Panthers to take two weeks for injuries

BARRE – Last Friday, Quabbin Regional High School Athletic Director Mark Miville announced that Quabbin football would be forfeiting its Weeks 7 and 8 games in order to allow its depleted roster to heal from a rash of injuries. The injuries, Miville said, have hurt the depth of the team to the point where they do not believe they can compete at the varsity level. Miville said he hopes the team will be able to compete in Weeks 9 and 10 during nonplayoff action. The Panthers have won just one game this season.



Turley photos by Jeffrey Haynes
Seniors Jacoby Venne and Zakk Mielnicki lead the team out of the tunnel.



Kingston McKenzie wraps up the runner for the tackle during action on Oct. 16



Noah Kelter takes the snap and turns to make the handoff.

Zakk Mielnicki fights through tacklers for extra yardage.