

## A sporting chance



RICHARD W. DIONNE JR.

Sports betting debuted Monday at the Tiverton Twin River Casino, and Warren resident Mike Peterson was among the first in line to try his luck. He said he planned to wager on football, \$40 or \$50 — this week he likes the Seahawks and Broncos and "you've got to go for the Texans." See story on page 2.



POOL PHOTO

Christy Gilpatrick of Warren at her Monday arraignment in Taunton District Court.

## Prosecutors say Warren driver caused bus crash

Prosecutors Monday blamed a Warren resident for the Saturday night crash that forced a Tiverton school bus off Route 24 and injured many of its passengers, several of them seriously.

At her arraignment in Taunton District Court, Christy Gilpatrick, 27, pleaded not guilty to driving under the influence, second offense.

Investigators had previously held off from saying that Ms. Gilpatrick caused the crash, but prosecutors in court laid the blame squarely on the Warren woman.

They said that her Subaru Impreza struck another car, then swerved in front of the school bus, causing the crash and forcing it off the road.

And they also gave the first indication of the extent of injuries.

"At this point, we do know that there was serious injury to multiple occupants of the bus, including broken ribs, broken jaw, crushed vertebrae, blood around the lungs, and others of the same magnitude," the Boston Globe reports that a prosecutor said.

Ms. Gilpatrick told police that she had consumed one drink, but prosecutors said she failed a field sobriety test.

Her attorney told the judge that she helped comfort some of the injured at the crash scene. While prosecutors sought \$10,000 bail, her lawyer asked that bail be set at \$2,000. Bail was set at \$2,500.

The Globe reports that bail terms include

## And the RICAs results are in

*Schools ponder results of state's latest test method*

Students in grades 3 through 8 got their first taste of Rhode Island's new RICAS (Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System) tests last spring, and last week, they and their teachers were handed the results.

The test is modeled after Massachusetts' MCAS — "Through RICAS, we now have a true apples-to-apples comparison of how we perform compared to Massachusetts,

the gold standard for education in America and beyond," said Ken Wagner, commissioner of elementary and secondary education.

The results were sobering as statewide scores fell significantly short of Massachusetts (17 percentage points in English Language Arts and 20 points lower in mathematics), although Massachusetts staff and students have the decided advantage of many years of experience with the test.

Asked to react to their schools' scores, the superintendents schools in Tiverton and Little Compton had this to say ...

### Tiverton — We'll learn from this

Since the RICAS test is modeled to a degree on Massachusetts' MCAS test, the experience is both familiar and refreshing, said Tiverton Superintendent of Schools Peter Sanchioni who had worked the decade previous to this year in Massachusetts schools.

He said it is too soon to draw conclusions one way or another about the performance of Tiverton students, but he is certain of one

See **RICAS** Page 3



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EAST BAY LIFE



# A sporting chance

## Tiverton casino launches sports betting

BY TOM KILLIN DALGLISH  
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TIVERTON — "Your attention please. The Tiverton Sports Book is now officially open," a woman's voice announced at 3:08 p.m. on Monday, December 3, at the Tiverton Twin River Casino.

Indeed it was. A slow-moving current of sports bettors shortly began to thread its way to the far northwest inside corner of the casino (to the left as you enter the casino), where the sports book area is located.

Awaiting them was an array of 11 large computer screens on the walls left and front with odds boards in the sports book area, showing the odds for different sporting events and stating the money line, the spread, and the total spread.

Behind a glass partition and under the front screens, four or five betting attendants stood, ready and waiting to place bets for the arriving bettors and to answer questions.

Among the first wave of bettors was Mike Peterson, 51, of Warren, who stood near the window, an 8 and 1/2 inch by 13 inch sheet of paper called a "Sports Book" in hand, on which he was making notes of the bets he intended.

"I have a budget," he said. "Today it's \$40-\$50, but normally it's about \$50 to \$100."

Mr. Peterson has visited the casino before, for craps, he said. He works for a hotel in the Newport area.

Right now he said he expects to come to the casino for sports betting "maybe once a week, during the football season."

So who do you like these days, he was asked.

"This week it's the Seahawks and the Broncos, And you gotta go for the Texans."

"\$10,000 is the highest amount that can be bet," said one of the attendants. "A guy earlier bet \$100 and won \$26,000 in a ten-team parlay." A parlay is a single bet," says a handout from the casino, "that links two or more wagers."

Another attendant said, "it's not that



RICHARD W. DIONNE JR.

Mike Peterson looks over some wager options.

complicated, it really isn't."

"The types of wagers and bets may vary daily," said Patti Doyle, spokesperson for Twin River.

"The arrival of sports betting in Rhode Island represents the only place in New England where sports bets can be placed legally. In Rhode Island, it also represents a collaboration with the state and IGT (formerly GTech, a multinational gaming company that produces slot machines and other gaming technologies) as the technology provider, and

William Hill as the sports betting operator.

Alexander Jovanovic, is an employee of IGT. "Usually you can tell the experienced or professional bettors by the amount of money they play," he said.

Joe Franklin, a regional executive director with the casino, said sports betting will be available at the casino from 10 a.m. to midnight, seven days a week, a schedule, he said, that's "subject to tweaking."

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# RI Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS) Test results (2017-18)

## Statewide

### English Language Arts (ELA)/Literacy

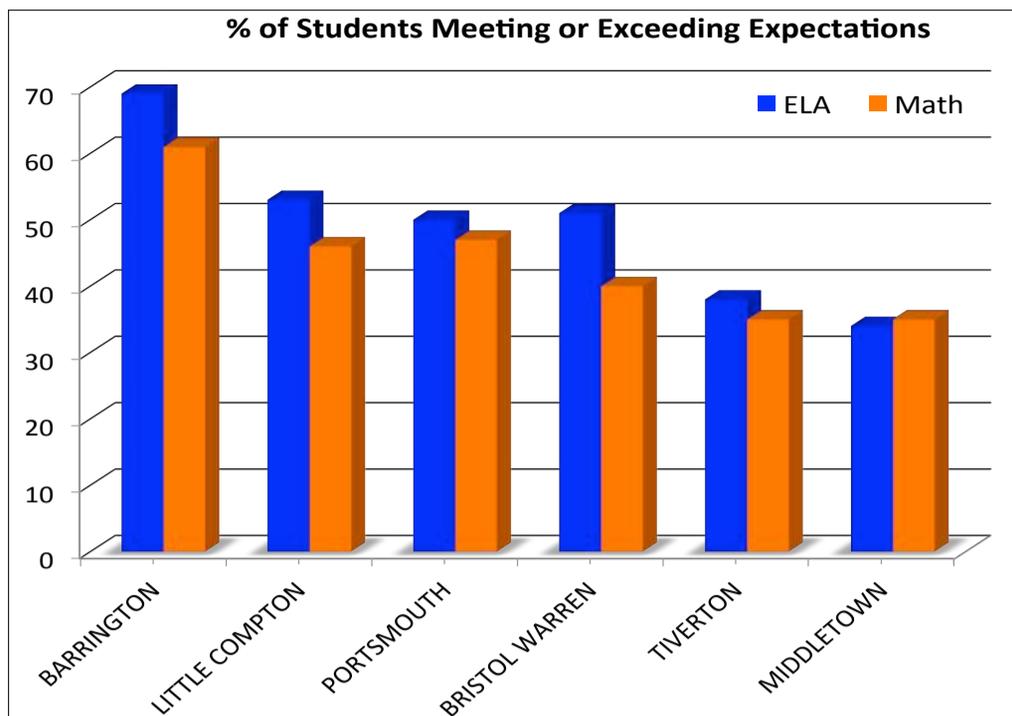
#### All Grades

63,663 students tested (98.5 percent)  
 Not meeting expectations: 19.76 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 46.53 percent  
 Meeting expectations: 30.24 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 3.47 percent

### Mathematics

#### All Grades

64,468 students tested (98.75 percent)  
 Not meeting expectations: 22.35 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 50.34 percent  
 Meeting expectations: 25.39 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 2.01 percent



Graph shows how Tiverton, Little Compton students fared compared to those in some nearby districts.

## Little Compton

### English Language Arts/Literacy

#### All grades

Students tested: 94.71 percent  
 Not meeting expectations: 6.83 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 40.37 percent  
 Meeting expectations: 44.72 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 8.07 percent

### Math

Students tested: 95.88 percent  
 Not meeting expectations: 3.68 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 50.31 percent  
 Meeting expectations: 41.1 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 4.91 percent

## Tiverton

### English Language Arts/Literacy

#### All grades

Students tested: 98.8 percent  
 Not meeting expectations: 9.28 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 52.38 percent  
 Meeting expectations: 36.14 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 2.2 percent

### Fort Barton

Students tested: 100 percent  
 Not meeting expectations: 3.9 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 51.95 percent  
 Meeting expectations: 42.86 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 1.3 percent

## Pocasset

Students tested: 98.86 percent  
 Not meeting expectations: 2.3 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 52.87 percent  
 Meeting expectations: 43.68 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 1.15 percent

### Middle School

Students tested: 99.82 percent  
 Not meeting expectations: 11.69 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 54.5 percent  
 Meeting expectations: 31.83 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 1.98 percent

### Ranger

Students tested: 98.9 percent  
 Not meeting expectations: 3.33 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 38.89 percent

Meeting expectations: 52.22 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 5.56 percent

## Mathematics

All Grades  
 Students tested: 98.55 percent  
 Not meeting expectations: 9.54 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 55.87 percent  
 Meeting expectations: 33.01 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 1.59 percent

## Fort Barton

Students tested: 100 percent  
 Not meeting expectations: 7.79 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 44.16 percent  
 Meeting expectations: 41.56 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 6.49 percent

## Pocasset

Students tested: 100 percent  
 Not meeting expectations: 9.09 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 61.36 percent  
 Meeting expectations: 27.27 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 2.27 percent

## Middle School

Students tested: 99.4 percent  
 Not meeting expectations: 10.07 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 58.81 percent  
 Meeting expectations: 30.04 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 0.72 percent

## Ranger

Students tested: 97.8 percent  
 Not meeting expectations: 3.37 percent  
 Partially meeting expectations: 46.07 percent  
 Meeting expectations: 48.31 percent  
 Exceeding expectations: 2.25 percent

# RICAS: Tiverton, Little Compton pore over test results

From Page 1

thing with Massachusetts school test results is “unfair.”

Massachusetts teachers and students have had years to become accustomed to the test, he said, “and I can almost guarantee you that as students and staff gain experience” with RICAS, the results will improve here too.

He said he encountered some administrators and other staffers who were disappointed as the results were revealed — “I tell them, don’t let the numbers define you ... What defines us is how we move forward.”

Because this is a first year test, “the results do not accurately portray the ability of our students and staff.”

The value of the test, Mr. Sanchioni said, comes when all involved dig into the results and discover where students did well and where they need to improve.

For instance, “how did we do in fractions? Is this an area that needs work, and if it is instruction can be adapted to emphasize the skill, as has been done in Massachusetts.”

Although the length of the exam varies by grade level, it can be an ordeal, the superintendent said — three days for both the math and English sections, a couple of hours per day.

Mr. Sanchioni was not here last spring so didn’t have the opportunity to hear student reaction, but “I’m sure they probably found it more challenging. But rigor is good. These are 21st century skills that they will need.”

## Little Compton — Good work, considering

Dr. Laurie Dias-Mitchell, superintendent of schools in Little Compton said, “Regarding RICAS 2018, the news is in: Rhode Island has a lot of work to do, but Wilbur and McMahon School (WMS) is in a good position. WMS is ranked at about the top quarter (aggregated data) of all public schools in the state in spite of the fact that RICAS is the third summative assessment in Rhode Island in just four years (NECAP 2013-14; PARCC 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17; RICAS 2018).”

“This constant change is confusing for educators and students and is surely counterproductive. Massachusetts has taught and tested to the same summative assessment for 20 years (MCAS), and this consistency has paid off.”

“WMS’ disaggregated data is below (grades 3-8). At WMS, each grade level at WMS achieved above the state average in ELA and Math — and there are many other data points that we are proud of — the number of students involved in our: STEM initiatives (SeaPerch, First Tech Challenge, LC Makers, Code.org), annual theatrical production, sports programs (cross country, soccer, basketball, lacrosse, field hockey), music programs (band, chorus), school-community partnerships (CORE, Island Moving Company, Little Compton Makers, Sogkonate Garden Club, URI Master Gardener Program).”

“There are so many more data points, beyond state tests, that speak to what a school offers to students and the greater community.”

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Solar panels, enclosed within a seven-foot-high gated fence, would cover 61.2 acres of the 101.7 acre site that fronts on Brayton Road (left) and Cornell Road (right).

## New council repeals solar ordinance

*Follows 'overwhelmed' planners' advice*

BY TOM KILLIN DALGLISH  
 tdalGLISH@eastbaynewspapers.com

TIVERTON — The newly elected Tiverton Town Council, after being sworn in on Monday night, November 26, in Town Hall, unanimously voted to repeal the solar ordinance that the previous council had unanimously adopted last March.

Monday's vote, which followed a public hearing on the issue, sent the solar ordinance back to the planning board for revisions. It was the planning board that on October 10 had recommended a repeal in the first place — in order for revisions to be made to the ordinance — and that had stressed in a letter to the council that the "revision process be expeditious and the results be timely."

The planning board may be approaching overload in respect to solar applications that now are before it.

"We have had a barrage of solar applications that have come in," said Rosemary Eva, a long-time planning board member and its one-time chairperson. "We currently have six large solar applications pending before the board," the board's Administrative Officer told the new council members at the evening's hearing.

"The size and scale of the projects submitted has exceeded what the town anticipated," Mr. Compton said. "It's a priority issue in Rhode Island — the siting of solar farms."

"No one envisioned what is happening — property being converted into solar" said Councilor Patricia Hilton, one of the previous council members who was re-elected said at the hearing.

One of those speaking at the hearing, against repeal, was the attorney for Raymond Johnson, the owner of a gravel pit and quarry at 691 Brayton Road, a property that had formerly been before the council, and the planning and zoning boards, seeking to establish a motocross track in the neighborhood.

"My client's property is not aesthetically pleasing," he said. "It's the kind of property suited for solar development. My client has submitted a concept plan, and I urge you not to repeal the ordinance."

Planning board reviews two solar proposals

Two proposals for solar installations, that went before the town planning board on Wednesday, November 14, illustrate the issues and the stakes involved.

They were two of at least six projects filed with the town that are currently under various stages of active review by the planning board.

About 30-35 members of the public were in attendance on November 14.

"Every five minutes we get another solar

application," Planning Board Chairman Stuart Hard said at one point in the evening's proceedings.

The proposals are part of a land rush in Tiverton now to develop solar installations. The rush to develop solar installations is reportedly motivated in part by federal tax credits of up to 30% on energy projects, state tax breaks for equipment, and renewable energy fees built into customers' bills by National Grid.

Consideration by the planning board of last Wednesday's two proposals, and others like them waiting in the wings, takes place against a backdrop of uncertainty.

The first proposal to be taken up by the board — by far the larger of the two — is called "Brayton Road Solar," and consists of 61.2 acres proposed to be covered by solar panels, as part of a total site that's 101.7 acres in size.

It's located at 390, 394, and 446 Brayton Road. Chairman Hardy called it a "major solar array." It was on the agenda as an "informal concept plan" for discussion — an early stage in the planning board review process. No vote was taken, and it drew a cascade of questions from board members.

The second proposal, called the "Cook Farm Solar Project," is a proposed 10-acre solar array, located on a 19-acre lot at 4366 Main Road. It already has Master Plan approval, and is slated to return to the planning board on January 8 for further discussion.

■ The Brayton Road solar proposal - issues presented

The site lies in an area zone R-80 to the east of Brayton Road, from which the site is accessed, about 0.8 miles south of Bulgar-marsh Road. To the northeast as the crow flies is Sandywoods Farm.

After the applicants presented their proposal, the discussion following brought forth a number of observations, which ultimately elicited from Chairman Hardy a request that, before next returning to the planning board, the applicant furnish the board with a detailed GIS (geographical information system) photograph that shows the location of the site's various features.

Another major issue surfaced in the discussion: the capacity of National Grid to absorb, accept, and transmit the energy generated by the Brayton solar proposal.

Apparently National Grid has only a limited capacity to accept energy generated by solar proposals, beyond which energy generated cannot be transmitted from the solar installation to the grid.

"I'm asking you to get a letter from National Grid," Mr. Hardy told the applicant, "that gives us some idea of how your project will impact other solar projects after yours."

Mr. Hardy gave as an example a farmer, who might want to install a solar array on his farm, and might want to know how likely it

See **FACING PAGE**

# CRASH: Several hurt in crash

From Page 1

that she attend AA meetings, appear at probation, be subjected to random alcohol screenings, and not drive without a valid license.

She was also charged with negligent operation of a motor vehicle, marked lanes violation, and operating under the influence causing serious injury.

A pretrial hearing was set for February 7.

On her Facebook page, Ms. Gilpatrick says she is a barista at the Beehive Cafe in Bristol.

The Saturday night crash happened on Route 24 south in Berkley, Mass.,

Massachusetts State Police say that 23 people were aboard the bus at the time including adults and children, and that all were treated for injuries of varying degrees. Two of the passengers, one of them a child, police say, were taken to Rhode Island Hospital with serious injuries. The child was later transported to a Boston hospital. Other occupants were treated for lesser injuries at Charlton and Morton hospitals in Massachusetts.

The bus was headed back to Tiverton after a bus company trip to LaSalette Shrine in Tiverton. Passengers were employees of First Student Bus Company, Tiverton, and their families.

The bus spun around to face the wrong direction and went into the woods, coming to a stop against trees in an upright position, Berkley Fire Chief Scott Fournier said.

The chief was the first firefighter to arrive and said he was greeted by the startling sight of people sitting and lying on the ground near the bus, two of them babies. Most had gotten out of the bus on their own or with the help of fellow passengers, he said.



MASS. STATE POLICE

The Tiverton school bus sit in the woods off Route 24 after the crash.

Bad as the crash was, it could easily have been worse, the chief said.

"They are lucky," he added — "school buses don't have seat belts." The chief decline to specify the nature of the injuries.

A mass casualty incident was declared, which brought mutual aid in the form of fire trucks and ambulances from over a dozen cities and towns.

Ambulances from Alert Ambulance, Brewster Ambulance, Dighton, Raynham, Fall River, Somerset, Swansea, Rehoboth, Freetown, Seekonk, Norton, Mansfield, Westport, North Attleboro, Bridgewater, Lakeville, Middleboro, West Bridgewater, Canton, Avon and Randolph were summoned to the scene. Taunton police and fire and Tiverton fire also responded.

The highway was closed for over an hour with vehicles detoured off the highway at exit 11. One lane was re-opened southbound just after 11 p.m.

## Solar rules must be reworked

From **FACING PAGE**

will be that he can sell his solar energy to the grid.

"The Town of Tiverton wants to make sure the landfill could be accessible for a solar array and be within the capacity of National Grid, so let us know how much capacity will be left," Mr. Hardy said.

"At what point will National Grid say it has no more capacity," he said. "I really think the town needs to know," and "I'm asking for a letter from National Grid" that answers this concern.

On this issue, Julie Munafo made the point that perhaps already compromised land might be used first for solar arrays, before prime land is so utilized.

■ Regarding the impact of the proposed installation on Basket Swamp, that lies within the site, Mr. Hardy asked the applicant to secure a letter from the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) addressing the concern, and the possible impact on well-head issues.

Of these requests for official letters, one member of the applicant team said, "it's unrealistic."

■ One lot on the site was designated as "open space" on December 31, 2016, one speaker said.

■ The site includes an "unknown" cemetery (known as Cemetery #36, said Bob Martin of the Tiverton Historical Cemeteries Commission.

■ There's a "stone wall configuration that is significant," said Chairman Hardy, that lies on either side of an old cart path that runs through the site. "I'd hate to lose all those stone walls," said Susan Anderson, chairperson of the town's Historical Preservation

Advisory Board.

■ Trees may be cut down to clear part of the site. "Cutting down 101 acres of woods is a horrible loss of habitat," said Ms. Anderson.

■ "Ground-mounted solar installations leave a giant footprint," said Julie Munafo

■ Cook Farm (formerly Fogland) solar proposal

The Cook Farm solar proposal, for a long, narrow uphill sloping site with 80 feet of frontage on Main, would commit one of five lots to solar development, the rest to residential. The proposal has already received master plan approval.

"The application was certified as complete under the existing ordinance," Mr. Hardy said, which means that the project could proceed regardless whether or not the existing solar ordinance were repealed.

The proposal has not yet received an environmental review, but Mr. Hardy said one environmental review for both the residential and solar aspects of the project would suffice.

"This is a very attractive area of Tiverton, and we want to keep the iconic area intact," Mr. Hardy said.

"This has been a working farm since the revolution," said Ms. Anderson. Concern was expressed that working farms, once the agricultural use is abandoned, may never regain their status as agricultural, after any decommissioning of the solar installation in the future. The life expectancy of the project is estimated at 20-25 years.

"This is an area the Nature Conservancy is very interested in, and this project looks very benign. But we're not there yet," said John Berg, a spokesman for The Nature Conservancy.



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