



# Amherst Town Newsletter

## December 2023

*Amherst, NH Chartered January 18, 1760  
Vol. 1, Issue 11*

### December

As we close out 2023, and get ready to usher in a new year, town officials and employees are ready to continue to provide the excellent and dedicated services that residents have come to expect.

The budget season began several months ago, and many meetings have taken place between department heads, the Board of Selectmen, town employees and the Ways and Means Committee members. This is a work in progress and many participants have been involved with the work continuing.

In December, several important public hearings are scheduled. These include the Energy Committee's hearings on the energy aggregation (community power) proposal and the first public hearing on proposed zoning amendments. All information is available on the town website: <https://www.amherstnh.gov> but see the dates and times on the enclosed calendar.

The town newsletters began in February 2023 as another way to reach residents and inform them of town news, events and information. New ideas are always welcome! The Town Library publishes its own newsletter which can be found at <https://shorturl.at/pILY6> and the Recreation Department also publishes a monthly newsletter filled with exciting program and event opportunities, located at this link <https://shorturl.at/suOW8>.

Last January the Board of Selectmen inaugurated a new celebration of the chartering of Amherst on January 18<sup>th</sup>. This year we will celebrate the 264<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the town. Once again, cake and refreshments will be provided. Please join us for the festivities!



## An Amherst Tax Bill Explanation

Tax bills have now been mailed to Amherst property owners. The Board of Selectmen recently met to finalize the tax rate and apply funds from the Unassigned Fund Balance to the town portion of the tax bill. A total of \$950,000 was approved to reduce the tax rate resulting in a reduction in the Town tax from 2022 to 2023. The town portion funds the many departments and services that are provided to residents including Police, Fire, Rescue, Public Works, Community Development, Town Clerk, Assessing and Tax Collection, Library and Recreation.

The County tax is collected by Amherst and sent to Hillsborough County in one lump sum each December. This tax rate is set by the county's legislative delegation during the annual budget process and funds departments such as the County Sheriff's Office, County Attorney, Registry of Deeds, courthouses and county nursing home. For a more detailed look at the county budget, follow this link: <https://rb.gy/itklij>

The Local Education portion of the tax bill reflects the ASD and SCSD budgets as approved by the voters in March 2023.

The State Education tax, commonly known as SWEPT, is an amount required to be collected by the Town of Amherst but does not get sent to the state. Funds are retained locally for school purposes to offset the state's obligation to supply adequate education aid.

Just a quick reminder that tax bills are due on or before **December 11, 2023**.

Tax Rate Breakdown is as follows:

	2022	2023	\$ INC/DEC	% INC/DEC
Town	4.32	4.18	(0.14)	-3.24%
County	0.93	1.10	0.17	18.28%
Local Education	14.71	15.06	0.35	2.38%
State Education	1.17	1.54	0.37	31.62%
<b>TOTAL TAX</b>	21.13	21.88	0.75	3.55%

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

*Mark your calendar for these upcoming  
meeting/important dates (Subject to change)*



<b>December 4</b>	Board of Selectmen Meeting, 6:30 PM
<b>December 5</b>	Village Streets Study Committee Meeting, 5:30 PM
<b>December 5</b>	<b>PUBLIC HEARING</b> , Energy Aggregation Plan, 6 PM
<b>December 6</b>	Planning Board Meeting, 7 PM and <b>PUBLIC HEARING</b>
<b>December 6</b>	<b>PUBLIC HEARING</b> , Energy Aggregation Plan, 6:30 PM
<b>December 6</b>	Energy Committee Meeting, 6:30 PM
<b>December 8</b>	Amherst Tree Lighting and Festivities, 6 PM
<b>December 11</b>	Board of Selectmen Meeting, 6:30 PM
<b>December 12</b>	Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting, 7 PM
<b>December 13</b>	Conservation Commission Meeting, 7 PM
<b>December 14</b>	Heritage Commission Meeting, 6:30 PM
<b>December 18</b>	Board of Selectmen Meeting, 6:30 PM
<b>December 19</b>	Zoning Board of Adjustment Meeting, 7 PM
<b>December 20</b>	Planning Board Meeting, 7 PM
<b>December 21</b>	Historic District Commission Meeting, 7 PM
<b>December 25</b>	Christmas Day – Town Hall closed
<b>December 27</b>	Conservation Commission Meeting, 7 PM

## **Board of Selectmen Meeting Highlights**



### **November 6:**

- Mike Berry, SAU 39 Superintendent introduced himself to the Selectmen
- The Health and Human Services proposed budget was presented to the Board by Rick Katzenberg, committee chair
- Engineers from Weston and Sampson, and on behalf of the DPW, presented an MS4 Stormwater Utility proposal. MS4 compliance has become more complex and additional requirements will be on the horizon.
- The BOS accepted the resignation of Cerise Boston from the Fourth of July Committee
- The BOS designated a tree hazard on a scenic road
- The Board approved an increase in the salary rate for the vacant positions of Town Planner and Building Inspector
- A mutual aid and assistance agreement for building inspection and code enforcement services with the Town of Hollis was approved
- Two snow plowing contracts with Knott's Landcare were approved for the upcoming season allowing the town to have a full complement of manpower and plowing services; extensive efforts to hire plow drivers have proven difficult.
- Carolyn Mercuri was hired as an Advanced EMT and the hiring of Spencer Wright as a Call Firefighter was also approved

### **November 20:**

- Chris Sylvia was appointed to the open Fourth of July Committee seat
- Tracie Adams, chair of the Village Streets Study Committee presented preliminary recommendations to the BOS
- FY25 initial budget presentation
- The low bid of \$71,300 from Meridian Land Services for engineering and design of the Buck Meadow Recreation and Conservation Area's athletic fields, pickleball courts, basketball courts and parking area was approved; impact fees of \$20,000 and funds from the revolving account will also be used
- Police Chief Ciampoli's proposal for a police comfort dog was presented and approved; a male, yellow Labrador puppy has been donated from GQ Labs (more information and photos coming in a future newsletter)
- A Hawkers and Peddlers permit was approved for Cameron Burke of Trinity Solar

## **Employment Opportunities**

The Town of Amherst has several exciting employment openings. Please take a look and share with anyone who may be interested in working for the town.

### **Town Planner, FT**

Office of Community Development

### **Building Inspector/Code Enforcement**

**/Deputy Health Officer, FT**

Office of Community Development

### **Recreation Groundskeeper, FT**

Recreation Department



For more information and to locate the town employment application, click here:  
<https://www.amherstnh.gov/human-resources/files/employment-opportunities>

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## **NOW HIRING FULL-TIME POLICE OFFICERS**

The Amherst Police Department, a progressive law enforcement agency, is seeking motivated, hardworking applicants for the position of full-time police officer. Applicants will be required to pass a written test, physical agility test, oral board interviews, polygraph examination, psychological testing, and medical examination with drug testing. Current starting base pay, dependent upon experience, is between \$54,288 and \$61,381 along with an excellent benefits package. Additional information is available on the Amherst Police Department webpage at [www.amherstnh.gov](http://www.amherstnh.gov). Interested parties should submit a resume via e-mail to:

[aciampoli@amherstnh.gov](mailto:aciampoli@amherstnh.gov), or via mail to:

Amherst Police Department, 175 Amherst Street, Amherst, NH 03031

*WELCOME TO AMHERST'S NEWEST EMPLOYEES, CAROLYN,  
A-EMT AND SPENCER, CALL FIREFIGHTER*

## Exciting News about Amherst Street Sidepath

Two bicycle/pedestrian counters were generously donated to the Town of Amherst by the Bean Foundation to help the Town measure usage along the sidepath along Amherst Street which was installed in 2021. The counters were activated in May 2023 as permanent fixtures that count each time a pedestrian or cyclist pass by, with induction loops and a small computer which is able to differentiate between the different modes.

Data measured from one counter along Amherst St. between Lyndeborough Rd. and Main St:

- Average daily pedestrians (weekdays) 95
- Average daily pedestrians (weekends) 72

**Total usage** since activation (May-October 2023)

**13,852 pedestrians and  
1,744 cyclists**



## FOOD COMPOSTING UPDATES FROM NOVEMBER

The food composting program at the Transfer Station continues to be successful. Composting totals, week by week, are

**11/6/23**

**1 full tote: 300 lbs.**

**1 full tote: 260 lbs.**

**Total Weight: 560 lbs**

**11/13/23**

**1 full tote: 260 lbs**

**1 full tote: 260 lbs**

**Total Weight: 520 lbs.**

**11/20/23**

**1 full tote: 200 lbs**

**1 full tote: 320 lbs**

**Total Weight: 520 lbs.**

**11/27/23**

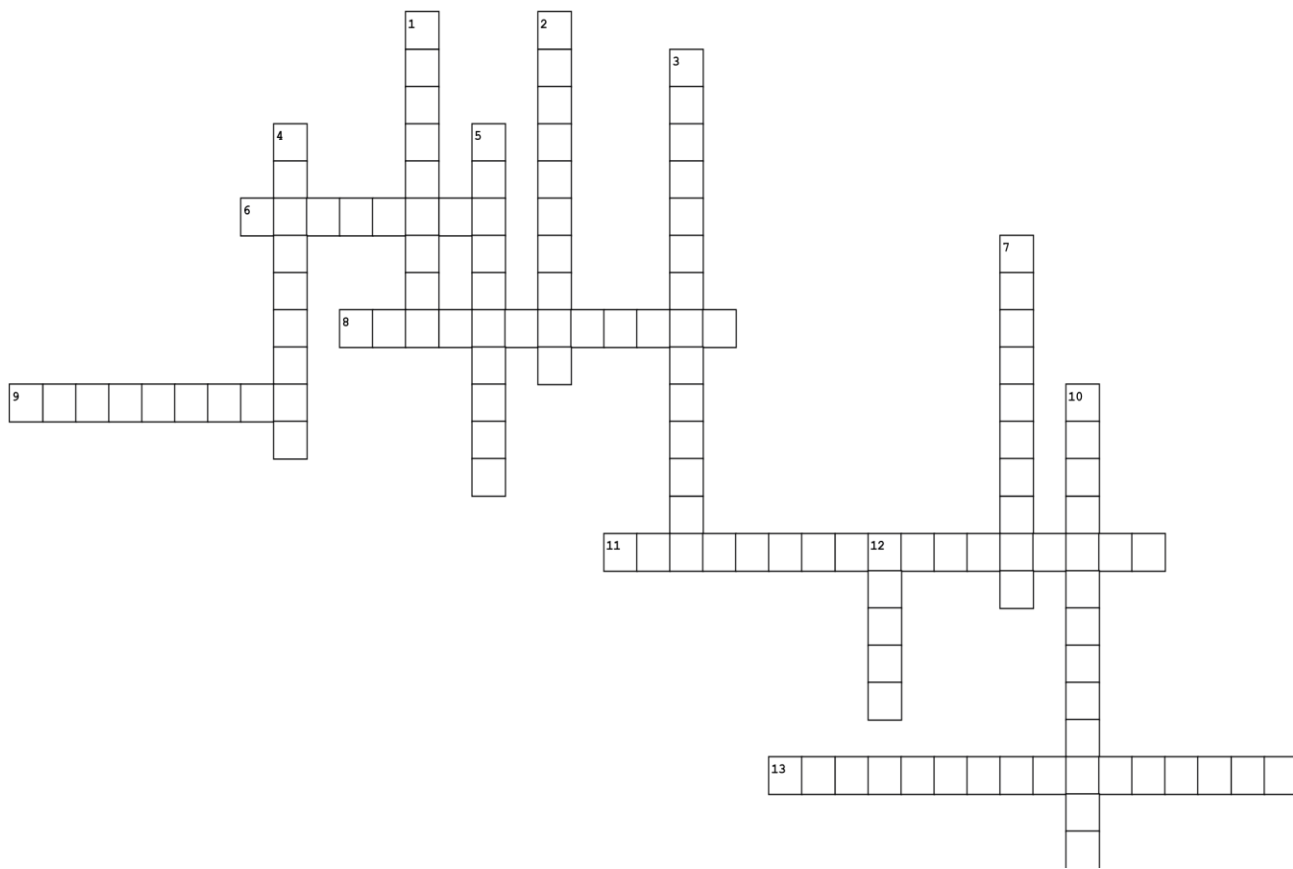
**1 full tote: 260 lbs**

**1 full tote: 260 lbs**

**Total Weight: 520 lbs.**

**TOTAL food  
waste/compost diverted:  
2,120 lbs or 2.12 tons**

## Amherst Conservation Trails Crossword Puzzle



### Across

- 6.** Features connectivity to the town village
- 8.** Visit this smaller area to see "wolf" trees over 200 years old
- 9.** Easy trails traversing forest and grasslands and jointly managed with Bedford
- 11.** Mountain bikers enjoy its rugged single-track trails
- 13.** Comprised of a retired apple orchard with hilltop views



### Down

- 1.** 100 acres of forest including lots of trails for hikers and mountain bikers
- 2.** Amherst's largest conservation area
- 3.** Includes the Bicentennial trail, the oldest in the ACC network
- 4.** Generally easy trails to explore historic quarries
- 5.** Best known for its boardwalk and beaver pond
- 7.** A recreation and nature trail ideal for easy walks and Nordic skiing
- 10.** A smaller area great for easy hikes on wide and flat trails
- 12.** Observe the meander of the Souhegan River from this smaller conservation area

# *Community Corner*

**Souhegan Valley Rides** (Blue Bus) is a curb-to-curb, "dial-a-ride" type bus service

available to residents of Amherst and surrounding communities. The focus for this service is on providing transportation for non-emergency purposes and assisting those in greatest need – elderly residents, those living with a disability, and residents who are unable to drive. Other residents may use the service as space is available in the schedule. Rides are available to most destinations within the six communities and to/from Nashua depending on each day's schedule.

**Pre-registration is required to schedule a ride, fare is \$2 each way, rides must be scheduled at least 2 business days in advance by calling the NTS dispatch center at 603-880-0100 ext. 2.**



**[www.SouheganValleyRides.org](http://www.SouheganValleyRides.org)**