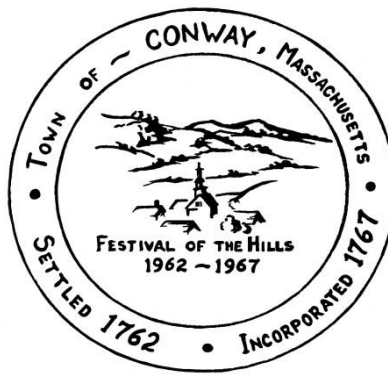


Town of Conway

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

2024 Annual Report



Fiscal Year 2024
July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Table of Contents

MEETING SCHEDULES	5
NATIONAL, STATE, AND REGIONAL OFFICIALS.....	6
REPORT OF ELECTED OFFICIALS 2024	7
CONWAY APPOINTED OFFICIALS.....	8
Agricultural Commission	10
Board of Assessors	10
Board of Health.....	10
Board of Registrars.....	11
Cable Advisory Committee	12
Cemetery Commission.....	12
Capital Improvements Planning Committee.....	13
Community Preservation Committee	14
Conservation Commission.....	14
Council on Aging.....	15
Cultural Council.....	16
Finance Committee	16
Forest and Trails.....	17
Historical Commission.....	18
Newsletter Committee	20
Open Space Committee	20
Parks & Recreation Committee.....	21
Personnel Committee.....	22
Planning Board.....	22
Public Buildings Committee.....	23
Sustainability Committee	23
Wastewater Committee	24
Zoning Board of Appeals.....	24
DEPARTMENTS – ADMINISTRATION	24
Town Administrator	24
Town Clerk.....	26
Transfer Station	30
Treasurer	31

Tax Collector’s Report	35
Accountant.....	36
DEPARTMENTS – PUBLIC SAFETY	46
Ambulance	46
Animal Control.....	47
Emergency Management.....	47
Fire Department.....	47
Police	49
DEPARTMENTS – PUBLIC WORKS	49
Highway	49
Tree Warden.....	50
DEPARTMENTS – SCHOOLS.....	50
Conway Grammar School.....	50
Frontier Regional School.....	57
FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS	64
FCAT.....	67

FAQs about Town Meeting

Frequently Asked at Town Meeting: What do the following terms mean?

The term...	Means....
dismiss an article	defeat it
postpone an article indefinitely	defeat it
take no action on an article	defeat it
lay the question on the table	kill or postpone a measure
table the question	kill or postpone a measure
move the previous question	cut off debate and vote on the issue at hand

MEETING SCHEDULES

Subject to change; please see postings at Town Hall or contact the Chair to confirm.

BOARD OF ASSESSORS

First and third Wednesdays– 5:15 p.m., Town Hall
Administrative Assessor: Natalie Whitcomb, assessors@conwayma.gov, 369-4235 x5 Clerk hours:
Monday 2-5, Tuesday & Thursday 8:30 – 4:30,
Wednesday 9-2; Friday 8:30-1:00

BOARD OF HEALTH

2nd and 4th Mondays – 5:00 p.m., Town Hall
Chair: Kathy Llamas, bohchair@conwayma.gov

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

2nd and 4th Tuesdays – 6:00 p.m., Town Hall
Chair: Bruton Strange, concomm@conwayma.gov

CONWAY GRAMMAR SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

3rd Thursday – 7:00 p.m., CGS Library
Chair: Elaine Campbell, drekiwi@gmail.com, 413-369-8089

COUNCIL ON AGING

1st Wednesdays – 9:00 a.m., Town Hall
Chair: Patricia Lynch, patricialynch@earthlink.net, 369-4284

FRANKLIN COUNTY TECHNICAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

2nd Wednesday – 7:00 p.m., FCTS

FRONTIER REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

2nd Tuesday – 7:00 p.m., FRHS Media Center

PLANNING BOARD

1st and 3rd Thursdays – 7:00 p.m., Town Office
Chair, Beth Girshman, planning@conwayma.gov

SELECTBOARD

Alternating Mondays – 6:00 p.m., Town Hall; December-May, every Monday.
Chair: Phil Kantor, selectboard@conwayma.gov 369-4235 x3

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING: 1st Saturday in June at the Conway Grammar School

ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION: Thursday following Town Meeting, Town Hall

NATIONAL, STATE, AND REGIONAL OFFICIALS

UNITED STATES SENATORS

Ed Markey (D)

975 JFK Federal Building, 15 New Sudbury Street, Boston MA 02203, 617-565-8519
1550 Main Street 4th Floor, Springfield, MA 01103, 413-785-4610
215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510, 202-224-2742
www.markey.senate.gov/contact

Elizabeth Warren (D)

2400 JFK Federal Building, 15 New Sudbury Street, Boston, MA 02203, 617-565-3170
1550 Main Street, Suite 406, Springfield MA 01103, 413-788-2690
309 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, 202-224-4543
www.warren.senate.gov/contact

UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE

Jim McGovern (D)

78 Center Street, Pittsfield MA 01201, 413-442-0946
300 State Street, Suite 200, Springfield, MA 01105, 413-785-0325
372 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-5601
https://forms.house.gov/neal/webforms/contact_Forms.shtml

GOVERNOR

Maura Healey (D)

State Office Building, 436 Dwight Street, Suite 300, Springfield MA 01103, 413-784-1200
Massachusetts State House, Office of the Governor, 24 State Street, Room 280
Boston MA 02133, 617-725-4005; Toll-free in MA 888-870-7770
<http://www.mass.gov/governor/constituent-services/contact-governor-office>

REPRESENTATIVES IN THE GENERAL COURT

Senator Paul Mark (D)

Berkshire, Hampshire, Franklin & Hampden District
100 North St. Suite 4, Pittsfield, MA 01201, 413-464-5635
24 Beacon St., Room 109-E, Boston, MA, 02133, 413-344-4561
Paul.Mark@mahouse.gov

Representative Natalie Blais (D)

First Franklin District
PO BOX 450, Sunderland, MA 01375, 413-362-9453
24 Beacon St., Room 134, Boston, MA, 02133,
natalie.blais@mahouse.gov

FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
Executive Committee, 12 Olive Street, Suite 2, Greenfield MA 0130
www.frcog.org, 413-774-3167

REPORT OF ELECTED OFFICIALS 2024

SELECTBOARD:	Elaine Campbell	2027
	Erica Goleman	2026
	Christopher Waldo, chair	2025
BOARD OF ASSESSORS:	George Forcier	2026
	Russell French	2027
	Natalie Whitcomb, chair	2025
BOARD OF HEALTH:	Kathy Llamas, chair	2025
	Regina McNeely	2026
	Daniel Sheff	2027
	Hanna Sherman	2026
	Emily Sweet	2025
BURIAL AGENT:	Laurie Lucier	2025
CONSTABLES:	Brian Blakeslee	2025
	James Recore	2025
FRS COMMITTEE:	Jared Campbell	2025
LOCAL SCHOOL COMM:	Elaine Campbell, chair	2025
	Jared Campbell	2025
	Victoria DeMaio	2027
	Philip Kantor	2026
	Michael Merritt	2026
MODERATOR	James Recore	2025
PLANNING BOARD:	Cheryl Case	2025
	George Forcier	2027
	Jeffrey Lacy	2026
	William Moebius	2025
	Vacancy	
TOWN CLERK:	Laurie Lucier	2025

TREE WARDEN

Walter Goodridge

2026

CONWAY APPOINTED OFFICIALS

AGRICULTURAL COMM:	Vacancy x 5	
ASST. TO ADMINISTRATOR:	Adam Reed	
BARN/ANIMAL INSPECTOR	Emily Sweet	2025
	John Wholey	2025
CABLE ADVISORY COMM:	Bill Arduser	2025
	Robert Armstrong	2027
	Jonathan Barkan	2025
	Vacancy x 2	
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:	Robert Armstrong	2025
	Roy Cohen	2027
	Phyllis Craine	2025
	Christopher Waldo (SB)	2025
	Vacancy	
CEMETERY COMMISSION:	Peter Freisem, chair	2026
	John Harrison	2027
	Stephen Jackson	2025
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION:	Aimee Anderson (open space)	2026
	Mary Kay Costello (con comm)	2025
	Henry Horstmann (hist comm)	2026
	William Moebius (planning board)	2027
	Carolyn Thayer (coa)	2027
	Vacancy x 2	
CONSERVATION COMM:	Louise Beckett	2026
	Mary Kay Costello	2025
	Grace Larson, acting chair	2025
	Anthony Somers	2025
	Jeanne Thomas	2027
COUNCIL ON AGING:	Gail Connelly	2025
	Hank Hortsmann	2027
	Patricia Kocot	2027

	Kathy Llamas	2025
	Patricia Lynch, chair	2026
	Carolyn Thayer	2025
	Robin Yerkes	2027
CULTURAL COUNCIL:	Ruth Bowman	2025
	Jane Roy Brown	2027
	Theresa Carter	2025
	Christine Kenneally	2025
	Sophie Michaux	2027
	Gayle Sullivan	2025
	Donna Sussek	2027
	Vacancy	
EMERGENCY MGMT DEPT.	Heidi Flanders	
	Amanda Herrmann	
FCAT BOARD OF DIRECTORS:	Vacancy	
FINANCE COMMITTEE:	Roy Cohen	2025
	John Craine	2025
	Thomas Donovan	2027
	Rhyanna McLeester	2025
	Alan Singer	2026
FOREST and TRAILS COMM:	Deb Donaldson, co-chair	2027
	Courtney Gilligan	2025
	Jennifer Heilig	2027
	Cynthia Lawton-Singer (assoc.)	2025
	Priscilla Lynch	2026
FOREST WARDEN:	Robert Baker	
FR COMP ECONO DEV ADV:	Vacancy	
FR TRANSIT AUTHORITY:	Vacancy	
FR COUNTY ER DISPATCH:	Robert Baker	
	Gemma Vanderheld	
FR CTY SOLID WASTE MGMT:	Vacancy	
FR CTY TECH SCHOOL COMM:	Vacancy	
FR REG PLANNING BOARD:	Vacancy x 2	

BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

Agricultural Commission

No report was submitted for FY2024 from this Committee.



Board of Assessors

No report was submitted for FY2024 from this Committee.



Board of Health

All Boards of Health in the Commonwealth have been charged with protecting the public health of its citizens in the following areas:

- Disease prevention and control
- Title V - enforcement for septage and refuse
- Title X – enforcement of food service establishments
- Sanitary conditions of camps, swimming pools and beaches
- Sanitary living conditions in dwellings
- Animal Health

The Board of Health personnel:

The Chair of the Conway Board of Health is Kathy Llamas (term through June 2025), the fellow members of the Board of Health are Jackie Choate (term expired June 2024), Emily Sweet (term through June 2025), Regina (Gina) McNeely (term through 2026), Daniel Sheff (term through June 2027), Hanna Sherman (term through June 2026).

Title V: This involves the approval and inspection of septic systems, water percolation which tests the rate at which the water drains through the soil which is relevant for any property without access to a municipal sewer system.

All of our Title V inspections and consultations were carried out by Carl Nelke, who was an independent contractor for the Town of Conway. In this fiscal year, there were 36 events that he conducted or reviewed for the Board.

Health and Wellness:

Although May 11, 2023, saw the end of the COVID pandemic emergency response, it continued to be something that concerned us. There were some variants to COVID such as JN1. The Board has also been monitoring RSV, a respiratory virus, which has fluctuated throughout the area since its onset. Toward the end of the fiscal year, Avian Flu was starting to impact our nation.

Jackie Choate, while working with the Nursing program at FRCOG, provided several rounds of home-bound vaccinations to Conway residents throughout the year. The town nursing program also provided access to vaccinations and other health services at the First Friday nursing program.

Food services and Inspections:

The Conway Board of Health has continued its partnership with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) to do all the Food Service Inspections. There were 7 food permits issued for food services at the Festival of the Hills. In addition, FRCOG conducted the ServSafe course for food handlers which Emily Sweet of our Board participated in.

Animal and Barn Inspections:

The Town of Conway has continued its contract with the Franklin County Sheriff's Office for all our Animal Control needs.

John Wholey and Emily Sweet continued to share responsibility as Barn Inspectors.

Education Undertaken:

There are ongoing educational opportunities for the Board of Health members. These include online workshops and meetings as well as in-person conferences and workshops.

The town is represented on the Cooperative Public Health Oversight Board by Jackie Choate and Kathy Llamas, who also serves at the Co-Chair of the Board. Throughout the year there were Nursing Roundtables and ongoing meetings with the Department of Public Health held online. We represent Conway as a member of the Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition and participate in their monthly meetings as well as in person seminars. As part of our work this Board collectively has availed itself of Narcan Training, Avian Flu Roundtables, Ongoing training for Barn Inspectors, ServSafe, a Table-Top exercise testing our Emergency Response in the event of a Mosquito Emergency. Four certifications were completed of online classes from FEMA as well as some training from the Alzheimer's Association.

The Board is committed to our ongoing efforts in this area to better serve this community..

Representatives for various Committees (as of June 2024):

MAPHCO: Regina McNeely/ Emily Sweet, alternate

CPHS: Daniel Sheff/ Kathy Llamas, alternate and Co-Chair

Conway Currents BOH submissions: Daniel Sheff and Hanna Sherman

Submitted by: Kathy Llamas, Chair (up for re-election June 2025) and members Jackie Choate (through June 6, 2024), Regina (Gina) McNeely (as of June 6, 2024), Daniel Sheff (as of June 6, 2024), Hanna Sherman (as of June 6, 2024), Emily Sweet (term completes June 7, 2025) and Laurie Lucier, Clerk of the Board of Health



Board of Registrars

The Town of Conway Board of Registrars hereby report that residents eligible to vote in Elections and Town Meetings in the year 2024 as of December 31, was 1,513. In the year 2024, there were four elections, the Presidential Primary (3/5), the Annual Town Election (6/6), the State Primary (9/3) and the State Election (11/5).

The Town Clerk was eligible to apply for a grant offered by the Center for Tech and Civic Life to assist in election administration. The Town of Conway was awarded \$5,000 for this grant opportunity. The funding enabled the Town Clerk to fund the high volume of vote-by-mail ballots and early voting. In addition, funds were used to purchase some much-needed election supplies and equipment.

According to the Annual Town Census taken during the month of January, the Town's population was 1,782. Voter registration sessions were held as required by Massachusetts General Laws prior to Elections and Town Meeting. In addition to certifying elections, the Board of Registrars certified nomination papers and signatures on petitions as required by law.

The following Town Meeting(s) were held during the year 2024:

Annual Town Meeting –June 01, 2024

As required by MGL, all election results and actions taken at Annual and Special Town Meetings were permanently recorded in the Office of the Town Clerk.

The Board would like to remind residents that election information including results, campaign finance reporting, and upcoming elections is available at the Town Clerk's office. The Board of Registrars works in conjunction with the Office of the Town Clerk to comply with Massachusetts General Laws related to elections and voter registrations.

If you have any interest in becoming a member of the Board of Registrars, please contact the Town Clerk.

Respectfully Submitted,
Town of Conway Board of Registrars



Cable Advisory Committee

No report was submitted for FY2024 from this Committee.



Cemetery Commission

In February 2020, the Town of Conway established a volunteer Cemetery Commission to oversee the management of the seven historic town-owned cemeteries within our borders. These cemeteries are; Boyden, Cricket Hill, Maynard Farm (Poor Farm), Poland, Pumpkin Hollow, Shirkshire, and South Part. NOTE: Two of our largest local cemeteries, Howland and Pine Grove, are privately managed. The Cemetery Commission

currently consists of three members: Peter Freisem – Chair, Stephen Jackson, John Harrison). Members usually meet on the first Tuesday of each month. Cemetery Commission email is: **cemcomm@townofconway.com**

During the period July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024, the Cemetery Commission worked on the following:

- By means of ground measurements and GPS assisted mapping, the commission has continued to develop a GIS data-oriented map for South Part Cemetery defining new burial lots for traditional burials and cremated remains burials.
- Worked on site and used drone flyover surveys of South Part and Cricket Hill cemeteries to facilitate mapping of the same.
- Identified a vendor and purchased a starter supply of lot-marking pins to define burial lots in South Part Cemetery and to facilitate sales.
- Completed development of a Cemetery Lot Deed to be used going forward for lot purchases in Town owned cemeteries
- Initiated research to compile a comprehensive list of veteran's graves in Conway cemeteries.
- Facilitated a lot sale for a green burial in South Part Cemetery.
- Commission members handled inquiries from several individuals who were interested in possibly purchasing lots in a Conway cemetery.

Town funds expended during FY24 for Cemetery Commission projects: \$373.00



Capital Improvements Planning Committee

In 2024 the Capital Improvements Committee continued the work on these committee actions:

- Updating the town capital equipment request so that the town departments can supply the necessary information to committees and the town
- Publishing the capital improvements schedule to the town web site so that residents can read it at any time. The committee hopes to achieve this prior to the 2025 town meeting.
- For the 2025 town meeting the committee will prepare and present a capital improvement handout at the town meeting for town voter consideration.
- The committee will also be present with the selectboard and the finance committee at the head of the room at the 2025 town meeting.



Community Preservation Committee

No report was submitted for FY2024 from this Committee.



Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission works with the community to protect wetlands, rivers, streams and associated resource buffers, and to assume the role of steward for conservation restrictions on behalf of the Town. The Commission's responsibility is to bring an environmental perspective to the ongoing interaction between the environment and projects being undertaken within the Town. As a local representative of the Commonwealth Department of Environmental Protection, the Commission is charged with the local enforcement of the Wetlands Protection Act and the Rivers Protection Act, two statewide laws. Our goal as a Commission is to approach our responsibilities from an educational perspective and to assist citizens with understanding the Wetlands Protection Act and Rivers Act, and the benefits derived from these laws.

It is the responsibility of the Commission to make formal determinations for landowners and homeowners as to whether the requirements of the Wetlands Protection Act and Rivers Act apply to their projects. It is an important goal of the Commission to work with landowners to balance their needs and rights with the requirements of these Acts. The process is done by the Commission interpreting the regulations that have been promulgated by Massachusetts upon inquiry by citizens and landowners by means of information inquiry, and formal Requests for Determination of Applicability of the Acts (RDA), or a Notice of Intent (NOI) to do work within a designated area of jurisdiction.

The Commission ideally consists of five volunteer members who meet generally twice a month (the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm at the Town Hall) to review projects and assist landowners. Currently the members include Tony Somers, Louise Beckett, Mary Kay Costello, Jeanne Thomas and Grace Larson, Chair.

The Commission has obtained and attached to the Town's web page a helpful summary as to landowners' rights and responsibilities (see Con Com Helpful links: Wetland Protection Act). The proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 was \$1,061 of which \$485.68 was spent, primarily on new commissioner trainings.

In the past fiscal year (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, the Conservation Commission was unusually busy after the July 2023 and the wet January 2024 heavy rains and flooding, resulting in 16 Emergency Certificates being issued. Additionally, there was an increased concern for potential flooding from rivers, culverts and erosion which resulted in 49 inquiries and site visits. The Commission has acted on 3 RDA's (Requests for Determination of Applicability), 1 NOI (Notice of Intent), reviewed 13 building permits: and 2 Extensions of Orders of OOC (Order of Conditions). There were no forestry cutting plans nor any enforcement orders. In addition, the Conservation Commission has worked with Open Space on its efforts to maintain the Bigelow Property, which had been donated to the Town, and supported the Planning Board and its work with FRCOG on its efforts to protect land and homeowners' property from flooding along the South River.

Respectfully submitted,

Grace Larson

Chair, Conway Conservation Commission



Council on Aging

As in past years, the COA continues to advocate for Conway's older adult residents. The COA's goals for the coming year are to continue to support ongoing programs and to develop new programs to meet future needs. Our work is supported by a grant from the state Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) and a town appropriation. In support of the state's Mass in Motion program to promote age-friendly communities, two COA members joined with a group of Conway residents as the town's Age-Friendly Conway Committee (AFC). The COA tries to meet the needs of older adults that were identified in an AFC survey:

Exercise. Two weekly yoga classes are offered: one a mat class, the other chair yoga for those less able. These have been conducted both in person at the library and on Zoom. A twice-weekly Healthy Bones and Balance class is held on Zoom. Each Monday from April through November a walking group takes easy walks around town.

Health. A monthly foot screening is held at Town Hall. The nursing service that conducts the screening also provides foot care in the home for people who are housebound. A health grant for FY2024 from the Fred W. Wells Trust contributed greatly toward our efforts to keep this program affordable. The council maintains a collection of durable medical equipment, which residents are welcome to borrow

Nutrition. Nutritious community meals (eat in or take out) are offered twice a month at the Town Hall, which also affords an opportunity for socializing. Annual holiday gatherings are held at the Sportsman's Club in November and the Whately Inn in December). In warmer weather we have held ice cream socials and picnic lunches in Veterans Memorial Park. Meals on Wheels delivers prepared meals seven days a week to seniors who need this service, at the same time serving as a wellness check.

Socializing. In August the COA held its first annual celebration of National Senior Citizens Day in Veterans Memorial Park. Live music, food, and beverages were provided.

Technology. Most recently the COA collaborated with the South County Senior Center to apply for an EOEA Hybrid Programming grant aimed at providing older adults with the equipment and training necessary to access hybrid programs. The grant paid for 25 iPads to be awarded free of charge via a lottery as well as technical training in their use. Included in the grant was OWL equipment (an intelligent 360° conference camera, microphone, and speaker) and a laptop computer so that the COA can deliver high-quality virtual and in-person programming to better meet the needs of older adults.

Information on COA programs and on senior issues, concerns, and events is published each month in *Conway Currents*. The Senior Calendar provides a quick review of each month's activities. The Conway COA is grateful to the townspeople and the town for the support given to all older residents and for the use of the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Ann Lynch, Chair; Carolyn Thayer, Treasurer; Gail Connelly, Hank Horstmann, Patricia Kocot, Kathy Llamas, Robin Yerkes



Cultural Council

The Conway Cultural Council is a group of volunteers who oversee and administer a grant program funded by the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC). Council members serve for three years with an option to continue for a second term - potentially serving on the Council for a total of six consecutive years. 2024 Council members included Ruth Bowman, Theresa Carter, Stein Feick, Joan Haley, Christine Kenneally, Sophie Michaux, Donna Sussex, Gayle Sullivan and Jane Roy Brown.

Grant funds are intended to benefit our community by supporting programs and events in the arts, humanities and natural sciences. The Council meets in November/December to review grant applications and make funding decisions. Our goal is to fund programs and events that provide citizens of Conway with affordable entertainment, education and opportunities for creative growth. Our priority is programming that includes local artists, individuals and groups and that directly benefits our town. We also strive to serve a wide range of age groups, from preschoolers to senior citizens.

For fiscal year 2024, we reviewed 35 proposals and awarded a total of \$6,365 to 23 grantees. We were pleased to support several quality Conway-centered proposals as well as programs outside of Conway that will benefit our citizens. We welcomed Donna Sussex and Jane Roy Brown to the Council for FY24 and are currently seeking new members to join us. (conwayculturalcouncil@gmail.com)

Respectfully submitted, Theresa
Carter



Finance Committee

Alan Singer, **Chair**
John Craine - **Recording Secretary**
Roy Cohn – Member At Large
Tom Donovan – Member At Large
Rhyanna McLeester – Member At Large

FY '24 ended 6/30/2024 saw the Town of Conway end the fiscal year in solid financial footing: 1) free cash was certified at \$612,613 (7.4% of the FY '24 budget) versus \$678,160 (9% of the FY '23 budget) for the prior year. The general “rule of thumb” is for free cash to range anywhere from 3.0% to 5.0% of that year’s budget (the levy and appropriate portion). The past two years saw free cash certified at higher levels than expected due primarily to two different factors: 1) the Personal Property portion of the Town’s full and fair value of assets grew at a higher rate than expected (80% increase over FY '23); and 2) Local Receipts (fees collected – namely) has grown over the past five fiscal years at an average annual rate of ~6.6% and the budgeted amount has essentially remained flat

for this same time period when adjusting for inflation. The full and fair cash value of our Town's assets as of FYE '24 at \$411.5M represents a 16.2% increase over the prior year.

This is critical as on the surface it may appear that, with free cash continually coming in higher than budgeted, property taxes are too high. Going forward, the Finance Committee will recommend the Town Financial Team consider a different methodology for estimating both the growth of Personal Property and the estimating of Local Receipts to more closely align with the consistent annual growth. Of further note, when adjusting for inflation, the Town continues to experience negative, real growth in the assessed value of Commercial and Industrial property.

On the Capital budget side, the Town continues to run appropriate balances in the General Stabilization Fund and to remain on track with our Special Stabilization (Fire and Ambulance) Funds. Of concern however is the current balance of the Conway Grammar School Stabilization Fund. The Conway Grammar School Stabilization Fund balance at slightly under \$230,000 is insufficient to cover the cost of replacing the Conway Grammar School's boiler system. The cost to replace the Conway Grammar School's boiler and provide other needed upgrades will be far greater than \$230,000. The last quote received to replace this system is now >10 years old. The Finance Committee has requested the Conway School Committee to receive an updated quote to replace the Conway Grammar School's boiler system.

Of final notes: 1) the annual percentage increase of the average assessed value of a home in Conway continues to outpace the annual percentage increase in household income; 2) the tax levy ceiling is well above the need for an override – with nearly \$1M of excess levy capacity and 3) the override capacity as a percentage of levy ceiling has grown, on average over the past five years at ~11.8% - leaving a solid 33.52% override capacity figure as of FYE '24; 4) State aid for the Town of Conway for FY '24 of \$~1.34M has grown on average over the past five years by only 4.78% per annum – barely enough to keep up with inflation. In summary property taxes will need to continue to increase to meet ever rising costs, especially the ever-increasing costs of the single, largest budget category of the Town, which remains Personnel Costs. More information compiled by the MA DOR DLS can be found at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/municipal-finance-trend-dashboard-reports> and search for the Town of Conway.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alan Singer, Chair
April 28, 2025



Forest and Trails

In the spring of 2024, the Forest & Trails committee offered a free 3 class workshop on Nature Journaling with artist Lori Austin thanks to a generous grant from the Conway Cultural Council. A dozen residents signed up to participate and an on-going journaling group has continued through the year.

The committee continued to remove invasive honey suckle from the wooded lot behind the playground at the Conway Grammar School. In August eight species of native understory plants (48 plugs) were planted to enrich the diversity of the site. To encourage more activity in the area a small "reading circle" was created with a dozen maple rounds, hopefully the start of an outdoor classroom. The committee has plans to continue improving the area, monitoring and removing invasives, and planting more native woodland shrubs.

We would like to thank the services of Marilyn Webster and Suzanne Artemieff for their dedication and work on the committee over the years. Their contributions have been invaluable. We would also like to welcome Jen Heilig to the committee. Her enthusiasm and love for our forests will help us continue our work. We still have one open seat on our committee if anyone in town is interested, please contact Deb Donaldson at deb.donaldson@yahoo.com.

Respectfully submitted,
Deb Donaldson, Chair
Priscilla Lynch, Secretary
Courtney Gilligan
Jen Heilig
Cynthia Lawton-Singer



Historical Commission

The Historical Commission's annual report last year was one of several reports printed and mailed together after the Town Report booklet had been distributed. We therefore repeat below, with pertinent updates, some of last year's content, where matters remain topical to this year's report.

Since August 24, 2023, following a routine state inspection, the historic Bardwells Ferry Bridge over the Deerfield River has been closed to vehicular traffic. That 1882 bridge - originally built in four months' time on the site of a covered bridge which high winds had demolished in January of that year - was most recently thoroughly renovated and painted during a 14-month period ending late in 1995. However, weathering-steel components installed in 1995 to support the short 31-foot approach span on the Conway side of the 197-foot landmark iron truss had apparently deteriorated by 2023. In February, 2024, the Historical Commission wrote to the state asking that repairs on that approach span be made the priority, to speed re-opening, in lieu of waiting years and spending up to six million dollars to again repaint and redeck (with tropical wood) the historic bridge, as was being contemplated by the state before the bridge was closed in 2023, according to the project's state website. By early 2025, however, although full funding has reportedly been promised by the state, and a design contract awarded, completion of the state's contemplated renovation(s) was rumored to have been delayed for another three years. Then, in the early spring of 2025, without mention of our 2024 letter and attachments, we were asked by a state consultant - due to the proposed use of federal funding for work on the National Register-listed historic bridge - for comments about the planned repairs (of at least the approach span). In response to that request, we've reiterated to the state, in writing, our support for immediate approach-span repairs, in an effort to avoid more years of inconvenience (at best) for those forced to detour because of the closed bridge at a major river crossing.

The Historical Commission spent significant time in multiple meetings in 2024 dealing with matters related to (historic) public-records storage in the Town Hall. An invaluable asset for researching the town's early settlement and settlers - one of our ongoing priorities - is the archive of property assessments created since the 1770s by the annual valuation work of Conway's Boards of Assessors. Those large, permanent historic record-books occupy space on multiple shelves in the Town Hall vault - the largest vault the town has. On February 20th, 2024, we learned by chance that, presumably due at least in part to 2023's record rainfall, moisture was seeping through to the interior of a section of the roadside brick wall of that vault closest to the floor (perhaps from below grade of the slope outside). We subsequently learned, in April 2024 (when a strong musty odor was noticeable in the

vault), that the moisture had dampened some boxes on a lower vault shelf that held permanent records of the Town Clerk, including some of the contents of at least one box. (For several years now, the Commission's had no independent access to the Town Hall office, limiting our ability to monitor conditions in the vault; for the time being, at least, we have space for research, scanning, and storage in a section of the upstairs gym, beside the pickleball court. We were able to use that space in the fall of 2024 for a time-consuming relabeling, and reboxing, project, which reduced the footprint of the acid-free boxes holding the permanent valuation records stored on vault shelves, somewhat easing access to the boxes, despite the overcrowded vault conditions.)

The Town Hall vault's humidity level - which in our long experience, has been low and stable - also seemed noticeably elevated by April of 2024, although it decreased and stabilized during the much-drier weather of the summer and fall of 2024, according to a measuring device monitored by the Town Clerk.

At the request of the Selectboard's office, the state Department of Public Health conducted a free evaluation of the air quality in the Town Hall vault, and the building as a whole, on May 3rd, 2024, and issued a written report, with recommended next steps to further investigate the source(s) of the water damage, in early June 2024.

The interior dimensions of the Town Hall vault (built in 1951) are 14 feet east-west and about 10 feet north-south. As we detailed last year, and as our long experience teaches, that quantity of secure Town Hall vault space - its integrity, age, and climate-control issues aside - is clearly insufficient for the needs of the offices now using the building, separate and apart from the needs of any other offices which may return to the Town Hall in future.

As we outlined, in draft form, for the Selectboard in late May 2024, the state's Public Records Law, in addition to facilitating public access to public records, requires all town departments, committees, and boards to follow the preservation components of the law. The latter process is facilitated by the state's mandatory Municipal Records Retention Schedule, with respect to all public records created by or held in the custody of each department, committee, or board. All remaining pre-1871 town records, among other categories, such as the annual valuation records, are permanent public records. But when non-permanent public records are eligible to be discarded under that Records schedule, most categories of records require that permission for disposal first be requested and obtained from the state Supervisor of Public Records, using a prescribed form. That process helps to document the type and quantity of public records to be destroyed by a component of town government. However, even without state permission, efforts to make room for current operations - often when staff and volunteers turn over, and due to the lack of sufficient vault and other secure storage space in town buildings - have likely contributed to the impulse to destroy older public records. Records which should have been either described before disposal, or preserved, under the law.

In short, the Historical Commission continues to strongly recommend that those directly involved provide sufficient provision for new or enlarged vault space in any pending plans to renovate or consolidate town office operations into one of the two existing downtown brick office buildings.

As time permits, and during our informal public-research sessions held from 1-4 PM in the Town Hall on fourth Fridays from April to November, we continue our in-depth research focused on the early history of the town, and welcome contributions or inquiries from property owners, as well as oral-history accounts, focused on more recent times.

Respectfully submitted,

Burnett, Willis ("Bill")

Darrow, Carl

Dwelley, Denise (Appointed 10/2023)

Horstmann, Henry ("Hank") (HC member on CPC, FY24-FY26)
Recore, Jane
Stone, Yulia
Williams, Sarah



Newsletter Committee

No report was submitted for FY24 for this committee.



Open Space Committee

Our public program on March 24, 2024 *Wildlife Slam: Nature in Your Neighborhood* was a big success. Dozens of folks shared stories and photos of wildlife in Conway. And especially enjoyed relating occasional sightings of mountain lions.

The **Kestrel Project** was our big undertaking last year. One impetus was Mass Wildlife's urging to provide nest boxes for these beautiful small hawks, which have been declining. https://conwayma.gov/files/Kestrel_Conservation_MassWildlife.pdf provides compelling explanations and photos. New volunteers built nest boxes and secured large locust posts. An announcement in Conway Currents generated lots of interest from landowners offering their property as host locations. In late March and early April volunteer crews erected 10 new boxes around town. The next few years will indicate results from this long-term monitoring project.

South River Meadow

Bluebirds and tree swallows again occupied our bird boxes, producing scores of fledglings. Special thanks to Katie Clarke and Robert Catlin for diligently maintaining the boxes and thwarting invasive house sparrows, which often kill the native birds in their aggressive quest for nest sites. Members devoted time to pulling invasive garlic mustard. Professionals treated Japanese Knotweed and oriental bittersweet. Without this, in a few years knotweed would clog the riverbanks again. The Committee diligently continued creation of interpretative signage for this important public space. Watch for them coming soon.

The **Bigelow Meadow**, the Town-owned preserved 2.3-acre open space, is now identified by a fetching new sign on the edge of Cemetery Hill! A new mowing regime aims to curb invasive plants and provide a walking path. It's a multi-year effort to restore the land as healthy habitat for native plants and animals, while respecting the privacy of abutters.

Veterans Memorial Park across from the Town Hall was renovated by *Pollinate Conway!* and volunteers who installed a new native plant garden. The project was supported by townspeople through appropriation of Community Preservation funds. The newest garden features attractive local trees and shrubs – modeling what folks might install at home. Combined with the pollinator garden recently installed on the library island, this

project expands support for our local birds and insects. And beautifies our town. Special appreciation goes to Cayte McDonough, Cynthia Lawton-Singer and Kendall Clark for their excellent work designing, implementing, managing and educating about these projects. See <https://conwayma.gov/p/160/Pollinate-Conway> and several links on that page for detailed plan and plant information to inspire enhancements in your own gardens. The Open Space Committee squeezed funds from our budget to hire out watering and maintaining the gardens over the summer and fall.

Expenses in FY24 from the General Fund: \$2500 mowing South River & Bigelow Meadows; \$450 garden maintenance; and \$312 for supplies. Total \$3,262. From CPA for Veterans Park \$2,307, and \$770 for invasive plant control at the South River Meadow.

Respectfully submitted, Janet Chayes, Chair



Parks & Recreation Committee

The Parks & Recreation Committee met monthly during FY2024. We held 2 community events in FY2024. The first was a shared event with the Conway Pool Committee. We helped fund the food and music and provided assistance in setting up, parking and food preparation. The event was well attended and enjoyed by all. We estimate about 100 attendees. We also hosted a National Pickleball Picnic on the Conway Ballfield. All Town residents were invited, and many enjoyed a cookout with hamburgers, hotdogs and many home-made side dishes and desserts.

Our Pickleball Court project was approved in the June 2024 Annual Town meeting for \$150K. Dirt work has been started by our highway department (after hours) and is continuing through this summer. We hope to have 4 completed courts by the end of the 2025 season.

Our Youth Sports program has had a successful year and continues to offer Soccer, Basketball and Baseball for all our Conway kids and school choice kids too. We give many thanks to Tanya Campbell the Youth Sports Director for her many hours of service to organize the entire program.

Our pickleball program remains very popular. We have over 150 players from Conway and surrounding towns. We were able to use the basketball courts, tennis courts and moved inside to the Conway Grammar School over the winter. Our players are very generous and have made donations to offset equipment and court expenses. We have hosted a couple of tournaments for low key friendly competition. We always welcome new players, experienced or beginners. For more information, please visit our town website and go to the Parks and Recreation page or join us on our Facebook page "ConwayMAPickleball".

Ballfield Maintenance for FY24 included revamping the infield baseball field, repairs to our picknick tables, electrical repairs to the post outlets, and painting/staining the larger storage shed.

Future Projects include fertilization and aeration of the ballfield grass, installation of a tennis backboard for practicing, replacing the playground mulch, repair of the storm drainage ditch and replacing various play apparatus like basketballs, tennis balls and rackets. Our biggest budgetary expense is the Grammar School and Ballfield portable toilets. This year we are going to upgrade to handicapped accessible units.



Personnel Committee

In 2024 the newly reactivated Personnel Committee focused on the following:

- Updating the Conway employee manual
- Engaging with the Employment Association of New England, as approved at the 2024 town meeting, for a review of the employee manual with the goal of learning best practices in the area of human resource management in ways that will benefit the town and its employees
- Discussions have also begun with respect to COLA (Cost Of Living Adjustment) trends and the challenges of competing with other towns for a tight labor pool
- Discussion is ongoing with respect to stipends for town elected officials and certain town boards.



Planning Board

The Planning Board, despite being chronically shorthanded, in 2024 continued work on a proposed River Corridor Protection Zone, extended a permit for a proposed cell tower at the Ashfield line, and began review of Conway's rules for "in-law apartments."

The board's four members also reviewed creation of some new lots in town and heard from engineers exploring the possibility of building a solar array in conjunction with farming off Roaring Brook Road.

New resident Jeff Lacy joined the five-member board, which still has one seat vacant. Lacy has an extensive background in rural planning, has served on Shutesbury's zoning board and currently is a rural planning consultant. The board is still seeking a fifth volunteer, especially because many of its decisions require a supermajority of four members.

The River Corridor Protection Overlay Zone is a comprehensive proposal that would more closely regulate development along parts of the South River that are prone to erosion, especially during heavy flooding events like those experienced on several occasions in recent years. The proposal will require town meeting approval.

Associate member bylaw. A proposal to make it easier for former residents to continue serving on town boards as appointed associate members was turned down by the June Town Meeting. Since then, some town officials and planners have come up with a modified proposal to address earlier concerns, which bylaw may be presented to the next town meeting.

Solar farm: Weston and Sampson engineers sought clarification about what fees might be charged if a solar farm were to be built on farmland off Roaring Brook Road. The prospective project would combine electric generation from solar panels 10 feet off the ground with continued hay and corn production below. State regulators favor such dual-use renewable energy development. If the project goes forward, the developers will have to seek a special permit and site plan review from the Planning Board.

Lapsed permits: In April, the board signed resolutions noting that permits had lapsed for a pot farm on Roaring Brook Road and for a cell tower on Route 116 near the Deerfield town line.

Members in 2024 were George Forcier, chair, Jeff Lacy, Cheryl Case and William Moebius. The board meets most first and third Tuesdays of the month.

Anyone interested in helping shape growth and land-use in Conway by joining the board may contact Forcier at: planningboard@conwayma.gov



Public Buildings Committee

Members: Walter Goodridge, co-chair, Ron Sweet co-chair, Ken Ouimette, Chris Herrmann and Peter Jeswald
This year was a particularly active one for the committee in planning and designing the new Public Safety Office addition to the old Highway garage. The committee took in feedback from the public forum held in March of 2023 to add in storage space in the attic and worked with David Vreeland and Jon Wyman to develop design plans and specifications. The Highway Department would do all the excavation work involved, and then an Invitation For Bid (IFB) would be developed with help from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG). It was decided to request student help from the Franklin County Technical School (FCTS) to work on the HVAC, plumbing and electrical systems. This both aids the students by providing them with real world projects, while also helping to keep construction costs down. This had also been done while constructing the new Highway Facility. Ken Ouimette has been instrumental in coordinating with FCTS, as well as teaching the students about plumbing and radiant flooring.

The first round of bids, which came in on March 20th, were rejected. Another bid invitation will be put forward when the issues which caused bids to be rejected are resolved.

Respectfully submitted,
Véronique Blanchard
clerk



Sustainability Committee

Meetings are held on second Thursday evening of every month, 5:30 – 7 p.m., back room of Town Office building.

Mission statement: The purpose of the Conway Sustainability Committee is to help the Town identify, develop, implement, and manage programs and policies that equitably advance decarbonization and resilience to mitigate the negative impacts of the climate crisis and to protect and improve the health and prosperity of our community, economy and environment.

Membership FY 2023 Beth
Girshman (secretary) Jody Lally

John Majercak (chair)

Membership FY 2024 Beth
Girshman (chair) Jody Lally

Sia Stewart (secretary) Pam
Westgate

Olivia Wyatt (co-chair)

Through FY 2024, members of the Sustainability Committee worked with Franklin Regional Council of Governments consultants to update the town of Conway's status as a Green Community. This enables the Town to apply for grants related to energy and cost saving measures.

At the request of the Selectboard, the committee gathered information and made initial recommendations pertaining to the Town's 67 streetlights. FY 2024 recommendations included hiring Real Time Energy to conduct a field audit, inventory and reconciliation of existing streetlights.

Public information session was planned for February 2025. The Sustainability Committee is responsible for final recommendations for elimination of some streetlights, purchase of fixtures and replacement of existing bulbs with LEDs, designed to increase quality of light, decrease unwanted light and save both energy and money.



Wastewater Committee

No report was submitted for FY2024 from this Committee.



Zoning Board of Appeals

In 2024, there were no applications to the ZBA for either Variances or Special Permits. This is less than the typical number of cases for most years. Also, there were various inquiries about building and land projects which did not involve the Zoning Board of Appeals, but we were able to furnish information and to help steer these residents in the correct directions.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Silverman



DEPARTMENTS – ADMINISTRATION

Town Administrator

Administration & Finance

July of 2023 was a momentous month for the town of Conway. Torrential rains throughout the month brought over 21 inches, more than any other town in all of the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico for July. States of Emergency were declared on July 10th and 21st, with damage estimates of \$3.8 million. 28 of the town's roads were damaged, many quite severely. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation fixed state road Route 116, as well as five Federally Assisted Roads; see the Highway Department report for more details. Many residential homes and properties also suffered damage.

Although several towns in the area were also greatly impacted, the cumulative amount of damage did not reach the threshold for a FEMA disaster declaration, therefore no funds could be requested of FEMA/MEMA to help rebuild our roads. Thankfully for Conway, the state not only repaired several roads, but also allocated Conway \$1.245 million dollars in disaster relief funding to aid in our recovery. The majority of funds are being spent on materials, mostly gravel, to repair the roads.

The remaining balance of ARPA funds were voted to be obligated for the building of a new public safety office building.

Grants

The town was awarded a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant (FY24 MVP) in July of 2023 for \$279,000, which happened to coincide with the floods that month, making it a very timely grant.

MVP Project Summary: Conway seeks funding to collect the hydraulic and hydrologic data necessary to determine the reaches along the Pumpkin Hollow Brook and South River, which need to be addressed in order to alleviate the potential for flooding in Conway center. This project will focus strongly on public education around the information gathered and participation in the choosing of potential projects to pursue in future years, focusing on those with nature based solutions.

Through the grant, two all town ‘Harvest Meals were held, along with a river walk, in order to discuss progress on the grant and get feedback from residents about priority projects to help alleviate flooding in Conway Center.

In FY 24 the town applied for the following grants:

- A Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant (FY25 MVP) to address the Pine Hill Road infrastructure (this grant was not awarded due to an issue with timing)
- A cybersecurity awareness grant through the Executive Office of Technical Services and Security (EOTSS), which is awarded for free, and
- Our annual Emergency Management Program Grant (EMPG) for \$2,000 for safety related materials.

Boards & Committees

Festival of the Hills

The dedicated volunteers who have organized and run this festival for years are stepping down, and the currently private Festival of the Hills organization is in discussions with the town about becoming a town committee. Two home rule petitions were voted at the annual town meeting which ask for a special fund to enable the town to provide scholarships and outline the makeup of the committee. The town is awaiting passage of those two bills by the legislature.

Personnel

Personnel is another town committee which has struggled to find volunteers. I’m pleased to say that in January of 2024, John Craine, Phyllis Craine and Alan Singer were appointed to the committee. One of the first tasks the committee will take on is a review of the personnel handbook.

Sustainability

The Sustainability committee was created by the Selectboard in March of 2023 and began meeting and developing a statement of purpose in FY24. This committee will take the place of the former Energy committee and will also address climate issues.

MISSION STATEMENT: The purpose of the Conway Sustainability committee is to help the Town identify, develop, implement, and manage programs and policies that equitably advance decarbonization and resilience to mitigate the negative impacts of the climate crisis and to protect and improve the health and prosperity of our community, economy and environment.

The committee will help the town with grant programs such as those offered by Green Communities and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness. The town has been out of compliance since 2018 with the energy reporting

requirements to stay within the Green Communities program. The FRCOG helped the town get back into compliance, which will make it possible to apply for future grant funding. The Selectboard has directed the committee to begin work on the possible acquisition of streetlights by the town and converting the streetlights to LED, with an eye to Dark Skies standards.

Departments

Accounting

For years the town has been provided accounting services through the FRCOG. This year the cost for software through that program was slated to go up significantly. Several towns decided to leave the program, making it difficult for FRCOG to continue the program. Buckland and Conway shared the same accountant and decided to work together to see if that person would consider remaining with the two towns if the towns left the FRCOG program. That plan worked and both Buckland and Conway have each hired Mike Kociela as town accountant.

Information Technology

This year we started work on developing an Incident Response Plan or IRP with free technical assistance from NuHarbor, funded by EOTSS. This plan outlines what steps are to be taken and who is to be contacted in the case of a cyber security incident.

State committee engagement

I have been invited to join the new Community Climate Advisory Council at EEA, described as follows: The Community Climate Advisory Council is a group of engagement experts from municipalities, regional planning agencies and community organizations across the state who are advancing local climate action and will help support the EEA Climate team in two distinct ways. The first is to help provide feedback on a variety of initiatives the climate team is working on. These topics could include:

- Developing Climate Resilience Metrics
- Climate Team Environmental Justice Strategy
- MVP Action Grant 2.0
- Updating Resilient Mass Resource Database
- Resilience Playbook
- Climate Leaders Program (Green Communities)
- Municipal Energy Assistance Grants
- Regional Energy Planning Assistance Grants

Although it was a challenging year for all, I am grateful for all the work that so many dedicated staff and volunteers do for the town, and to be your town administrator.

Respectfully submitted,

Véronique Blanchard

Town Administrator & resident



Town Clerk

{Town Clerk's Report is based on Calendar Year –
January 1 through December 31, 2024}

Historically, the position of Town Clerk dates to biblical times when clerks were often considered scribes or scholars. Their writings became the official records of the period. Today the Town Clerk continues as the official record keeper for the town and records all official business conducted at Town Meetings and elections and provides a wide variety of services to the public as well as local, state, and federal governments. The Town Clerk is also the Records Access Officer under the Public Records Law effective January 1, 2017. The major functions of the Town Clerk's Office are spelled out over 73 chapters and 400 sections of the Massachusetts General Laws as well as local Town By-Laws. Other responsibilities include records management, Burial Agent, registration and certification of vital statistics, voter registration licensing, compilation of the Annual Census and Street/Voting Lists, Board of Appeals and Planning Board decisions, and the most complex – those relating to elections and Town Meeting. The State Ethics Commission's enabling act of 2009 which required city and town clerks to provide municipal employees, including elected and appointed officials, with an annual summary of the Conflict-of-Interest Law, instructions on how to complete the mandatory online training requirements biannually, and dissemination of the Open Meeting Law. Part of this legislation, the revision of the Open Meeting Law, requires municipal clerks to post meeting notices and agendas of all committees and boards at least 48 hours prior to the meeting excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

The Town Clerk is often considered the core of local government, serving as the central information point for residents. The Town Clerk's Office serves as Commissioners to Qualify Oath of Office for the Commissions Division of the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth and, until January 1, 2012, as licensing agents for the Division of Fish & Wildlife. From July 2000 until May 2011 the Town Clerk's Office served as the local Passport Agency for the U.S. Department of State.

The number of Town Meetings and elections varies from one year to the next, ranging from one Town Meeting and one Election to multiple Town Meetings and Elections (not including any specials called by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the Selectboard). The Annual Town Election is held on the first Thursday following the Annual Town Meeting. 2024 saw four elections – the Presidential Primary in March, the Annual Town Election in June, the State Primary in September and the State Election in November; and one Town Meeting – the Annual Town Meeting in June.

The population for the Town of Conway according to the 2024 Annual Town Censes was 1,782.

As required by Massachusetts General Laws, minutes of the Annual Town Meeting, Special Town Meetings, and all election results are certified by the Town Clerk and are permanently recorded in the Town record books.

VITAL RECORDS

Number of Recent Births Recorded in Conway

For reasons of privacy, names of children are no longer published in the town report.

MALE – 1 / FEMALE – 9

2024 Marriages Recorded in Conway

February 17 Alexander Nakleushev and Birgitte Juliussen Haug of Conway
Married in Conway, MA

June 22 John Erik Storm and Sara Louise Palmisano of Conway
Married in Conway, MA

September 14 Andrew Philip Soles and Leanne Jody Fontaine of Conway
 Married in Conway, MA

September 28 Adam Christopher David Caron and Alicia Marie Carvalho of Conway
 Married in Whately, MA

November 28 James Samuel Smith and Paula Barry of Conway
 Married in Conway, MA

2024 Deaths Recorded in Conway

January 28 John Gerald Perreault, Age 62
 Disposition at Springfield Crematory, Springfield, MA

February 17 Susan Ellen Fields, Age 71
 Disposition at Saint Michael Crematory, Boston, MA

April 20 Dorothy Masterson Bennett, Age 92
 Disposition at South Part Cemetery, Conway, MA

July 17 Dale J. Allis, Age 73
 Disposition at Cheshire Family Crematory, Troy, NH

September 29 Edwin Rose, Age 87
 Disposition at Springfield Crematory, Springfield, MA

October 14 Karen Ann Dunphy, Age 61
 Disposition at Springfield Crematory, Springfield, MA

October 9 Christopher Dale Munson, Age 72
 Disposition at Ker Phaneuf, Brattleboro, VT

October 18 Thomas Henry Manwell, Age 83
 Disposition at Springfield Crematory, Springfield, MA

December 23 Janice A. Healy, Age 69
 Disposition at Springfield Crematory, Springfield, MA

2024 Town Meetings and Elections

There were many voting law changes implemented by the Commonwealth in 2022. This has increased the workload for the Town Clerk's office regarding elections. Vote-by-Mail and Early Voting hours have been made law for State Elections going forward and will be available for our local elections.

I would like to thank my Election Warden and Election Clerk, Katherine Whitcomb, and Margaret Kennedy, along with all our poll workers for their dedication and hard work. I also wish to thank our elections workers and constables for their help in making sure all the elections and Town Meetings run smoothly.

As the Chief Election office of the Town of Conway, the Town Clerk serves as the liaison office of the Board of Registrars and maintains voter registrations and all materials related to elections. The Town Clerk is responsible for coordinating and administering all local and State elections.

The following town meetings and elections were held and the total number of registered voters in the Town of Conway reported per election in 2023 is as follows:

Presidential Primary – March 5, 2024
Registered Voters: 1484 / Voter Turnout: 36%

Annual Town Caucus – March 20, 2024
Registered Voters: 1484 / Voter Turnout: 1.8%

Annual Town Meeting – June 1, 2024
Registered Voters: 1484 / Voter Turnout: 9.6%

Annual Town Election – June 6, 2024
Registered Voters: 1484 / Voter Turnout: 36.7%

State Primary – September 3, 2024
Registered Voters: 1513 / Voter Turnout: 20%

State Election – November 5, 2024
Registered Voters: 1513 / Voter Turnout: 86.5%

For the calendar year of 2024:

Dogs Licensed – 416

Business Certificates held – 69

The Office of the Town Clerk offers many services on a walk-in basis to residents, such as, issuing marriage licenses; dog licenses; certified copies of birth, marriage, and death certificates; notary public services; voter registration; absentee ballot applications; and raffle and bazaar permits. In addition, the Office of the Town Clerk serves as the filing/clerical office for the Zoning Board of Appeals, and the filing office for the Planning Board. Residents can also obtain Town Meeting warrants, sample ballots for elections, annual reports, and the annual street list (\$10) in our office.

Under normal circumstances, the Town Clerk's Office, which is oriented to serve the public, is open Monday and Wednesday 8:00 am to 1:00 pm, Tuesday and Thursday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, or by appointment, or by chance.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie L. Lucier
Conway Town Clerk



Transfer Station

Report for fiscal year 2024; July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024

Below is a comparison of the first three years' budget for the transfer station.

Line items	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
	Budget	Budget	Budget
Hrly Emp TSA	\$42,000	\$43,260	\$45,800
TS Manager			
Total Salaries	\$42,000	\$43,260	\$45,800
Inspections		\$1,000	\$1,000
FCSWMD Admin	\$7,859	\$7,982	\$8,133
Telephone	\$300	\$300	\$300
Contracted Services	\$22,700	\$18,000	\$10,000
Trash Hauling	\$45,000	\$12,251	\$12,675
Bulky Waste hauling and tip fee		\$20,368	\$21,997
Recycling Hauling		\$16,254	\$17,554
Trash Tipping	\$40,000	\$41,078	\$42,537
Haz Waste Coll	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$4,500
Springfield MRF Fee	\$15,000	\$0	\$18,627.65
Compost		\$5,000	\$6,120
Scrap Metal Hauling		\$3,816	\$3,205
Other Supplies (new in FY25)			
Uniforms	\$0	\$1,500	\$1,500
Total Expenses	\$138,359	\$135,048	\$148,148
TOTAL	\$180,359	\$178,308	\$193,948

The transfer station pad is in need of repairs, but this work has been delayed due to the need to respond to the damage to roads caused by the July 2023 floods. \$37,000 was set aside at Special Town Meeting in December of 2022 to address this.

The Selectboard voted to create a modified Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) program this year and changed the price of the vehicle decals from \$10 to \$20.

In addition, the board voted to give out 104 bag stickers to each household which obtains at least one vehicle permit decal. This is the equivalent of two 35-gallon bags of trash per week.

They also voted that the stickers will apply as follows:

- Two 13-16 gallon kitchen garbage bags = 1 sticker
- One 33-35 gallon bag = 1 sticker
- One 50-64 gallon contractor bag = 2 stickers

The purpose of this program is to help reduce the amount of trash coming into the transfer station. As of February of 2024, trash tonnages were down by 20%.

FY24 tonnages were as follows:

Trash – 327 tons
 Bulky – 80 tons
 Metal – 29 tons
 Recycling – 116 tons
 Electronics – 1.3 tons

The Conway Mall is struggling to stay open due to a lack of volunteers. It is also difficult for volunteers in the colder weather because there is no heat in the building. Conway is applying for a Sustainable Materials Recovery Program grant for a new swap shop building and if that comes through there should be a much nicer facility to house the Conway Mall.

Respectfully submitted,

Véronique Blanchard

Town Administrator and Transfer Station Department Head



Treasurer

The treasurer's office hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9am to 3pm.

Banking

Prudent investing in the US treasuries and CDs offered an increase in General Fund interest this year. We use Rich Rogers as a long-term investment manager. Rich is currently using Pershing/Cetera and has helped us protect our long-term investments while capitalizing on return for almost 20 years. Our investments are limited by the approved state list which can keep us from higher returns that the public may experience, but also keeps losses at a minimum. The market experienced a moderate increase and we were able to improve our returns.

General Fund interest earnings							
2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
\$87,482	51,466	10,179	15,493	27,377	16,646	8,614	6,329

Long term investment return							
2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
5.94%	2.01%	(0)	6.57%	3.39%	2.82%	-0.55%	1.77%

Long Term Investments	Balance 7/1/2023	Deposits	With drawals	Interest Earned	Realized Gains /Losses	Advisor Fees	Balance 6/30/2024	market Value 6/30/2024
830 Stabilization	230,160	200,000	(200,000)	6,193	510	(626)	236,237	256,965
831 Amb Stabilization	224,838	-	-	9,186	597	(634)	233,987	251,828
832 Capital Stabilization	290,958	200,000	(200,000)	8,664	670	(796)	299,496	324,524
834 G Schl Stabilization	222,308	-	-	8,962	584	(620)	231,235	243,858
835 Fire Tr Stabilization	100,566	100,000	-	6,799	382	(462)	207,286	217,500

Subtotal	1,068,831	500,000	(400,000)	39,804	2,743	(3,137)	1,208,241	1,294,674
811 C S Boyden	70,410	0	0	2,938	190	(202)	73,335	81,463
813 Guilford Fund	870,791	450	0	35,944	2,329	(2,474)	907,040	991,584
814 G. Howland	9,369	0	0	405	26	(28)	9,773	11,453
815 A & E Boice Germain	18,669	0	0	763	50	(53)	19,429	20,904
816 Whiting Street Fund	21,413	0	0	878	57	(61)	22,287	24,113
817 S.F. Howland	11,400	0	(139)	469	30	(32)	11,728	12,808
818 Sale Of Lots	11,852	0	0	486	32	(34)	12,336	13,337
819 M & M Germain	472,852	0	(11,950)	19,605	1,270	(1,344)	480,433	541,182
820 M B Germain	25,624	0	0	1,069	69	(73)	26,688	29,626
821 M H Germain	26,581	0	0	1,264	79	(85)	27,839	37,344
822 J. Boyden	9,410	0	0	386	25	(27)	9,795	10,586
823 Tanner	496	0	0	21	1	(1)	516	582
824 DO Paul	16,356	0	0	671	44	(46)	17,024	18,414
825 C & F Field	12,018	0	0	493	32	(34)	12,509	13,525
826 W E Tucker	991	0	0	42	3	(3)	1,033	1,164
827 E C Glazier	496	0	0	21	1	(1)	516	582
828 S Bradford	496	0	0	21	1	(1)	516	582
829 Emory Field	991	0	0	42	3	(3)	1,033	1,164
838 E.M. Chase Fund	797	0	0	32	2	(2)	829	860
Subtotal	1,581,012	450	(12,089)	65,547	4,243	(4,504)	1,634,659	1,811,274
380 Com Pres Fund	1,256,198	242,410	(64,164)	51,857	3,401	(3,742)	1,485,960	1,572,730
840 OPEB	107,854	20,000	0	4,848	305	(334)	132,674	137,680
Investment Grand Total	4,013,895	762,860	(476,253)	162,057	10,692	(11,717)	4,461,534	4,816,359

Allocation of Funds by Bank Accounts

Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2024

*Please note that these are bank balances only and do not include 4th quarter transfers to/from the general fund. See accountant report for current figures.

General Fund

INTEREST BEARING CHECKING	Description	Balance 7/1/2023	Activity	Interest Earned	Balance 6/30/2024
Unibank	Payables	255,903	290,887	102	546,891
Unibank	Payroll	10,676	-614	12	10,074
Unibank	SCH Payables	39,721	-13,874	33	25,881
Subtotal		306,300	276,399	147	582,846

General Fund

LIQUID INVESTMENTS	Description	Balance 7/1/2023	Activity	Interest Earned & Net Gain	Balance 6/30/2024
Adams Community Bank	MM	75,886	0	1,056	76,942
ESB	MM	104,699	896,000	12,417	1,013,116
GSB	General	522	47,092	7	47,621
Salem Five	Salem5 MM	567,093	-364,694	13,063	215,462
Unibank	Amb	33,600	-27,923	153	5,829
Unibank	Bond Proceeds	17,642	-12,852	174	4,964
Unibank	MM	127,281	78,884	2,652	208,818
Unibank	RD	585,799	-559,171	75	26,704
Unibank	School Lunch Receipts	999	0	0	999
Unibank	Unipay Deputy	8,780	1,943	21	10,743
Unibank	Unipay School	42,935	-34,031	42	8,946
Unibank	Unipay Tax	21,379	-1,149	58	20,287
Unibank	Unipay Treas Recpts	34,170	-20,908	36	13,298
Subtotal		1,620,783	3,191	29,754	1,653,727

TERM INVESTMENTS	description	Balance 7/1/2023	Activity	Interest Earned	Balance 6/30/2024
GSB	CD flex	1,823	0	6	1,829
Unibank	CD 7 day	1,764,850	-1,721,965	23,738	66,623
Bartholomew and Co	General Fund	500,021	2,250,000	33,837	2,783,858
Subtotal		393,767	528,035	57,581	2,852,310

Special Revenue Accounts

LIQUID INVESTMENTS	Description	Balance 7/1/2023	Activity	Interest Earned & Net Gain	Balance 6/30/2024
M&T Bank	SSRP	54,086	-5	54	54,136
Unibank	CC	3,458	-2,365	38	1,130
Unibank	Planning Board Consulting	13,771	0	187	13,957
GSB	Student Activity	761	106	0	867
Subtotal		70,465	-2,264	279	70,091

Grand Total		2,391,315	805,361	87,760	5,158,974
--------------------	--	------------------	----------------	---------------	------------------

Tax Title Balance

Description	Balance 7/1/2023	Additions	Payments and Adjustments	6/30/2024
Real Estate	59,992	63,941	28,521	95,412
Community Preservation fund	606	939	379	1,166
Total	60,598	64,880	28,899	96,579

Tax Possessions				
Description	Balance 7/1/2023	FY 2024 Foreclosures	FY2023 Sales	6/30/2024
Bardwells Ferry Rd; Map 405, lot 8 and 9	7,798			7,798
Main Poland Rd; Map 415 Lot 28	3,834			3,834
off Ashfield Rd; Map 409 Lot 18.1, LLV foreclosure	20,985		6,584	0
Total	11,632			11,632

Debt

Debt Schedule								
Description	Initial Loan Amt	Term	Remaining Term	July 1, 2023 Debt Beginning Balance	FY2024 New Debt	FY2024 Debt Retire- ment	FY2024 Debt Interest PD	June 30 2024 Debt Ending Balance
Highway Garage	988,000	15 yr	11yr	790,000		66,000	18,063	724,000
Paving	170,000	3 yr	1yr	110,000		55,000	3,410	55,000
Total	1,158,000			1,026,000	0	121,000	21,473	779,000

Tax Liens and Possessions

Tax Liens are being addressed regularly. There was one land of low value affidavit to foreclose granted by the Massachusetts Commissioner of Revenue on an abandoned property in the name of Florence Burnett. The property was posted for public auction two times with no bidders. The property was then transferred to the Town of Conway and sold on an open bid to a Conway resident.

Tax Title Balance				
Description	Balance 7/1/2023	Additions	Payments and Adjustments	6/30/2024
Real Estate	59,992	63,941	28,521	95,412
Community Preservation fund	606	939	379	1,166
Total	60,598	64,880	28,899	96,579

Tax Possessions				
Description	Balance 7/1/2023	FY 2024 Foreclosures	FY2023 Sales	6/30/2024

Bardwells Ferry Rd; Map 405, lot 8 and 9	7,798			7,798
Main Poland Rd; Map 415 Lot 28	3,834			3,834
off Ashfield Rd; Map 409 Lot 18.1, LLV foreclosure	20,985		6,584	0
Total	11,632			11,632

Health Insurance

We are members of the Hampshire County Group Insurance Trust. The trust rates are compared annually to the Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission benchmark and remain to be the better option for the town and employees. There was a 6% rate increase in 2023.

year	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
expense	457,198	428,346	419,555	433,118	420,858	409,674	412,220
expense change	6.74%	2.10%	-3.13%	2.91%	2.73%	-0.61%	5.61%
rate change	6.00%	4.60%	0.00%	-2.00%	0.00%	0.00%	4.70%

Respectfully Submitted,
Janice Warner
Treasurer/Tax Collector



Tax Collector's Report

Tax Collector hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9am to 3pm. Taxpayers can make their payments online by mail, our dropbox locations at the Town Hall and the Town office or in person. Our collection software offers many online options for paying or viewing bills. You can retrieve a report for all taxes paid in a prior year for filing your income taxes at www.conwayMA.gov. Feel free to contact our office regarding any questions or concerns you may have.

Collections are in line with prior years and all efforts (per Mass General Law) are being made to collect on delinquent accounts.

Tax Type	Beginning Balance 07/01/2023	Additions	Payments and Adjustments	Ending Balance 06 30 2024
2024 Real TAX		5,313,408.98	5,275,299.78	38,109.20
2024 Real CPA	-	113,320.12	112,766.50	553.62
2024 Pers TAX	-	508,554.50	508,388.86	165.64
2024 Excise TAX	-	259,297.83	243,054.19	16,243.64
2023 Real TAX	43,278.85		- 40,767.80	2,511.05

2023 Real CPA	536.74	-	536.74	-
2023 Pers TAX	114.23	-	114.23	-
2023 Excise TAX	13,086.96	23,767.76	32,736.10	4,118.62
2022 Real TAX	9,914.41	-	9,914.41	-
2022 Excise TAX	4,543.87	-	1,205.26	3,338.61
2021 and prior Pers TAX	1,099.89	-	493.29	606.60
2021 and prior Excise TAX	6,497.07	-	2,000.54	4,496.53
Total Due	79,072.02	6,218,349.19	6,227,277.70	70,143.51

Respectfully submitted by Janice Warner, Treasurer & Tax Collector



Accountant

Account Title	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Total Budget	YTD Actual	Balance
Moderator Salaries & Wages	350.00	0.00	350.00	350.00	0.00
Moderator	350.00	0.00	350.00	350.00	0.00
Selectboard Salaries & Wages	5,400.00	0.00	5,400.00	5,400.00	0.00
General Expenses	1,100.00	0.00	1,100.00	659.32	440.68
Mosquito Disease Testing 6/4/22	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00
A19 All-Hazards Mitigation Plan	0.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00	2,500.00
Selectboard	6,500.00	7,500.00	14,000.00	6,059.32	7,940.68
Finance Committee General Expenses	300.00	0.00	300.00	142.00	158.00
Finance Committee	300.00	0.00	300.00	142.00	158.00

Reserve Fund					
General Expenses	40,000.00	(14,522.00)	25,478.00	0.00	25,478.00
Reserve Fund	40,000.00	(14,522.00)	25,478.00	0.00	25,478.00
Accountant					
Independent Audit	10,000.00	104.00	10,104.00	0.00	10,104.00
Accountant	10,000.00	104.00	10,104.00	0.00	10,104.00
Assessors					
Salaries & Wages	54,319.00	0.00	54,319.00	48,666.02	5,652.98
General Expenses	15,703.00	0.00	15,703.00	14,769.04	933.96
Assessors' Conversion	0.00	24,000.00	24,000.00	3,821.77	20,178.23
Computer Software	0.00	11,498.00	11,498.00	2,004.49	9,493.51
Assessors	70,022.00	35,498.00	105,520.00	69,261.32	36,258.68
Revaluation					
General Expenses	0.00	12,478.00	12,478.00	2,500.00	9,978.00
Revaluation	0.00	12,478.00	12,478.00	2,500.00	9,978.00
Treasurer					
Salaries & Wages	67,861.00	0.00	67,861.00	65,379.82	2,481.18
General Expenses	19,795.00	0.00	19,795.00	19,761.71	33.29

Account Code	Account Title	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Total Budget	YTD Actual
Total 145	Treasurer	87,656.00	0.00	87,656.00	85,141.53
150	Town Office Expense				
5100	Salaries & Wages	94,942.00	0.00	94,942.00	89,769.90
5400	General Expenses	18,200.00	0.00	18,200.00	16,088.39
5499		0.00	868.00	868.00	867.50
5525	Grant Match Account	0.00	18,350.00	18,350.00	0.00
Total 150	Town Office	113,142.00	19,218.00	132,360.00	106,725.79

	Expense				
151	Legal				
5400	General Expenses	10,000.00	5,000.00	15,000.00	12,213.05
Total 151	Legal	10,000.00	5,000.00	15,000.00	12,213.05
159	Other Operations Support				
5400	General Expenses	44,825.00	0.00	44,825.00	42,933.29
5499		0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Total 159	Other Operations Support	44,825.00	3,000.00	47,825.00	45,933.29
161	Clerk				
5100	Salaries & Wages	39,398.00	0.00	39,398.00	39,397.50
5400	General Expenses	10,145.00	0.00	10,145.00	5,693.31
5816	Archiving Records	0.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00
Total 161	Clerk	49,543.00	1,500.00	51,043.00	45,090.81
162	Board of Registrars				
5100	Salaries & Wages	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00	1,200.00
5400	General Expenses	500.00	0.00	500.00	164.35
Total 162	Board of Registrars	1,700.00	0.00	1,700.00	1,364.35
163	Elections				
5100	Salaries & Wages	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	3,558.00
5400	General Expenses	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	2,540.58
Total 163	Elections	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	6,098.58
170	Open Space				
5100	Salaries & Wages	0.00	0.00	0.00	450.00
5400	General Expenses	3,100.00	0.00	3,100.00	2,650.00
Account Code	Account Title	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Total Budget	YTD Actual
Total 170	Open Space	3,100.00	0.00	3,100.00	3,100.00

171	Conservation Commission				
5400	General Expenses	1,061.00	0.00	1,061.00	580.27
Total 171	Conservation Commission	1,061.00	0.00	1,061.00	580.27
172	Agricultural Comm				
5400	General Expenses	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Total 172	Agricultural Comm	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
175	Planning Board				
5400	General Expenses	2,350.00	736.00	3,086.00	1,029.63
Total 175	Planning Board	2,350.00	736.00	3,086.00	1,029.63
176	Zoning/Appeals Board				
5400	General Expenses	325.00	0.00	325.00	0.00
Total 176	Zoning/Appeals Board	325.00	0.00	325.00	0.00
190	Personnel				
5100	Salaries & Wages	0.00	0.00	0.00	12,504.88
5400	General Expenses	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
5890	Compensated Absences Fund	0.00	41,632.00	41,632.00	18,689.91
Total 190	Personnel	1.00	41,632.00	41,633.00	31,194.79
192	Public Buildings				
5400	General Expenses	82,500.00	0.00	82,500.00	61,182.65
5827	Town Hall Lift Design 5/13/19	0.00	4,108.00	4,108.00	0.00
5866	A17 Public Safety Building ATM 6/3/23	0.00	395,695.00	395,695.00	0.00
Total 192	Public Buildings	82,500.00	399,803.00	482,303.00	61,182.65
193	Property Insurance				

5400	General Expenses	89,532.00	2,642.00	92,174.00	92,173.00
Total 193	Property Insurance	89,532.00	2,642.00	92,174.00	92,173.00
210	Police				
5100	Salaries & Wages	120,539.00	(6,769.00)	113,770.00	103,220.40
5400	General Expenses	21,725.00	6,769.00	28,494.00	26,383.56
Account Code	Account Title	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Total Budget	YTD Actual
5499	Prior Year Encumbrance	0.00	7,843.00	7,843.00	7,842.99
5852	Public Safety Radios ATM 6/20/20 A14	0.00	3,983.00	3,983.00	0.00
5859	Radar Speed Detectors 6/4/22 A09	<u>0.00</u>	<u>886.00</u>	<u>886.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total 210	Police	142,264.00	12,712.00	154,976.00	137,446.95
220	Fire				
5100	Salaries & Wages	41,548.00	0.00	41,548.00	36,565.47
5400	General Expenses	40,255.00	0.00	40,255.00	33,223.67
5852	Public Safety Radios ATM 6/20/20 A14	0.00	4,788.00	4,788.00	0.00
5861	Emergency Pagers ATM 6/4/22	<u>0.00</u>	<u>18,000.00</u>	<u>18,000.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total 220	Fire	81,803.00	22,788.00	104,591.00	69,789.14
231	Ambulance Service				
5100	Salaries & Wages	26,663.00	0.00	26,663.00	26,326.28
5400	General Expenses	29,475.00	0.00	29,475.00	30,796.73
5499	Prior Year Encumbrance	<u>0.00</u>	<u>1,082.00</u>	<u>1,082.00</u>	<u>96.99</u>
Total 231	Ambulance Service	56,138.00	1,082.00	57,220.00	57,220.00
291	Emergency Management				
5100	Salaries & Wages	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
5400	General Expenses	<u>2,250.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>2,250.00</u>	<u>1,631.00</u>

Total 291	Emergency Management	4,250.00	0.00	4,250.00	3,631.00
292	Animal Control Officer				
5400	General Expenses	<u>5,305.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>5,305.00</u>	<u>5,305.00</u>
Total 292	Animal Control Officer	5,305.00	0.00	5,305.00	5,305.00
294	Tree Service				
5100	Salaries & Wages	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00
5400	General Expenses	<u>210.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>210.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total 294	Tree Service	510.00	0.00	510.00	300.00
300	Grammar School				
5100	Salaries & Wages	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,570,563.94
5400	General Expenses	2,060,585.00	0.00	2,060,585.00	556,844.35
5430	Transportation	75,000.00	0.00	75,000.00	3,570.00
5499	Prior Year Encumbrance	0.00	14,651.00	14,651.00	2,830.76
5855	Conway Grammer School Cap Exp	<u>0.00</u>	<u>35,968.00</u>	<u>35,968.00</u>	<u>14,374.00</u>
Account Code	Account Title	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Total Budget	YTD Actual
Total 300	Grammar School	2,135,585.00	50,619.00	2,186,204.00	2,148,183.05
310	Regional School				
5400	General Expenses	1,568,585.00	0.00	1,568,585.00	1,602,556.00
5430	Transportation	32,563.00	0.00	32,563.00	0.00
5830	FRSD Capital Assessment	<u>3,818.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>3,818.00</u>	<u>0.41</u>
Total 310	Regional School	1,604,966.00	0.00	1,604,966.00	1,602,556.41
320	Technical School				
5400	General Expenses	159,930.00	6,144.00	166,074.00	177,416.27
5430	Transportation	5,198.00	0.00	5,198.00	0.00

5830	FRSD Capital Assessment	<u>6,</u> <u>144.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>6,</u> <u>144.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total 320	Technical School	171,272.00	6,144.00	177,416.00	177,416.27
330	Vocational School				
5400	General Expenses	25,906.00	0.00	25,906.00	33,400.49
5430	Transporta tion	27,000.00	0.00	27,000.00	20,740.00
5828	Trans Sta Comp- (CLOSE 6/23) 5/13/19 A12	0.00	4,142.00	4,142.00	0.00
Total 330	Vocational School	52,906.00	4,142.00	57,048.00	54,140.49
422	Highway Expenses				
5100	Salaries & Wages	319,141.00	(85,000.00)	234,141.00	230,368.70
5400	General Expenses	342,800.00	85,000.00	427,800.00	405,153.68
5835	Capital Expenses	0.00	25,000.00	25,000.00	0.00
5843	Renovate Town Garage	0.00	4,891.00	4,891.00	2,000.00
5844	Delabarre	0.00	15,775.00	15,775.00	0.00
5847	Highway Cold- Storage Building 5/13/19 A5	0.00	62,651.00	62,651.00	0.00
5851	9	0.00	50,664.00	50,664.00	98.80
5867	Boom Lift ATM 6/3/23 A#11	0.00	40,000.00	40,000.00	0.00
5868	Wood Chipper ATM 6/3/23 A#12	<u>0.00</u>	<u>99,</u> <u>000.00</u>	<u>99,</u> <u>000.00</u>	<u>99,</u> <u>000.00</u>
Total 422	Highway Expenses	661,941.00	297,981.00	959,922.00	736,621.18
423	Snow & Ice Removal				
5100	Salaries & Wages	21,888.00	0.00	21,888.00	10,151.16
5400	General Expenses	<u>108,</u> <u>000.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>108,</u> <u>000.00</u>	<u>83,</u> <u>689.75</u>

Account Code	Account Title	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Total Budget	YTD Actual
Total 423	Snow & Ice Removal	129,888.00	0.00	129,888.00	93,840.91
433	Transfer Station				
5100	Salaries & Wages	45,800.00	0.00	45,800.00	44,585.83
5400	General Expenses	148,148.00	0.00	148,148.00	121,618.10
5815	Landfill Cap Repair	0.00	37,000.00	37,000.00	0.00
Total 433	Transfer Station	193,948.00	37,000.00	230,948.00	166,203.93
491	Cemetery Maintenance				
5400	General Expenses	600.00	0.00	600.00	373.03
Total 491	Cemetery Maintenance	600.00	0.00	600.00	373.03
512	Board of Health				
5100	Salaries & Wages	15,974.00	0.00	15,974.00	15,542.50
5400	General Expenses	17,650.00	0.00	17,650.00	13,895.70
Total 512	Board of Health	33,624.00	0.00	33,624.00	29,438.20
541	Council on Aging				
5400	General Expenses	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00	743.76
Total 541	Council on Aging	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00	743.76
543	Veteran's Services				
5400	General Expenses	9,474.00	0.00	9,474.00	5,621.67
Total 543	Veteran's Services	9,474.00	0.00	9,474.00	5,621.67
610	Library				
5400	General Expenses	2,845.00	0.00	2,845.00	2,845.00
Total 610	Library	2,845.00	0.00	2,845.00	2,845.00
630	Recreation Activities				

5100	Salaries & Wages	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
5400	General Expenses	8,000.00	0.00	8,000.00	6,854.62
5499	Prior Year Encumbrance	0.00	108.00	108.00	108.00
5863	Town Field	0.00	7,789.00	7,789.00	0.00
Total 630	Recreation Activities	8,000.00	7,897.00	15,897.00	7,962.62
635	Forest & Trails Committee				
Account Code	Account Title	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Total Budget	YTD Actual
5400	General Expenses	400.00	0.00	400.00	44.40
Total 635	Forest & Trails Committee	400.00	0.00	400.00	44.40
650	Conway Currents Newsletter				
5400	General Expenses	6,000.00	0.00	6,000.00	5,746.71
Total 650	Conway Currents Newsletter	6,000.00	0.00	6,000.00	5,746.71
691	Historical Commission				
5400	General Expenses	400.00	0.00	400.00	394.17
Total 691	Historical Commission	400.00	0.00	400.00	394.17
710	Retirement of Debt				
5920	Debt Principal	121,000.00	0.00	121,000.00	121,000.00
Total 710	Retirement of Debt	121,000.00	0.00	121,000.00	121,000.00
751	Long Term Debt Interest				
5900	Int-Maturing Debt	21,473.00	0.00	21,473.00	21,473.00
Total 751	Long Term Debt Interest	21,473.00	0.00	21,473.00	21,473.00
752	Interest on Short-term				

	Debt				
5400	General Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	77.15
5900	Int-Maturing Debt	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
Total 752	Interest on Short-term Debt	100.00	0.00	100.00	77.15
820	State Assessments & Charges				
5640	Air Pollution District	574.00	0.00	574.00	574.00
5646	RMV Marking Surchg	920.00	0.00	920.00	920.00
5663	Reg Transit Authority	303.00	0.00	303.00	303.00
5691	School Choice Assessment	39,796.00	0.00	39,796.00	21,642.00
Total 820	State Assessments & Charges	41,593.00	0.00	41,593.00	23,439.00
830	County Assessments & Charges				
5400	General Expenses	58,439.00	0.00	58,439.00	47,039.00
Total 830	County Assessments & Charges	58,439.00	0.00	58,439.00	47,039.00
900	Employee Benefits				
Account Code	Account Title	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Total Budget	YTD Actual
5400	General Expenses	<u>765.</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>765.</u>	<u>752.</u>
		<u>265.00</u>		<u>265.00</u>	<u>963.45</u>
Total 900	Employee Benefits	765,265.00	0.00	765,265.00	752,963.45
970	Transfer To				
5962	Transfer to Stabilization Fund	0.00	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00
5966	Transfer to Trust/Agency Fund	<u>0.00</u>	<u>20.</u>	<u>20.</u>	<u>20.</u>
		<u>0.00</u>	<u>000.00</u>	<u>000.00</u>	<u>000.00</u>

Total 970	Transfer To	0.00	120,000.00	120,000.00	120,000.00	
Report Difference	6,934,097.00	1,074,954.00	8,009,051.00	6,961,955.87	1,044,095.13	



DEPARTMENTS – PUBLIC SAFTEY

Ambulance

As the country has moved into what has been called the “Post Pandemic” phase of COVID-19, the fallout of the pandemic is and will remain for a long time. The medical field has undergone many changes in policy and procedures as well as the mental and physical health of all responders. There will be lasting effects for years to come. Conway is no different in that case. Conway Ambulance has had changes and difficulties to overcome. Our ambulance typically responds to about 120 calls for assistance each year. Over the last few years, we have seen a steady increase in 911 calls, resulting in increased needs for mutual aid support from the surrounding towns, as well as an increase in our budgetary costs.

Conway Ambulance continues to work and train closely with the Fire and Police Departments. Earlier this year we completed CPR recertification for all members of the Ambulance and Fire Departments, and we will be having our annual 1st responder training in the new year.

Through the generosity of the townspeople and our donations account we had purchased several “File of Life” packets. They are available at several town offices, as well as from the Ambulance directly. Please contact me, the police chief or fire chief if you would like one.

As EMT’s we are required to complete several hours of continuing education training to maintain our certification, as well as our state ambulance licensing.

The ambulance remains at a critical low for EMT’s, and we are actively seeking anyone interested in becoming certified, or already certified. Please contact me at 413-369-4235 or ambulance@conwayma.gov for more information.

To be trusted with the care of another person is a truly humble and rewarding responsibility, and I urge anyone able to dedicate some portion of your time, in any capacity, to helping your fellow citizens and neighbors.

On behalf of myself and my fellow EMT’s, I thank you for trusting us with your emergency medical needs and we look forward to serving you for another year.

Gemma VanderHeld

Director, Conway Ambulance



Animal Control

The Franklin County Sheriff's Office Regional Dog Shelter has been in operation since 2012. The shelter was started by Sheriff Christopher Donelan who saw the need in the community for a dog sheltering facility and is currently the only brick and mortar dog shelter in Franklin County.

As of this date, the dog shelter provides services to 23 of the 26 Franklin County towns. During the course of 2024, the Regional Dog Shelter logged **198** canine intakes, (**166** where brought in as strays, and **32** where Surrendered, Transferred or Returned to our facility)

- 🐾 **97** where returned to their owners;
- 🐾 **74** where adopted into new fur-ever homes; and
- 🐾 **7** where transferred to another facility to better meet their specific needs.

While we are primarily a dog facility with the addition of the Sheriff's Office Regional Animal Control Position the shelter assisted in the holding and transfer of 42 felines. At this time, the shelter does not have the capability to process cat adoptions, therefore all felines are transferred to an appropriate agency.

Working with the Community:

Food Pantries: If you are struggling to feed your pet, or know of a food pantry that could use dog/cat food please let us know!

Rabies Clinics: In 2024, the shelter partnered with (2) local veterinarians to sponsor rabies clinics in Greenfield and Heath.

Volunteers: Volunteers are essential to the smooth operation of the shelter, without them, we would not have the success that we have today. Donating over 7075 hours in 2024, volunteers helped with Daily Kennel Chores, Foster Homes, Event Staffing and providing Enrichment specific to each dog's needs. We are always in need of new volunteers, if you are interested in joining our volunteer team; please check out the volunteer application on our website.

Did you know? The overall average length of stay for a dog at our kennel is 30 days? During this time, all their costs and care are covered by the Friends of the Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter.



Emergency Management

No report was submitted for FY2024 from this Committee.



Fire Department

To the citizens of Conway, I hereby submit my forty-fifth annual report of the Fire Department.

This past year our department responded to 76 calls consisting of the following:

- 17 Smoke/CO₂ calls
- 11 Town-wide flooding calls

- 3 Deerfield River rescue and mutual aid calls
- 2 Structure fires
- 15 Wires down calls
- 8 Mutual aid to assist other towns calls
- 5 Miscellaneous calls
- 1 Ambulance assist call
- 9 Car accidents
- 4 Brush fires
- 1 Animal rescue call

As you can see, this past year we had a lot of calls to pump out cellars and to help replace batteries in smoke detectors.

FY24 Fire Department budget consists of:

Wages	\$41,545
Radio Fees	3,700
Dues	855
Training	1,000
Phone Rental.....	300
Cell Phone - Fire and Ambulance.....	900
Gas and Fuel	500
Supplies	3,000
Vehicle Maintenance	10,000
Equipment	10,000
SCBA (Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus) Maintenance	2,000
Turnout Gear	8,000
Total	\$81,803

Fire Department officers are:

Robert Baker, Chief
Adam Baker, Deputy Chief
Chris Herrmann, Deputy Chief
Joseph Peramba, Captain
Nickolaus VanderHeld, Captain
Robin Armstrong, Lieutenant
Gemma VanderHeld, Lieutenant

At this time, I would like to thank the selectboard, firefighters, and Ladies Auxiliary for their support throughout this past year.

Yours first in Fire Safety,
Robert Baker, Fire Chief



Police

It is my distinct honor to present my first Annual Report for the Conway Police Department. Having assumed the role of Police Chief in July 2023, I am deeply committed to upholding the safety, integrity, and trust that defines our community. This year brought both challenges and opportunities for growth, and I am proud of the resilience and dedication displayed by our officers.

The Conway Police Department remains dedicated to fostering a safe and vibrant community through proactive policing, community engagement, and a steadfast commitment to excellence. Our team of dedicated professionals works tirelessly to ensure the safety and well-being of all residents and visitors.

In July 2023, the Town of Conway faced significant challenges due to severe flooding caused by unprecedented rainfall. The flooding resulted in extensive damage to numerous roads in town. The Conway Police Department worked closely with the Highway Department and Fire Department to do our best in keeping the roads as safe as possible for the residents.

In August 2023, the town faced another critical situation with the unexpected closure of Bardwell's Ferry Bridge spanning the Deerfield River and connecting Conway with Shelburne. The closure disrupted daily commutes and significantly impacted local businesses and residents. It is our hope that the Massachusetts Department of Transportation acts quickly to restore this bridge.

In June 2024, after 28 years of dedicated service to the Town of Conway, we bid farewell to Officer Randall Williams. He started his law enforcement career in 1996 when Chief Ken Ouimette asked him to join the police department. During his career, he also dedicated himself to the Town of Ashfield and then the Town of Whately for many years. Randall was an integral part of the Conway Police Department, and he will be missed by myself as well as many town residents. Prior to Randall's retirement, he aided in the search for a replacement and after an extensive search, Christopher Miner was hired.

As we move forward, the Conway Police Department remains committed to addressing the evolving needs of our community. We will continue to enhance our capabilities, foster strong community relationships, and uphold the highest standards of service and accountability.

Thank you for your continued support and trust in the Conway Police Department. Together, we will ensure a safe, secure, and thriving Conway!

Respectfully submitted,
Donald N Bates

DEPARTMENTS – PUBLIC WORKS

Highway

In July 2023 we experienced 3 flood events, each successively worse than the previous. Some roads totally washed out and most had substantial damage. We were able to get the roads back in shape good enough to be able to plow them when the first snowstorm came and then on December 10 rainstorm came and damaged some of the work that was already completed. Since the July floods we've put in 380 ft of 15", 180 ft. 18", 140 ft. 60" culvert pipes, used more than 900 yds. of rip rap, and over 11,000 yds. of gravel to repair the edge of roads and sections of totally washed-out roads. Besides the work the highway crew did MassDOT came to the rescue and sent a contractor to do repairs on Whately Road, Main Poland Road, North Poland Road, Williamsburg Road and South Ashfield Road. They also supplied us with 1,000 yds. of gravel to help us with repairs.

During this time the highway dept. only had 1 CDL driver (full staff is 4), 1 Laborer and 1 Student trainee from Smith School.

We also were able to get some paving done on Bardwells Ferry Road, Elmer Road, Main Poland Road and Pine Hill Road and Chip Seal on Old Cricket Hill Road, South Shirkshire Road and Shelburne Falls Road.

We do our best to do most of our maintenance and repairs in-house, but some work must be done off site with outside vendors.

For FY25 we will continue working on storm damaged roads and spend more time doing general maintenance on our roads.

As always if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 413-369-4696 or email me directly at highway@conwayma.gov.

Finally, I would like to thank the residents for their continued support and the Highway Department crew for their hard work and dedication to the Town.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ron Sweet

Highway Superintendent



Tree Warden

No report was submitted for FY2024 from this Committee.

DEPARTMENTS – SCHOOLS

Conway Grammar School

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

District Mission Statement

Building dynamic learning communities, one student, one teacher, one family at a time.

District Vision Statement

Vibrant, collaborative, engaging, and inclusive learning communities promoting the growth of every student.

Enrollment & School Choice: The October 1, 2024 enrollment for Conway Grammar School totaled 153 (PreK-6) students. This is an increase of 7 students from the October 1, 2023 (PreK-6) enrollment figures of 146 students. Of those 153 (PreK-6) students, 52 were School Choice students. This is a decrease of 3 students from the October 2023 (PreK-6) School Choice enrollment figures of 55 students.

Staff:Resignation: Cara Chandler, Nurse Leader; Marijo Sherrill, Strings Teacher

Retired Staff: None

New Staff: Mia Friedman, Strings Teacher; Paulette Levchuk, Reading Tutor

Special Thanks: We are pleased to acknowledge the dedication of Conway School Committee members Chair Elaine Campbell, Vice Chair Michael Merritt, Secretary Victoria DeMaio, and Members Philip Kantor and Jared Campbell. The members of the Committee work tirelessly on behalf of the children in Conway. Together, I look forward to working with this group to continue to strive for the best educational experience for our students.

Conway Grammar School continues to focus on academic excellence, student well-being, and family engagement. This year, we were able to enhance educational opportunities through competitive grants and valuable partnerships. One of the most significant initiatives was the Early Literacy Consortium Grant, a collaboration between Northampton Public Schools, Frontier Regional Schools, Smith College, and Mount Holyoke College. This grant provides specialized training in LETRS for Tier II and Tier III specialists, ensuring a system-wide, evidence-based approach to reading instruction.

Curriculum improvements remain a priority, with continued implementation of high-quality English Language Arts and mathematics programs. Teachers have worked diligently to deepen their understanding of instructional materials and best practices, ensuring students receive effective literacy and numeracy instruction. Science and Digital Literacy/Computer Science (DLCS) curricula are under review, with teacher committees exploring best practices to guide future instruction.

Professional development for faculty has been an integral part of supporting student success. This year's Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) initiatives have included conferences on de-escalation strategies, relationship-building, and restorative practices. Special sessions with experts such as Mandy Levine and Lynn Lyons have provided training on topics like microaggressions, managing social media, and addressing student anxiety.

Family engagement remains at the heart of our mission. Throughout the year, we have hosted a variety of district-level events designed to keep families connected and involved in their children's education. These events included a screening of *The Right to Read* in collaboration with Smith College, an author's night with local writer and illustrator Mischa Archer, and a presentation by nationally recognized psychologist Lynn Lyons on the impact of social media and smartphones on student stress. Additional events, such as a community conversation on our K-5 math curriculum and a screening of *Counted Out*, have provided valuable insights and strengthened our partnership with families.

The capital improvements at Conway Grammar School included installed new surveillance cameras and replacing HVAC circulation pumps to improve heating and cooling efficiency.

These initiatives demonstrate our district's ongoing commitment to both academic excellence and student well-being. With continued support from our communities, we look forward to building on these successes and ensuring that every student receives a high-quality, well-rounded education.

Respectfully submitted,

Darius E. Modestow
Superintendent of Schools

Curriculum Initiatives (more detail)

English Language Arts (ELA)

- Second year of implementing Expeditionary Learning Language Arts program.

- Teachers collaborate to refine instructional practices.
- Renewed focus (grades 3-5):
 - 60-minute block for foundational skills (grammar, fluency, spelling).

Math

- Bridges in Mathematics (K-5) fully implemented this year.
- Illustrative Math (Grade 6) fully implemented this year.
- 18 hours of teacher training completed.
- Early NWEA data shows strong student growth.

Science & Digital Literacy/Computer Science (DLCS)

- Committee reviewing research on effective science teaching.
- Input from faculty and families will guide curriculum resource selection.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

- Latest edition of the Second Step SEL curriculum purchased and teacher training completed.
- Weekly 30-minute SEL lessons (K-6) on emotional and social skills.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

- Focus on professional development to strengthen student support.
- November MTSS Conference featured:
 - Keynote speakers & breakout sessions on de-escalation, relationship-building, and restorative practices.
 - Workshops by Mandy Levine (microaggressions) & Lynn Lyons (social media, anxiety management).
- April training by Sarah Ward on executive functioning skills.

Family Engagement

- District-wide events to connect families with schools:
 - **August:** *Right to Read* documentary screening (with Smith College).
 - **October:** Author's Night with Mischa Archer.
 - **November:** Lynn Lyons on social media & stress.
 - **January:** Math curriculum night & *Counted Out* documentary screening.

Early Literacy Consortium Grant

- Partnership with Northampton Public Schools, Smith College, & Mount Holyoke College.
- Funded a year-long LETRS training for 27 teachers (3rd year of offering).
- Supports an evidence-based, system-wide approach to teaching reading.

Hitchcock Center/MWEE Grant

- Collaboration with Hitchcock Center for the Environment.
- 4th graders: *Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEE) Grant*.
- Younger students (Sunderland): *Take It Outside project*.
- Grants fund:
 - Outdoor environmental science classes.
 - Professional development for teachers on field-based science instruction and climate action projects.

CONWAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

TERM EXPIRES

Elaine Campbell, Chair	2025
<i>Michael Merritt, Vice Chair</i>	<i>2026</i>
Victoria DeMaio, Secretary	2027
*Philip Kantor, Member	2026
<i>Jared Campbell, Member</i>	<i>2025</i>

*Representative to Frontier Regional School Committee

ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent of Schools	Darius Modestow
Director of Business Administration	Shelley Poreda
Director of Student Services	Karen Ferrandino
Director of Education, Elementary Focus	Lara Ramsey
Director of Early Childhood	Kimberly McCarthy
Director of Instructional Technology	Scott Paul
Director of School Facilities	William Hildreth
Director of Food Services	Patrick McCarthy
Principal	Kristen Gordon

SUPPORT STAFF

<i>Executive Assistant to Superintendent</i>	<i>Raquel Chlosta</i>
<i>Administrative Assistant (Student Services)</i>	<i>Penny Smiarowski</i>
<i>Administrative Assistant/Facilities</i>	<i>Mary Jane Whitcomb</i>
Receptionist/Early Childhood Assistant	Sarah Butler

Payroll Specialist, FRS/Union #38
Accounts Payable/Bookkeeper
Grants Accountant
Secretary to Principal

Brenda Antes
Michelle Melnik
Stephan Shepherd
Lora Hanas

CONWAY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

ENROLLMENT - OCTOBER 1, 2024

Grade	Residents	Non Resident	Total	Oct 2023 Total
PreK	8	6	14	17

Grade	Resident students	Tuition-In students	School Choice students	Total	Oct 2023 Totals
K	20		5	25	15
1	9		7	16	13
2	9	1	5	15	18
3	7	2	10	19	19
4	10	1	8	19	26
5	13	3	9	25	18
6	10	2	8	20	20
K-6 Subtotal	78	9	52	139	129

	Current Total	Oct 2023 Total
Grand Total PK-6	153	146

Union #38 Teacher Salary Schedule

Union #38 Teachers

Effective July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025

FY2						
5	2%					
STE						
P	B	B+15	M	M+15	M+30	M+45
1	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
3	\$49,261	\$50,798	\$52,385	\$54,025	\$55,713	\$57,369
4	\$50,798	\$52,385	\$54,025	\$55,713	\$57,456	\$59,112
5	\$52,385	\$54,025	\$55,713	\$57,456	\$59,251	\$60,907
6	\$54,025	\$55,713	\$57,456	\$59,251	\$61,098	\$62,754
7	\$55,713	\$57,456	\$59,251	\$61,098	\$63,007	\$64,662
8	\$57,456	\$59,251	\$61,098	\$63,007	\$64,977	\$66,633
9	\$59,251	\$61,098	\$63,007	\$64,977	\$67,007	\$68,664
10	\$61,098	\$63,007	\$64,977	\$67,007	\$69,100	\$70,755
11	\$63,007	\$64,977	\$67,007	\$69,100	\$71,258	\$72,915
12	\$64,977	\$67,007	\$69,100	\$71,258	\$73,487	\$75,142
13	\$67,007	\$61,097	\$71,258	\$73,487	\$75,788	\$77,445
14	\$73,348	\$75,565	\$78,288	\$80,642	\$83,835	\$85,508

15	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
16	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
17	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
18	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
19	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
20	\$75,625	\$77,884	\$80,662	\$83,065	\$86,323	\$87,996

Nature's Classroom Teacher: One hundred dollars (\$100) per day of attendance by a teacher. Workshop Presenters: \$30 per hour of presentation and reimbursement for reasonable expenses. Tutoring Rate: \$33.00 per hour. Head Teachers: \$1,500. Placement on Step 20 occurs when a teacher has completed 19 years as a teacher in Union #38. Mentors: \$500 per new teacher, \$250 for second-/third-year teacher, \$250 for each additional teacher being mentored, to a maximum of three (3) in any year. The Town of Conway currently pays 70% of the health insurance premium contribution, with the eligible employees who elect to participate in the Town offered health

INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS						
	2022-2023		2023-2024		2024-2025	
	IA	IAB	IA	IAB	IA	IAB
3	\$16.18	\$16.68				
4	\$16.72	\$17.22	\$17.05	\$17.55	\$17.40	\$17.90
5	\$17.23	\$17.73	\$17.58	\$18.08	\$17.93	\$18.43
6	\$17.76	\$18.26	\$18.12	\$18.62	\$18.48	\$18.98
7	\$18.30	\$18.80	\$18.66	\$19.16	\$19.04	\$19.54
8	\$18.82	\$19.32	\$19.20	\$19.70	\$19.58	\$20.08
9	\$19.35	\$19.85	\$19.73	\$20.23	\$20.13	\$20.63
10	\$19.91	\$20.41	\$20.31	\$20.81	\$20.71	\$21.21
11	\$20.51	\$21.01	\$20.92	\$21.42	\$21.33	\$21.83
12			\$21.54	\$22.04	\$21.97	\$22.47

insurance paying the remaining 30% of the health insurance premium contribution.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT NURSES, LPN, COTA, SLPA & PTA

STEP	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
1	\$24.91	\$25.41	\$25.92
2	\$25.98	\$26.50	\$27.03
3	\$27.04	\$27.58	\$28.13
4	\$28.10	\$28.67	\$29.24
5	\$29.16	\$29.75	\$30.34
6	\$30.23	\$30.83	\$31.45
7	\$31.30	\$31.92	\$32.56
8	\$32.37	\$33.02	\$33.68
9	\$33.44	\$34.11	\$34.79
10	\$34.48	\$35.17	\$35.87

Frontier Regional School

Hello Frontier, Regional Community,

I am pleased to present our annual town report, which serves as our "community report card," highlighting the achievements of our graduates, new initiatives, and significant changes within our schools. Frontier Regional and Union #38 Schools continue to expand opportunities for students by strengthening academic programs, enhancing social-emotional support, and investing in professional development for faculty and staff.

Overview: Frontier Regional School opened in 1954 in the town of South Deerfield, Massachusetts. The school includes students in grades 7 through 12 with an enrollment of 593 students. This is a decrease of 23 students from the October 1, 2023 enrollment figures of 616 students.

The class of 2024 had 87 graduates; 62% planned to attend a four-year college, 14% a two-year college, 1% plan to attend vocational schools, 0% planned on a post-grad year, 5% will enter military service, 0% will take a gap year, 16% plan to enter the labor market, and 2% plans are unknown. This is different from previous years. There were 87 graduates in the class of 2023: 62% planned to attend a four-year college, 14% a two-year college, 1% vocational schools, 5% military, 0% will take a gap year, 16% planned to enter the labor market and 2% plans were unknown.

Staff:

Retired Faculty: Carla Nelson, Foreign Language Teacher

Faculty Resignations: Sarah Crawford, Special Education Team Leader, Martha Pomputius, School Psychologist, Raina Kittilstved, Chemistry Teacher

New Faculty: Nicole Duprey, School Psychologist; Stephanie Recore, Special Education Team Leader; Glenn Sullivan, Athletic Director/PE Teacher; Michelle DeSorgher, Special Education Teacher; Louann Krebs, School Adjustment Counselor; Meghan Lena, Special Education Teacher; Jessica Levy, Chemistry Teacher;

Special Thanks

We are pleased to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of Frontier Regional School Committee Members: Chair Melissa Novak, Vice Chair Olivia Leone, Secretary Christopher White, Members Bob Halla, Bill Smith, Mary Ramon, Jessica Corwin, Philip Kantor, Keith McFarland, Damien Fosnot, and Jared Campbell. I look forward to continuing our work together.

Report: Over the past year, we have deepened our commitment to providing students with meaningful learning experiences that prepare them for success. Our Innovation Pathways program, now in its third year, has continued to thrive. This initiative offers hands-on career training in Advanced Manufacturing, Health Care, Criminal Justice, and International Studies. We are excited to announce that beginning in the fall of 2025, we will introduce new pathways in Business and Computer Science, giving students the chance to explore high-demand career fields while earning industry certifications and gaining practical experience through internships and independent study projects.

Beyond career pathways, our focus on social-emotional learning remains a priority. The implementation of restorative practices has helped strengthen school culture by fostering positive relationships and conflict resolution strategies. Restorative circles have provided students with structured opportunities to engage in meaningful dialogue, creating a stronger sense of belonging and mutual respect. Additionally, our faculty continues to participate in professional learning focused on microaggressions and reinforcing our commitment to creating an inclusive and supportive school environment. This year, we also introduced a new social-emotional learning curriculum for grades 7-10 called *Changing Perspectives*, which promotes empathy, self-awareness, and emotional intelligence.

Professional development remains a cornerstone of our district's success. Teachers have engaged in training on emerging technologies, including the integration of AI writing tools like ChatGPT, to enhance student learning while maintaining academic integrity. Faculty members have also participated in workshops on the new Individualized Education Program (IEP) process to ensure they are well-equipped to support students with diverse learning needs. Additionally, professional development on managing anxiety has provided teachers with effective strategies to foster a supportive classroom environment that prioritizes student well-being.

Alongside our academic initiatives, we remain dedicated to maintaining and improving our school facilities. This past year, we have made significant progress in addressing critical infrastructure needs. At Frontier Regional, we completed Phase 1 of the roof replacement over the music room, locker rooms, and C-wing, a \$525,000 project funded through school choice funds. The school is also in the process of replacing the fire alarm system at \$465,000 using a combination of Excess and Deficiency funds, School Choice funds, and Rural Aid funds.

Darius E. Modestow
Superintendent of Schools

Our School in Detail

FRONTIER REGIONAL

Innovation Pathways

- Designated an Innovation Pathways School in Fall 2022 by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- Innovation Pathways connect students to high-demand industry sectors in the regional and state economy.
- Grant funding has enabled the purchase of equipment for hands-on training.
- Current Innovation Pathways programs:
 - Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering
 - Health Care and Social Assistance
 - Criminal Justice
 - International Studies
- Students engage in:
 - Hands-on experiences (fabrication lab, CPR/First Aid certification, OSHA training)
 - Internships in local businesses, healthcare, and research institutions
 - Independent study projects for in-depth learning
- New pathways (Fall 2025):
 - Business (courses in personnel management, accounting, financial literacy)
 - Computer Science (courses in cybersecurity, programming, data analysis)

Restorative Practices

- Faculty and support staff engaged in professional development to implement restorative practices.
- Focus areas include:
 - Restorative circles for student reflection and relationship-building.
 - Training on microaggressions to create inclusive classrooms.
 - Introduction of Changing Perspectives SEL curriculum (grades 7-10):
 - Promotes empathy, self-awareness, and emotional intelligence.
 - Delivered by counselors and the restorative practice coordinator.
 - Uses interactive activities and guided discussions.

Professional Learning

- Faculty engaged in diverse professional development opportunities, including:
 - Use of AI writing tools (e.g., ChatGPT) to support learning.
 - Training on the new IEP process for special education.
 - Emerging technology advancements for instruction and assessment.
 - Workshops on anxiety management to support student mental health.

- Culturally responsive teaching to foster inclusive education.
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) support collaboration and best practices.

FRONTIER SCHOOL REPORT

Melissa Novak, Chair
Frontier Regional School District Committee
South Deerfield, MA 01373

Dear Melissa:

I respectfully submit the 2024 Frontier Regional School Annual Report.

Frontier Regional School Committee

	<u>TERM EXPIRES</u>
Melissa Novak, Chair, Deerfield	2026
Olivia Leone, V. Chair, Deerfield	2027
Christopher White, Secretary, Sunderland	2025
* Robert Halla, Member, Whately	2025
William Smith, Member, Whately	2025
* Philip Kantor, Member, Conway	2025
* Mary Ramon, Member, Deerfield	2025
Keith McFarland, Member, Sunderland	2026
* Jessica Corwin, Member, Sunderland	2025
Damien Fosnot, Member, Deerfield	2025
Jared Campbell, Member, Conway	2025

*Representing the local Elementary School Committees for a one-year term.

ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent of Schools

Darius Modestow

Director of Business Administration

Shelley Poreda

Director of Student Services

Karen Ferrandino

Director of Secondary Education

Sarah Mitchell

Director of School Facilities

William Hildreth

Director of Instructional Technology

Scott Paul

Director of Food Services

Patrick McCarthy

SUPPORT STAFF

Executive Assistant to Superintendent

Raquel Chlosta

Administrative Assistant (Student Services)

Penny Smiarowski

Administrative Assistant/Facilities

Mary Jane Whitcomb

Receptionist/Substitute Coordinator
Payroll Specialist, FRS/Union #38
Accounts Payable/Bookkeeper, FRS
Treasurer
Grants Accountant
SIS Data Specialist
Network Administrator
Information Technology Specialist
Education Technologist

Sarah Butler
Brenda Antes
Donna Lloyd
Michael DeBarge
Stephan Shepherd
Megan Donovan
Stuart Dusenberry
Keith VanBuren
Maureen Beeltje

FRONTIER REGIONAL SCHOOL

George Lanides
Scott Dredge
Roberta Reiter
Grace Evangelista
Courtney Parent
Michelle Russell
Mary Lapinski

Principal
Assistant Principal
Principal's Secretary
School Secretary
Special Education Secretary
Attendance Secretary
Guidance Secretary

FRONTIER REGIONAL SCHOOL
ENROLLMENT - OCTOBER 1, 2024

Grade	Resident Students	Tuition-In	School Choice-In	In-House Enrollment	Out-Placed/Service Only	Total Students	Oct 2023 Totals
7	85	2	21	108	2	110	119
8	88	1	30	119	0	119	115
9	67	1	28	96	2	98	74
10	50	1	21	72	0	72	102
11	66	1	29	96	2	98	103
12	64	0	29	93	1	94	100
SP	6	0	3	9	1	10	9
Total	426	6	161	593	8	601	622

FRONTIER REGIONAL

UNIT A SALARY SCHEDULE

	FY25			
STE				CAGS/DO
P	B	M	M+30	C
0	\$48,112	\$50,430	\$53,272	\$55,936
1	\$50,592	\$52,623	\$55,288	\$58,051
2	\$52,691	\$54,871	\$57,373	\$60,242
3	\$53,989	\$57,197	\$59,533	\$62,508
4	\$55,879	\$59,027	\$61,718	\$64,804
5	\$57,342	\$60,963	\$64,036	\$67,237
6	\$59,811	\$62,907	\$66,150	\$69,455
7	\$61,387	\$64,905	\$68,281	\$71,693
8	\$63,013	\$66,540	\$71,363	\$74,931
9	\$66,149	\$70,322	\$74,535	\$78,262
10	\$69,617	\$74,395	\$77,805	\$81,697
11	\$70,771	\$77,139	\$81,397	\$85,467
12	\$73,522	\$79,989	\$84,315	\$88,531
13	\$75,356	\$81,984	\$86,418	\$90,739
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20L	\$76,356	\$82,984	\$87,418	\$91,739
21				
22				
23				
24				
25L	\$77,356	\$83,984	\$88,418	\$92,739

FRONTIER REGIONAL

UNIT C INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS SALARY SCHEDULE
2024-2025

STEP	IA	IA B	IA SP	IA SP B	IA ALPS	IA ALPS B
1						
2						
3						
4						
5	\$17.69	\$18.19	\$20.64	\$21.14	\$21.64	\$22.14
6	\$18.23	\$18.73	\$21.26	\$21.76	\$22.26	\$22.76
7	\$18.83	\$19.33	\$21.97	\$22.47	\$22.97	\$23.47
8	\$19.36	\$19.86	\$22.58	\$23.08	\$23.58	\$24.08
9	\$19.94	\$20.44	\$23.26	\$23.76	\$24.26	\$24.76
10	\$20.52	\$21.02	\$23.94	\$24.44	\$24.94	\$25.44
11	\$21.10	\$21.60	\$24.62	\$25.12	\$25.62	\$26.12
12	\$21.73	\$22.23	\$25.35	\$25.85	\$26.35	\$26.85
13	\$22.38	\$22.88	\$26.11	\$26.61	\$27.11	\$27.61

Unit C Educational Support Nurses

	NURSE
1	\$25.79
2	\$26.90
3	\$28.00
4	\$29.10
5	\$30.19
6	\$31.29
7	\$32.40
8	\$33.51
9	\$34.62
10	\$35.70



FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

The FRCOG provides planning services, programming, and advocacy to all Franklin County municipalities. Our municipal service programs – Collective Purchasing, the Cooperative Public Health District, Cooperative Building, Plumbing, and Electrical Inspection, and Town Accounting – are available to any municipality. The Community Health Department gathers data and works to improve the factors that impact health in the region; the Planning Department assists with local planning and larger regional projects; and the Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security Programs prepare and train first responders and local officials.

The following pages list services specific to Conway.

Climate Resilience, Land Use, and Housing

- Prepared a memo to towns summarizing the latest guidance from the state regarding the new Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) zoning changes to assist towns as they prepare their own bylaws.
- Held a second community roundtable for communities involved in the Regional Pollinator Plan for Franklin County, including Conway, to share stories and lessons learned about expanding, enhancing, and protecting pollinator habitat.
- Completed the Unpaved Roads Stormwater Management Toolkit under a MA Department of Environmental Protection Nonpoint Source Pollution Grant and distributed a copy to Conway. Conducted outreach to highway staff and Conservation Commission members.
- Helped the Conway Town Administrator and Sustainability Committee to complete the FY24 MA Green Communities Annual Report and to analyze town energy use.
- Continued public education and outreach work on Conway's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grant, which resulted in identifying five potential projects to mitigate flooding in Conway Center.
- Continued work with the Conway Planning Board to draft a river corridor overlay district.

Community Health

- Conducted the annual student health survey to assess teen attitudes and behavior among middle and high school students. Staff reported to Frontier Regional School District (FRSD) administrators on results from 212 students, representing 68% of the 8th, 10th, and 12th grade classes. Survey data meets federal requirements for the school and is valuable for grant writing and program planning. The 2024 survey includes the Department of Education's School Climate Survey (EDSCLS).
- Recruited two youth leaders from Frontier Regional High School into the Communities That Care Coalition's Youth Leadership Program. One youth leader attended the CADCA (Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America) conference in Chicago, IL. One youth leader presented the 2024 Student Health Survey data at the Communities That Care Coalition's Full Coalition meeting in October.
- Collaborated with Restorative Practices Coordinator on implementing Restorative Practices school climate improvements.
- Provided technical assistance in grant writing to procure public school opioid settlement funds earmarked for mental health, social emotional, special education, restorative practices and school climate and culture.
- Provided regional networking opportunities with other school districts, youth-serving organizations, community mental and physical health organizations, and community resource centers.
- Supported town officials with information and technical assistance on spending opioid settlement funds.

- Staff provided mentoring support and professional development training opportunities to public health inspection staff via three webinars and monthly email updates.
- Provided funding and facilitation support to the Mary Lyon Foundation for the creation of the West County People Supporting People Network, which hosted a resource fair to bring the county's healthcare and human service agencies to West County.
- Supported Conway Mass in Motion Age-friendly workgroup on age- and dementia-friendly municipal planning initiative. The workgroup organized a Senior Prom Party in June, attended by nearly 60 people, purchased a bench to install in the meadow to provide a place for walkers to sit, and is developing a list of people who can provide various home repairs. The workgroup is also working on developing the Senior Tax Workoff program, and on increasing transportation options.
- Provided Technical Assistance and support to Board of Health for drafting tobacco regulations.

Economic Development

- Met with municipal officials to discuss economic development planning opportunities.
- Completed a data request.
- Updated municipal officials on the status of the federal National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC) Designation Process.

Shared Municipal Services

- Conway contracted with the FRCOG to receive collective bid pricing for highway products and services, including rental equipment; and dog tags and licenses.
- The FRCOG Cooperative Inspections program issued 128 building permits, 77 electrical permits, 32 plumbing/gas permits, and 3 Certificates of Inspection for Conway in 2024.
- Through the end of fiscal year 2024, the FRCOG Town Accounting program provided accounting services, including biweekly vendor warrants and monthly budget reports to all officials and departments.
- Compiled, published, and distributed the results of the *Franklin County Municipal Wage and Salary Survey*, providing detailed municipal compensation and benefits packages data for local officials. Staff expanded the project in 2024, gathering information from 12 towns outside of the county for a regional compilation, along with relative MA Division of Local Services municipal statistical data to further assist all surveyed towns and cities with budget building and hiring comparisons.
- Used grant funding to organize, facilitate, and present at local official capacity-building workshops throughout the year.
- FRCOG staff organized and facilitated educational meetings for members of town energy committees, including presenting information on various topics and conducting follow-up communication.
- Conway is a member of the CPHS, a regional health district based at the FRCOG, which accomplishes all of the town's public health work. (Through 2024, septic system oversight was carried out by a separate agent to the board of health). CPHS staff:
 - Facilitated COVID-19 and flu vaccine clinics between state mobile vendors and local schools and senior centers. Clinics in CPHS towns served 477 individuals and provided 777 doses of vaccine, including many Conway residents.
 - Assisted Conway businesses, organizations, and individuals with the CPHS on-line public health permitting system. Evaluated and made determinations on a total of 28 permit applications, including 19 from annual and temporary food establishments.
 - Hosted drop-in nursing hours at Conway Town Hall, and made home visits serving 97 different people in 171 separate contacts, including 43 home visits.
 - Gave 286 Flu and 344 COVID vaccinations at drop-in nursing hours and home visits. Conway residents received 137 vaccines.

- Completed state-mandated infectious disease surveillance and reporting for communicable disease cases in district member towns, checking state infectious disease system daily and following up as required, including for 64 Conway cases.
- Hosted county-wide opioid listening session, with the aim for local board of health members and health department staff to hear from community members impacted by the opioid crisis on how to spend opioid abatement funds. This listening session was attended by 35 individuals, representing many in recovery and local recovery organizations.
- Gathered available data around opioids—EMS incidents, deaths, and treatment—and created opioid data fact sheets.
- Provided 660 doses of naloxone (Narcan) throughout CPHS towns through trainings and distribution through 11 community naloxone cabinets.
- Offered sharps collection and box exchange in collaboration with Franklin County Solid Waste Management District at all drop-in nursing hours: 75 boxes exchanged.
- Conducted 11 on-site health inspections, including camp, food service, and housing.
- Responded to health- and safety-related housing complaints.
- Supported the Franklin County Age- and Dementia- Friendly Conway committee to support progress in enabling residents of all ages to participate in all aspects of community life.
- Maintained certification as Medicare insurance “SHINE” counselor and assisted 34 CPHS town residents, including 10 from Conway.
- Provided guidance to the board of health and regularly attended board meetings.

Training and Education

The following list represents the FRCOG workshops, roundtables and training sessions that Conway public officials, staff, and residents attended, and the number in attendance.

Community Health

Aging Listening Session - 1
CPR/First Aid - 3
Food Safety - 2
Mass in Motion Community Engagement – 6
NARCAN Trainer Certification - 4

Emergency Prep & Homeland Security

Cyber Security - 1
EMS Pediatric Care - 1

Planning, Conservation, & Development

Housing Myth Busting - 1

Transportation

- Facilitated the design of information panels for kiosks at trailheads on the Mohican-Mohawk Trail.
- Coordinated the installation of Franklin County Bikeway wayfinding signs.
- Prepared and submitted a MA One Stop Grant for culvert repair and replacement on Shelburne Falls Road. This was successfully awarded.
- Conducted traffic count on Shelburne Falls Road.



2024 was one of FCAT's most ambitious years to date! Along with its usual duties, the station has been focused on expanding our media services and production tools to community producers and students. In addition, FCAT has also begun some exciting infrastructure projects, one of which will revolutionize how government meetings are recorded and presented to the community.

FCAT's usual duties that it fulfilled to the town of Conway consisted of covering community events, covering government meetings, managing its two channels (12 and 23) and also providing educational opportunities to Frontier Regional School students. Management of the channels was overseen by the station manager Jonathan A. Boschen, and consisted of scheduling community programming and also maintaining the bulletin board to communicate important information and events. Conway government meeting coverage was overseen by FCAT staff and also by the town of Conway. Individual Meetings were recorded by FCAT Staff (Jonathan Boschen, Kevin Murphy, Ben Roberts, Morgan Hoyle-Combs, Tom Alber, Marie Thomas, Emily Laus, and Leo Franceschi), while the Annual Town Meeting were recorded by the entire FCAT team. The coverage of Frontier Regional School functions was overseen by Kevin Murphy and consisted of school functions and school sports. These events utilized a student volunteer from the school thus giving them an educational experience working on a professional media production set. In addition, Kevin provided other unique educational, hands-on experience to student volunteers by participating in Northampton Open Media's "Crowdsource Cinema" and also assisting a Frontier student with the production of a short film.

Along with its usual duties, FCAT also oversaw the production of several important infrastructure projects, which were spearheaded by Jonathan Boschen and Ben Roberts. A new archival server was designed and built by Ben Roberts, which will allow FCAT to digitally preserve and easily access its vast history. All known existing videos (which exist in digital form) that have been made since the station's founding in 2008, have been archived onto the server. In the future, FCAT may digitize programs that were produced on VHS and archive them as well. Along with this project, Ben Roberts also began work on a Roku channel for FCAT. As the industry is moving away from cable and more towards streaming, the station is getting on board by making a streaming option available to South County residents. Along with these station projects, FCAT has also begun an exciting Capital project to upgrade the hybrid meeting technology in place for the towns of Conway, Deerfield, Sunderland and Whately. FCAT began working with the town of Deerfield to install a DTEN board, to cover and record the town's hybrid government meetings. When completed, the station will be working with the other three south county towns to institutions to install similar tools to cover their hybrid meetings.

2025 is going to be an exciting year for the station, as much is underway to build its presence in the community and attract community volunteers. FCAT hired

Bella Levavi in the beginning of the year as an Assistant Station Manager, who will be working with the station to help grow its volunteer base. Along with continuing to work with the school, the studio will also be looking to work and do programs with the South County Senior Center to provide video production activities to members of the center. Once the meeting coverage upgrades are completed, FCAT will be working with the towns of Conway, Sunderland and Whately, and other institutions within our four towns to further upgrade and streamline how their meetings are covered.

Jonathan A. Boschen

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jonathan A. Boschen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

General Manager

