

Franklin Food Pantry Announces Appointments to Board of Directors

New Members Bring Community Experience to Board

The Franklin Food Pantry announced that Franklin community members, Nancy Schoen and Roberta DeBaggis Trahan have joined its Board of Directors to help reach its mission to provide immediate hunger relief and healthy sustainable solutions within the Franklin area.

"On behalf of the Franklin Food Pantry and the Board of Directors, I am pleased to welcome Ms. Schoen and Ms. Trahan to the Board," said Lynn Calling, Executive Director of the Franklin Food Pantry. "Both women have extensive experience serving nonprofits and have deep roots in the Franklin community that will help guide us as we continue to grow the Pantry and serve our neighbors."

Nancy Schoen is a retired music teacher where she spent



thirty-three years in the Franklin Public Schools as a teacher and K-12 Director of Music. In 2005, she represented Franklin and the Massachusetts Teachers Association as the 2005 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year. Nancy continues to teach



in the Franklin Lifelong Learning's String Program. She is a graduate of University of Massachusetts Amherst, (BMus) and Cambridge College (MEd).

MEMBERS

continued on page 3

Commuters Told Change is En Route

About 50 Turn Out for Public Meeting with MBTA and Keolis, Hosted by Rep. Roy

By J.D. O'GARA

On December 17th, 2019, Representative Jeffrey Roy (D-Franklin) hosted a public meeting with representatives from the MBTA and Keolis concerning commuter rail service in our area. About 50 members of the community attended the meeting, voicing their concerns and listening to the responses of Ryan Coholan, Chief Railroad Officer of the MBTA; Richard Dean, Vice President of Service Delivery for Keolis; and Robert Huggan, Franklin resident and Chief Transportation Officer for Keolis. Rep. F. Jay Barrows, of Mansfield, also attended, as did some Franklin officials.

After a community meeting in August of 2018, and a January 2019 meeting with Sen. Spilka and rail officials, Repre-

sentative Roy recently started the "Franklin Line Working Group," consisting of Representatives and Senators whose communities are served by the Franklin Line.

Roy organized December's meeting in response to the entire commuter rail system's on-time performance taking a dive in late September and October, with the Franklin Line the worst performing line, with a 79.2 percent on-time performance (otp). The meeting was an opportunity to hear more about delay causes and ways they are being addressed.

Richard Dean said things are "turning around," with minutes of delay dropping to 130 in 2019 from 612 in 2018,

COMMUTERS

continued on page 2



Pond Home
GRACIOUS RETIREMENT LIVING

Wishing all our neighbors
a happy and healthy
New Year!

289 East Street,
Wrentham, MA 02093
Tel: (508) 384-3531
www.pondhome.org

The Todaro Team



Tammy Todaro



Barbara Todaro - Marketing



Andy Paleologos



Free Market Analysis
508-444-9796
RE/MAX Executive Realty - Franklin



Free Marketing Analysis

**Tired Of The Snow Already?
I Can Help! Call me at 508-826-4970**

LISA PERRIN
Lisa.perrin@reallivingrealtygroup.com
www.lisaperrin.com



Your Franklin Local Realtor



**CALL NOW FOR FALL
CLEAN UP ESTIMATES**

RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL



LAWN MOWING | MULCHING | DETHATCHING | SLICE SEEDING | AERATION
EDGING | PRUNING | LANDSCAPE DESIGN | PLOWING & SANDING
STUMP GRINDING | PATIOS | WALKWAYS | FIRE PITS | HOUSE & ATTIC CLEANOUTS

CALL TODAY! 508.528.6505

FRANKLIN, MA
www.kellyslandscapinginc.com



Join us for a

FREE TRIAL CLASS

at the

Franklin School for the Performing Arts



COMMUTERS*continued from page 1*

but admitted that the Franklin line experienced “a torrid last couple of months. It might get worse before it gets better,” he told community members. “But it will get better.” The addition of the new coaches expected to help with capacity problems, a pressing issue right now, where all seats are full, and a safety concern voiced by some in the audience. Franklin resident, “Rick” doubted the T would ever be able to deal with ridership in the growing bedroom community. “We were here a year ago at the library,” he said. “It just seems this problem is going to continually overwhelm you.”

Rep. Roy asked what many in the audience seemed to agree – if there were any correlation between the recent Franklin delays and the pilot of the new Foxboro line.

Although there is a perception that the new line is the cause of the delays, Callahan responded, “Based on analysis, the number one contributor (to delays on the Franklin line) is mechanical in nature. Unfortunately, a lot of

these mechanical issues made themselves known at the most inopportune times at the most inopportune locations. Once the ripple starts, it’s very hard to roll it in.”

Kellie, from Franklin, was skeptical of that response, expressing frustration. “Right now, we have trains that break, equipment we have (to update), and in that environment, the Foxboro pilot was launched. Now you’ve added them. What are the metrics by which the Foxboro pilot is held to? What is the standard, and what are we supposed to do in the meantime? Just because we can doesn’t mean we should, but we have, and it kinda sucks.”

Attendees were assured, however, that change was in the works. In late September, 80 bi-level coaches were purchased, and the MBTA has invested \$100 million in locomotive overhauls. The 10 worst performing locomotives were sent for overhauls (nine are back with the MBTA), and those that didn’t receive them were scheduled to have main engines replaced.

Coholan noted that his goal is for the MBTA to never be in a position of having trains in need

of such repair again. Until now, he says, “There was never a real capital component to address major overhaul, and (locomotives) run 24/7,” he says. “Our goal is to prevent this from recurring. I want it fixed, and I want it fixed permanently. My goal is to prevent us from ever ending up in this cyclical situation.”

In addition, the MBTA has invested 20% in its workforce from 2014 to 2019 and \$1.2 million in simulation training. It also created new route line managers for each line in 2019, giving conductors and assistant conductors clear managers for first time in MBTA commuter rail

“Our conductors and our engineers have somebody to go to, to help them be the best they can be at their jobs,” said Dean.

In March, of 2019, as part of the MBTA’s \$8 billion, 5-year capital investment plan, the Franklin Line Double Track Project was launched, with the first phase to add four miles of double track extending from just west of Walpole Station to Rockwood Road near Norfolk Station. Keolis has also received the additional contract to cover construction of the second phase



Rep. Jeff Roy introduced the meeting with a presentation on the findings of his “Franklin Line Working Group,” consisting of Representatives and Senators whose communities are served by the Franklin Line who are working with rail representatives on solutions to commuter rail problems.

– adding a second track to a three-and-a-half mile stretch of the Franklin Line between Norfolk Station and just east of the Franklin Station terminus – and a third phase will connect Walpole and Norwood Central Stations with double track. By the end of the project, officials said, the entire Franklin Line will have double track.

Officials at the meeting lauded the double-track, pointing out that it will solve issues of

working trains being delayed by a mechanical issue on another train, slow speeds due to signal problems and approaches of other trains.

Community members also raised other concerns.

Betsy, from Franklin, who pays for a monthly pass, said “the constant increase in fares is exhausting,” and she was con-

COMMUTERS*continued on page 4*

Wake up with Ray and Rick and
My FM in the Morning 6-9am

**Listen and win
Wachusett
lift Tickets all
month long!**

Myfm
101.3

Local Live & Lovin It

My FM in the Morning 6AM to 9AM

WACHUSETT MOUNTAIN

New State Law Requires Financial Transparency in Higher Ed

By J.D. O'GARA

Jeff Roy remembers the day his constituent called him.

"The day that Mt. Ida College closed, I received a phone call from the parent of a young

man who was finishing his junior year, who was going to become a senior," says Rep. Roy, "and Mt. Ida announced in April that it was closing. The deadline for applications was over, and he's got three years at this school." Transferring at that point, said Rep. Roy, was not an option.

"It left a deep impression on me," says Roy, who was appointed House Chair of the Joint Committee on Higher Education in March of 2019. "I'm the parent of three kids who went through college, and I can't imagine what I would do. I told Mark Lenzi I will do my best to come up with a solution to the problem."



The Joint Committee on Higher Education was determined to make sure institutes of higher education in Massachusetts show better accountability to students with An Act to Support Improved Financial Stability in Higher Education (H4099), which made its way with unanimous support in the House and Senate and finally, Governor Baker, on November 14, 2019.

FINANCIAL

continued on page 18



Residents from Franklin and surrounding towns who use the commuter rail posed questions to officials from the MBTA and Keolis, in a meeting organized by Rep. Jeff Roy on December 17th.

COMMUTERS

continued from page 2

cerned that not all ticketed riders were paying their fair share. Coholan responded that the MBTA will implement a new system, where riders will "tap on, and tap off," which will more accurately charge their pass.

Kaitlyn complained about doors being blocked from her parking lot at Forge Park as the train approaches, necessitating her to run all the way around to the other side to catch her train, and Huggan responded that "flagging the platform" was a required safety measure to prevent "horrific accidents." He recommended getting to platforms about three minutes before train departure time.

Lauren, another resident from Franklin, complained about the noise of idling trains near her home, even at 4 a.m.

Huggan responded that a new layover was being sought, and the MBTA was securing funding to purchase the property at Union Street. The goal is to evaluate MBTA property and find an industrial area in which to put the new layover, which will make a difference in the noise.

Some questioned how they can get real time updates on train delays, especially since they can't connect on the train. Response was that the system is currently running under 3G, and equipment running on the 3G connection needs to be updated, something that should be completed by March 2020. Shane, from Wrentham, added that the entire line's on-time performance doesn't help him plan what train would help him make better time. The answer was that the data was available, but whether it was made available to the public was not clear.

localtownpages

Published Monthly
Mailed FREE to the
Community of Franklin
Circulation: 12,527 households
& businesses

Publisher
Chuck Tashjian

Editor
J.D. O'Gara

Advertising Sales Manager
Lori Koller
Franklin - Millis - Medway
(508) 934-9608

Production & Layout
Michelle McSherry
Susan Dunne

Advertising Department
508-934-9608
lorikoller@localtownpages.com

Ad Deadline is the
15th of each month.
*Localtownpages assumes
no financial liability for errors
or omissions in printed
advertising and reserves the
right to reject/edit advertising
or editorial submissions.*

Send Editorial to:
editor@franklintownnews.com
© Copyright 2020 LocalTownPages

Established in 1974

Komal's Custom Tailors
BIG SHORT TALL - WE FIT THEM ALL
WE ARE THE ONLY BESPOKE TAILORS IN TOWN

WINTER SPECIALS
SEAR - SUCKER COTTON SUIT - \$575 AND SUIT AND A SHIRT FOR \$625, 6 SHIRTS FOR \$590 (100% COTTON)
WE DO ALL KINDS OF FORMAL RENTALS

(508) 872-9669 | 331 Worcester Road (Route 9 West) Framingham
bigguylittle@yahoo.com

NOR'EASTER ROOFING INC.

Blackstone Valley's 1st Choice!

Deal directly with the owner Rob Chaille, No outside salesman!

Our Roofs will weather the storm!

Roofing • Vinyl Siding • Windows
RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

Free Non-prorated Extended Warranties Covering Labor & Material from 30 to 50 Years with TAMKO or CERTAINTED Shingles!

Chimney Repair & Rebuilt • Seamless Gutters
Over 26 years experience CS#69907 HIC#160483
~ NO OUTSIDE SALESMAN ~

508-NOR-EAST / 508-667-3278
www.NoreasterRoofing.com

TAMKO ROOFING PRODUCTS Fully Insured

SELECT CERTAINTED Uxbridge, MA

Happy New Year

Enjoy **\$20 Off** your 1st Service in 2020!

Nerds To Go Computer Service

1-800-390-NERD (6373)
www.NerdsToGo.com
FRANKLIN