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MONSON

Select Board recognizes firefighters, discusses sign policy

By Marcelo Gusmão
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MONSON – The Select Board held a meeting on Oct. 8, where it discussed the town’s policy on signs and recognized the actions of local firefighters.

Select Board Chair John Morrell started the meeting with a moment of silence for the residents of Florida being affected by Hurricane Milton.

Fire Department

Fire Chief Brian Harris introduced Allison Sheldon, who joined the department on Sept. 30.

“She already has all of her certifications, as far as firefighter, EMT, and pump operator,” Harris said. “I think she’ll make a great addition to our department.”

Sheldon said she has been very ambitious from a young age, and described joining an explorer program for youths aged 14-17 in the town where she lived.

“I started in the fire service at the age of 17,” Sheldon said, describing how she rose through the ranks in her career. “The fire service is a never-ending education, so there’s always something to be learned, something to learn how to do.”

The board members welcomed Sheldon to the town and the department, before moving on to a Public Safety Recognition regarding an accident on Wales Road on Sept. 19. Sergeant Adam Szymanski read a letter he had addressed to the Fire Chief commending firefighters Am-

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Turley photos by Marcelo Gusmão

Chief William Bernat thanked the assembled crowd for its support and announced each speaker.

Fire Dept. unveils brand new ambulance

By Marcelo Gusmão
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PALMER – Last week, the Fire Department unveiled a new ambulance that will help provide emergency medical services to residents in the region.

On Friday, Oct. 4, town residents, state legislators, and first responders from all over the region gathered in front of the Fire Department to celebrate the launch of the new ambulance service.

Fire Chief William Bernat opened the ceremony by thanking State Representative Todd Smola and Senator Jake Oliveira, as well as Fire District Prudential Committee Chair James St. Amand,

“On Oct. 1, the fire district voted almost unanimously that the Fire Department will have its first ever municipal ambulance service,” Bernat said.

“It has been three long years in the making,” Bernat continued. “Our firefighters have responded to 317 medical calls in the past year alone, and assisted in the life-saving techniques until surrounding towns arrived with their ambulances.”

Bernat said that the ambulance service will not only save lives, but will also bring revenue for the district.

“The BLS Ambulance Service will serve the town and its surrounding communities,” Bernat said. “The Fire Department

will operate this service as the first backup to the Palmer ambulance service. This will increase response times and provide a better level of care for our town residents.”

Representative Smola said he was “delighted” to see all the departments that showed up to support the fire department. He shared a story of visiting his in-laws in the hospital after a motor vehicle collision.

“A week ago today, my wife came home from work, and we were just about ready to settle in for our Friday afternoon,” Smola said. “My wife hangs up the phone and says, ‘we have to go to the hospital, my mother’s been in a car accident.’”

Smola described getting to the hospital and checking on his mother- and father-in-law, who were then transferred to the trauma wing at Baystate Medical Center.

“As I was sitting there through the course of a couple of hours,” Smola said, “I saw how many ambulances were coming through the doors of two separate hospitals that evening.”

Smola said that he was impressed at the volume of work done by emergency responders, and that it was a testament to the need for ambulance services.

Senator Oliveira admired the historic fire station that dates back

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MONSON

FinCom discusses School Dept. end-of-year budgeting

By Marcelo Gusmão
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MONSON – At this week’s Finance Committee meeting, there was a discussion about how the school department was previously tracking its utility expenditures.

The Oct. 7 meeting featured a discussion about a memo about the school’s end-of-year budget, which was brought to the committee’s attention by Finance Director Jamie Farnum.

“When I was closing the year-end books, I noticed some things that were of concern and I wanted to be able to talk about,” Farnum said.

Farnum said that she discussed with the school’s Business Manager about how the electricity bills are part of the net-metering invoices that the town pays which get applied to the National Grid bill.

“The vendor that we would be asking for the prior year bills for those are the UGT that we pay as a net-metering agreement,” Farnum said.

Farnum said that in her discussions with the school department, she said, “Usage should be stable, so they should be budgeting on usage, getting projections, and looking at prior year actuals, so that way, when they’re in their current year budget, they’re actually looking at their year to date to understand how much they’ve expended. That way you know if you have enough money or not.”

Farnum said that the school

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EDUCATION

Pathfinder Tech fills parking lot during annual Open House last week

By Marcelo Gusmão
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PALMER – Last week, Pathfinder Technical Vocational School held its annual Open House for parents and families to visit the campus and get to know the school better.

“We had a fantastic turnout with parents and families that came,” said Principal Ryan Rege. “It was fantastic to see that.”

Rege explained that the Open House is an opportunity for parents of current students to meet with the teachers and get information on their student’s studies, as well as learn about the school’s other offerings.

“The evening is for them to be able to meet with teachers, hear what their students are learning in class right now, and get updates on the student’s progress,” Rege said.

Superintendent Eric Duda estimated between 250 and 300 cars in the parking lot, front field, and along the driveway at any given point in the evening.

“As in the past couple of years, this year’s open house saw an extremely high level of attendance,” Duda said. “This strong turnout, with current students accompanied

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Turley photo by Marcelo Gusmão

Gathered around school mascot Scout on the steps of the school, (from left) Director of Student Services Marina Latourelle, student Travis Chartier, and Academic Director Dan Whalley.

POLICE/FIRE



Turley Photos by Marcelo Gusmão

Anthony Siniscalchi and Kaleb Metcalfe worked the table for the Fire Department.

Fire Department wins Safety Night Out Barbecue Contest

By Marcelo Gusmão
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MONSON – Last weekend, the Police Department and Fire Department competed in the annual barbecue, with Fire being crowned this year’s champions.

The town’s fourth annual Public Safety Night Out presented an

opportunity for residents to meet the police officers and firefighters that work for the town. It was held on Oct. 5 from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Veterans Field.

The event also involved a Touch-a-Truck event, and the annual barbecue cook-off between the fire and police departments. This event has built into a heated rivalry between the two depart-

ments, who spent the days leading up to the event goading each other on social media.

In one post, the police department joked that “residents are urged to keep their windows closed and remain inside until the start of Monson’s Public Safety Night Out” to avoid the fire department’s

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SPORTS

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SOCCER



Goalie Aidan Santiago punts the ball away.

Pathfinder handles Putnam

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

SPRINGFIELD—Despite playing only two home matches during the first month of the regular season, the Pathfinder Tech boys' soccer team entered October with a 6-2 overall record. The Pioneers road journey continued as they defeated the Putnam Voc./Tech Beavers, 5-1 at Forest Park in Springfield last Tuesday afternoon. "We haven't played Putnam in a few years, so we really didn't know what to expect coming here," said Pathfinder Tech head coach Dave Wilson. "This is a very good win for us. We didn't suffer any more injuries or get any yellow cards." The Pioneers only two losses have come on the road against the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School, and Springfield International Charter School. The final score in both of their matches were 3-1.

Senior Ethan DeBettencourt,

who's normally a starting defender, didn't play in the Pioneers first meeting on the soccer pitch against the Beavers since the start of the 2019 regular season because of an injury. "Ethan is our starting right full-back, but he missed today's game because of an injury," Wilson added. "We also had several other players who are nursing injuries. We just need to keep an eye on them." Another senior listed on the Pioneers soccer roster is Evan Costa, who recorded a hat-trick against the Beavers (1-5-2). "Evan just loves playing the game of soccer, and he works very hard," Wilson said. "I returned as the varsity soccer coach when he was a sophomore. He was already a talented soccer player at that time. He's also approaching 100 career points (Goals + Assists) which will be a great accomplishment for him." Costa finished the road game against Putnam with 98 career points. He was hoping to achieve the elite milestone in a home match against the Pioneer Valley Chinese this fall.

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Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Cayden Bousquet crosses to the right side of the field with the ball.



Adonis Dupre clashes with an opposing player.

SOCCER

Tough second half spells defeat for Panthers

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

GRANBY—The returning members of the Granby girls' soccer team haven't forgotten about losing to Palmer in the 2023 Western Mass. Class D championship match. The Lady Rams, who suffered a 3-1 loss in that contest, swept the season series against the Lady Panthers this year. Granby squeaked out a 3-2 road win in the first meeting between the Central Division rivals. The score of the second match-up was tied 1-1 at halftime. The Lady Rams managed to pull away during the second half with four goals leading to a 5-1 home victory, last Wednesday afternoon. "Palmer beat us in the Western Mass. finals a year ago, so it feels very good to beat them twice this year," said Granby senior Maggie Crawford. "Today's game was tied at halftime, but we just pushed a little bit harder during the second half." Crawford, who's one of the seven seniors listed on the Granby varsity roster, scored a total of four goals in the two games that her team played against Palmer this fall. The home victory also improved the Lady Rams overall record to 5-5 and they had a 3-5 league.

"It's always a hard fought battle whenever we face Palmer," said Granby head coach Bob Weaver. "We split with them during the regular season last year and then they beat us in the Western Mass. finals. It does feel nice to win both games against them this year." The Lady Panthers (1-10) lost their fourth game in a row since celebrating a 5-0 shutout victory in a non-league road match against rival Ware on September 23. "Granby just out played us in today's game, especially during the second half," said Palmer head coach Celso Sandoval. "We do



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Anabella Ladue kicks the ball away ahead of pressure.



Addyson Petraszewicz eyes the ball as she tries to change directions.

have a completely new line-up since the first time that we played Granby. The younger players are doing their best." One of the Lady Panthers injured players is senior captain G- PALMER | page 8

FOOTBALL

Anthony Arventos scrambles around looking to pass.



Turley photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com

See more photos on page 8.

Pathfinder falls to SICS

PALMER – Last Saturday morning, the Pathfinder Tech suffered a 40-30 loss against Springfield International Charter School. The Pioneers put up their best offensive performance of the year. Unfortunately, the Pioneers fell behind 12-0 in the first quarter. The Pioneers would outscore the Cybercats in the final three quarters, but could not make up the early deficit. Pathfinder drops to 0-4 on the season. The Pioneers face Monument Mountain on the road this Friday night at 7 p.m.



Dustyn Cook makes the reception.

Mustangs take early lead, dominate Chicopee



Chelsea Hull sizes up a clearing kick.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Hannah Murphy tangles with an opponent.



Mackayla St. George passes ahead of pressure.



Ella Corthell looks to avoid an opposing player.

MONSON – Last Wednesday afternoon, Monson girls soccer took control with four first half goals and went on to defeat Chicopee 6-1. Hannah Murphy continued her torrid pace with four goals scored. Avery Beaudoin and Addie Peterson also scored goals. The goalie combination of Emily Provost and Emma Bannon made five saves for the win. Monson is 6-3 on the regular season and will travel to Amherst Regional on Thursday, Oct. 10 at 4:30 p.m.