



ISSUES/DESCRIPTIONS REPORT

4th Quarter 2021

WSBK-TV Boston

WSBK-TV Boston, MA

Quarterly Issues/Program List

CBS Television Licenses LCC

October 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021

Attached are listings of broadcasts or broadcast segments, which, in the station's judgment, reflect the station's most significant programming treatment of ascertained community issues during the preceding three-month period.

PROGRAM INDEX

WBZ-TV News on TV38 – WBZ-TV News on TV38 is anchored by Anaridis Rodriguez. The newscast delivers a contemporary hour of news filled with comprehensive coverage of local politics, community events, medical updates, and issues of importance in the community. In addition, issues related to government, politics, business, financial issues, corruption and crime are explored in-depth during the station's newscasts.

Business and Political

10/14/21: Kristina Rex reports on hyperinflation in the U.S. in past year. The government has released new data saying prices of everything have increased by an average of 5.4% in 2021. Certain industries have been hit harder than others with these price increases: used cars have gone up 24%, meat has gone up 12%, and home heating oil is estimated to have gone up by 43%. Experts are crediting these price increases to the pandemic, citing labor and supply shortages as manufacturers are playing catch up with skyrocketing demands.

10/23/21: Ken Macleod reports on the Boston Mayoral debate between Michelle Wu and Anissa Essaibi-George as early voting begins. Senator Elizabeth Warren makes an appearance outside the Boston Public Library to support her former law student, Wu. With promises of driving down rent and transportation costs, Wu has a big lead on opponent Annissa Essaibi George. George will have a lot of work to do in the next 10 days to convert a sizeable chunk of voters.

12/1/21: Zinnia Maldonado reports on concerns the Omicron variant will slow the travel industry. Tourism is Boston's third largest industry bringing in over \$22 million a year. The industry has suffered greatly in the past two years and while business was decent this past summer, Massachusetts is still recovering slower than most states. CEO of the US Travel Association says business and international travel needs to come back in full swing for a broader economic recovery.

12/17/21: Zinnia Maldonado reports on the end of a 9-month union nurses strike at St. Vincent's Hospital, the second longest nurses strike in Massachusetts's history. On March 8th, 700 nurses walked out of St. Vincent's Hospital and after 285 days, the strike has finally come to an end. Thanks to the help of Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh, a deal was able to be struck with the union and the hospital to provide better, safer working conditions and patient care for their nurses.

Health and Medical

10/1/21: Breanna Pitts reports that pharmaceutical company, Merck, has been experimenting with a new COVID-19 pill, Molnupiravir, that has been shown to reduce the symptoms of COVID by 50% in the recently infected. If approved, this would be the first COVID-19 pill that can be taken at home to combat infection, help fight the pandemic, and relieve hospitals of COVID patients. The US government is set to purchase 1.7 million doses of the drug if it becomes available.

10/15/21: Christina Hager reports on upcoming vaccine deadlines at several hospitals in the Boston area including the Massachusetts General Hospital, Mass General Brigham, and the Boston Medical Center who all have vaccine mandate deadlines in mid-October to early November. If not vaccinated before the deadline, non-compliant workers will be placed on unpaid leave. While most are complying with the state's mandate, thousands are still refusing to be vaccinated.

10/22/21: Cheryl Fiandaca reports on an investigation into the state's vaccine mandate for corrections officers. An unnamed Massachusetts correction officer has come forth saying his religious exemption from the vaccine mandate was originally approved, then weeks later, rescinded and eventually denied. Over two dozen officers have reported similar stories of exemptions being revoked and being suspended as a result. Kevin Flanagan with the Massachusetts Correction Officers Federated Union comments on how frustrating and confusing the vaccine mandate process has been and the moral dilemma for those who are refusing to be vaccinated.

10/28/21: Cheryl Fiandaca reports on the potential reopening of Boston's Long Island. Closed in 2014 to the public due to safety concerns about the instability of the Long Island Bridge, the island was home to substance abuse recovery centers and homeless shelters for the city. Since being demolished in 2015, the properties on the island have not been well maintained. Recently, amidst ongoing legal challenges, the city has started the process of assessing and stabilizing the buildings for future use. The reopening is years away, but the additional recovery services would aid in dealing with Massachusetts's immediate Mass and Cass crisis.

11/17/21: Juli McDonald reports on the FDA giving approval to Pfizer for their booster shot. CDC Director Dr. Rochelle P. Walensky says the difference in rate of disease for those with two doses of the vaccine and those who have received a double dose and booster are much lower. The approval comes at a time when COVID cases are spiking again in Massachusetts with the state reporting 2,600 new cases this past Wednesday, the most there has been since September.

11/17/21: Ken Macleod reports on problems with Boston MedFlight struggling to find local hospitals with empty beds for patients. Due to the shortage, patients are being flown to neighboring states to receive treatment—Rhode Island, Connecticut and New Hampshire. MedFlight says it is not just COVID patients that are causing the issue but also patients who have put off medical care for their health issues during the pandemic along with understaffed hospitals.

12/7/21: Kristina Rex reports on the rush to get COVID-19 home tests ahead of the holiday season. Political leaders such as Michelle Wu and President Joe Biden have encouraged the use of these at home rapid antigen COVID-19 tests as the holidays approach and families start to gather. The tests have been flying off the shelves and are sold out in many pharmacies and drugstores. The tests give you immediate results, cost about \$20 for a pack of 2, and are 70-80% accurate in detecting COVID infections.

12/13/21: Louisa Moller reports on Governor Charlie Baker announcing that the state will be providing two million free rapid at-home COVID tests to over 100 communities in Massachusetts that have been hit the hardest. The tests will be distributed in 4-5 days and will be helpful this holiday season with the new Omicron variant and residents visiting friends and family. The state is also working with manufacturers to strike cheap, bulk buying deals to provide the state with easy access to at-home testing.

12/16/21: Christina Hager reports that 908 Boston city employees have not met the weekly COVID testing requirement for this month, a small improvement from over 1,000 employees last

month. The new “vaccinate or test” policy for Boston states that city employees who are not vaccinated or test positive should be placed on unpaid leave, but the city has reported that nobody has been fired due to noncompliance.

12/22/22 - Kristina Rex reports on long lines for COVID-19 testing in the city and record high numbers for cases in Massachusetts. With 7,817 cases reported on Wednesday, Mass General’s Dr. Mark Siedner says that the holiday season and college kids returning home are a “virus’ best dream.” Despite the big positive numbers, having more people vaccinated will keep serious illness and deaths down.

12/27/21 – Louisa Moller reports on the CDC’s new quarantine guidelines when diagnosed with COVID-19. The CDC has advised all Americans who test positive to reduce their quarantine time from 10 days to five days if they are asymptomatic and to wear a mask for the following five days.

12/28/21: Louisa Moller reports on the National Guard training to fill important hospital roles during the COVID-19 surge. 500 soldiers are currently undergoing training to help ease the burden on healthcare workers. The National Guard will mainly be responsible for helping with external functions such as operating ambulances, transporting and moving patients, and directing traffic flow at the front desk.

12/29/21: Juli McDonald reports on the reliability of at-home COVID-19 tests. Sophie Richie, a Norwood local, tested negative three times on at-home tests leading up to the holidays but woke up feeling awful on Christmas day. Richie then went to urgent care where she tested positive. Dr. Anthony Fauci says the at-home tests are good for peace of mind but were never 100% accurate and are less accurate now with emerging variants.

12/30/21: Anna Meiler reports on winter sports in Wellesley Public Schools being suspended due to COVID-19. The decision came after the Wellesley Health Department reported 26 student athletes tested positive in the past week. School officials say the spiking numbers have left them no choice.

Law, Safety and Security

10/12/21: Kristina Rex reports on Governor Charlie Baker ordering the National Guard to assist with staff shortages in the state prison system and COVID testing in schools. 250 troops have been activated to help with the potential officer shortage at the Department of Corrections as the vaccine mandate deadline approaches on October 17. 200 extra guards have also been summoned to help with expanded COVID-19 testing in schools across the state as well as bus driver shortages.

10/13/21: Beth Germano reports on the Supreme Court taking up the Marathon Bomber’s death penalty case. There is some controversy and mixed opinions amongst Boston Marathon survivors about bringing the death penalty sentence against convicted marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. The U.S. Supreme Court is not expected to rule until next summer.

12/3/21: Zinnia Maldonado reports on a warning from Boston Police as multiple cases of spiked drinks in downtown Boston bars have surfaced. Boston Police are advising people to always be aware of their drinks while out and to never leave drinks unattended. Dangerous drugs like the date rape drug Rohypnol have no taste or odor and can cause disorientation, confusion and unconsciousness.

12/16/21: Juli McDonald reports on an attempted kidnapping in Roxbury. The kidnapping took place at Ellis Elementary School on Wednesday afternoon around 2:40 pm during recess, when the suspect approached three children who were playing, grabbed one of their arms and asked them to play basketball with him. Police have surveillance images of the suspect, an adult black male wearing a gray suit, and are asking for help from locals to identify and catch the man.

12/20/21: Juli McDonald reports on a scam that local police in Stoughton are alerting women about. An older man in a white Jeep has been reported twice in the past week for circling the Target parking lot asking women to step out of their vehicles due to an oil leak. Stoughton Police fear the man may be luring women out of their cars and are monitoring and increasing patrols at busy shopping centers, especially around the holiday shopping season.

Community and Culture

10/4/21: Juli McDonald reports on a Facebook outage affecting users worldwide for hours. Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp were all offline for about six hours before they were up and running again. Facebook Chief Technology Officer Mike Schroepfer said the problem was due to “networking issues.” The issues affected Facebook staff as well as workers were not able to access their internal emails.

10/5/21: Lisa Gresci reports on a Tik Tok challenge that has kids slapping teachers. Schools are taking proactive steps to address this behavior and stop these Tik Tok challenges which change monthly and are mostly based on committing devious acts. 8th grade teacher and President of the Haverhill Education Association believes this issue is stemming from children being out of school for an extended period of time, and instead, spending all of their time online.

10/18/21: Paul Burton reports on the impact that Colin Powell has had on Massachusetts and the local tributes taking place in his memory. From speaking at the Centennial Celebration of the Robert Gould Shaw and 54th Regiment Monument in Boston in 1997 to being stationed in Fort Devens in the 1960s in the Army Reserve Training Corp, Powell’s legacy and his many achievements will be remembered.

10/21/21: Tiffany Chan reports on parents asking for changes to the school lunches in the Lynn School district after kids were served spoiled, moldy food. Hundreds of parents in Lynn are now petitioning to demand fresher, healthier school meals for their kids.

10/25/21: Christina Hager reports on the plans to remove tents at the Mass and Cass encampment in Boston. Despite notices posted around the encampment over the weekend asking residents to

remove their belongings by 7 am on Monday, the encampment was not shut down. Acting Mayor Kim Janey is not putting a deadline on when the encampment will officially be closed but states that it is an ongoing situation, and the city wants to ensure the residents can be given the support and services they need.

10/28/21: Kristina Rex reports on outdoor dining coming to an end in the North End on November 1st, one month earlier than the citywide order to shut down outdoor dining. Some business owners and locals believe this is a positive move while others think outdoor dining should remain in place as long as possible.

11/16/21: Ken Macleod reports on Michelle Wu being sworn into office today. This is a historical day as Wu will be the first person of color and woman to take office as mayor for the city of Boston. Young girls at the Boys and Girls Club of Dorchester were interviewed saying Wu is an inspiration and role model for them proving they can be successful no matter their race or gender. Wu takes office ready to tackle big issues, with police reform and finding a new Police Commissioner as high priorities on the list.

11/17/21: Lisa Gresci reports on the large number of people quitting their job during the pandemic, a phenomenon which is being called “The Great Resignation.” 4.3 million people have made career changes this year and a whopping 33 million people are projected to quit their jobs. This phenomenon is not about money but rather about work-life balance as people have had a lot of time during the pandemic to reflect on how underappreciated, overworked, and burnt out they are.

11/19/21: Anna Meiler reports on students and parents protesting at Wakefield High School Friday morning after a student was set to return to school after allegedly taking hundreds of inappropriate pictures of a dozen schoolgirls and posting them on social media. Protestors believe the boy is a danger to others and do not agree with the school’s decision to allow the student to continue attending Wakefield High School.

11/25/21: Tiffany Chan reports on free Thanksgiving meals in Boston for those in need. Peabody resident, Gina Goodwin, has been providing Thanksgiving meals to strangers for the past seven years. The tradition began when Goodwin, a visiting nurse, had patients asking her if her family had any Thanksgiving leftovers to share. Dozens of meals have turned into thousands and Goodwin says she is preparing over 4,000 meals to give out this season.

12/3/21: Juli McDonald reports on Patriots’ player Kyle Van Noy, who hosted his seventh annual Christmas party for foster children in need. The Van Noys partnered with three local Massachusetts Foster Care organizations: Wonderfund, Hopewell, and the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange, to throw a Christmas extravaganza. The event included a catered Christmas meal, presents and a toy giveaway, as well as a visit with Santa and free Christmas trees and essentials for foster families.

12/6/21: Rachel Holt reports on a unique holiday market adapted for COVID-19 times. People can shop at an outdoor local market where everything is sold on the honor system. The Rustic Marlin Market in Hanover was started in April of 2020 amidst the pandemic and despite initial

concerns, the market has become a hit among visitors. The success of the market has prompted owner Brian O'Neil and his wife Melanie, to operate the market year-round, changing with the seasons.

12/9/21: Juli McDonald reports on a new smoking law in Brookline: starting in the fall of 2021, nobody born after January 1, 2000 will be allowed to purchase tobacco products in the town. This law does not apply to existing tobacco users but is intended to prevent new users from starting the habit. Anthony Ishak, a local resident and pharmacist, says this new law will combat the tobacco industry's strategy to target young, vulnerable people. However, anywhere else in Massachusetts, tobacco is still legal for purchase for adults over 21 and a Brookline parent has pointed out that for the new law to work, other communities will have to follow suit.

This Quarterly Issues/Program List was placed in the Public File on Monday January 10, 2022 by Christine Ferrara, Program Director.