

ISSUES AND PROGRAMMING REPORT

This report details community issues programming aired on WBRK AM 1340. This report contains highlights of programming on key community issues, which have been determined through a monthly ascertainment program involving periodic interviews with community leaders and the input of station staff. The specific programs include:

NEWS -- daily newscasts of breaking and continuing news hear at the top and bottom of each hour 6qm-6pm.

SPEC -- Special reports or programs.

CBS -- Programming supplied by the CBS radio Network.

BERK - The Berkshire Connection is an in-studio public affairs program featuring city and state officials in addition to non-profit and community organizations.

RS-- Rensus IT Solutions is a monthly program dedicated to keeping listeners updated on the latest digital device vulnerabilities and how they can best secure their personal data and make their IT lives more efficient. The program is hosted by a local IT and digital security expert.

VP-Viewpoints is a magazine style news and public affairs program covering social issues, the environment, history, food and more.

CBS News airs for 4 minutes each hour with the latest world and national news with local newscasts of 2 minutes at the top and bottom of each hour with special reports throughout the day as needed.

During the period covered by this report, WBRK aired numerous 30 and 60 second Public Service Announcements (both live and recorded) for local, state and national non-profit organizations, totaling over an hour of air time. Among the topics covered were Covid-19, veterans and senior services, high school sports, health clinics, local fundraisers and benefits and many more. All announcements were logged with details available upon request.

***Issue: Politics/Government-** The campaign is heating up in the race for Mayor with controversies from the candidates past being raised as voters seek more specifics related to policies. National Politics are also heating up and the resulting polarization is once again noticeable among the local population. Despite local citizens clamoring to end partisan politics to remain focused on important city issues such as road repair, housing shortages and out of control spending, there seems to remain a lack of initiative from local government. All the while city taxes and fees continue to rise with no resistance from representatives. The national boarder crisis is beginning to be felt across the Commonwealth as thousands of refugees have filled shelters and now draining local resources.*

News 10-3 1:00- Citizens from across the Commonwealth, including many from Berkshire County finally got the chance this week to tell a panel of state representatives how they feel about a proposed overhaul of the state's gun laws, and they poured out hours of impassioned commentary that sets the stage for a contentious House vote.

News 10-6 1:00- The local results of the 2020 U.S. Census have been released, which found that the Berkshire population continues to shrink while its residents grow older.

VP 10-8 30:00 Filipino immigrant Elizabeth Keathley mistakenly registered to vote while at the Illinois Department of Motor Vehicles. Keathley and her former lawyer, Richard Hanus, join us this week to share the stressful, years-long legal battle that almost led to her being deported back to the Philippines.

News 10-10 1:00- Governor Healey yesterday signed into law the state's first tax cuts in two decades. The governor and lawmakers said the \$1 billion tax relief plan will put more money in taxpayers' wallets and make Massachusetts more competitive.

News 10-13 1:00- House Democrats on Beacon Hill plan to vote on controversial legislation overhauling the state's firearms laws on Wednesday, 13 days after they unveiled a redrafted version of the measure and eight days after it received its first -- and only -- public hearing. The proposal that Speaker's team will put on the floor is expected to emerge from the Ways and Means Committee, leapfrogging the usual joint committee process.

VP 10-15 30:00-With a Presidential election approaching and free speech an issue, we wanted to uncover what exactly FIRE stands for and why some people have mixed feelings on the nonpartisan nonprofit.

News 10-16 1:00- The Healey-Driscoll Administration last week released its Statewide Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, known as ResilientMass. In total, the ResilientMass plan details 142 actions across state agencies that are tracked publicly at resilient.mass.gov.

News 10-20 1:00- President Joe Biden has officially nominated Joshua Levy to serve as U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts. Levy has been acting U.S. Attorney since May when Rachael Rollins resigned. She was facing two federal investigators into ethics violations and abuses of power. In a statement of support, senators Ed Markey and Elizabeth Warren urged the Senate for a quick confirmation.

VP 10-22 30:00- Over the last year, hundreds of thousands of migrants seeking asylum have made their way into the U.S. and have been bussed to sanctuary cities across the country. We cover how this large influx is leading to chaos and mass frustration among residents and leaders.

VP 10-29 30:00-We speak with mother, Christina Kuhn, who lives in Michigan about how high childcare costs are impacting her day-to-day and talk to childcare policy expert, Patricia Cole, about what needs to change to better support families and create an environment that encourages raising healthy children.

SPEC 11-6 60:00- WBRK Presents our Meet the Candidate Series with the last public long form interviews of each of the candidates for Mayor.

News 11-7 1:00- Let the voting begin...It's election day in Pittsfield as citizens go to polls to effectively elect a new government. With Mayor Tyer stepping down, current city council president Peter Marchetti and former city councilor and council vice president John Kroll are vying to win the corner office for the next 4 years. Also on today's ballot, are 7 candidates hoping to win 4 available at large city council seats. 4 of the 7 ward council seats are also being contested today.

News 11-7 1:00- Pittsfield is far from the only community heading to the polls today. Eighty Massachusetts communities will complete elections today with several choosing new mayors, during a cycle that usually produces lower turnout due to the lack of big name federal or statewide races.

SPEC 11-7 90:00 WBRK presents live election night coverage with results from each polling location minutes after the polls close.

News 11-8 1:00- A new era in Pittsfield politics begins in January with Peter Marchetti about to become Pittsfield's new mayor, while 2 new ward councilors and 2 new At-Large city councilors enter the chambers.

News 11-10 1:00- When the media tracked down the reason for an unscheduled and unannounced trip by Governor Healey last week, they were informed that out of state trips by the governor will no longer be disclosed despite it being the protocol for decades.

News 11-13 1:00- A bill coming before the Labor and Workforce Development Committee later today proposes to give a tax credit to businesses in the state that join a pilot program to explore the possible benefits of a shorter work week.

News 11-15 1:00- As the state's new policy of turning some away from shelter has left migrant families struggling and hungry as the days get colder, the Mass House wants to revive a nutrition benefit for newly-arrived immigrants.

News 11-17 1:00- The state Legislature ended formal sessions for the year yesterday with no agreement on a spending bill which would steer money toward the emergency shelter system.

News 11-21 1:00- More than 1,000 "work-eligible" migrants staying in emergency shelters across the state attended a workshop last week to fast-track processing times for work authorizations, something state officials have argued will help shift families out of temporary housing and into permanent solutions.

News 11-24 1:00- The city council wants more time to explore its options before voting on the Mayor's proposed tax rate that could increase the average residential property tax bill by over 400 dollars a year,

News 11-25 1:00- As private disagreements between top House and Senate Democrats on Beacon Hill continue to hold up funding for the strained emergency shelter system and collectively-bargained pay raises for state workers, the Legislature gavelled into a four-day Thanksgiving weekend with no signs of an immediate deal. However, some talks did occur over the weekend.

News 11-30 1:00- Residents of the city's west side are invited to community input session tonight on the role of zoning in developing communities and what role it can play in revitalizing that area of the city.

VP 12-3 30:00- : We cover how this app is quickly becoming a dominant platform for news sharing amidst an evolving media landscape.

News 12-13 1:00- Stating the concern that any further delay would not allow quarterly tax mails to be sent on time, the city council this week, approved Mayor Tyer's new tax rate without amendment, which will raise the average annual residential tax bill by over 400 dollars.

VP 12-17 30:00 Why aren't U.S. prison systems - which receive billions of dollars in public funding each year - doing better in its care of inmates/

News 12-15 1:00- A spending bill that includes money for temporary shelter spaces for migrant homeless families cleared the Massachusetts House on Monday after more than 100 Democratic lawmakers showed up at an informal session of the chamber to overcome efforts by House Republicans to block the bill.

News 12-17 1:00- Mass Congressman Rich Neal is the 1st of the state's Washington delegation to commend the Air Force for grounding the type of aircraft that crashed in Japan last week killing a Pittsfield native.

News 12-21 1:00- Bay State Voters could soon decide whether to legalize "magic mushrooms." Supporters of the psychedelic treatment said last week they've turned in enough signatures to allow for a ballot question in 2024.

Issue: Economy/Development- *It's still an unusual dichotomy within the local economic picture that despite rising inflation, businesses closing and continuing tax increases, a workforce shortage persists, creating its own problems on the local and state level. The biggest issues of concern locally are rising taxes, a housing market too cost prohibitive for younger generations, rising utility costs creating hardships for businesses and homeowners. citizens are also questioning where and how the city is spending its millions in Federal Covid PPE funding. Though the city has recently made high profile allocations addressing the homeless problem, a demand for pickle ball courts and a local historic mansion are among spending priorities.*

News 10-4 1:00- The local results of the 2020 U.S. Census have been released, which found that the Berkshire population continues to shrink while its residents grow older.

News 10-5 1:00- Governor Healey yesterday signed into law the state's first tax cuts in two decades. The governor and lawmakers said the \$1 billion tax relief plan will put more money in taxpayers' wallets and make Massachusetts more competitive.

News 10-10 1:00- Confidence among Massachusetts businesses dipped back into pessimistic territory during September after two months of optimism. Associated Industries of Mass reported this week that its business confidence index ended September at 49.8, just shy of a neutral reading on the 0-to-100 index. Businesses have held a pessimistic view for three of the last five months.

News 10-14 1:00- Many Massachusetts residents 65 and older are struggling to live in a state with a high cost-of-living state. Costs are impacting their ability to afford basic needs such as housing, food, transportation, and healthcare.

News 10-21 1:00- Attorney General Andrea Campbell and Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Lauren Jones are cautioning state residents looking for information on unemployment insurance or to access their account on the Unemployment Online system against fraudulent third-parties, websites, and scams.

News 10-24 1:00- Mayor Tyler is requesting a zoning change and a TIF to support a new housing project on Wendell Avenue. 786 Holdings LLC plans to convert a commercial building at 100 Wendell Ave. into 28 units of mixed-income rental units.

VP 10-29 30:00- \$13,000 per toddler for annual childcare: why america is failing its parents

VP 11-5 30:00- We discuss what's one of the fastest growing frauds out there and why thousands of people each day are getting tricked.

News 11-6 1:00- The push to bring a four-day work week to Massachusetts is set to get a hearing on Beacon Hill. A bill coming before the Labor and Workforce Development Committee later today proposes to give a tax credit to businesses in the state that join a pilot program to explore the possible benefits of a shorter work week.

News 11-10 1:00- Despite rising rental costs, property taxes and utility bills, a new study has found that the cost of living in Pittsfield is fairly reasonable compared to other areas of the state.

VP 11-12 30:00 CEO pay in the auto industry rose 40% over the last decade: how fed-up auto workers are fighting back

News 11-13 1:00- The state Legislature ended formal sessions for the year yesterday with no agreement on a spending bill which would steer money toward the emergency shelter system.

News 11-17 1:00- With a record low inventory of available homes still resulting in record high prices and interest rates rising, sales across the commonwealth have reached a 12 year low.

VP 11-19 30:00- We cover the recent conviction of FTX founder & former CEO, Sam Bankman-Fried. Will people build up trust in cryptocurrency again?

News 11-24 1:00- The city council wants more time to explore its options before voting on the Mayor's

proposed tax rate that could increase the average residential property tax bill by over 400 dollars a year,

News 11-25 1:00- As private disagreements between top House and Senate Democrats on Beacon Hill continue to hold up funding for the strained emergency shelter system and collectively-bargained pay raises for state workers.

News 11-28 1:00- The city council is conducting the annual tax classification hearing tonight and will consider new rates that will again result in an hefty increase for home owners.

News 12-2 1:00- Residents of the city's west side are invited to community input session tonight on the role of zoning in developing communities and what role it can play in revitalizing that area of the city.

News 12-4 1:00- Members of the Senate Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy are holding a special oversight hearing at 10:30 in the Berkshire Innovation Center

News 12-12 1:00- Stating the concern that any further delay would not allow quarterly tax mails to be sent on time, the city council this week, approved Mayor Tyer's new tax rate without amendment.

News 12-16 1:00- After weeks of legislative procrastination, parliamentary delays and finger-pointing, a \$3.1 billion spending bill packed with money for the stretched-thin emergency shelter system and raises for state employees landed on Governor Healey's desk yesterday and she immediately signed it.

News 12-19 1:00- State authorities issued a warning to citizens yesterday about a newly reported scam targeting EBT card users.

***Issue: Public Health/Environment-** Health issues are not as much of a public discussion as they were during the pandemic but play a major role in the everyday life of a city with an aging population. The state is again changing its mandatory health insurance coverage protocols forcing citizens to reenroll with new coverage providers, which changes their healthcare delivery. The city's health department still has concerns with 5- G cellular radiation with some residents even taking a major carrier to court over health concerns. Meanwhile, at the writing of this report cases of Covid and other respiratory viruses are on the rise to the point that healthcare facilities have implemented mask mandates.*

VP 10-1 30:00- '35 percent of all food ends up in the trash': why is food waste still so high?

News 10-15 1:00- The Healey-Driscoll Administration last week released its Statewide Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, known as ResilientMass. In total, the ResilientMass plan details 142 actions across state agencies that are tracked publicly at resilient.mass.gov. Key actions include establishing an Office of Climate Science, making the state building code more resilient, and updating MBTA design standards.

News 10-20 1:00- A warmer autumn so far is extending the threat of west nile virus. The state department of public health has announced A fifth person, this time from Hamden county is now being treated for West Nile virus. The DPH said while mosquito activity is decreasing as the weather gets cooler, the risk is still there until the first hard frost.

VP 10-22 30:00- We talk to experts on how to best deal with the loss of loved ones.

News 11-6 1:00- Senate Democrats on Beacon Hill plan to make another attempt this fall at reining in prescription drug prices, this time with language requiring insurance companies to make medications for certain chronic illnesses available at no cost to patients. Senate President Karen Spilka announced last week that her chamber plans to release and debate a prescription drug cost bill in the next few weeks.

VP 10-29 30:00- We highlight some of these updated policies and the lasting effects of early childhood obesity.

VP 11-5 30:00-A parched landscape: why the amazon rainforest is facing an uncertain future
News 11-11 1:00- A Senate committee chair seemed vexed over the commonwealth's authority to buck federal law and legalize drug consumption sites during a hearing this week as health care providers and local officials insisted that pending legislation would provide them with crucial protections as they aim to curb the state's worsening opioid epidemic.

VP 11-12 30:00- Experts estimate that about 10 million Americans deal with seasonal affective disorder, or SAD, each year. Interestingly, women are four times more likely to be diagnosed than men. We look at what can be done about

News 11-16 1:00- While likely not having much of an impact this time of year, the city of Pittsfield has temporarily banned boating on Onota Lake with the discovery Zebra Muscles, an in vasive species.

News 12-4 1:00- Governor Healey's administration yesterday outlined its strategy for preparing coastal areas of the Bay State to deal with the impacts of a changing climate. The ResilientCoast initiative will be led by a new chief coastal resilience officer within the Office of Coastal Zone Management, and is expected to "pursue a multi pronged approach to the risk of coastal climate change.

News 12-10 1:00- Confronting higher volumes of non-fatal opioid-related overdoses in rural swaths of Massachusetts, health officials are planning to more closely analyze new data on the addiction crisis as they map out additional interventions, such as legal injection sites.

News 12-17 1:00- Berkshire Health Systems has cleared a major bureaucratic hurdle in its effort to reopem North Adams Regional Hospital. According to the Berkshire Eagle, the state DPH's public health council has approved the determination of need application. The federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services must also designate NARH a critical access hospital.

News 12-20 1:00- Berkshire Health Systems has cleared a major bureaucratic hurdle in its effort to reopen North Adams Regional Hospital. According to the Berkshire Eagle, the state DPH's public health council has approved the determination of need application. The federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services must also designate NARH a critical access hospital.

News 12-22 1:00- The state secretary of environmental affairs was in Pittsfield on Friday to announce that the city is the largest recipient of grant funding earmarked for the removal of deteriorating dams across the commonwealth.

Issue: Public Safety/Education- *Increasing gun violence on the local level remains a primary concern of local residents as with an increase in petty crimes such as home and vehicle break-ins, shoplifting and property damage. Road safety is also a hot button issue with the needs and convenience of motorists often clashing with the need and convenience of bicyclists and pedestrians. Local citizens have also begun questioning the priorities of the school district, which continues to see a decline in test scores, attendance and graduation rates but have offered few solutions to those problems, which remaining focused on national party agenda issues such as gun control, gender dysphoria and racial dynamics. As a result, the district has one of the largest opt-out rates in the region.*

VP 10-1 30:00-2/3 of students are testing below proficiency in reading': why are literacy rates so low?

News 10-10 1:00- Citizens from across the Commonwealth, including many from Berkshire County finally got the chance this week to tell a panel of state representatives how they feel about a proposed overhaul of the state's gun laws, and they poured out hours of impassioned commentary that sets the stage for a contentious House vote.

News 10-12 1:00- The Central Berkshire School District is the latest to ban cell phone use during the academic day.

News 10-14 1:00- Several Berkshire County police departments are among those awarded state grant funding this week to defray the cost of body cameras.

News 10-16 1:00- House lawmakers on Beacon Hill yesterday unveiled sweeping gun legislation that already has 2nd amendment advocates up in arms.

News 10-21 1:00- House Democrats on Beacon Hill plan to vote on controversial legislation overhauling the state's firearms laws on Wednesday,

News 10-23 1:00- A Dalton police sergeant has been fired for engaging in three high-speed pursuits in the span of two months.

News 10-26 1:00- A third distinct version of the Mass House's controversial gun reform bill advanced out of the House Ways and Means Committee yesterday as the House continues to circumvent the usual committee process to get the priority of Speaker Ron Mariano to the floor for a vote this afternoon.

News 10-27 1:00- Teen driver car crash fatalities have hit their highest point in over a decade in the Bay State according to new analysis by AAA Northeast — with 49 people killed in crashes which involved drivers between the ages of 16 and 19 in 2022.

10-30 1:00- President Joe Biden has officially nominated Joshua Levy to serve as U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts. Levy has been acting U.S. Attorney since May when Rachael Rollins resigned.

News 11-2 1:00- Two of the state's top elected officials are encouraging colleges and universities across the Commonwealth to find new approaches to "advance diversity in light of the Supreme Court's ruling that restricted the use of race by colleges in admission decisions.

News 11-3 1:00- According to new data released by the state department of education this week, Chronic absenteeism in Mass public schools grew by 72 percent between 2019 and 2023 and called for an "all hands on deck" approach to address the issue.

News 11-15 1:00- Mass Attorney General Andrea Campbell yesterday announced the launch of the office's gun violence prevention unit, which she said will aggressively enforce the state's gun laws and consumer protection statute, as well as defend those laws from ongoing and potential legal challenges.

News 11-20 1:00- Massachusetts has become the first state in New England and the fifth in the nation to make prison and jail calls free. Governor Healey signed the bill into law last week that will go into effect Dec. 1st.

News 11-25 1:00- Gun violence was the hot topic on Beacon Hill yesterday. A total of 56 gun bills were heard in front of the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security, and it gathered advocates both for and against gun reform

News 12-9 1:00- The number of students studying at the state's community colleges shot up in the fall semester, driving the first undergraduate enrollment increase at Massa public colleges and universities in a decade, officials announced yesterday.

