

Inaugural Quabbin Days kick off at Visitor Center

By Ryan Drago
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BELCHERTOWN – The inaugural Quabbin Days kicked off Oct. 10 at the Quabbin Visitor Center.

Quabbin Days is a celebration of the beauty and heritage of the Quabbin Region and the towns that surround it. This newly incorporated celebration consists of four days across various towns that are connected to the Quabbin Reservoir.

This kick-off helped promote the Quabbin region and what it has to offer.

“It’s just an amazing place right in our backyard,” said Clayton Sydla, president of the Quabbin Fisherman’s Association.

Sydla says this kickoff is about the opportunities the Quabbin offers, including being a wonderful place to fish. The weather was perfect for the occasion as various state legislators attended the kickoff to honor the Quabbin and its past.

Project Coordinator Ed Comeau spoke first and he said he hoped everyone in attendance appreciated the sheer beauty of where they live as Quabbin is their neighbor. The towns surrounding the Quabbin hope to promote tourism, hiking, and various opportunities for visitors all over the world to enjoy.

“I hope Quabbin Days becomes an annual tradition,” Comeau said.

The first to speak during the kickoff was state Sen. Jake Oliveira, who is a big advocate of the Quabbin Reservoir. Oliveira mentioned that many residents who live in the eastern part of Massachusetts don’t realize that their drinking water comes from the Quabbin.

Many western Massachusetts towns are also served water by the Quabbin Reservoir.

Providing the Quabbin Reservoir involved a lot of sacrifice, including the disincorporation of four Massachusetts towns,



Sen. Jo Comerford, Office of State Sen. Peter Durant Communications Director Kim Mongeau, Quabbin Fisherman's Association President Clayton Sydla, state Rep. Todd Smola, Ed Comeau of Friends of Quabbin, state Sen. Jake Oliveira, state Rep. Aaron Saunders, and state Rep. Susannah Whipps. This was during the kickoff of Quabbin Days at the Quabbin Visitor Center.

Turley Photos by Ryan Drago

Enfield, Dana, Prescott and Greenwich. The project also provided a lot of jobs in the 1930s and 1940s and Oliveira shared that his grandfather was employed during this project that created the reservoir.

Oliveira had a lot of memories from going to the Quabbin and sees it as a very special place. Oliveira ended by presenting a citation from the Senate and was given to Comeau and the Friend of the Quabbin in recognition of this four-day celebration to honor the Quabbin.

State Rep. Aaron Saunders came up to speak and said “we have a complicated relationship with the Quabbin.” Having the Quabbin provides recreational opportunities, tourism and natural beauty of the region.

Saunders wanted to acknowledge the surrounding towns and local boards who do a lot to keep this resource going.

Senator Jo Comerford spoke next and feels it is “our job to recognize and honor that service” of what it took to bring Quabbin Reservoir to this region.

Comerford hopes Quabbin Days will continue for years to come and offers an opportunity for many residents of eastern and western Massachusetts.

Next to speak was state Rep. Todd Smola, who is quite the fisherman, who says it is a spectacular experience to explore this body of water on the actual water. Four towns were moved off the map to provide this water resource that serves over 2.5 million people.

“We’re proud of this resource,” Smola said. “Make sure the voice of the Quabbin is heard.”

Representative Susannah M. Whipps came up to speak next and mentioned how many residents of the Commonwealth depend on this water source. Whipps finds it important to pay attention and be stewards of this region.

Sydla spoke and expressed appreciation for all the representatives and senators who watch over the Quabbin and make sure it is still supported. With Quabbin Days officially kicked off, Sydla hopes

to see more people explore Quabbin in the near future. Sydla enjoys going out on the water and is a well-accomplished fisherman with 11 gold pins.

Former State Trooper and Selectman for the Town of Ware, John Carroll came out during the kickoff. Carroll said it was nice to recognize the sacrifices people of the four lost towns made to benefit the Commonwealth.

Carroll always appreciated the beauty of the Quabbin and describes it as an amazing place. Carroll enjoys walking the dam

daily and views spectacular sunsets.

Many guests stuck around to explore the visitor center, which featured displays and history of the Quabbin, as well as a documentary presentation on how the Quabbin was built back in the 1930s.

Comeau is on the executive board of the Friends of the Quabbin and hopes after this first celebration of Quabbin Days, the Quabbin will build on this momentum. The inspiration of Quabbin Days came from the passion of enjoying the Quabbin and the economic

drive for tourism.

Quabbin Days has encouraged towns, local businesses, and community groups in the Quabbin region to host events that highlight the region’s heritage and natural beauty.

Comeau views this first year as a big success and the Friends of Quabbin will continue to improve on it. Comeau is also a nature photographer and has been involved in photography for many years and says he enjoys it so much.

For more information on Quabbin Days, visit quabbin-days.org.

NEED, from page 1

emergency fund to help with crises.

“We are hoping to start with \$100,000 in the fund and grow it,” Casey said. “We want to show people that their local government cares.”

He said resolutions aimed at establishing this emergency fund will be presented to the Holyoke City Council in the coming weeks and he is hoping for support from the councilors and Garcia claims he will not ask the council for anything “unrealistic” as the

city works to come up with contingency plans for it residents in need.

In the coming week, residents in need of assistance should go to www.holyoke.org and keep an eye on the city’s website for updates on assistance available.

COOK, from page 1

until proven guilty.

The investigation stems from two prior seizures conducted by law enforcement earlier this month. On October 10, 2025, investigators intercepted and searched two suspicious packages at Hotel UMass in

Amherst, which were found to contain approximately 13 kilograms of suspected cocaine. Evidence collected during that operation was consistent with the narcotics recovered during the most recent controlled delivery in Springfield. The investigation into the UMass seizure remains ongoing and may result in additional

charges related to the prior shipments in Hampshire County.

This investigation is ongoing and active.

Cook served as the Western Massachusetts deputy director of Gov. Maura Healey’s office since 2023 and was terminated from his position, effective immediately, after his arrest.

VOTING, from page 1

The other seat needing to have candidates finalized was for the Ward 5 School Committee seat. Jens Michaelsen received 72 votes and Aida Luz Oquendo received 54 votes to advance to the general election. James Alan Rossmeisl had 49 votes and was eliminated.

With those two races finalized, the entire ballot now takes shape.

Mayor Joshua Garcia is unopposed barring a major write-in campaign. He is likely to win his second term in a walk after outlasting several candidates to win the mayor’s seat in

2021. City Clerk Brenna Murphy Leary is also unopposed.

The Ward 5 school committee seat is the only known contested race for School Committee with Michaelsen and Oquendo facing off.

Gladys Lebron-Martinez will run in Ward 1 without opposition. She previously represented Ward 1 on the city council.

Ward 2’s Rosalee Tensley Williams, Ward 4’s Orland Isaza, and Ward 7’s Ellie Wilson are all unopposed.

Yadilette Rivera-Colon is the current vice chair of the school committee and will run unopposed in Ward 3.

In Ward 6, with the withdrawal of Pat Beaudry, Patty Norris Lubold and Christian Carde have announced a write-in campaign for the vacant seat. Longtime Ward 6 member William Collamore is retiring and did not seek re-election to the seat he has held since 1976.

The general election will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 4 with polling locations open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The last day to register to vote was Oct. 25 and the last day to request a vote by mail ballot was Oct. 28.

Go to www.holyoke.org/clerk-voter-information to get more information on the election.

Public Notices

City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The DGR Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a public hearing to hear a special permit for home occupation application of Amelia Box for a wood window restoration business at 57 Taylor Street (073-00-007) per sec 4.8.2. Hearing will take place on **Monday, November 17th, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.** at Holyoke City Hall, 536 Dwight St., and can be accessed remotely via www.zoom.us Meeting ID 834 3349 4516 Meeting Passcode 963679 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. For a copy of the application or to provide comments, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org or by phone 413-322-5525.

DGR Chair, Kocayne Givner
 10/31, 11/07/2025

City of Holyoke Legal Notice

The Holyoke License Board will be holding a Public Hearing

on **Wednesday, November 5, 2025, at 5:15 pm.** You can join via Zoom.com; ID **83974921923**; CALL IN: ***67 646 558 8656**, or in person at City Hall 536 Dwight in the Old Tax Collector office regarding the application for a New Seasonal of an **Off-Premise All Alcohol License for 787 Min Mart LLC at 399 Hillside Avenue**, pursuant to M.G.L. Ch.138.

Applicant:
 787 Mini Mart LLC
 License Board:
 Jose Correa, Chairman
 10/24, 10/31/2025

City of Holyoke Legal Notice

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M.G.L. Ch.138.

Applicant:
 Los Masters Social Club Inc.
 License Board:
 Jose Correa, Chairman
 10/24, 10/31/2025

City of Holyoke Conservation Commission

Pursuant to MGL Chap. 131 §40 and the Holyoke Wetlands Protection Ordinance, the City of Holyoke Conservation Commission will hold a Public Hearing on **Thursday, November 13th, 2025, at 6:15 p.m.** remotely via Zoom at https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89073362339 on an Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation filed by VHB on behalf of Wyckoff Estates, LLC for the verification of wetland resource area boundaries and the field delineation of parcels off of Easthampton Road (MBPs 139-00-001, 139-00-003, 141-00-002, 213-00-006A) in Holyoke, MA.

Jeffery Horan, Chairperson
 10/31/2025

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The Holyoke Sun
OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.