

# Early birds get the democracy

## More than 2,800 Johnston voters cast early ballots

By RORY SCHULER

The laughter of little children faded from the atmosphere inside of the former Belknap School in 1941, according to the chalk message scrawled on the blackboard. But late last Friday afternoon, the giggles were replaced by former schoolgirls and current poll workers Carol Salvatore, Gladys

Boornazian and Joann Faella, as the steady stream of early voters started to fade into the weekend and the polls were set to close for the day. “They’re usually lined up Monday morning,” Salvatore said. She was right.

EARLY - PAGE 13



**LONG LINE:** A line formed early Monday morning outside the Johnston Land Trust building at 509 Greenville Ave., the town's lone early voting location. (SunRise photo by Rory Schuler)

# PUTNAM PIKE SENTINEL FELLED

## Copper beech planted as wedding gift a century ago; stood guard outside Johnston Historical Society HQ

By RORY SCHULER

The more than century old copper beech was thick as a midsized sedan. A crew of skilled tree hackers took her down in less than a day, leaving a stump face as smooth as a baby’s bottom. “It’s truly a beautiful tree,” Johnston Historical Society Trustee Anthony J. Ursillo said, watching the saws tear into one of the town’s oldest surviving Putnam Pike sentinels. A week earlier, Ursillo wrote to inform the SunRise that the stately Ent would be removed.

TREE - PAGE 8



**OLD TREE, OLD PIC:** Louis McGowan, the Historical Society's Manager of Archives and Museum (and former president), provided a nearly century-old photo of the tree, from 1928. The now fallen copper beech is “just behind the one in the foreground,” McGowan said. “Blanche Farmum, the last owner-occupant of the house, said she had the tree planted when she was married. That event took place between 1911 and 1919.” (Photo courtesy the Johnston Historical Society Archive)



## ILO CONTRACT

# Investigation finds insufficient evidence to prosecute McKee

AG: Email with smile and a wink emoji not enough to pursue bribery charge



**WASTED TIME & MONEY?** Gov. Dan McKee says it is ‘unfortunate that so much time and taxpayer dollars were wasted’ on investigating his administration’s 2021 contract with education consultant ILO. (Alexander Castro/Rhode Island Current)

By ALEXANDER CASTRO & NANCY LAVIN  
Rhode Island Current

The awarding of a multimillion-dollar state education contract in 2021 flouted state procurement laws, but there’s not enough evidence to press criminal charges against Gov. Dan McKee and his advisers. So concluded the Rhode Island Office of the Attorney General and the Rhode Island State Police in a report issued Tuesday, marking the end to a three-year probe into the now-abandoned contract with the ILO Group. “The Governor and his administration

did not follow state procurement rules and regulations — the evidence of that is plain and cannot be seriously disputed,” Attorney General Peter Neronha concluded in a 14-page memo. “But enforcing state procurement rules is not within this Office’s responsibilities. Our job is to determine whether crimes were committed.” Neronha and Col. Darnell S. Weaver, superintendent of the Rhode Island State Police, are scheduled to take questions from reporters at Neronha’s office in Providence on Wednesday morning. Prosecutors and Rhode Island State Police pored over thousands of records

ILO - PAGE 10





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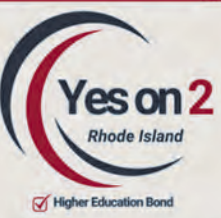
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# JHS Panther of the Week



**POTW:** This week's Panther of the Week is Caroline McCormick. Caroline was nominated by her Cross Country coaches, Ms. Cheryl Marfeo and Mr. Jay Areson. They said, "We are pleased to nominate Caroline McCormick in recognition of her hard work and determination in cross country. Caroline consistently demonstrates a strong work ethic, setting a positive example for her peers through her commitment to improvement and her willingness to push herself beyond her limits. Her dedication has led to impressive contributions to the success of the cross country team. She approaches each practice with focus and a positive attitude which allows her to excel in this sport." Caroline is also a member of SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) and helped coordinate a Wear Red Day at JHS for Drug and Violence Prevention Awareness. (Photos submitted by Matt Velino, Johnston High School Principal)

**Editor's Note:** This is the newest installment of an ongoing weekly series highlighting Johnston's amazing students. Staff at Johnston High School will be nominating students and submitting a caption and a photo for publication. You'll find each week's winning Panther on Page 2 of the Johnston Sun Rise.

Say you saw  
it in the  
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# THERE'S CHOICE AND THEN THERE'S THE *RIGHT* CHOICE

**Former District 42 Rep. Edward Cardillo said of the progressive candidate:  
“(she) represents the ‘Soros-backed far left wing’ of the Democratic party.”**

*Johnston Sun Rise, September 12, 2024*

## AS YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE RICHARD FASCIA:

- ✓ Will NEVER vote to raise taxes
- ✓ Supports protecting benefits for veterans & seniors
- ✓ Opposes taxpayer-funded benefits for undocumented immigrants
- ✓ Supports law enforcement & protecting communities
- ✓ Supports energy choice: oil, gas, electric, wood, solar
- ✓ Supports protection of private property rights.
- ✓ Opposes accessory dwelling units used as low-income housing
- ✓ Supports reinstatement of pensioners’ cost of living adjustments taken by the Raimondo administration

**Richard will stand with the  
taxpayers & citizens of Johnston & Cranston,  
NOT the radical Progressive agenda!**

## THE PROGRESSIVE CANDIDATE SUPPORTS:

- ✗ Taxpayer-funded heroin injection sites in our community
- ✗ Taxpayer-funded tuition for undocumented immigrants
- ✗ Defunding the police
- ✗ Higher taxes - there are no free handouts
- ✗ Open borders for immigration
- ✗ More government
- ✗ Policies that trigger soaring energy prices
- ✗ Relentless undermining of traditional values

**She is simply not the right choice for Johnston.**



**Richard  
FASCIA**

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VOTE FOR RICHARD FASCIA ON ELECTION DAY NOVEMBER 5**

# VOTE YES ON QUESTION 7

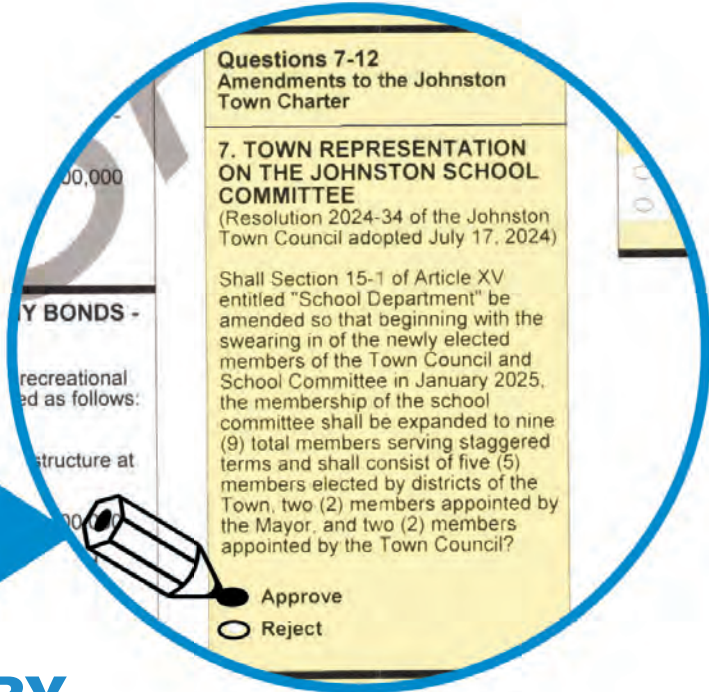
## Town Representation on School Committee

### CURRENTLY:


- Half of the town's budget, \$66.4 million, goes to the school department, yet the town has no say in school department finances.
- The school department is facing incredible financial strain with state mandates, which has led to deficits Johnston taxpayers must pay for.
- Unchecked, school department spending leads to property tax increases and less funding to other town services like public safety, senior services and infrastructure.

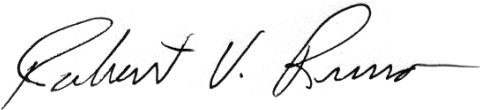
### Voting YES on Question 7


- Allows appointment of four municipal representatives, two by the mayor and two by the town council, to the school committee.
- Gives the town an ability to work with the school department to implement responsible budgeting practices, ensuring stable property taxes.
- With town involvement, we can ensure financial oversight and enhance budgeting and resource allocation that aligns with our community's needs and our students' success.





### SUPPORTED BY

  
Mayor Joseph Polisena, Jr.

  
Council President Robert Russo

  
Council Vice President Lauren Garzone

  
Councilman Alfred Carnevale

  
Councilwoman Linda Folcarelli



# Big questions on the ballot in Johnston

## Major changes possible, including bigger school committee, if several Town Charter changes pass referendum

By RORY SCHULER

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The version of this story that appeared in last week's print edition mistakenly attributed quotes by Town Council President Robert Russo to Johnston Mayor Joseph Polisena Jr. Those attributions have been fixed in this version of the story, and additional quotes from the mayor have been added to this update. The Johnston SunRise regrets the error.*

Johnston voters will answer several major questions on this year's ballot, which may substantially alter local government.

Six questions were ultimately approved at a Special Meeting of Johnston Town Council on July 17. At that meeting, the culmination of more than a dozen Johnston Charter Review Commission meetings were strained and concentrated into six ballot questions.

"All 39 cities and towns have local questions on the November ballot, and Johnston stands out for proposing some of the most fundamental changes to the structure of local government," said John Marion, executive director of Common Cause Rhode Island.

### The Big Q

Questions 7-12 on Johnston's 2024 General Election ballots will ask voters to approve or reject six amendments to the Johnston Town Charter.

The first proposed amendment, No. 7, could radically alter the composition of the School Committee.

"The most dramatic proposed change is the expansion of the school committee from five to nine seats, with two of the new members appointed by the mayor, and the other two appointed by the city council," Marion said earlier this week. "This is a dramatic departure from the current structure which has been in place since the 1960s and gives significant control to the other elected parts of town government. If this passes, Johnston would become only the second municipality to have such a hybrid board following Providence which is moving to that model in 2025."

Johnston School Board member Susan Mansolillo served on the Charter Review Commission. She urged the commission to reject the amendment.

"I was not in favor of four appointed members to the school committee," Mansolillo reaffirmed last week. "It takes away the citizens right to elect who represents them on the school committee. We spend time going out and talking to our constituents. We are always available to them. Appointed members will be loyal to the town not the children and the families in our districts. Voters should reject question 7 and protect their right to elect their school committee representation."

Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr., however, said he is "in support of all the ballot questions."

"Specifically, I'm in strong support of the town representation on the school committee," Polisena argued last week. "I think having voting members of the school committee representing the town would help foster a greater discussion and balance taxpayer priorities along with school department priorities."

Since taking office, Polisena has locked horns with the School Committee over budget increases and what he called growing regular structural deficits.

"I would love to give the school department one to two million dollar increases every budget cycle, as we have for the past two years since I've been mayor, however, at some point I will not be able to continue doing that without a major tax increase," Polisena said. "Moreover, since the school department is a separate government entity from the town, yet they are half of the town's budget, I think it's only fair to have town representation on that board."

Town Councilman Robert J. Civetti (District 5) argued against approving "Ballot Question 7" which would increase the Johnston School Committee to nine total members (from five; adding two new members appointed by the Mayor, and two appointed by Town Council).

"I am not in favor of this question to amend the Town Charter and hope that the taxpayers vote NO to this question," Civetti wrote earlier this week. "The taxpayers currently vote for individuals to represent their District on the School Committee. Anyone wishing to run for the position of School Committee has the right to register and submit paperwork to represent their District. I have heard that adding these positions will help diversify the composition of the School Committee, but I am not optimistic that this would actually occur."

Civetti worries the town's power of appointment could sever the district's autonomy and weaken voters' power to effect change.

"I do not believe that the Mayor or the Town Council should have the ability to appoint someone to the School Committee who would have the same powers and authority of the members that ran for this political position and were voted to serve in the capacity of School Committee Member by the taxpayers," Civetti argues. "The taxpayers should vote on who they want representing them and doing what is in the best interest of the children of OUR Town of Johnston."

An accountant by trade, Civetti said he's sensitive to the district's budgeting problems.

"I understand that more than 50% of the Town's budget goes to the School Department and that the School Department has been running deficits over the past several years," Civetti explained. "However, I do not believe that appointing members to the School Committee is the right way to try to resolve these deficits. The current administration has done a good job in increasing funding to the School Department after years of level funding by the prior administration. The Administration and Town Council has spent well over \$100,000 to have studies done on the finances and educational programs of the School Department. The Town needs to work with the School Department to implement many of the recommendations that were noted in these reports. The development and consolidation of the elementary school should result in considerable savings for the School Department."

Civetti voiced support, however, for a new taxation approach that has also been proposed by Polisena.

"Currently under RI State Law the Mayor and the Town Council have no control in how the School Committee spends the funding which they receive to support their annual budget," Civetti argued. "I believe that since the Mayor and Town Council have no control over their spending then the State should pass legislation which would allow the members of School Committees throughout the State of Rhode Island to set their own tax rate. The Town could simply incorporate the School Committee approved rate for education with the Town Councils approved tax rate when sending out annual tax bills. Having the School Committee responsible for setting their own tax rate may increase accountability to the taxpayers and will avoid any claims for lack of funding from local municipalities."

Johnston Town Council President Robert V. Russo said that those who "oppose this question are trying to make it a political power play issue."

"Elected and appointed positions are political by their very nature — they have always been that way since the beginning of civilization and will always be that way going forward regardless of rhetoric from the sidelines," Russo said last week.

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# Questions

(Continued from page 5)

“The school department is the largest budget driver in the town and involves one of the most important roles to citizens of the town — education of our children so that they can flourish in our complex world,” Russo continued. “I strongly believe there are extremely knowledgeable people in the community that can bring a positive dynamic and real-world solutions to issues confronting our school department. However, these same people do not get involved because they cannot afford or have the skills to run a political campaign. Appointments would solve this problem and bring a new dimension to creating solutions to school department challenges.”

Polisena supports Question 7: “I am in support of town representation on the school committee.”

“I think it’s fundamentally unfair the school department is roughly half of the town’s budget, yet the town has no say in how the money is spent,” Polisena explained. “This is money we are bound by state law to provide annually, with no ability to reduce funds (maintenance of effort mandates the town provide the same funding or more funding each year). Town representation on the school committee (two by the mayor and two by the council) allows municipal representatives to have a voice, albeit not the majority, on how the school department is spending funds. The present situation is like funding a subsidiary organization yet having no say on how your money is spent. If they sent out their own tax bill, this wouldn’t be an issue but that’s only possible through a state law at the state house, and there’s no appetite to lower municipal tax bills and send out a separate school tax bill.”

### Stormwater Bond (Q6)

Question 6 on the “Local Questions” portion of the ballot asks voters to approve a \$40 million bond for the “renovation, repair, and improvement for the stormwater management and sewer facilities throughout the town.”

The bond was recommended by Polisena and Town Planner Thomas Deller in response to major flooding concerns in Johnston over the past few years.

“I am in support of the financ-

ing to allow storm water management throughout the town,” Russo said last week. “With the recent weather cycles, it is clear we have serious flooding issues, and we need to obtain funding to formulate a plan to prevent further harm and expense to Johnston citizens due to destructive rain and flooding.”

Civetti questioned the ultimate plan, if the bond is approved.

“Although I agree that the town does have a number of problems and deficiencies with the Stormwater Management and Sewer Facilities I also feel that the Town has not provided sufficient information as of this date for the taxpayers to approve a \$40 million bond,” Civetti said on Tuesday, Oct. 22. “I would have liked to see the Town be fully transparent and hold several workshops to discuss the proposed projects and plan for utilizing this \$40 million, along with the impact this bond would have on the tax rate.”

In 2022, voters also approved a \$215 million bond to build new schools (Polisena promised those bond payments would be covered by the tax agreement with Amazon, which has yet to open its facility on Hartford Avenue but has already started making annual payments to the town).

“Many of the issues with the stormwater drainage system in the town (were) created years ago when the town allowed developers to build where they should not be building and where the town did not properly monitor these projects,” Civetti said. “If you go back and look at some of these areas where the town is looking to utilize these bond funds you will see how these areas once contained brooks, ponds, and streams yet they were filled in and the property developed. If the town would have held contractors responsible and properly managed the development years ago the taxpayers would not be asked to now pay \$40 million to help rectify the situation. Let’s hold some public workshops where the plan can be fully vetted and discussed with the taxpayers before we ask them to approve this bond.”

Johnston and Cranston are about to cooperate with the federal government in a major home buyout and demolition program aimed at tearing down more than 100 structures and building flood remediation fea-

tures in their place. That program is separate and apart from the local \$40 million bond question in Johnston.

### Longer Terms

Question 8 proposes doubling town council terms.

“Another proposed change lengthens the terms of office for council members from two to four years,” Marion said. “This means councilors will have to run for office less frequently, but they’ll also be less accountable to voters.”

Polisena said he is “in support of 4 year terms for town council member.”

“I think it’s right as a question of fairness, as both the mayor and school committee members are on four year terms,” Polisena said. “The council is the only municipal government position that runs every two years, which I also believe fatigues voters too. I think having a four year term allows a council member to focus on governing, rather than taking office, governing for 14 months, then going right into reelection mode. This four year term is common in other municipalities across Rhode Island.”

The Charter Review Commission recommended this change, although current elected officials questioned the need.

“I spoke out on this proposal several months ago and stand by my position that a two-year term is sufficient and provides the most flexibility to voters in keeping their elected officials on their toes,” Russo said.

Civetti supports the change.

“I hope that the taxpayers approve this ballot question to increase the term of office from 2 years to 4 years,” Civetti said. “All other elected offices in the town (Mayor and School Committee members) currently serve 4 year terms and I do not see a reason why Town Council should be any different ... It takes some time for a newly elected Town Council member to get situated in the position and therefore I believe that a 4 year term is more appropriate than a 2 year term.”

### Budget Calendar

Polisena and Civetti have been repeatedly at odds over the town budget, and its introduction to Town Council and the public.

Question 11 will ask voters to amend the Town Charter to allow the mayor to present the town’s proposed budget to Town Council on or before the

first day in June each year (and the Town Council “shall enact the budget no later than the last day of June in each year”).

“I am in support of this as much of our budget is based on the state’s budget,” Polisena wrote last week. “This would allow us to submit a budget on the same timeline as the state rather than going back and amending it based on last-minute changes they make, which unfortunately, happens every year.”

Polisena and Town Council have already been following that schedule for years, in blatant violation of Town Charter. Civetti cries foul every year.

“A proposed change to the dates for introducing and passing the town budget could give less time for scrutiny by the council and public input by moving by shortening the window between the budget’s introduction and adoption,” Marion said.

Russo said he supports the “presentment of budget by June 1 instead of April 1.”

“Having a town budget ready by April 1 is not in the best interests of the taxpayer as it is not accurate at such an early stage,” Russo explained last week. “I believe the budget should be fine tuned over the longest period possible as we do not know what our state funding level is often until June each year. Passing a budget without such revenue figures would be negligent.”

Civetti first turned to the budget schedule language in the current Town Charter.

“Currently the Charter requires the Mayor to present the proposed budget to the Town Council on or before the first day of April each year,” Civetti said. “In addition, the Charter states that the Town Council shall hold one or more public hearings on the proposed budget and shall enact the budget ordinance on or before the first day of May in each year. If you look over the past decade or so the Mayor has never submitted the proposed budget to the Town Council by April 1st and the Town Council has never held multiple public meetings on the budget.”

The budgeting process in Johnston is late and opaque; the budget is dropped and Town Council votes almost immediately after, sometimes just hours before the start of the new fiscal year (sometimes after).

“Usually the budget is presented to the members of the Council separately in a closed

meeting with the Mayor, the Chief of Staff, and the Finance Director and then one public meeting is held to discuss and vote on the budget,” Civetti explained. “I do not believe that this current process is transparent or consistent with the Town Charter. I believe that the Town Council should hold several public meetings to vet the proposed budget prepared by the Mayor. The Council should ask individual Directors and members of the School Department to discuss their budget at these meetings so that the Council has a full understanding of the budget. Therefore, I believe that waiting until June 1st for the Mayor to submit the budget for review does not provide adequate time for the Town Council to do their proper due diligence on the annual budget, which now exceeds \$134 million. I recommend that taxpayers vote No on this question and require the Mayor and Town Council to comply with the current Charter requirements. I am willing to bet that most of the RI Municipalities have their budgets submitted to the Town Council, hold public hearings, and approve the annual budget prior to the proposed June 1st date being suggested for the initial submission of the Mayor’s proposed budget.”

### The Rest

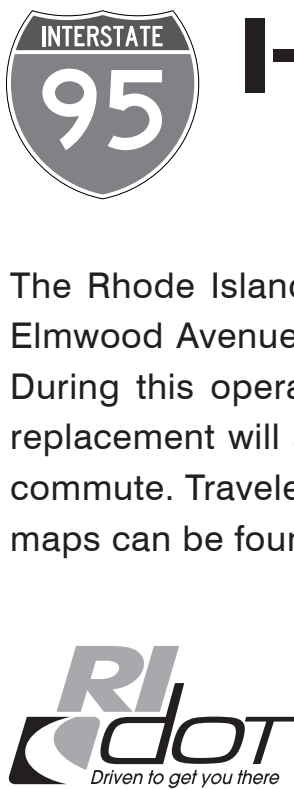
Four final ballot questions ask voters to hold elected and appointed town officials to the state’s Code of Ethics, create an Auxiliary Probate Judge position, amend the town’s budget calendar, and a Town Council-led (School Committee-aided) audit of school district finances.

Polisena also voiced support for the new auditing mandate.

“I am in support of the auditing standards,” Polisena said. “It’s very important the town and school adhere to strict auditing requirements. Passage of this question mandates the town comply with state law in regard to auditing practices and deadlines.”

Neutral parties questioned the affect these four questions would have in the daily lives of voters.

“Other changes will have little practical effect,” Marion argued. “One proposed change specifies that all elected school department employees and officials will be subject to the state and local ethics codes. All elected and appointed municipal officials and employees in Rhode



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# I-95 NORTH OVER ELMWOOD AVE WEEKEND CLOSURES

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) will replace the I-95 bridge northbound over Elmwood Avenue on the weekend of November 1st and November 8th using rapid bridge construction. During this operation, I-95 northbound at Elmwood Avenue will be reduced to two lanes. The bridge replacement will start at 8 p.m. Friday night and re-open at 5 a.m. on Monday morning for the morning commute. Travelers are advised to expect delays and plan alternate routes. More information and detour maps can be found at: [www.ridot.net](http://www.ridot.net).



State Questions

1. CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

(Section 2 of Article XIV of the Rhode Island Constitution)

Shall there be a convention to amend or revise the Rhode Island Constitution?

☐ Approve

☐ Reject

QUESTIONS 2 - 5

(Chapter 117 Public Laws 2024)

Shall the act passed by the General Assembly at the January 2024 session allowing Rhode Island to issue bonds, refunding bonds, and temporary notes to pay for the projects listed below, be approved, and the State be allowed to issue these bonds, refunding bonds, and temporary notes as outlined in the law?

2. HIGHER EDUCATION FACILITIES - \$160,500,000

For capital improvements to higher education facilities, to be allocated as follows:

a. University of Rhode Island Biomedical Sciences Building - \$87,500,000

b. Rhode Island College Cybersecurity Building - \$73,000,000

☐ Approve

☐ Reject

3. HOUSING AND COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY - \$120,000,000

To increase the availability of housing, support community revitalization, and promote home ownership, to be allocated as follows:

a. Affordable Housing - \$80,000,000

b. Acquisition and Revitalization - \$10,000,000

c. Homeownership - \$20,000,000

d. Site Acquisition - \$5,000,000

e. Housing Related Infrastructure - \$4,000,000

f. Municipal Planning - \$1,000,000

☐ Approve

☐ Reject

4. GREEN ECONOMY BONDS - \$53,000,000

For environmental and recreational purposes, to be allocated as follows:

a. Port of Davisville Infrastructure at Quonset - \$15,000,000

b. Climate Resiliency - \$2,000,000

c. Brownfields Remediation and Economic Development - \$5,000,000

d. Local Recreation Projects - \$5,000,000

e. Municipal Resiliency - \$10,000,000

f. Newport Cliff Walk - \$3,000,000

g. Agricultural Land Preservation Commission - \$5,000,000

h. Open Space Program - \$3,000,000

i. Forests and Habitat Management - \$5,000,000

☐ Approve

☐ Reject

State Questions

5. CULTURAL ARTS AND THE ECONOMY GRANT PROGRAM \$10,000,000

For purposes of funding for 1:1 matching grants to continue the Cultural Arts and the Economy Grant Program administered by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (RISCA) for capital improvement, preservation, and renovation projects for public and non-profit artistic centers, performance centers, museums, and cultural art centers located throughout the State of Rhode Island, to be allocated as follows:

a. Tomaquag Museum - \$2,000,000

b. Newport Contemporary Ballet - \$2,000,000

c. Trinity Repertory Company - \$2,000,000

d. Other funds to be allocated by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts - \$4,000,000

☐ Approve

☐ Reject

Local Questions

6. FINANCING FOR THE RENOVATION, REPAIR, AND IMPROVEMENT FOR THE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND SEWER FACILITIES THROUGHOUT THE TOWN \$40,000,000

BONDS AND NOTES

(Local Acts 032/033 - Acts and Resolves of 2024)

Shall an act, passed at the 2024 session of the General Assembly, entitled, 'An Act authorizing the Town of Johnston to issue not to exceed \$40,000,000 general obligation bonds, notes and other evidences of indebtedness to finance construction, additions, renovation, improvement, alteration, repair, furnishing and equipping of stormwater management and sewer facilities throughout the Town' be approved?

☐ Approve

☐ Reject

Questions 7-12

Amendments to the Johnston Town Charter

7. TOWN REPRESENTATION ON THE JOHNSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Resolution 2024-34 of the Johnston Town Council adopted July 17, 2024)

Shall Section 15-1 of Article XV entitled "School Department" be amended so that beginning with the swearing in of the newly elected members of the Town Council and School Committee in January 2025, the membership of the school committee shall be expanded to nine (9) total members serving staggered terms and shall consist of five (5) members elected by districts of the Town, two (2) members appointed by the Mayor, and two (2) members appointed by the Town Council?

☐ Approve

☐ Reject

8. FOUR-YEAR TERMS FOR JOHNSTON TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

(Resolution 2024-35 of the Johnston Town Council adopted July 17, 2024)

Shall Section 3-1 of Article III entitled "Town Council" be amended so that beginning with the general election of 2026, the Town Council shall serve a term of four (4) years?

☐ Approve

☐ Reject

Local Questions

9. CODE OF ETHICS

(Resolution 2024-36 of the Johnston Town Council adopted July 17, 2024)

Shall Section 19-4 of Article XIX entitled "General Provisions" be amended so that all elected and appointed officers and employees of the town government, including the schools and members of the school committee, shall abide by the state and local code of ethics?

☐ Approve

☐ Reject

10. CREATION OF AUXILIARY PROBATE JUDGE POSITION

(Resolution 2024-37 of the Johnston Town Council adopted July 17, 2024)

Shall Sections 7-1, 7-2, 7-3, and 7-4 of Article VII entitled "Probate Judge" be amended so that an additional position of Auxiliary Probate Judge position is created and whose appointment and compensation shall be by the Town Council?

☐ Approve

☐ Reject

11. BUDGET INTRODUCTION AND ENACTMENT

(Resolution 2024-38 of the Johnston Town Council adopted July 17, 2024)

Shall Section 8-3 of Article VIII entitled "The Budget" be amended so that the Mayor shall present the Town's proposed budget to the Town Council on or before the first day in June in each year and the Town Council shall enact the budget no later than the last day of June in each year?

☐ Approve

☐ Reject

12. AUDIT AND AUDIT STANDARDS FOR THE TOWN AND SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

(Resolution 2024-39 of the Johnston Town Council adopted July 17, 2024)

Shall Section 3-10 of Article III entitled "Town Council" and Section 15-5 of Article XV entitled "School Department" be amended so that the Town Council, with the School Department cooperating in financial reporting, must complete an annual detailed audit in compliance with government auditing standards and within the time period mandated by state law?

☐ Approve

☐ Reject


Johnston

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## Questions

(Continued from page 6)

Island are already subject to the state's Code of Ethics. This is largely a feel good measure with little or no actual impact."

Polisena, Russo and Civetti all support the code of ethics amendment.

"I am in support of codifying the code of ethics in the town charter," Polisena said. "This is more procedural, as we are bound by state ethics laws which supersede town ethics laws. Approving this question allows the town to codify state ethics laws into municipal government."

All three also support the creation of an "Auxiliary Probate" position.

"I think the courts need flexibility in scheduling and having an auxiliary probate judge will guarantee that court sessions do not get rescheduled due to the unavailability of a single judge," Russo said. "Local judges are practicing attorneys and there are many times their schedule conflict with the town probate court date. The expense of an auxiliary probate judge is minimal, and the benefit far outweighs the minimum cost."

Civetti said he understands that the "position is not a fully paid position rather the position is only paid whenever the auxiliary judge fills in for the probate judge."

"I believe this position is something that is needed to ensure that the Town continues to serve the residents of our community," Civetti said. "The Town had an unfortunate incident occur this past year where we had a vacancy in the position of Probate Judge. Probate is somewhat of a specialty and we should have had an Auxiliary Judge available that could have stepped in to fill the vacancy. Voting to approve this question will ensure that we have someone qualified to fill in for the Probate Judge so that all probate matters are heard in a timely

and efficient manner."

The sitting Probate Judge faced criminal charges; and under the old Town Charter, the town's solicitor was to temporarily fill the position. This ballot measure should prevent that in the future.

"I am in support of this," Polisena argued. "As it currently stands, if our probate judge is unavailable the way our charter is now, the town solicitor is forced to cover for them. Probate work is very specific in nature and not a lot of attorneys know how to do it. Allowing a backup probate judge would ensure our probate court keeps running smoothly by a qualified professional in case of emergency."

### Public Messaging

Civetti raised concerns with the presentation of the ballot questions to the public.

"Let me start by saying that I believe that the Town of Johnston did not do a sufficient job in providing information to the taxpayers about these questions which appear on the 2024 Ballot," Civetti argued. He shared a story about "taxpayers" with whom he has spoken "who have already voted said they were surprised and caught off guard by the local questions which appeared on the back of their ballot."

"They indicated that they had no idea what the questions were about and wished that the Town of Johnston had sent out some notice ahead of the election to provide information about the local questions which they were going to be asked to vote on," Civetti said. "The State of Rhode Island did a mailing to all taxpayers about the State questions. Why didn't the Town of Johnston do the same for the Town questions?"

Polisena disagreed with Civetti's assessment.

"Overall, these ballot questions are about moving Johnston into the future so we aren't governing in the 2020s from a charter last amended in the 1970s," the mayor said.





**AFTER:** The tree was gone by late afternoon. (Photo courtesy the Johnston Historical Society Archive)

ANIMALTALK

By Karen Kalunian

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Photo credit: Karen Kalunian

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■ Tree

(Continued from page 1)

“We have a very large 100-year-old tree (on the front lawn at the JHS) which unfortunately needs to be taken down,” he sadly reported. “It has rotted away.”

Louis McGowan, the Historical Society’s Manager of Archives and Museum (and former president), provided a nearly century-old photo of the tree.

“This is from 1928 and shows our tree just behind the one in the foreground,” McGowan said last week. “Blanche Farmum, the last owner-occupant of the house, said she had the tree planted when she was married. That event took place between 1911 and 1919.”

In just the past four years, University of Rhode Island researchers have reported a new blight facing trees like the historical society’s former tenant — “a

**BEFORE:** Members of the Johnston Historical Society watched sadly as a professional tree service dismantled the more than century-old copper beech outside the historic Elijah Angell House and the JHS barn museum next door. (SunRise photo by Rory Schuler)



JOHNSTON POLICE LOG

SHOPLIFTING

On Oct. 24, Matthew Neves, 34, of 55 Wannissett Ave., East Providence, was arrested by Rhode Island State Police on multiple active warrants, including one from Johnston Police for shoplifting.

At 1:05 p.m. on Sept. 12, Johnston Police Officer Nicholas DeFelice was dispatched to Walgreens, 1583 Atwood Ave., where a suspect, identified as Neves, “walked around the store for approximately 45 minutes grabbing several items such as Coca-Cola, Hotwheels City Transforming Race Tower, Pepsi 12pk, and Tide Lq 2X” before walking out of the store without paying and allegedly emptying the shopping cart in the Brewed Awakenings parking lot, according to police.

Neves was turned over to Johnston Police custody on Oct. 24 without incident and held at headquarters awaiting arraignment.

ATTEMPTED BREAKING & ENTERING

On Oct. 26 around 5 p.m., Johnston Police Officer Derrick Palazzo observed a man, later identified as Teddy Zeekch, 27, 9 Magdalene St., Providence, riding a mountain bicycle eastbound on Plainfield Street “with a large red square pizza box in the front basket of the bicycle.” He then observed Zeekch stop his bike at a vacant residence and walk to the backyard.

Officer Palazzo then followed Zeekch and saw him “manipulating a basement/lower level window of the residence,” according to police. Zeekch told police he “was in fact a good Samaritan that was only checking the residence to ensure it was locked.”

DRIVING WITH SUSPENDED LICENSE

On Oct. 24 at 2:56 p.m., Johnston Police pulled over Lorena Hernandez, 32, of 17 Pennsylvania Ave., Providence, on Traver Avenue for having no front registration plate and a rear plate with an expired registration tag. A DMV check revealed that her driver’s license was also suspended. Hernandez was arrested and charged with driving with suspended/revoked/cancelled license and cited for operation of unregistered vehicle and display of plates.

CHILD MOLESTATION

According to the Rhode Island Attorney General’s Office, on Oct. 24, the Providence County Grand Jury returned an indictment charging Jhonatan Cadima Huayta, 21, of Cranston, with one count of first-degree child molestation and one count of simple assault. The alleged acts occurred in the town of Johnston on or about Jan. 25. The Johnston Police Department conducted the investigation. The defendant is scheduled to be arraigned on Nov. 13, in Providence County Superior Court.

EDITOR’S NOTE:

The preceding police log information has been taken from public record police incident and arrest reports provided by the Johnston Police Department and other local law enforcement agencies.



# Opinion

EDITORIAL

## Early voting proves valuable for Rhode Islanders

In what has felt like a mad dash to the 2024 General Election, thousands of Rhode Islanders have already made their voices heard through the state’s generous and straightforward early voting period — and that’s a great thing for democracy.

There’s still time, too, to beat the rush on Election Day and submit your ballot on your own time, at your own availability.

Early voting continues on until the day before Election Day, Nov. 4. To see where and when you can go vote early, simply visit [vote.sos.ri.gov](http://vote.sos.ri.gov) and click on “Early Voting Information” among the buttons in the center of the page. From there, you can find your early voting location and their hours of operation.

Clearly, according to our own anecdotal experiences with voters who have exercised this right to vote early, and to the data coming out about early voting numbers, plenty of Rhode Islanders are finding the ease and availability of early voting to be a benefit.

According to the Secretary of State’s voting tracker, Warwick leads all Rhode Island municipalities in early voting with over 6,300 early voters as of press deadline. They additionally trail only Providence in the number of mail ballots received by the Board of Elections, with over 2,500 as of press-time (Providence voters have submitted 3,000 mail ballots, but only 4,100 voted early so far). This means nearly 9,000 Warwick residents have voiced their vote prior to Election Day, which is around 14% of the 62,865 registered voters.

Cranston takes the second spot for most early voting in the state with over 5,500 early votes and nearly 2,000 mail-in ballots cast as of press time, which amounts to around 13% of its 56,200 registered voters.

Johnston voters demonstrate a similar trend to Warwick and Cranston, with over 2,400 early voters and 762 mail-in votes as of press-time. That amounts to around 14% of their 22,492 registered voters.

All said, with more than a week of early voting remaining, nearly 112,000 Rhode Islanders have exercised their right to vote through the early voting process. There are thousands more approved mail ballots that have yet to be received, and it wouldn’t be surprising if a huge swath of Rhode Islanders take advantage of this last full week of early voting to boost the overall participation from early voting close to 25% (or greater) of the total voter turnout by the time all is said and done.

The proof is evident from these numbers that voters prefer having options for how to cast their ballots. This availability of early voting also reduces the burden on poll workers and elections officials on Election Day, as a significant number of people won’t be crowding polling locations since they’ve already been able to vote.

We applaud the Secretary of State and Board of Elections for encouraging a vibrant early voting culture in Rhode Island, and implore anyone who has not already taken the opportunity to cast their vote to consider doing so early.

At the very least, we implore all registered voters in Rhode Island to make it out to the polls on Election Day, to ensure they have a say in how the most important issues to them — the local ones — are carried out.

GUEST OPS

## A Constitutional Convention is our best hope for reform

By STEVEN FRIAS

This year voters will decide whether to hold a state constitutional convention. A constitutional convention proposes constitutional amendments for voter approval. These amendments could dramatically reform state government.

What could a constitutional convention propose? It could propose an inspector general responsible for preventing and detecting fraud, and waste. The federal government and many states have an inspector general. If there had been an inspector general overseeing DOT, maybe the Washington Bridge fiasco could have been prevented.

A constitutional convention could propose an amendment to require voter approval of any major debt obligation that puts taxpayers at risk. Voters are asked to approve millions in bonds, but they get no say on the debt for certain unpopular projects. As a result, taxpayers are now stuck paying \$132 million for a Pawtucket soccer stadium.

Debacles are not inevitable. The General Assembly could have created an inspector general or required voter approval for the soccer stadium. It chose not to. Through a constitutional convention, the people get a chance to vote on proposals the General Assembly will not support.

In Rhode Island government, there is too much power concentrated in too few people. Power is concentrated in the General Assembly, which is controlled by a handful of politicians who are influenced by a small group of special interest groups.

Good government is limited government, and in limited government, power is dispersed. A constitutional convention could propose amendments that reduce this concentration of power. Proposed amendments could include: term limits for state legislators, a line-item veto, and voter initiative which gives the people the power to put legislation on the ballot for voter approval. Numerous states have these government reforms.

Not surprisingly, the special interest groups and politicians who control the state house are opposed to a constitutional convention. When powerful people are scared, they use scare tactics. First, they claim a consti-

titutional convention will strip away rights. This is misleading. No change in Rhode Island’s constitution can affect our rights under the U.S. Constitution. Furthermore, any proposed constitutional amendment cannot go into effect unless it is approved by the voters. For example, in 1986, a pro-life constitutional amendment was overwhelmingly rejected by Rhode Island voters.

Second, they claim special interest groups will influence the constitutional amendment process. This is hypocritical. Well-funded special interest groups already influence the Rhode Island political process. Special interest groups have already spent over \$130,000 opposing a constitutional convention. Special interest groups, some from out of state, spent \$600,000 in 2022, to help Gov. McKee win a primary after McKee’s tie-breaking vote in favor of the soccer stadium. Furthermore, it should be noted that voters have previously rejected an out of state special interest group’s effort to amend Rhode Island’s constitution. In 2006, the General Assembly proposed a constitutional amendment which allowed casino gambling and benefited Harrah’s. Harrah’s spent large sums of money, but voters overwhelmingly rejected it.

Third, they claim a constitutional convention will be expensive. This is inaccurate. The 1973 constitutional convention cost less than \$20,000. Furthermore, the costs of any convention could be easily offset if voters approved an inspector general or a line-item veto.

Basically, the opponents of a constitutional convention are saying: you are smart enough to elect legislators to the General Assembly and to vote on any constitutional amendment the General Assembly may propose, but you are too stupid to elect delegates to a constitutional convention and to vote on any constitutional amendment the convention may propose.

If you believe state government needs to be reformed, and you are skeptical the General Assembly will reduce its own power or upset the special interest groups that influence it, a constitutional convention is your best hope.

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** *Steven Frias is a lawyer, a local historian, an award-winning writer, whose campaign for state representative has been credited with leading to the phase out of the car tax.*

## House Speaker Shekarchi urges voters to ‘Vote No’ on Question 1

By K. JOSEPH SHEKARCHI

Rhode Island began as a “lively experiment,” but we must never tolerate becoming a laboratory for out-of-state extremist interests.

There is a provision in the Rhode Island Constitution requiring that every 10 years, the following question is to be put to the voters: “Shall there be a convention to amend or revise the Constitution?” This will appear as Question 1 on the ballot in this election.

I am urging Rhode Islanders to vote NO on Question 1 and reject the calling of a constitutional convention. I know that there will be some criticism leveled at me for taking this position. But I want to make sure that voters know exactly what is at stake.

The Constitution is the state’s most important governing document. We rely on its language to guarantee our most fundamental and personal rights: civil rights, voting rights, marriage rights, reproductive rights and workers’ rights.

If Question 1 is approved, a special election would be held to elect 75 delegates whose sole charge would be to revise the Rhode Island Constitution in any way they see fit. Delegates would undoubtedly run and campaign on behalf of a multitude of special interests, including national issues espoused by the fringes of both political parties. Outside money would flood into this state. Outside groups would treat Rhode Island as a test case in an attempt to cement these issues into the constitution of any state.

We must not allow our Constitution to be sold to the highest bidder. Voters should be aware that there is no limit on the amount of money that anyone - inside or outside the state - can spend in support of any special interest. There are no guardrails on the scope of issues to be considered by the delegates or the process the convention uses to approve them. The combination of unlimited dark money and a convention’s opportunity to unwind critical and hard-fought rights gives me grave concern.

Some of the ideas that proponents support may have merit. Supporters of a constitutional convention erroneously suggest that a constitutional convention is the only way that certain constitutional changes will occur. I want to remind voters that the General Assembly considers legislation every year which propose changes to the Constitution. The public participates in our open and transparent hearing process, and the media carefully reports on these ideas. Representatives and senators in the General Assembly must face the voters every two years. If the voters are not happy, election results will show it. Conversely, delegates to a constitutional convention will never face the voters again.

As Speaker of the House, I am always mindful of budget impacts. Voters should know that if Question 1 were

to be approved, the special election and resulting convention would result in an expense to taxpayers of millions of dollars.

There is sound reason why no other state has approved or conducted a constitutional convention for nearly 40 years. In fact, Rhode Island conducted the very last constitutional convention in the nation in 1986. Since that time, our voters have consistently rejected the calling of a convention.

I will be voting NO on Question 1 and urge all Rhode Islanders to join me. Finally, I encourage all Rhode Islanders to engage regularly with their representatives and senators on legislative priorities and to actively participate in the legislative public hearing process by providing written or in-person testimony.

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** *K. Joseph Shekarchi (D) was first elected Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives in January 2021; he was re-elected as Speaker in January 2023. He represents Warwick’s District 23.*



John Howell, Publisher Emeritus

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ILO

(Continued from page 1)

obtained through a combination of court-authorized search warrants, other legal avenues and in response to public records requests, and conducted interviews of more than 25 witnesses, including state officials, officers and employees. The AG’s website on Tuesday afternoon posted a trove of memos, emails, text messages, conflict of interest forms and campaign finance filings with the state Board of Elections.

The investigation found the \$5.2 million deal with the ILO Group was in the works as McKee’s team prepared for his transition from lieutenant governor to governor in early 2021 to fill the unexpired term of former Gov. Gina Raimondo after she was tapped as U.S. Commerce Secretary.

But, “the evidence is cloudy and contradictory in places,” Neronha wrote. “Cloudy and contradictory evidence rarely if ever justifies a prosecution, and seldom leads to a successful one. We choose not to bring one here.”

The state ultimately paid \$1.8 million to ILO for what was supposed to be a \$5.2 million contract beginning in July 2021. The contract was cut short halfway through the one-year agreement amid ongoing public and legal scrutiny.

ILO Group — its letters stand for “In the Life Of” — incorporated in Rhode Island just two days after McKee was sworn in on March 2, 2021. The company was cofounded by Julia Rafal-Baer while she was working as chief operating officer at the national education nonprofit Chiefs for Change, alongside then-CEO Mike Magee. Magee also served on McKee’s transition team.

ILO’s website describes the company as a “women-founded, leadership-focused education policy and strategy firm” that offers executive coaching, capacity building and other strategizing to enhance student outcomes. Rafal-Baer has been its CEO since July 2021, according to her LinkedIn page.

ILO was one of the top two bidders — with a significantly more expensive proposal — seeking the federally-funded contract to help schools meet COVID-19 safety protocols in the wake of the pandemic, alongside summer and after-school programs to address learning loss. The controversial award, first reported by WPRI-12 TV in October 2021, prompted state prosecutors and law enforcement to open an investigation that same month.

“Today’s report confirms what we’ve been saying for years,” Gov. McKee said in a statement Tuesday evening. “No

wrongdoing took place and our priority has and will always be delivering for the people of Rhode Island. It’s unfortunate that so much time and taxpayer dollars were wasted on an effort that was always going to come up empty, but now it’s important that we all move forward and continue focusing on the issues that are impacting Rhode Islanders every day.”

Robert Clark Corrente, an attorney representing ILO Group, issued a statement Tuesday afternoon on behalf of his clients.

“The Attorney General’s report confirmed what we have maintained from the outset: there was absolutely no wrongdoing by ILO Group or any of its personnel,” Corrente wrote. “We are pleased that this matter has concluded, and ILO Group looks forward to continuing its work supporting public education nationwide.”

Magee, who now works as president for Minerva University in San Francisco, said in an email Tuesday night that he was “pleased” the investigation had concluded.

“As an unpaid member of Governor McKee’s transition team, I tried to help Rhode Island support teachers and students through one of the worst periods of the COVID pandemic,” Magee said.

Rafal-Baer could not be reached for comment.

Bribery argument leads to a dead end

Neronha told WPRI in March that the ILO investigation was finished, promising the report “fairly soon.”

Seven months later, he delivered, concluding that the maze-shaped evidence did not definitively lead to bribery: “The evidentiary trail here was complicated, and understanding its threads and weaving them into apparent truth took considerable time,” Neronha wrote in his memo.

The attorney general’s investigation centered around state bribery law, which requires prosecutors to show a quid pro quo occurred and benefited a state official in a personal or political, rather than official, capacity.

There are two narrative threads in the report. The first is the contract awarded to ILO for consultation surrounding school reopening, and the second is communication services for McKee via SKDK, a New York-based communications consulting firm. Two smaller subplots involve a pair of related allegations: That McKee violated campaign finance and ethics laws in addition to bribery.

SKDK’s services cost McKee nothing, and the investigation alleges they were paid for via Chiefs for Change, thanks to

Rafal-Baer securing roughly \$90,000 for a six-months contract to provide “transition support” from another nonprofit. The contract covered the period from Jan. 5, 2021,to June 7, 2021,to support only education-related issues.

Magee, who the AG’s report describes as being “as involved behind the scenes during much of the procurement process,” was willing to be interviewed about the communication services provided via SKDK, but did not agree to be interviewed about ILO.

The report names Magee and Rafal-Baer as the impetus for the ILO contract, not McKee.

In a Feb. 28, 2021, email to then-Lt. Gov. McKee and his staff, Magee pushed for an “emergency contract” or “very fast RFP (request for proposal)” that could be “swiftly executed so Julia and her team can get to work.”

On March 5, 2021, Magee joined McKee, then-Director of Administration James Thorsen and Purchasing Agent Nancy McIntyre for a Zoom call to discuss the proposed RFP. McKee said children needed to get back to school because of pandemic learning loss, and floated the idea of a speedier, single-source contract, avoiding the traditional competitive solicitation route.

“No, you should do a procurement,” McIntyre advised.

But was the solicitation truly competitive? Perhaps not.

A March 21, 2021, email from Magee to other top McKee advisors shows how Magee manipulated the phrasing of the state solicitation to fit with ILO’s qualifications.

“I personally think ‘qualified’ should be defined as a firm whose partners have worked ... in at least 15 large school districts and at least 6 states ... We want one vendor with the capacity to oversee, manage and deliver on all of this work,” Magee wrote.

Rafal-Baer was even less subtle in an email to an out-of-state consulting colleague sent two days later.

“It’s a fixed RFP but luckily I know the person it’s fixed for,” Rafal-Baer wrote, capping her note with a winky face emoji.

To Rhode Island State Police Sgt. Michael Brock, Rafal-Baer’s email threw the entire bidding process into question.

“This email shows that potential fraud or manipulation of the competitive bidding occurred at the outset of the process,” Brock wrote in his own, 25-page memo. “It calls into question the legitimacy of the process that followed.”

The state issued its formal bid request on March 23, 2021. Five bidders submitted proposals, with two companies, ILO and WestEd, rising to the top. The proposal from WestEd, a San Francisco-

based firm with decades of experience, came in \$4 million less than ILO.

Despite WestEd scoring higher on the state’s evaluation and drawing support from the bid review team, McKee stepped in to block a potential contract. A series of text messages in May 2021 between McKee and Thorsen show the governor questioning the proposed award to WestEd and, as Thorsen admitted to State Police, ultimately influencing the award process.

WestEd ultimately got a small piece of the final contract — less than \$1 million — but the bulk went to ILO. Gretchen Wright, a spokesperson for WestEd, declined to comment on the investigation Tuesday.

The definition of bribery

Bribery consists of two parts: an “official act” and a “personal benefit.” Neronha’s office found the former charge was “satisfied” by McKee’s manipulation of the RFP process. But the “evidence is decidedly mixed,” Neronha wrote, as to how McKee personally profited, or imagined he and his team would profit, from ensuring ILO was victorious in the bid process.

The strongest evidence of a quid pro quo was timing: The communications firm SKDK worked for McKee for the first six months of 2021 as “transition support,” from when McKee was still lieutenant governor until just before the ILO contract was awarded July 1.

Those overlapping timelines warranted “close investigative and prosecutorial scrutiny,” Neronha said, but, “Without such direct evidence, a prosecution for the bribery offense would have to rely on a patchwork of circumstantial evidence and inferences surrounding the award of the contract to ILO and the receipt of SKDK’s services.”

There was also no clear way to delineate how the SKDK money was used to fund McKee’s 2022 candidacy for governor, as opposed to his transition to governor. Magee told State Police that he believed there would be a “Chinese wall” within the funds that would prevent their use in McKee’s 2022 campaign, and that he also told Rafal-Baer and Trainor that the funds could not be used for McKee’s campaign.

“Yet, we cannot definitively answer that question, because, as described above, the investigative record is replete with conflicting witness accounts, emails and other documents that cut both ways,” Neronha stated.

Conclusive evidence of the SKDK work benefiting McKee’s 2022 candidacy would have violated state campaign

ILO - PAGE 11

LEGAL NOTICES

<div><div>Town of Johnston</div><div>Notice is hereby given pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws of 1956, as amended, §3-5-8 that the Johnston Town Council, sitting as the Liquor Licensing Commission under Chapter 5 of the RIGL, shall hold a public hearing at the Johnston Municipal Court Building, 1600 Atwood Avenue, Johnston, RI on November 12, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.</div><div>The purpose of the Public Hearing is to consider the following applications for liquor license renewals:</div><div>2024-2025 Licenses</div><div><div>Class A Liquor Store</div><div>G &amp; S Liquors, Inc.</div><div>d/b/a The Johnston Fine Wine Beer &amp; Spirits</div><div>2951 Hartford Avenue</div><div>Knight's Wine &amp; Spirits, Inc.</div><div>d/b/a Knights Liquor Warehouse</div><div>1450 Hartford Avenue</div><div>Market Beer Wine Spirits, LLC</div><div>d/b/a Market Fine Wine &amp; Spirits</div><div>11 Commerce Way</div><div>Tri Town Liquor, Inc.</div><div>d/b/a Tri Town Wine &amp; Spirits</div><div>39 Putnam Pike</div><div>Class B Limited</div><div>Baja's Tex Mex Express, LLC</div><div>d/b/a Baja's Grill Express</div><div>1412 Atwood Avenue</div><div>Class BYOB</div><div>Cafe Vino</div><div>235 Greenville Avenue</div><div>Class BV- Full</div><div>101 Bar &amp; Grill, Inc.</div><div>d/b/a Bar 101, Ste 103,104,105</div><div>1478 Atwood Avenue</div><div>A Center Stage Co, LLC</div></div></div>	<div><div>d/b/a The78 Pub at This Guy's Pizza</div><div>80 Greenville Avenue</div><div>Fried Holdings, LLC.</div><div>d/b/a Mr. Biggs Saloon</div><div>1463A Atwood Avenue</div><div>A Taste of Italy Deli &amp; Café LLC d/b/a</div><div>A Taste of Italy Deli &amp; Café</div><div>1302 Atwood Avenue</div><div>AGZ Enterprises, Inc</div><div>d/b/a Escada Restaurant and Bar</div><div>39 Putnam Avenue #3&amp;4</div><div>An-Jon, Inc.</div><div>d/b/a Johna's</div><div>659 Killingly Street</div><div>Atwood Pizza, LLC d/b/a Bar Lino</div><div>1395 Atwood Avenue</div><div>Chipotle Mexican Grill of Colorado, LLC</div><div>d/b/a Chipotle Mexican Grill</div><div>1386 Atwood Avenue</div><div>Choummaly, LLC</div><div>d/b/a Bangkok Republik</div><div>1369 Hartford Avenue</div><div>Coliseum Sports Bar &amp; Grille, Inc.</div><div>d/b/a J.J. Coliseum</div><div>23 Greenville Avenue</div><div>Copperfield's, Inc</div><div>d/b/a Copperfield's Bar &amp; Grill</div><div>678 Killingly Street</div><div>CW Building, LLC</div><div>d/b/a Run-Em-Racks, Bar &amp; Grill &amp; Billiards</div><div>928 Plainfield Street</div><div>DNS, Inc.</div><div>d/b/a Red Ginger Restaurant</div><div>560 Killingly Street</div><div>Duffs, LLC</div><div>d/b/a Dr. Duffs Lost and Found Project</div><div>198 Putnam Pike</div><div>El Paisano Panaderia &amp; Restaurante, LLC</div><div>d/b/a El Paisano Panaderia &amp; Restaurante</div><div>928 Plainfield Street</div><div>Emmily's, LLC</div><div>d/b/a Emmily's Family Style Restaurant</div><div>103 Putnam Avenue</div><div>F. Saia Restaurants, LLC.</div><div>d/b/a Pat's Italian Restaurant</div></div>	<div><div>1200 Hartford Avenue</div><div>Family Dining Restaurant, Inc.</div><div>d/b/a Uncle Tony's Pizza &amp; Pasta</div><div>46 Putnam Pike</div><div>Hei Palace, Inc.</div><div>d/b/a Hei Place</div><div>1 Commerce Way, Unit E</div><div>HNR, LLC.</div><div>d/b/a Sura Restaurant</div><div>300 George Waterman Road</div><div>JJ Group, Inc</div><div>d/b/a Bon Asian Bistro</div><div>1386 Atwood Avenue</div><div>J. Palmieri Pizzeria &amp; Ice Cream, Inc</div><div>d/b/a J. Palmieri Pizzeria</div><div>1999 Plainfield Pike</div><div>JJ &amp; AH, LLC d/b/a</div><div>The Punjab Indian Cuisine</div><div>1565 Plainfield Pike</div><div>Luigi's Gourmet Express, Inc.</div><div>d/b/a Luigi's Gourmet Express</div><div>1359 Hartford Avenue</div><div>Parsadanyan Enterprises, LLC</div><div>d/b/a Pizza Palace</div><div>1587 Plainfield Pike</div><div>Pizzeria Romana Corp</div><div>d/b/a Pizzeria Romana</div><div>1571 Atwood Avenue</div><div>Roman Enterprise, Inc.</div><div>d/b/a Atwood Grill</div><div>1413 Atwood Avenue</div><div>Rosa Mia Ristorante, Inc.</div><div>d/b/a Silvio's Restaurant &amp; Bar</div><div>133 Greenville Avenue</div><div>Strings Bar &amp; Grill, LLC</div><div>d/b/a Strings Bar &amp; Grill</div><div>183 George Waterman Road</div><div>TCP Enterprises, LLC</div><div>d/b/a The Ave Bar &amp; Grill</div><div>1428 Hartford Avenue</div><div>The Chicken Coop Kitchen &amp; Bar, LLC</div><div>d/b/a The Chicken Coop Kitchen &amp; Bar</div><div>1463 Atwood Avenue, Units E &amp; F</div><div>Torre Corp III</div><div>d/b/a Trattoria Romana</div><div>1571 Atwood Avenue</div></div>	<div><div>Viva Mexico Restaurant, LLC</div><div>d/b/a Viva Mexico Restaurant</div><div>1031 Plainfield Street, Ste 6</div><div>Bishop Hill Tavern</div><div>2868 Hartford Avenue</div><div>Cherry Hill Grille</div><div>223 B Greenville Avenue</div><div>Fu Ming Chinese Restaurant, Inc.</div><div>9 Greenville Avenue</div><div>Murphy Holdings, LLC d/b/a Real'i's Fine</div><div>Italian Cuisine Restaurant</div><div>79 Putnam Avenue</div><div>Class C- Club</div><div>ArtJim, LLC</div><div>d/b/a Dad's Place</div><div>1465 Atwood Avenue</div><div>Class D- Club</div><div>Maria SS Della Difesa Society</div><div>15 Lafayette Street</div><div>Johnston, RI 02919</div><div>November 14, 2024</div><div>Individuals requesting Interpreter service for the hearing impaired must notify the Office of the Town Clerk seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the meeting date at 351-6618.</div><div>Per Order</div><div>Robert V. Russo, President</div><div>Johnston Town Council</div><div>10/24, 10/31/24</div><div>TOWN OF JOHNSTON</div><div>OFFICE OF THE</div><div>TAX COLLECTOR</div><div>COLLECTOR'S SALE</div><div>OF REAL ESTATE FOR</div><div>TAXES DUE AND</div><div>UNPAID</div><div>Johnston Municipal Court</div><div>1600 Atwood Avenue</div></div>	<div><div>Collector's Sale.</div><div>Pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws Section 44-9-21, if the real estate in which you have a substantial interest is purchased by someone other than the Town of Johnston, you may redeem the real estate by paying or tendering to the purchaser or his or her legal representatives, assigns or to the person or persons to whom assignment of the tax title has been made by the Town of Johnston, or the Treasurer, the original sum and any intervening taxes having been paid to the municipality plus interest thereon at a rate of one percent (1%) per month and costs, plus a penalty as provided in Rhode Island General laws Section 44-9-19, or in the case of an assignee of a tax title from the Town of Johnston, the amount stated in the instrument of assignment, plus the above-mentioned penalty.</div><div>The right of redemption may be exercised only by those entitled to notice of the Sale pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws Section 44-9-10 and Section 44-9-11, and may be exercised at any time prior to the entry of Final Judgment in an action to foreclose the right of redemption filed pursuant to Rhode Island General Law Section 44-9-25. You are encouraged to review Rhode Island General Laws pertaining to tax sales and/or consult with an attorney concerning your rights.</div><div>Joseph Chiodo</div><div>Finance Collector/Director</div><div>10/24, 10/31, 11/7/24</div></div>
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# RI Board of Elections, Department of State remind voters to return Mail Ballots via drop box

Johnston SunRise  
Staff Reports

The Rhode Island Board of Elections and the Rhode Island Department of State are today reminding voters who are choosing to vote by mail that mail ballots must be received by the Board of Elections by 8 p.m. on Election Day, Nov. 5, 2024.

Those ballots should be dropped off now, however, because they mailed ballots may not make it by the deadline.

According to Faith Chybowski, Director of Communications and Public Affairs for the Rhode Island Department of State and Secretary of State Gregg M. Amore, “at this point, we are past the date by which we recommend putting ballots in the US Mail and we strongly encourage the use of drop boxes instead.”

Voters should return their mail ballot in a secure elections drop box, at their local board of canvassers, or in-person in a designated receptacle at a polling

place on Election Day. With Election Day just over a week away, voters are strongly encouraged to use a drop box instead of mailing their ballot.

All Rhode Island drop boxes are monitored by surveillance cameras 24 hours a day, seven days a week when drop boxes are in use for an election.

Voters who must return their mail ballot through the U.S. mail are encouraged to mail their ballot as soon as possible.

Voters can track their mail ballot online using Ballot-Trax.

Any voter who requested a mail ballot and has not received it, or who has not requested a mail ballot but will be unable to vote in-person during early voting or on Election Day, should contact their local board of canvassers as soon as possible. The deadline to request an emergency mail ballot is 4 p.m. on Nov. 4, 2024.

To learn more about elections in Rhode Island, visit [vote.ri.gov](http://vote.ri.gov).

# Obituaries

Victor S. Colella



Victor S. Colella, 101, of Johnston, passed away peacefully at home on October 20, 2024. Born in Providence, he was the son of the late Costanzo and Laura (Spirito) Colella.

Victor worked for the United States Postal Service for many years before retiring. After retiring, he worked for McLaughlin & Moran for many years. He was an Army Air Corps Veteran of World War II.

A loving and devoted father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, he is survived by his two children, Laura (Arthur)Pichette Fontaine and Richard Colella, two sisters, Ada Marcoccio and Lillian Zaneccchia; three grandchildren, Demian (Marie) Pichette, Danielle (Jude) Paroyian and Deirdre-Morgan Pichette (Justin Bernier); and five great-grandchildren, Tristan, Demian, Sophie, Julian, and Gabriel. He was the brother of the late Flora Colella, Leah Colella, Vilma Generali, and Laura Marsella. He leaves behind many nieces and nephews as well as great-nieces and nephews.

Victor lived by the Four “Fs”, Family, Faith, Friends and Food and always had a great love of country. He spent every holiday, especially Fourth of July, and Christmas Eve with his large Italian family. He was a devout Catholic; first as a parishioner of Holy Cross Church for many years before having to move to St. Robert Bellarmine Church. He made many friends over the last five years through his viral video from “Caught In Providence”. The Honorable Judge Caprio was captivated by the 96-Year-Old Speeder and they became dear friends. Victor loved good food and cooking for his friends and family. He shared his recipes for his famous apple pie and pizza with the Judge on TV and on YouTube. He also went out weekly to his favorite restaurants.

He was an avid duckpin bowler and loved to golf. He was a huge fan of all sports, especially his beloved New York Yankees and his favorite players were Joe DiMaggio and Mickey Mantle.

As a World War II veteran, he had the distinguished pleasure of participating in the Rhode Island Fire Chiefs Honor Flight Hub “X-RAY” on September 14, 2019. While in Washington, DC he was one of two oldest veterans on that trip and they were lucky enough to place a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Visitation was held on Friday, October 25, 2024 from 4 – 7 p.m. in the Maceroni Funeral Home, 1381 Smith Street, North Providence. Relatives and friends were invited directly to St. Robert Bellarmine Church, 1804 Atwood Ave., Johnston, on Saturday, October 26, 2024, at 9:45 a.m., where a Mass of Christian Burial was held in Celebration of Victor’s Life. Burial with Military Honors followed in the St. Ann Cemetery, Cranston.

In lieu of flowers donations in his memory may be made to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN. 38105.



## ONE-ROOM POLLING PLACE:

The former Belknap School operated from 1893 to 1941 in the building, which is now the Johnston Land Trust building, the town’s lone early voting location. Voters could grab their own “I VOTED” stickers. (SunRise photo by Rory Schuler)



**Subject:** Re: Solicitation Create Notification from State of Rhode Island: RFP21000563 K-12 School and Higher Education Reopening Plan...  
**From:** David Irwin <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** 3/24/2021, 7:50 AM  
**To:** Julia Rafal-Baer <[REDACTED]>

Wonderful!

On Mar 23, 2021, at 10:48 PM, Julia Rafal-Baer <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi!

It’s a fixed RFP but luckily I know the person it’s fixed for 😊

Already talked with Avossa about us all partnering on this one.

Will circle back but think it should be smooth!

**WINK WINK:** Above, an email sent by Julia Rafal-Baer to an out-of-state colleague references a request for proposal with a winking emoji. The Office of the Rhode Island Attorney General saw the email as suggesting the ‘the procurement process was manipulated from the outset,’ according to a report released Tuesday, Oct. 29, 2024. (Screenshot/Rhode Island Attorney General)

## ILO

(Continued from page 10)

finance laws, the report added, as SKDK’s consulting would have surpassed the \$1,000 limit for in-kind contributions.

Possible disregard of ethics laws was also discussed in the report. McKee met some of the criteria, since his team shared confidential information with Rafal-Baer that would financially benefit herself and ILO. But there was “no proof” that Magee or Rafal-Baer met the standard of “business associate,” the final ingredient in an ethics violation. While Rafal-Baer did help secure funds for the SKDK contract, the relationship “was too tenuous” for Neronha’s office to qualify her as McKee’s “business associate.”

**Editor’s Note:** Nancy Lavin is senior reporter covering state politics, energy and environmental issues for the Rhode Island Current, and Alexander Castro covers education and health for Rhode Island Current. Rhode Island Current is part of States Newsroom, the nation’s largest state-focused nonprofit news organization.

## Obituaries

In your time of need, the *Johnston Sun Rise* will print your loved one’s full obituary for a small charge. The paper also places the obituary on our website, [johnstonsunrise.net](http://johnstonsunrise.net).

Should you desire our services, kindly inform your funeral director, or call (401) 732-3100 or email [Obits@rhodybeat.com](mailto:Obits@rhodybeat.com) for additional information. Obituary prices start at \$60. You may include the obituary in any of our other newspapers for half price.

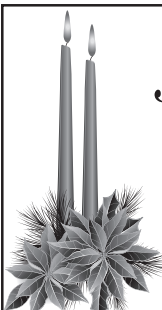
— Thank you

## Holiday Remembrances

Remember loved ones in our special holiday section in the Johnston SunRise on December 18 or Warwick Beacon or Cranston Herald on December 24. Just bring in your loved one’s picture, your verse or pick a verse from our selection.

DEADLINE WILL BE THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11 FOR ALL PUBLICATIONS.

For information, call Ida at 732-3100 or email: [IdaZ@rhodybeat.com](mailto:IdaZ@rhodybeat.com)



EXAMPLES:

Warwick Beacon,  
Cranston Herald or  
Johnston Sun Rise - \$33<sup>00\*</sup>  
1.65"x3"

PICTURE

To me, your name will ever be,  
The key that unlocks memory,  
Of a dear one gone,  
but cherished yet,  
A beloved face I'll never forget.



~ Your name here

One precious to our hearts has gone,  
The voice we loved is stilled;  
The place made vacant in our home  
Can never more be filled.  
Our Father in His wisdom called  
The one His love had given,  
And so on earth the body lies,  
His soul is safe in Heaven.



~ Your name here

Warwick Beacon,  
Cranston Herald or  
Johnston Sun Rise - \$66<sup>00\*</sup>  
3.42"x3"

PICTURE

\*All ads will be black & white. A second publication can be added for half price



# ANSWERING THE DESPERATE LIES OF MY OPPONENT

- My opponent doesn't pay taxes to the town of Johnston, so how can he relate to the financial hardships that our residents have?
- I have owned my home and paid taxes to the town for over 30 years.
- My opponent lists all his degrees in law enforcement, however, he works as a valet driver at a local hotel.
- As he stated in his mailer, I only held Government jobs. I had worked for John Hancock for 10 years and just retired from the Providence School Dept. where I worked for 30 yrs.
- My opponent stated I voted for illegal immigrant licenses. Public record on the vote proves this is not true. —>
- My opponent is a one-issue candidate that keeps his main reason from the voters; he is a radical gun supporter and is running for election every two years to further himself in the NRA — Unlike myself. I believe in common sense gun legislation, including the safe storage and the banning of ghost guns.

This document is not an official record of the House of Representatives and does not reflect the final vote of the House, or of any individual Representative on the captioned matter. The final and official vote is reported in the Journal of the House of Representatives of this date.

SEQUENCE NO. 572

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2022  
7:04:11 PM

CALENDAR 2022-H 7939 SUB A			
ITEM 58 Judiciary			
SAFE ROADS & MANDATORY INSURANCE			
PASSAGE			
YEAS - 55	NAYS - 15	NOT VOTING - 5	RECUSED - 0
Y Abney	Y Edwards	N Morgan	
Y Ackerman	Y Felix	Y Mr. Speaker	
Y Ajello	N Felicia	N Nardone	
Y Alzate	N Fenton-Fung	N Newberry	
Y Amore	Y Filippi	N Noret	
Y Azzinaro	Y Fogarty	N O'Brien	
N Baginski	Y Giraldo	Y Perez	
Y Barros	Y Handy	N Phillips	
Y Batista	N Hawkins	N Place	
Y Bennett	Y Henries	Y Potter	
Y Blah	Y Holl	N Price	
Y Blazejewski	Y Kazarian	N Quattrocchi	
Y Caldwell	Y Kennedy	Y Ranglin-Vassell	
N Canfilin	Y Kislak	NV Roberts	

DO YOU WANT A LEADER OR A LIAR?  
DEB IS A PROVEN LEADER.



DEB  
FELLELA

State Representative • District 43



# ■ Early

(Continued from page 1)

Three days later, on Monday morning, about a dozen voters gathered in a jumbled line in front of the building, which is now the Johnston Land Trust, at 509 Greenville Ave.

Henry Giolitti stood on the ramp smiling. He was first in line and ready to cast his vote.

## Alternates Needed

Two weeks into the early voting process, Johnston still needs a few alternate poll workers for the Nov. 5 General Election.

“Johnston is still in need of alternate poll workers in case of any call outs the morning of the election,” said Cinzia Travisono, of Johnston’s Board of Canvassers.

Early voting really caught on in Johnston this cycle.

According to data provided by the Rhode Island Department of State, Johnston has approximately 22,492 registered voters (8,460 Democrats, or 38%; 3,553 Republicans, 16%; and 10,468 Unaffiliated, or 47%).

“Last night we ended the day with 2,851 voters since Oct. 16,” Travisono said early Wednesday morning.

The early vote count nearly rivals recent turnouts in off-year and special elections. Of course, the next U.S. President’s on the ballot.

## Big Lines

Neighboring cities like Providence and Cranston (and nearby Warwick) have all reported long lines to vote early. Initial reports show Cranston and Warwick are leading the state in early voting totals.

“But we’ve got over 2,000,” Salvatore said last Friday afternoon. She checked the official number of ballots cast so far — it was 2,074.

By Tuesday afternoon, the number swelled by nearly a third (around 800).

“We had the Primary and we didn’t even have 200, in the same amount of

time,” Salvatore said.

In comparison, Cranston, a city three-times bigger than Johnston with three-times the number of voters, topped 5,000 General Election early voters this week.

## Quick & Easy

Erin Blackman and Fran Paliotta showed up to cast their votes Friday afternoon.

In a matter of minutes, both were checked in and reading their ballots carefully.

Early voting switched to a new location this year. Voters from all Johnston precincts used the single Land Trust building polling location.

“It’s always a difficult balance because you want to keep continuity as much as possible so you don’t confuse people, yet you want to make positive changes if possible,” Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr. said before the Primary in September. “With that being said, we did change where early voting takes place. In the past it occurred at town hall, but due to accessibility issues, particularly for seniors, it’s now at the Johnston Land Trust Building.”

The former Belknap School once operated, from 1893 to 1941, in the Greenville Avenue building, which is now home to the Johnston Land Trust. The building was restored in 2018.

Two months ago, Polisena also reminded voters that the Johnston Land Trust Building is ADA (The Americans with Disabilities Act) accessible, has “plenty of parking, and it’s right off a main road near a highway exit.”

Parking, however, has been tight outside at times, like when the polls first open each morning since General Election early voting started.

## State Law Says ...

On Monday, at 9 a.m., the parking lot was full and voters started parking along busy Greenville Avenue. They crossed the thoroughfare, dodging traffic between red lights.

Someone had posted a tiny sign in the ground next to the bank-like Land Trust sign, urging a vote against Johnston’s

Ballot Question 7, a proposed expansion of the school committee from five to nine members (adding four appointments to the committee; two mayoral, and two by the town council).

Despite the parking, compared to the early voting location in Cranston, where city officials have had to outline an electioneering boundary in chalk, Johnston’s early polling place was relatively sleepy and running smoothly.

Rhode Island state law stipulates that there’s no campaigning permitted inside a polling place or within 50 feet of the exterior entrance of a polling place. If voters witness violations of the law, they should report them to the local Canvassing Authority.

Faith Chybowski, Director of Communications and Public Affairs for the Rhode Island Department of State and Secretary of State Gregg M. Amore, forwarded a link to the state statute governing electioneering outside the polls.

“No poster, paper, circular, or other document designed or tending to aid, injure, or defeat any candidate for public office or any political party on any question submitted to the voters shall be distributed or displayed within the voting place or within fifty (50) feet of the entrance or entrances to the building in which voting is conducted at any primary or election,” according to state law. “Neither shall any election official display on his or her person within the voting place any political party button, badge, or other device tending to aid, injure, or defeat the candidacy of any person for public office or any question submitted to the voters or to intimidate or influence the voters.”

Christopher D. Hunter, a communications specialist with Advocacy Solutions (a public relations firm working for Amore’s office), had advice for any voters who felt the state laws on campaigning at the polls have been violated.

“Any suspected violations of polling place rules should be reported to the local Board of Canvassers,” Hunter replied via email. “In the event of any threatening behavior, people should call their local police department.”



**RUNNING SMOOTH:** Poll workers Carol Salvatore (below), Gladys Boornazian and Joann Faella, have been helping the early polling place inside the Johnston Land Trust building at 509 Greenville Ave., run smoothly for more than 2,800 Johnston voters who had already cast ballots by Tuesday, Oct. 29. (SunRise photo by Rory Schuler)



## CHECK FIRST

Visit [vote.sos.ri.gov](http://vote.sos.ri.gov) to find your polling precinct and a sample ballot. Contact the Johnston Board of Canvassers for any questions at 401-553-8856 or email [ctravisano@johnston-ri.us](mailto:ctravisano@johnston-ri.us).

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Re-Elect

*The candidate for the people ... who gets the job done!*

# GREG COSTANTINO

Representative District 44 - Smithfield • Lincoln • Johnston



- Fought to eliminate the car tax resulting in the Town of Johnston receiving 10.3 million annually.
- Supported legislation that eliminated the tax on veterans pensions.
- Lobbied DOT to expedite resurfacing Greenville Avenue two-years ahead of schedule.
- Supported municipal road program that generated \$600,000, resulting in 1.7 million to improve Town roads.
- Defeated a large solar project off Windsor Avenue.
- Supported legislation that created a \$50,000 exemption for tangible tax-relief for our small business community.
- And there is more!

*Thank you to our veterans,  
police and first responders.*

For questions, call Greg at 401-426-0284,  
or email at [repconstantino@aol.com](mailto:repconstantino@aol.com)

**Vote for the one  
who gets  
things done!**

**“Greg has been a  
champion of municipalities  
and their taxpayers ...”**

- Johnston Mayor, Joseph M. Polisena, Jr.





We connect over coffee.  
We've been friends for 20 years.  
One of us is a survivor.

# ONE of US

Nearly 1 in 2 Rhode Islanders has experienced domestic violence.

All of us can help.  
800.494.8100  
NoMoreRI.org





## We're All Ears

Your opinion is something we always want to hear.

**Questions?  
Comments?  
Story ideas?**  
Let us know how we're doing.

Warwick Beacon  
•  
Cranston Herald  
•  
Johnston SunRise

# BEACON MEDIA

401-732-3100



**HALLOWEEN SPIRIT:** Nicole Cournoyer dressed as a pumpkin while Jennifer Merlino and Emilia Merlino dressed as witches to celebrate the holiday.



**CARS AND CANDY:** Rachel Aucone & Nicki Aucone shared messages to trunk or treaters, while Anthony Achilli dressed as a skeleton.



## Junkfood in the trunk

The Johnston Recreation Department hosted a trunk or treat event last weekend and was thrilled with a big turnout for the celebration. Here are some looks of the event. *(Submitted photos)*

PAID POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT

# VOTE TO REJECT QUESTION 7

## REJECT APPOINTEES!

Don't lose YOUR power to vote in the best interest of Johnston's Children!

**YOUR COMMUNITY!  
YOUR CHILDREN! YOUR VOTE!**

Questions 7-12  
Amendments to the Johnston Town Charter

**7. TOWN REPRESENTATION ON THE JOHNSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
(Resolution 2024-34 of the Johnston Town Council adopted July 17, 2024)

Shall Section 15-1 of Article XV entitled "School Department" be amended so that beginning with the swearing in of the newly elected members of the Town Council and School Committee in January 2025, the membership of the school committee shall be expanded to nine (9) total members serving staggered terms and shall consist of five (5) members elected by districts of the Town, two (2) members appointed by the Mayor, and two (2) members appointed by the Town Council?

☐ Approve  
☒ Reject

**ON NOVEMBER 5TH,  
VOTE TO REJECT QUESTION 7**

Paid by: Dawn Aloisio-Marysue Andreozzi-Robert La Fazia-Susan Mansolillo-Joseph Rotella



**WEREWOLF OF JOHNSTON:** Elvis Fellela donned a Werewolf costume last week.

**LOCAL HEROES:** Johnston firefighters Anthony Colella with Jerry St. Angelo.







**MEETING OF MINDS:** From left to right: Mary Naeiring, Claiborne Pell Manor Tenant Association President; Linda Folcarelli, Town Councilor District 1; U.S. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse; Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr.; and Martha Church, Claiborne Pell Manor Tenant Association Vice President. *(Photo by Ron Cece)*

## From D.C. to Johnston

U.S. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), hosted a community dinner in Johnston to listen to concerns of the residents' of Claiborne Pell Manor and to take questions. According to Jessica Layden, Resident Service Coordinator for the Johnston Housing Authority, Sen. Whitehouse discussed his successful fight to preserve Social Security and Medicare benefits. Also in attendance was Johnston Mayor Joseph M. Polisena Jr., as well as U.S. Rep. Seth Magaziner and Johnston District 1 Town Councilor Linda Folcarelli. Both candidates and the mayor stressed the importance of voting in this election.



**GET OUT THE VOTE:** U.S. Rep. Seth Magaziner spoke with residents at Claiborne Pell Manor in Johnston. *(Photo by Ron Cece)*



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**NOVEMBER 5**






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CREEPY & THEY’RE KOOKY




THEY GOT WINGS: The little angels, Ava, age 7, with her dog Babylove. (Submitted photo)



SURVIVED THE BLACK PLAGUE: Brayden as medieval plague doctor with Beetlejuice Pat the Patriot (Submitted photo)



PUPPIES INC.:  
Bruschi and Dakota, aka Mike and Sully (Submitted photo)



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# JUST KOOKY

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Here’s a look at our next photo submission series, kids’ and pets’ Halloween costumes! Feel free to start sending in submissions by commenting on our Facebook page, or by emailing them to [ashleym@beaconmediari.com](mailto:ashleym@beaconmediari.com) with the subject line “Halloween costumes - Johnston.” Please include your child’s or pet’s first name. It may take us a few weeks to run them all.



**FROM NINJAS:** Connor as a ninja and Camryn as Audrey from Disney Descendants (Submitted photo)



**SCARECROW’S SHADOW:** Ava, the pirate, and Emma, the pink barbie cowgirl, doing some trunk or treat festivities before Halloween (Submitted photo)

## TREASURES INSIDE THE MUSEUM

SEASONS 1-4

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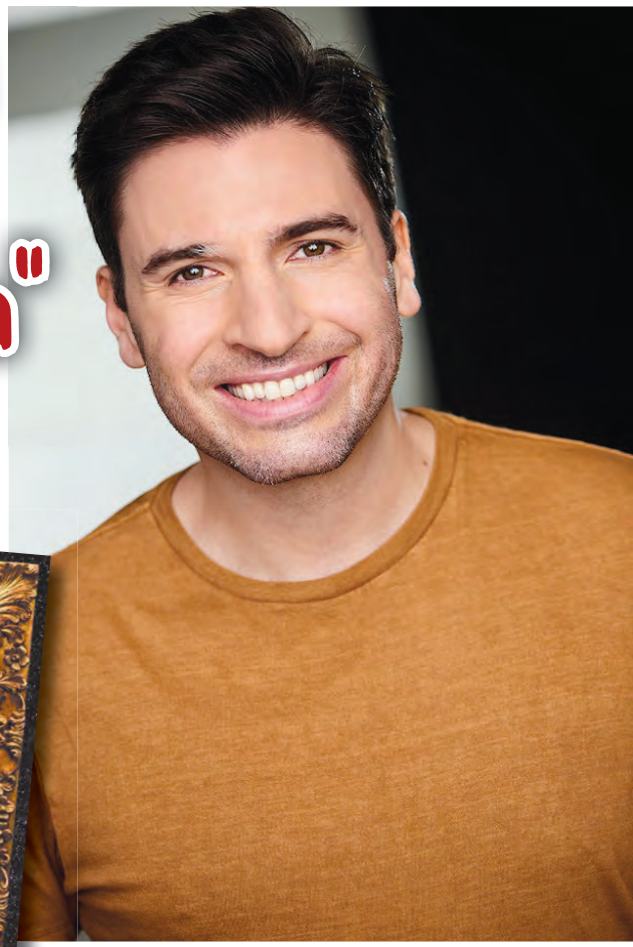
## Chris Chianesi utilizes his songwriting talents in royal fashion with "Prince Harry: Live! At Coachella"

By ROBERT DUGUAY

Cranton native and Los Angeles resident Chris Chianesi uses his creative talents in a variety of facets. He has extensive experience in the musical theater, improv and sketch comedy mediums and for the past few years he's been transitioning that into songwriting. Chianesi has amassed a prolific output of comedy songs and he just released a concept album about a member of the Royal Family. It's titled "Prince Harry: Live! At Coachella," which reimagines the Duke of Sussex as a mainstream popstar. The full-length record was released on Oct. 18, and it's already being embraced by Chianesi's massive social media following.

We recently had a talk about how the idea for the album came about, his theatrical experiences in Rhode Island and what he hopes to connect with people when they give "Prince Harry: Live! At Coachella" a listen.

■ CHIANESI - PAGE 27



CHRIS CHIANESI

TOP: Chianesi performed "Prince Harry: Live! At Coachella" at the Hollywood Fringe Festival (Submitted photos)

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# Sports

## ‘A beautiful field’

New complex opens doors for town sports

By ALEX SPONSELLER

Johnston finally opened its new soccer complex located behind the Indoor Recreation Center and it has been a hit for local teams as they break it in.

It was announced back in 2022 that the town had secured a \$1.1 million grant to go toward funding community programs, including the recreation department. That money was used toward a brand new, padded turf soccer complex including the lines and goal posts at field level. The town is still planning on making some smaller additions to the complex, including fencing.

The field opened earlier in October and has been used regularly by the town’s youth soccer programs. The rec department has been working alongside Challenger Sports in organizing youth soccer camps and the field has been a great asset so far.

“It’s been good. We started our soccer program there, we’re in communication with the schools. We are trying to work alongside as many people in the town to get use out of it. It’s a beautiful field, we’ve gotten a lot of compliments on it. Our facili-



**NEW FIELD:** A few looks at the new soccer field located behind the Johnston Indoor Recreation Center. (Photos by Alex Sponseller)

■ FIELD - PAGE 21

**HANDOFF:** Johnston quarterback Matt Clements hands the ball off to Dean Paris. (Photos by Leo van Dijk/rhodyphoto.zenfolio.com)



## Roundup: Panthers fall in 2OT thriller

FROM STAFF REPORTS

The Johnston football team dropped a 52-50 thriller against host Pilgrim last Friday night in a wild game that took two overtime periods to complete.

The two clubs were tied 14-14 after the first quarter and Pilgrim took a 22-21 lead into halftime. Pilgrim extended its lead to 30-21 in the third quarter, but Johnston would fight back to score 15 points in the fourth to force overtime with a 36-36 score.

Each team scored eight points in the first overtime period and the Panthers managed to score six more in double overtime, but the host was able to score a touchdown with the 2-point conversion which would be enough to grab the victory.

Johnston quarterback Matt Clements threw four touchdown passes and no interceptions in the six periods. Ethan Placella hauled in a pair of touchdown passes while Dean Paris and Giovanni Celani also grabbed a touchdown pass each. Lyalo Harrison-Perez and Mike Abbruzzi each had four receptions while

■ PANTHERS - PAGE 21



# Dissecting the high school fall playoffs

It's playoff time. Yes, I know some were underway last week, but this week is when we truly get into the thick of the postseason with nearly all sports in playoff action.

Here are some of the things that I am watching for in the coming weeks.

First off, the cross country class championships shed some light on what we can expect for this week's state championship at Ponaganset.

First off, Pilgrim's Keane Bayha is a near lock to take first place on the girls side. She ran to the Class A title with relative ease and no runner in Class B or C would have been very close either. It's Bayha's to lose and Pilgrim is set up well to see its first-ever state champion cross the finish line on Saturday.

Hendricken is also well placed to win on the boys side as a team, as it also dominated the standings despite not having a runner truly threaten to take the top spot overall. The

Hawks have found success in the last few years with depth and it seems like they are once again positioned to win with the same formula.

As for field hockey, Division III has been every bit as competitive as I expected and both Toll Gate and Cranston have championship aspirations. The two clubs were in semifinal action on Tuesday with the winner advancing to Sunday's state championship.

The Titans earned an overtime win over Tiverton in the quarters which set them up for a meeting against first-place Classical. The Thunderbirds took on always-tough Smithfield. The front runner is Classical but Cranston has played the Purple tough in every meeting this fall. Toll Gate and Cranston have a real shot at this thing, don't let Classical's record fool you.

Hendricken soccer, despite being ranked second, is the favorite to win it all if you ask me.

## My pitch



by  
ALEX  
SPONSELLER  
SPORTS EDITOR  
  
ALEXS@  
RHODYBEAT.COM

The Hawks fell to La Salle in a tight battle then also dropped a 1-0 decision to first-place Cumberland. The team also tied Moses Brown 2-2. Point being, the only teams that matched them were their fellow elite clubs. Don't get me wrong, the Hawks are far from a lock, but I'd consider them to be the most consistent team of the fall on both offense and defense. Brent Karpowich has been a force on offense while Jack Mefford and Tristan Boyns have also been stellar all around. Hendricken, La Salle, Cumberland, Moses

Brown, North Kingstown, and heck, even Portsmouth all have realistic shots at the championship. I'll take the Hawks to get it done, though.

The Johnston boys have also been a pleasant surprise and qualified for the Division III playoffs.

The Panthers have been slowly rebuilding their roster the past few seasons and now have not only a playoff team, but a team that may be able to make a real run at a championship.

At its best, Johnston can hang with any team in DIII. It's just a matter of the Panthers being at their best when it matters most.

Steven Vera Vaca and Sebastian Saucedo have been one of the best 1-2 punches in the division while Josue Vasquez has settled into the keeper position nicely. Daniel Morales and Freddy Magana Landaverde have also stepped up in their roles as well.

The Cranston West girls soccer team has all the makings of a champion-

ship cast and has a shot to make it happen, but the Falcons will just need to figure out a way to beat the cream of the crop.

The good news for the Falcons is that they beat the teams they should have beaten and their losses came against the clubs positioned ahead of them in the standings. West takes the fifth seed into the playoffs.

West has an elite keeper in Oceanna Orlandi and one of the best weapons in the state in Saniyya Chase. Stalia Biosse, Jordan Costa and Sarah Pimental are all leaders and provide quality depth, it'll just be a matter of them putting it all together against the teams like La Salle, Cumberland and North Kingstown.

As for the East girls, after a huge start to the fall, they came back down to earth in the second half of the season to settle into sixth place as the playoffs begin.

Although Saint Ray's is 18-0 and Burrillville is nipping at its heels in sec-

ond place, don't count East out. The Bolts forced the Broncos to put together a last-second comeback win in their meeting in Burrillville. East also played the Saints to a 2-1 decision earlier in the year as well. Point being, it is fair to call East a dark horse in this race.

Another dark horse in our coverage area is the Toll Gate girls team.

Credit to the Titans, who were moved up to Division II after graduating a large senior class. Although it took a few early lumps for the Titans to catch fire, they did just that and became one of the most dangerous teams in DII down the stretch.

Sure, the record and eighth seed doesn't wow you, but Toll Gate just can't be slept on. Emma McIntyre has been the best freshman in the state this season while Shinyu Vega is one of the most underrated players in the state as well. Alanna Pereira is consistent in net while Madison Gautieri has been strong on the

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## Anchorwomen ranked top-20

### FROM STAFF REPORTS

Rhode Island College has been picked No. 20 in the 2024-25 D3hoops.com Women's Basketball Preseason Top-25 Poll.

Head Coach Jenna Cosgrove's team finished the 2023-24 campaign with a 29-1 overall record, a perfect 16-0 (first place) mark in the Little East, won the Little East Regular Season and Tournament titles for the fourth straight season and reached the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Div. III Championship for the second straight year.

The Anchorwomen return six student-athletes from last season, including senior guard Madison Medbury (Scituate). As a junior in 2023-24, Medbury was named D3hoops.com Second Team All-Region 2. She was also named First Team All-Little East, Fourth Team All-Region by the New England Women's Basketball Association (NEWBA) and the Most Outstanding Player of the 2024 Little East Women's Basketball Championship. She played in 29 games, starting all of them. Medbury averaged 8.8 ppg, 5.0 rpg, 3.6 apg and 2.2 spg.

RIC also returns senior forward Angelina Nardolillo (Hinsdale), who was named Second Team All-Little East. She played in 29 games, starting all of them. She averaged 10.8 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 1.3 apg and 0.9 spg.

Rhode Island College opens the 2024-25 season at home vs. Western New England on Wednesday, Nov. 13 (7:30 p.m.).

### Anchorwomen fight to a draw

Senior midfielder Marissa Ruzzano (Smithfield) led the Anchorwomen with two shots on goal as the Rhode Island College battled Keene State to a scoreless, 0-0, draw at Owl Stadium on Saturday afternoon.

Rhode Island College's first attack came in the 17th minute when a shot from sophomore forward Amber Almeida (Sturbridge, Mass.) was blocked by an Owl defender.

Junior goalkeeper Riley Andriski (Newmarket, N.H.) was forced to make six saves on the day for Keene State, with five of them coming in the first half.

RIC's defense stood strong all game, as senior goalkeeper Chloe Angelone (Bayville, N.Y.) made two saves between the woodwork to record her fifth shutout of the season and the 10th of her career.

The Anchorwomen have been held without a goal in 399 consecutive minutes.

RIC recorded their seventh clean sheet in the tie.

In upcoming action, Rhode Island College will continue Little East play on Saturday, Nov. 2 (2 p.m.).

### RIC men win on senior night

Junior forward Sekou Kamara (North Providence) netted his team-leading seventh goal of the season as the Anchormen won, 1-0, vs. Keene State on Senior Day at Alumni Stadium on Saturday afternoon.

RIC honored seniors Cameron Chalue-Feeney (Barrington), Aidan Moriarty (Wakefield), Wilson Penafiel (Providence), Wesley Perrotto (Pembroke, Mass.) and Anthony Recinos (Providence), along with their families, on Senior Day prior to the game.

Before scoring the contest's only marker, Kamara had a chance in the 24th minute, which was saved as the hosts found some momentum.

Kamara would then capitalize in the 38th minute off a through-ball pass from freshman midfielder Michael Strain (West Warwick, R.I.). It was Strain's first collegiate assist.

RIC Senior goalkeeper Wesley Perrotto (Pembroke, Mass.) recorded the win (8-3-1) and his fourth clean sheet of the season with a two-save effort.

RIC's defense was outstanding, allowing only seven shots for the entire game, of which only two were on net.

### RIC volleyball comes up short

Sophomore setter Yuleisy Alvelo (San Juan, Puerto Rico) recorded her ninth double-double of the season with 30 assists and 17 digs as the Anchorwomen lost, 3-1, vs. in-state rival Salve Regina at the Murray Center on Thursday evening.

RIC went up three, 20-17, in the opening set after a kill by freshman Olivia Rollinson (Coventry), but the visitors ripped off eight straight points to win the frame.

RIC knotted the second set at 16, but SRU went on a 9-1 run to win the frame and build a commanding, 2-0, lead.

With the Seahawks working in six subs during the third set, RIC went ahead, 11-10, on an Alvelo ace and never looked back in a 25-17 decision to pull within a set, 2-1.

In the pivotal fourth set, junior middle hitter Andrayah Williams (North Providence) tied the stanza at 23-all with a kill. The Seahawks were able to hold off the Anchorwomen's comeback bid with a kill and a RIC attack error to secure the win, 25-23.

Salve Regina were led by junior opposite hitter Lauren Hoyle (Albany, N.Y.) who racked up a game-high 24 kills on a .477 hitting percentage as the Seahawks snapped their three-game losing streak.

Rollinson and sophomore outside hitter Sarina Marines (Cranston) led the Anchorwomen with 10 kills apiece.



# Field

(Continued from page 19)

ties are very good, some of the best in the state. We want to make it available to as many people in the town as we can,” said Johnston Recreation Director Mike Bedrosian.

Also using the field has been the Johnston Youth Football program, as well as teams from Ferri Middle School and Johnston High School, both for games and practices.

The high school complex is expected to remain intact and in use while the new high school and elementary school are built. The schools are expected to be completed by the 2027-2028 school year.

Bedrosian and the rec department are thrilled to have a new complex to offer the town’s sport scene, especially the youth soccer program which has been expanding fast with Challenger Sports.

“People are happy, that for sure. People were itching to get on it the first Saturday it was open,” Bedrosian said. “We’re trying to expand. (Challenger Sports) has really taken the reins with our younger kids and we want to help them. It’s a relief for us because we know those kids are in good hands.”



**PUT TO USE:** This building is next to the new field and will be used as a press box and conference area for the town.



**STIFF ARM:** Michael Abbruzzi battles off a defender.

# Panthers

(Continued from page 19)

Paris led the team with 57 yards receiving.

Paris was even more dangerous on the ground, rushing for 176 yards and scoring two touchdowns. Clements also rushed for a touchdown in the loss.

The loss dropped the Panthers to 2-5 overall and the team will be taking on Classical in the season finale this weekend. A win would send the Panthers to

the Division III playoffs. Pilgrim improved to 5-2 with the win.

**BOYS SOCCER**  
**Johnston 1, Block Island 0**  
The Panthers shut out Block Island in the season finale last week to wrap up the regular season. The win improved the team to seventh place in Division III, setting up a home game against Prout in the preliminary round on Wednesday. The results were not available at press time.

# CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORNER

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## CLUES ACROSS

- \_\_\_ Spumante (Italian wine)
- Polish city
- Highly impressed
- Pronoun to identify something specific
- Uttered in an impassioned way
- Outfits
- “Westworld” actor Harris
- Stewed game casserole
- Indignities inflicted on others
- Blood type
- Says beneath one’s breath
- Taxis
- Transmits genetic information from DNA to the cytoplasm
- NFL great Randy
- Where college students live
- Brief Yankees sensation Kevin

- Condiment
- frutti
- Astronomy unit of distance
- Romanian village
- Bears first overall pick Williams
- Irritated
- Clothing for sale has them
- One-time world power
- When you anticipate arriving
- Farm building
- Organize thoughtfully
- Detective
- One who reduces
- Nursemaids
- Partner to “Pa”
- World’s longest river
- Commemorates
- Compound
- The Lannisters and Starks fought for one
- Email function

## CLUES DOWN

- Open-roofed entrance
- Japanese religion
- Dancer’s garments
- Distributes
- Yemeni port
- Spanish doctors
- It cools your house
- Engine variant
- Makes more manageable
- Days (Spanish)
- Milliliter
- Spread out from
- With two replaceable hydrogen atoms
- Respectful title for a man
- Equally
- Scarlett’s home
- Big Blue
- Subway dwellers
- One-tenth of a liter
- Central European river
- Distress signal
- Expression of sympathy

- Bar bill
- Football equipment
- Dance music
- Russian river
- Mary \_\_\_, cosmetics
- Gym class
- Autos
- Fourth and honorable name in ancient Rome
- Defeats (abbr.)
- A way to color
- Planet
- Form of humor
- Taken without permission
- Go over again
- Auto parts manufacturer
- Detective’s source
- Home of the Flyers
- Short official note
- Emit coherent radiation
- In the year of Our Lord
- Atomic #18
- Not from, but

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# New RI state tautog record

By CAPT. DAVE MONTI

Last week Vinney Simms, Jr’s huge tautog made a total of four runs back down to the bottom. He managed to keep the fish off the bottom and got it into the boat, it was a record breaking 22 pound 5.28 ounce, 31-inch tautog. By Wednesday of last week the State of Rhode Island had it verified and posted it as the state’s top tautog.

Simms, a resident of Hamilton, New Jersey, landed the huge tautog while fishing with Capt. Rob Taylor of Newport Sportfishing Charters, one of the State’s premiere tautog and bluefin tuna charter captains.

“Vinney did a good job, but you also need a lot of luck to land a big fish like this. With big fish I tell anglers to just keep reeling, even if the fish is talking drag you are slowing it down (Simms’s drag was set at a very heavy 18 pounds),” said Capt. Taylor. “The aim is to prevent the fish from returning to where it came from, meaning the rock cluster it lives in. We had a lot of current and strong tides Monday so this fish fortunately may have gotten disoriented a bit coming up and down four times.”

The fish was landed aboard the Reel E-Z, Capt. Taylor’s charter fishing vessel, on a piece of structure he discovered earlier this year in about 60 feet of water when netting Atlantic menhaden for striped bass fishing bait. It was the first time he brought charter customers to the spot to fish.

Simms is a State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection employee.

The world tautog record is a 28-pound 13 ounce, 35 inch fish caught by Ken Westerfeld of Queens, NY in 2015. This record holder fish was caught with Capt. Kane Bounds off Ocean City, Maryland on an offshore wreck. The Massachusetts tautog record is 22 pounds 9 ounces, caught by Michael Horsely, on June 29, 1978.

### Aquatic Resource Education Association conference big success

Thanks to Kim Sullivan of the RI Department of Environmental Management the state of Rhode Island hosted aquatic educators from 35 states in Newport last week. Sullivan is president of the Aquatic Resource Education Association (AREA) and packed the conference with useful training



**NEW RECORD:** Capt. Rob Taylor with charter customer Vinny Simms who broke the Rhode Island State tautog record Monday with this 22-pound 5.28 ounce tautog. *(Submitted photo)*

courses, as well as a full social calendar that included fly tying and fishing (with expert guide Ed Lombardo and his team of volunteers), a lobster boil, Newport Harbor tours, fishing and mansion side trips and an annual awards banquet where I served as keynote speaker on climate change and its impact on recreation fishing and aquatic education. Hats off to AREA and Kim Sullivan for bringing the conference to Newport.

### Where’s the bite?

Striped bass, bluefish, bonito. Declan O’Donnell of Breachway Bait & Tackle, Charlestown, said, “A few breaking fish coming tight to shore this week on the south shore. Watch hill has seen most of the striped action as to Charlestown has seen some bonito, blues and shad. There have been good reports of healthy schools of bass in the bay we

are hoping some bay anchovies and bunker nestle into the beach lip and give the fish a reason to cruise the coast rather than making their way to deeper water and eventually finding Montauk or other areas south. The salt ponds are still warm and loaded with bait. Guys have been doing well in the backwater with swim shads and topwater. I have even found an eel bite going on in some of the skinny water. Big bass can find their way into the ponds this time of year to sun themselves during the day and then put on a feed at night.”

“I have never seen so many birds working, particularly off Newport,” said Vincent Castaldi, an associate at Quaker Lane Bait & Tackle, North Kingstown. “Customers are catching striped bass, bluefish and still some Bonito are being caught in the area.”

Striped bass fishing at the Cape Cod Canal is still very good. “Grab a rod

before more fish head south,” said East End Eddie Doherty, Cape Cod Canal fishing expert and author. “Best wishes to experienced Canal Sportsman’s Club member Larry Silvestri who celebrated his 85th birthday wetting a line with his good friend and fellow club member Bob Dyer at one of their favorite spots during an east flood tide. The timing couldn’t have been better for a nice birthday present as Larry’s green mack Savage found its mark with a 36-inch striped bass! The Keegan brothers have been reeling in so many fish at first light with loaded white Cotton Cordells and the 5-ounce green Striper Gear Shaddy Daddy that they have lost count! George fought a 32 pounder to fruition that measured out to 48 inches, Sean landed a nice fish that was just under 30 pounds and Joe had stripers that were bigger than Sean’s.”

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# Real Estate Transactions

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
COVENTRY				
1 Sonya Dr Lot 1	Buell, Michael	Stanley, Richard T and Voellings, Rachel M	10/10	\$294,000
18 Hampton Rd Lot 18	Apponaug Properties Inc	Mark D Correia T and Correia, Mark D	10/10	\$672,500
34 Lane E	Labrecque, Rita	Slader, Michael and Slader, Helga	10/8	\$180,000
82 Doolittle St	Claire D Murray T and Murray, Claire D	Mccabe, Dylan and Bagley, Madison	10/10	\$405,000
CRANSTON				
1052 Cranston St	Gino Costantino Relt and Costantino, Gino	Gils Re Invest LLC	10/7	\$415,000
12 Rushton D	Gagnon, Arthur E	Ruelas, Alejandra	10/8	\$780,000
143 Hoffman Ave Lot 301	Mary E Allard Relt and Trombetti, Lawrence	Boehm, Joanne	10/8	\$304,950
15 Westbrook Rd	Wilkinson, Tyler L and Wilkinson, Laura	Dilibero, Devan C	10/8	\$360,000
2036 Cranston St	Reagan, Kerrylin	Rosas, Terra S and Rosas, Uriel I	10/7	\$375,000
24 Ruxton St	David G Hudson Lt and Hudson, David G	Arsenault, Paula	10/7	\$395,000
35 N View Ave	Zarella, Ronald V and Annese, Regina M	Zarella, Derek	10/7	\$375,000
41-43 Bain St	Vennell, Jennifer	Garcia, Marys R	10/7	\$400,000
42 Lark Ave	Blankenship, Wanda L	Blankenship, Caitlyn M	10/9	\$307,500
48 Garden Hills Dr	Quentin & Albina Turtle I and Turtle, William T	Turtle, James Q	10/7	\$371,200
5 Pomham St	Geary, Kristen	Pomham LLC	10/7	\$480,000
5 Pomham St Lot 1279	Geary, Kristen	Pomham LLC	10/7	\$480,000
5 Pomham St Lot 1281	Geary, Kristen	Pomham LLC	10/7	\$480,000
50 Sweet Fern Dr	Lamarche, Jean-Francois	Daley, William M	10/7	\$705,000
9 Morningside Ct	Mcdonnell, Kyle J and Mcdonnell, Angela A	Daniel Ft and Rihani, Hana S	10/9	\$625,000
EAST GREENWICH				
1060 Middle Rd	Allen, Frances D and Allen, Sasha E	Mcdonough, Jennifer M and Mcdonough Jr, David P	10/10	\$450,000
18 Hampton Rd Lot 72	Apponaug Prop Inc	Mark D Correia T and Correia, Mark D	10/10	\$672,500
45 Deep Meadow Ln Lot 45	Quinn, R	Falvey, Michael E	10/7	\$1
76 Eldredge Ave	Herbert S Fogel Ft and Fogel, Judith S	Devens, Jacqueline	10/11	\$646,000
JOHNSTON				
19 Hill Top Dr	Calcagni, Nicholas and Conti, Diana	Pavao 3rd, John R	10/9	\$355,000
2 King St	Hicks, Jamie	Bay Team Investments LLC	10/10	\$295,000
22 Beechnut Dr	Rossi, Jane	Balletto, Gary A	10/11	\$450,000
27 Bishop Hill Rd	Krape, Julie B and Barton, Robert G	Waldron, Ashley and Gelardi, Christopher	10/15	\$391,400
30 Beechnut Dr	Dimundo, Deborah M	Anderson, Claude and Anderson, Terri J	10/15	\$750,000
43 Dix Ave	Criner, Catherine	Baez, Carlos A and Matos, Ramona M	10/15	\$450,000
43 Oak Tree Dr	Lyons, Abigail	Zambarano, Nicholas L	10/15	\$282,000
7 Woodhaven Dr	Paul J Messina T and Messina, Paul J	Quality Investments LLC	10/10	\$460,000
71 Hunter Ave	Ricci, Nicholas J and Calitri-Ricci, Alexandra L	Pineda, Ulisses and Damaso, Cystal	10/9	\$350,000
8 Kimball Ave	Tavitian, Angel	Jiang, Lanlan and Zheng, Ting	10/15	\$651,500
80 Lookout Ave	Kent, Douglas W	Bacon, Jennifer	10/15	\$325,000
83 Winsor Ave	Vicario, Paul	Williams, Lowell A	10/11	\$585,000
WARWICK				
106 Rock Ave	Parkside Invest LLC	Starline Prop LLC	10/11	\$395,000
106 Rock Ave Lot 184	Parkside Invest LLC	Starline Prop LLC	10/11	\$395,000
11 Hunts River Ct	Paul Alexander T and Alexander, Paul	Russo, Bradley M	10/11	\$430,000
119 Edman St	Chu, Edwin W	T A K Equity Hm LLC	10/9	\$282,500
1258 Warwick Neck Ave	Michael S Lake T and Lake, Michael S	Marital Gst Exempt T and Gerhard, Kathleen C	10/9	\$1,250,000
14 Fleet Ave	Rosemary Waterman Lt and Waterman, Rosemary	Knorr, Juergen and Comtois, Deborah A	10/7	\$524,800
170 Baldwin Rd	Ogara, Lisa	Sinapi, Anthony E	10/10	\$526,000
200 Horse Neck Rd	Webster Bank Na	Castillo, Raul	10/7	\$119,000
200 Post Rd Lot 602	Imondi, Edward J	Marrocco, Michael and Marrocco, Elaine	10/11	\$302,300
207 Oak Tree Ave	Alpha Hldg LLC	Rudolph, Robyn M	10/8	\$439,000
22 Laura St	Silva, Charles	Shepard, Christopher J	10/9	\$153,000
228 Alvin St	Beaulieu, Gregory J and Beaulieu, Taryn L	Curran, Jeanne C	10/9	\$460,000
242 Parkside Dr	Shea, Tyler W	Clark, Margaret	10/7,	\$465,000
268 Irving Rd	Silva, Lindzee P	Dimezza, Lori D	10/7	\$335,000

ADDRESS	SELLERS	BUYERS	DATE	PRICE
333 Norwood Ave	Obrien, Kim K	Raposa, Nicholas J	10/7	\$470,000
3341 Post Rd	Stamp, Christine A and Santoro, Robert S	Karam Prop LLC	10/7	\$510,000
40 Grand View Dr	Reidy 4th, John D and Reidy, Jamie E	Mancini 4th, James A and Mancini, Justine N	10/9	\$435,000
60 Oak Grove St Lot 1	Kercor T and Pistole, Sue E	Greene, Clark M and Cammuso, Karen	10/10	\$667,500
65 Suburban Pkwy	One Main Invest LLC	215 Tollgate Rlty LLC	10/8	\$136,000
7 Albert Wilson St	Abruzzini, Richard and Abruzzini, Deborah	Quartetti, Michael J and Quartetti, Mary A	10/11	\$775,000
7 Albert Wilson St Lot 143	Abruzzini, Richard and Abruzzini, Debora	Quartetti, Michael J and Quartetti, Mary A	10/11	\$775,000
7 Curry Pl	Sabbagh, Allyson R and Zanni, Raymond G	Heller, Lanie C and Murray, John K	10/11	\$435,000
71 Gillan Ave	Melancon Bernard R Est and Melancon, Michael	Dejordy, Alexander	10/7	\$365,000
74 Pell Ave	Li, Guangzhong	White, Mark	10/11	\$330,000
75 Glenco Rd	Mako LLC	Fortes, Deanna	10/8	\$377,000
752 Quaker Ln Lot C108	Kasper, Richard J and Kasper, Nancy	Heelon, Lucy A	10/7	\$220,000
78 Westfield Rd	Ward Karen A Est and Angell, Warren S	Martin, Bert and Martin, Jenna	10/7	\$505,000
8 Winthrop Rd	Santos, Robert and Santos, Dawn	Ciccarone, Michael J and Tortora-Ciccarone, Libra E	10/11	\$475,000
81 Overhill Rd	Durning, John S and Kelson, Heidi A	Andrews, Ivana M and Coughlin, Jonathan	10/7	\$825,000
84 Longwood Ave	Clark, Margaret	Hitchings, Kaitlin E	10/7	\$445,000
84 Scranton Ave	Alpha Hldg LLC	Rodriguez, Jose	10/10	\$395,000
WEST GREENWICH				
269 Fry Pond Rd	Dorothy E Sundelin RET and Chamberland, Cheryl I	Reidy, Jamie E and Reidy 4th, John D	10/9	\$530,000
32 Regina Dr	Beverly E Najarian RET and Bogosian, Sandra M	Folsom, Zachary and Winsor, Haley	10/8	\$665,000
WEST WARWICK				
10 Bryant Pl	Paiva, Matthew V	Madden, Danielle and Checrallah, Matthew	10/15	\$400,000
16 Church St	Janoudi, Yaser and Zakaria, Nesreen	Neves, Jermaine,	10/11	\$400,000
21 Sternbach St	Bonham, Whitney M	Peters, Kevin G and Peters, Kasey L	10/9	\$385,000
31 Harley St	Bellows Jr, Robert E and Dichiaro, Rachel	Sousa, Kimberly R and Sousa, Bruno	10/15	\$355,000
35 Terra Marr Dr	Sollars, Palma A	Dube, Raymond R	10/10	\$426,000
38-40 Border St	Ardente, Robert A and Ardente, Diane	Bello, Nisa E	10/11	\$396,000
47 Quaker Dr	Elmwood Realty LLC	Camero, Jacqueline,	10/10	\$400,000
650 E Greenwich Ave Lot 6-404	Ketli, Takuhi	Loiselle, Renee A and Heroux, Susan E	10/9	\$306,050
69 Washington St Lot 4	Justilien, Florvil	Nguyen, Minh T	10/11	\$295,000
72 Trellis Dr Lot 72	Karleen E Flamand Lt and Flamand, Karleen E	Reed, Nancy F	10/15	\$305,000
81 Ayda Rose Ave Lot 81	5-5 Plus LLC	Williams, Christopher A	10/11	\$459,900



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By JENNIFER COATES

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Premier Martial Arts is part of a larger network of martial arts studios throughout New England. This dojo is owned locally and is managed by Johnny Gasdia, a talented, energetic and devoted Black Belt instructor. Johnny or “Mr. Johnny” (as he is affectionately known) is passionate about the work he does at the studio, but mostly he is passionate about the students who attend classes here. It matters to him that they live up to martial art’s overarching principles, both on the mat, and in the outside world.

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self-discipline. All aspire to instill the values of courtesy, integrity, modesty, self-control and perseverance.

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Premier Martial Arts is located at 43 Village Plaza Way in North Scituate. To learn more, call Mr. Johnny at 401-764-5745 or visit them at their website at [www.scituatemartialarts.com](http://www.scituatemartialarts.com).



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# ■ Chianesi

(Continued from page 18)

**Rob Duguay:** How did you initially come up with the idea to do this musical that's focused on Prince Harry? Was it finding humor in the way the Royal Family is portrayed in pop culture or was it something else?

**Chris Chianesi:** It kind of started without the idea of writing a show at all. His book "Spare" came out almost two years ago and I was seeing a lot about it in the news. He had done the Oprah [Winfrey] special and he had this Netflix show with Meghan Markle, so I was curious because I was seeing all the clickbait online about the salacious things he mentioned in the book, which kind of touches on all the family drama and everything. I didn't really know that much about the Royal Family before I read the book, so I started reading it. I'm a songwriter and I do musical comedy and I've performed in clubs for years in New York while writing songs about pop culture and what's going on at the moment.

As I was reading the book, I just realized that it had so many ripe moments to write songs about. It was so filled with drama, musicality and a potential for music comedy, so I just started writing songs on my own with no goal in mind. I was hanging out with a friend one day where I live in Los Angeles, and she had mentioned to me that she had done the Hollywood Fringe Festival the year before. That was the first moment that sparked in me that I should try to put these songs on their feet and see if there's anything there. At that point, I had a couple songs written already, maybe three or four, but at that moment I entered the Hollywood Fringe.

I got a theater and everything, but the show had not been written yet, so I signed up to do the festival. I work great under intense deadlines like that, and the festival started in June. At this point, it was March when I signed up to do the festival and I set a goal to write one song per week and fully produce the track with the lyrics and everything else. As I was writing the songs, I came up with the concept of placing Prince Harry as this larger than life version of himself performing as a popstar at Coachella. I shaped the show around that notion, and within a couple months I had a show that was on its feet at the Hollywood Fringe.

We sold out every performance and I had no idea how it was going to be received because it's a very wacky show. It's kind of a silly notion to make Prince Harry out to be a popstar, but I did it while wearing a red wig and performing as myself. It was received really well and it went really great.

**RD:** What was the atmosphere like during your performance at the Hollywood Fringe and how did you go about making the album afterwards?

**CC:** The theater was set up like a concert experience at Coachella and the audience was free, cheering throughout and they were dancing and stuff. After the Hollywood Fringe, I performed it once more at another festival in Santa Monica. I did some rewrites, I wrote some more songs and I performed it again this past January in Hollywood. After that, I decided that I had all the songs that I wanted for the show, I had 17 songs at that point. People had been asking me for months to release an album of it because they loved the songs so much, so this summer I buckled down.

I record all of my songs at home. I have a home studio setup with my microphone where I write and produce everything on my own. I recorded the album from May to July, then I got it mixed and it was ready to be put out into the world. I'm excited to finally have it out.

**RD:** That's awesome. Since November of 2018, you've written, performed and produced over 175 comedy songs, which you previously alluded to, while amassing millions of views on Instagram and TikTok. What would you say influenced you to pursue this artform? When I think of comedy songs, I think of Weird Al Yankovic, so did his career play a part?

**CC:** Oh yeah, I've always loved Weird Al growing up, I love his songs, his music and his vibe. I kind of got into musical comedy through the world of musical theater and sketch comedy. I went to college to study musical theater at New York University and I spent years after graduation working in theater, performing in regional shows and on cruise ships. It was really, really fun, but I kind of realized at a certain point that I wanted to perform my own work while having my own creative control on it. I wanted to put out original stuff into the world that had my own creative stamp on it that I grew organically.

In 2017, I entered another festival in New York City called Solocom, which is at the Peoples Improv Theater. This was before I had released any songs, music videos or anything, this was my very first thing. I signed up for the festival, because I work well with a deadline, and I had a couple of weeks to put a show together. I wrote about 10 songs for that show, I taught myself how to use the music producing software, I did it all myself and the show was a huge success. That was the impetus for me realizing that I could really do this, people think I'm good, I think I'm good and I have something to say with a fresh and unique perspective.

That was the catalyst and since then, I was able to write and produce. I learned how to edit videos, making music videos, which I thought was an easy way of getting my stuff out there too. On social media, the length of videos isn't as long so I could write a 30 sec-



CHRIS CHIANESI

ond song or one that's a minute and a half long, get it online, do a rock & tumble music video with a green screen and get it out to as many people as possible.

**RD:** Going along with what you just mentioned with the roots of your craft being in musical theater, you performed at the Trinity Repertory Company in Providence and the Theatre By The Sea in Wakefield while growing up in Cranston. From being in those environments, how formative do you consider that time in your life when it comes to your current career?

**CC:** It was incredibly important. I first started performing at the Theatre By The Sea in 1999, where I performed in "Gypsy." That experience from hanging out with all of these New York actors, some of them who had been on Broadway with amazing credits, was such a unique and formative experience. That was what actually made me want to go to school to study theater, there was somebody in the cast who went to NYU for musical theater and that was the minute where I set my sights on that goal. I must have been 11 or 12 at the time, I knew I wanted to go to NYU for musical theater, so that's what started it.

I always loved making friends with all the professional actors, people from New York and also the people from Rhode Island who were incredibly talented in the theater scene. I was fortunate enough to perform in "A Christmas Carol" one year at Trinity Rep, and that was another wonderful experience. I also performed in "The Cider House Rules," which was a two-part, six hour theatrical experience with very heavy adult material, but I learned a lot from it. I always knew that I wanted to do it from a young age and I'm very fortunate that Rhode Island had so many opportunities to perform, put myself out there and meet all of these incredible people.

**RD:** With the following you've gotten from the live shows of "Prince Harry: Live! At Coachella," I'm willing to bet that some people are going to tell their friends who aren't familiar with it about the album. What do you hope to accomplish with those folks who are going to hear about the record through word of mouth?

**CC:** I always tell people that with the show, it's for all people. It's for the people who love the Royal Family and love following them. It's made for people who love "The Crown" and it's made for people who know nothing about the Royal Family. You can go into the show while having heard nothing about Prince Harry and still love it and become obsessed with it. The show is about this one person who is exploring themes about identity, family, love and legacy while trying to make sense of the world he's in, which is a genuinely human experience that a lot of people can relate to.

It also doesn't hurt that the songs are really, really good, if I do say so myself. I'm so proud of this score, I'm so proud of the songs and it's been such a creatively fulfilling experience making this because I stretch myself so much as a songwriter and as a music producer. I'm just so proud of all of these songs and people love the music when they hear it. I love writing earworms that get stuck in people's heads and they'll be singing for weeks, months or however long. That's always my goal when I first start writing songs because that's what I look for in music.

I look for catchy hooks and very memorable, fun, cool, interesting and unique lyrics & melodies.

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