

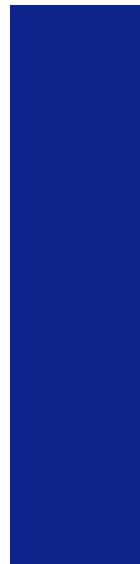
W H A T ' S H A P P E N I N G I N

# SEEKONK



## Seekonk High School's Top 10 Students

1. **Abigail Visnick**
2. **Delainey Pari**
3. **Avelyse Odle**
4. **Elizabeth Burleson**
5. **Greysen Baldizar**
6. **Sophia Cordeiro**
7. **Victoria Shields**
8. **Caiden Sears**
9. **Jillian Cabral**
10. **John Payne**



## Class of 2025: The Future Just Walked Across the Stage

The Seekonk High School **Class of 2025** walked across the stage, marking the close of an important chapter and the beginning of exciting new journeys. As a community, we celebrate their achievements and send them off with pride, hope, and best wishes for the future.

**Graduation** is more than a ceremony; it is a shared moment between the graduates and the entire town. These young men and women have grown alongside us—learning, leading, and contributing to Seekonk's spirit and vitality. Their successes are a reflection of not only their hard work but also the support of families, teachers, and neighbors who have nurtured them along the way.

The Class of 2025 faces a world full of opportunity and challenge, and we have every confidence they will rise to meet both. Whether pursuing higher education, careers, or new adventures, they carry with them the values of our town: resilience, kindness, and community.

**To the graduates:** thank you for inspiring us and reminding us that the future isn't a distant horizon—it's happening right here, right now, as you step forward. From all of us in Seekonk, congratulations and best wishes for success in all you do.





## CHAPTERS CHANGE, BUT OUR COMMITMENT DOESN'T

As June comes to a close and we look ahead to the start of a new fiscal year, I find myself reflecting on everything we've accomplished together—and the people who made it happen.

The end of the fiscal year isn't just a matter of dates and deadlines. It's a milestone. It marks the culmination of months of planning, decision-making, problem-solving, and showing up—day in and day out—for the good of the community.

To our **department heads and staff**: thank you. You've navigated the challenges and met the demands of the year with skill, patience, and integrity. You've kept essential services running, responded to emergencies, balanced budgets, and delivered on projects large and small. Because of your work, we're not just closing the books—we're opening the door to new opportunities in FY2026.

### FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR'S DESK



**Shawn Cadime**  
**Town Administrator**

I also want to extend my gratitude to the **350 residents** who joined us at Annual Town Meeting in May. Civic engagement doesn't always get the attention it deserves, but the truth is: showing up matters. Your presence, your questions, your votes—**they mattered**.

Thanks to your support, we passed the Town's operating budget, approved key capital items, and moved forward on some truly transformative initiatives. Two, in particular, deserve special mention:

- The **Library Renovation Project**, which will reinvest in one of our town's most treasured public spaces, and
- The **Medeiros Farm Project**, which will preserve open space and protect it for generations to come.

These aren't just line items. They're reflections of what we value as a town—education, community, sustainability, and the future we want to create together.

As we prepare for the start of Fiscal Year 2026 on July 1, we're stepping into a new chapter with momentum and purpose. Infrastructure improvements, grant-funded projects, community outreach—there's a full slate of work ahead. But because of the foundation we've built, we're ready.

To the residents, employees, and partners who have made this year what it was—thank you. Your commitment is what makes this town not just function, but flourish. I'm proud of what we've accomplished, and I'm excited for what's next.

Here's to a new year, and a new chapter—together.





## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: TITO, AL, AND THE YANKEES HAT – ONE MAN, TWO NAMES, ALL HEART

In every town, there's that one person who knows where the breaker is, how to fix the weird buzzing noise in the wall, and what's leaking *before* anyone else even notices. For us, that person is **Al Gonzalez**—or as many know him, **Tito**.

Yes, the man has two names and one iconic look: a well-worn **New York Yankees hat** perched proudly on his head. And whether you call him Al or Tito, one thing's for sure—he's an **irreplaceable part of the team**. Just don't judge him for the Yankees hat! We've all come to accept it as part of the package.



### Employee Spotlight

#### AL “TITO” GONZALEZ

##### Foreman

**What's your favorite local spot in Seekonk? Toti's Restaurant**

**If you could have any superpower, what would it be? Flying**

**If you could swap jobs with anyone for a day, who would it be and why? Vladimir Putin would be the person I would swap places with to create peace all over the world alongside President Trump.**

Since joining the Town in **September 2019**, Al has served as **Foreman for the Department of Public Works**, overseeing building maintenance for all municipal buildings. From minor repairs to major projects, he's the behind-the-scenes force that keeps the lights on, the boilers running, and the buildings standing tall. He tackles each task with precision, professionalism, and yes—a *whole lot of patience*.

Need someone to jump in and problem-solve mid-crisis? Al's there. Need a calm voice to help sort through a crew issue? Call Tito. Need someone to show up, get it done, and still manage to laugh along the way? That's both of them.

Just don't talk to him **before breakfast or his morning coffee**. These are sacred rituals, and even the most seasoned among us know better than to schedule a meeting pre-coffee. Once he's had that caffeine, though? **Watch out. The man moves.**

And oh, that **laugh**. You hear it before you see him. It's one of those honest, contagious laughs that instantly improves the day for everyone within earshot.

What makes Al truly stand out isn't just his skills with a wrench or a work order—it's the **genuine respect and kindness he shows to everyone around him**. He takes time to listen, he leads by example, and he brings a sense of calm to even the most chaotic days. I've lost count of how many employees from different departments have pulled me aside just to say, "You know who's the best? Al. He's just the best."

They're right. He is.

So here's to **Al “Tito” Gonzalez**—the man with two names, one Yankees hat, and a whole lot of heart. The Town runs a little smoother, and smiles come a little easier, thanks to him.





## A GENTLEMAN'S LEGACY: JOHN ALVES STEPS DOWN AS SEEKONK'S MR. CPA

After more than a decade of steadfast service, **John Alves** has announced he will not seek reappointment to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). A founding member since the adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in Seekonk in 2009, Mr. Alves has been a guiding force in the preservation and enhancement of our town's natural beauty, history, and community resources.

Mr. Alves is more than just a longtime committee member—he's a fixture in Seekonk's civic life. A regular presence at Select Board meetings and Town Meetings, he has earned my affectionate title of "**Mr. CPA**," a nod to both his deep knowledge of the Community Preservation Act and his tireless advocacy for responsible, forward-looking investment in Seekonk's future.

Known for his quiet demeanor and signature smile, Mr. Alves embodies the best of what public service can be: thoughtful, principled, and genuinely passionate about the town he calls home. Whether the topic was open space, historic preservation, or community housing, his voice was one of reason, balance, and care—always focused on what was best for Seekonk, both today and tomorrow.

While his absence on the CPC will certainly be felt, we know this is not goodbye. We'll continue to see Mr. Alves in the audience at Town Hall, listening intently, always ready with a well-considered opinion or a kind word. His legacy is evident all around us—in the preserved landscapes and protected community spaces he helped make possible.

On behalf of a grateful town, thank you, Mr. Alves. Your service has made Seekonk stronger, greener, and more connected. We wish you well in your next chapter—and we look forward to seeing that familiar smile in the crowd for years to come.



## DISPATCHING EXCELLENCE: DONNA WUNSCHEL NOMINATED FOR STATE LEADERSHIP AWARD

Seekonk's own Donna Wunschel has been nominated for the prestigious **Massachusetts Telecommunicator Awards – Leader of the Year**, recognizing her outstanding leadership in the 911 profession. Presented by the Massachusetts Communications Supervisors Association (MCSA), this honor celebrates individuals who exemplify excellence, professionalism, and unwavering dedication to public safety communications.



Donna's calm, steady presence has been a cornerstone of Seekonk's emergency response system. As a leader, she supports and elevates her team, mentors with compassion, and never loses sight of the life-saving work happening every day behind the scenes. Her nomination is a testament to the high standards she sets and the respect she's earned across the state.

The winner will be announced at the MCSA Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 18, 2025—but in the eyes of her colleagues and community, Donna is already a true leader and a hometown hero. Congratulations, Donna, and thank you for being the voice of calm when it matters most.





## REFLECTING ON TOWN MEETING

On Monday, May 12, over **350 residents** gathered in the Seekonk High School auditorium for our Annual Town Meeting—a clear sign that civic participation is alive and well in our community. Thank you to everyone who took the time to show up, ask questions, and vote. These shared moments of local democracy are powerful, even when they stretch nearly four hours.

One of the most impactful votes of the night was the approval of a **\$10.4 million** renovation to the Seekonk Public Library. This project has been years in the making, shaped by community input and a thorough feasibility study. While the library's role as a cultural and educational hub hasn't changed, the building itself has aged—without significant upgrades since its construction in 1978. The renovation will tackle the basics first: electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and fire safety systems, which make up nearly 90% of the total cost. The plan also includes improvements to accessibility, roof and siding repairs, and reimagined interior spaces, including dedicated areas for children and teens.



This article wouldn't be complete without noting that the vote passed with a strong majority—**240 to 74**—clearing the two-thirds threshold required for borrowing. But this isn't the final step. The project now heads to a **special election**, scheduled for **July 21<sup>st</sup>**, where voters will decide whether to approve a temporary tax increase through a Proposition 2½ debt exclusion. If successful, the average household would see an estimated \$100 increase annually.

The proposed **\$9.5 million South End Fire Station**—submitted via citizen petition—did not receive the two-thirds majority needed for borrowing authorization. While the final vote (112 in favor, 108 opposed) shows the community is clearly engaged with this issue, questions around long-term staffing and overall cost remain

unresolved. The conversation doesn't end here, and I remain committed to working with residents, public safety officials, and town leadership to explore viable solutions.

We also approved the **Fiscal Year 2026 budget**, totaling \$73.3 million—a 3.3% increase from the current year. As part of that, voters supported an additional \$113,000 for the school budget, bringing it to \$33.85 million. While that increase was meaningful, it fell short of meeting the full \$2.1 million in identified service-level needs. Like many communities constrained by Proposition 2½, we're left making difficult trade-offs—resulting in cuts to staffing, supplies, and student support services. These challenges demand continued collaboration between the Town, Board of Selectmen, School Committee, and School Department.

Finally, several **capital investments** were greenlit, addressing a wide range of infrastructure and safety needs. Highlights include:

- \$825,000 for continued development of Medeiros Farm into a public park;
- \$140,000 for five automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) call cabinets;
- \$95,000 for a DPW excavator;
- \$70,000 for mobile data terminals in police cruisers;
- \$26,000 for traffic light cameras at Arcade Avenue and Ledge Road;
- \$300,000 for asbestos tile removal at the high school;
- \$150,000 for a new heating system at the middle school;
- \$97,600 for energy-efficient lighting at the public safety building;
- \$77,500 for upgraded door locks at the high school and Martin School.

Every one of these decisions reflects community priorities—and more importantly, the willingness of our residents to shape Seekonk's future together. Thank you again for being part of it.





## SUMMER HOURS TRIAL PROGRAM AT TOWN OFFICES

The Town of Seekonk is launching a **Summer Hours** Trial Program to better serve our residents while also providing a more flexible schedule for staff during the warmer months. Beginning **June 9, 2025** and running through **August 29, 2025**, Town Hall and participating departments will adjust their weekly hours to include extended hours Monday through Thursday and early closure on Fridays.

### What's Changing?

- Monday–Thursday: Offices will open earlier and/or stay open later.
- Friday: Some departments will close early, while others will not be open at all.

### This trial is designed to:

- Make it easier for residents to access services outside the traditional business hours.
- Provide more efficient service during peak times.
- Offer a better work-life balance for employees.



**Please note:** Each department will operate on its own modified schedule based on operational needs and staffing. We strongly encourage residents to check individual department hours before planning a visit. We value your feedback and will be collecting input throughout the trial to help determine the future of the program.

For a full listing of updated hours by department, please visit [www.seekonk-ma.gov](http://www.seekonk-ma.gov). Thank you for your cooperation and support as we pilot this new schedule!



## SUMMER HOURS

### Building Department

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 6:30 AM to 3:30 PM  
Wednesday 6:30 AM to 4:30 PM  
Closed Friday

### Health Department

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 6:30 AM to 3:30 PM  
Wednesday 6:30 AM to 4:30 PM  
Closed Friday

### Human Services

Monday through Thursday 8:30 AM to 4:15 PM  
and Friday 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM

### Public Works

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM  
Wednesday 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM  
Friday 6:00 AM to 10:00 AM

### Town Hall

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM  
Wednesday 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM  
Closed Friday

### Summer Hours Community Feedback

We're considering changes to the Town's operating hours during the summer months, and we want to hear from you!

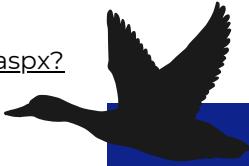
The Summer Hours Community Feedback Survey gives residents, businesses, and visitors an opportunity to share their thoughts on potential adjustments. Your feedback will help ensure any changes meet the needs of our community.

The survey is short and will only take a few minutes to complete. Thank you for helping us serve you better!



**The survey can be located on the Town's website at:**

<https://www.seekonk-ma.gov/forms.aspx?FID=73>





## SEEKONK'S UNSUNG CHAMPION: BRITTNEY FARIA NAMED A 2025 COMMONWEALTH HEROINE

In every community, there are people whose impact is felt more than seen—who work quietly, consistently, and compassionately to lift others up. This year, we're proud to share that one of Seekonk's own, **Brittney Faria**, has been recognized for doing just that.

Brittney, who has served as the Town's Director of Human Services since August 2018, has been named a **2025 Commonwealth Heroine** by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW). She was nominated by **State Representative Steven Howitt** and **State Senator Kelly Dooner** for her extraordinary contributions to our town and her unwavering commitment to serving others.



The **Commonwealth Heroine Award** honors women across Massachusetts who may not always make headlines but are the backbone of their communities—leading with heart, purpose, and humility. Brittney embodies that spirit. Whether supporting seniors, connecting residents with critical resources, or simply lending a listening ear, she works tirelessly to make sure no one in Seekonk is left behind.

We congratulate Brittney on this well-deserved honor and thank her for all she brings to our town. The 2025 Commonwealth Heroines will be celebrated at the Massachusetts Statehouse on Thursday, June 26, 2026—and Seekonk will be cheering for her every step of the way.



## YOUR TAX DOLLARS, EXPLAINED: THE FY26 BUDGET IN REAL TERMS

This year's **\$73.3 million** general fund budget reflects our continued commitment to maintaining high-quality public services while planning responsibly for the future. It also reminds us of an important truth: for **every \$100 in taxes**, nearly every dollar is already spoken for.

Roughly **\$49** of every \$100 goes directly to **education**—including our public schools, special education programs, and vocational school assessments. That's a long-standing investment in the next generation, and one that continues to be our largest and most critical responsibility. **Public safety**—our police, fire, and dispatch services—accounts for about **\$17**, ensuring that we have trained, equipped professionals ready to respond in times of crisis. Another **\$19** supports **employee benefits and insurance**, including health coverage and pension obligations for the people who deliver town services every day.

The rest is spread across the full range of operations: **\$6 supports general government**—from elections and inspections to IT and legal services. Only **\$3** supports our **Department of Public Works**, which manages everything from roads and snow removal to stormwater and trash. **Library** and **recreation** services receive just **\$2**, while **\$4** goes toward paying down **debt** on past capital projects like school upgrades and major equipment purchases.

Every dollar in this budget plays a role in keeping the town running smoothly and safely. If you're interested in where your money goes, I encourage you to explore the full FY26 Budget Book available on our website. It's your budget—and we're proud of the work it represents.





## FROM RESERVE FUNDS TO WARRANT ARTICLES: WHAT THE FINANCE COMMITTEE REALLY DOES

The Finance Committee plays a vital but often behind-the-scenes role in town government. As the Advisory Board, this seven-member committee—appointed by the Town Moderator—reviews all financial matters brought before Town Meeting, including the annual operating budget and any article that involves appropriating town funds. Their mission is simple: to provide independent, informed recommendations to help voters make sound decisions.

In the months leading up to the Town Meetings, the committee meets with department heads, analyzes budget proposals, and examines each monetary article in detail. Their recommendations, printed in the Town Meeting warrant, represent hours of review, discussion, and a commitment to balancing community priorities with fiscal responsibility. If you've ever wondered who vets the spending requests before they reach the floor, it's the Finance Committee doing the legwork.



### Finance Committee Meeting



#### Board Spotlight

### FINANCE COMMITTEE

**Members:** 7

**Term:** 3 years

**Vacancies:** 1

**Meeting Schedule:** Monthly

**Purpose:** Advises on the Town's financial matters. The committee reviews the proposed budget for the coming fiscal year prior to the Annual Town Meeting.

Beyond budget season, the Finance Committee also has the authority to approve transfers from the Reserve Fund—a critical tool for addressing unexpected costs during the fiscal year. Their work helps ensure that our financial decisions are not only thoughtful and transparent but grounded in long-term planning. They may not seek the spotlight, but the impact of their service is felt in every vote we take at Town Meeting.

## CALL for VOLUNTEERS

### Help Shape the Future – Volunteer for a Board or Committee

**Volunteer Opportunities** - volunteers are needed for the following boards and committees:

**Board of Registrars, Capital Improvement, Commission on Disability, Cultural Council, Energy Committee, Finance Committee, Historical Commission, Parks & Recreation, Recycling Committee, Zoning Board of Appeals.**

[Click here to fill out your Talent Bank Form!](#)





## THINK YOU KNOW SEEKONK? PROVE IT!

WHAT WELL-KNOWN MASSACHUSETTS HIKING TRAIL HAS A SECTION THAT RUNS THROUGH SEEKONK?

Think you know the answer? Find out if you're right in next month's newsletter!

**May's Answer:**

**What popular entertainment spot, opened in 1952, made Seekonk one of the first towns in the country to host a drive-in theater experience?** Seekonk Drive-In Theater, which opened in 1952. It made Seekonk one of the early adopters of the drive-in movie experience, a hallmark of mid-20th-century American entertainment. Located along Route 6, the theater became a beloved local destination for families, couples, and moviegoers throughout the region before closing in the 1990s.

**Think you can stump Seekonk?** We're looking for fun and challenging trivia questions to feature in our monthly newsletter! Send your best Seekonk-themed questions and answers to Sandra Smith at [SaSmith@seekonk-ma.gov](mailto:SaSmith@seekonk-ma.gov) and see if you can leave the town guessing!

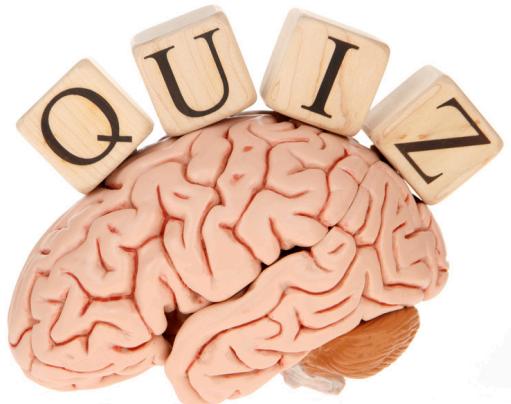


Seekonk's

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- **June 9 - August 29**  
Summer Hours for Town Depts.
- **June 11<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm**  
Select Board Meeting
- **June 25<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm**  
Select Board Meeting

[Read More on our website](#)



### STAY CONNECTED



Town of Seekonk



[www.seekonk-ma.gov](http://www.seekonk-ma.gov)



@townofseekonk7712



townofseekonk



Town of Seekonk, Massachusetts

**Contact Us:**

Town Administrator's Office

Phone: (508) 336-2910

Email: [scadime@seekonk-ma.gov](mailto:scadime@seekonk-ma.gov)

