



## MEMORANDUM

### OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

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TO: Select Board

FROM: Evan Brassard  
Town Administrator

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: April 30, 2021

#### IMPORTANT NOTICES TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

- Town Meeting will be held on June 5<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. on the Grafton High School Football Field
- The Local Election Date has been moved to Saturday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Polls will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with polling locations remaining the same.

#### TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

- Met with various local businesses in the community and reviewed economic development opportunities.
- Toured Houlden farms with William and John Allen. Very nice tour and farm.
- Finished Town Meeting Warrant Drafts and submitted for review.
- Met with residents interested in pursuing skate park.

#### ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

##### Town Accountant

- Finance Team & School Dept. met with Vadar on the Chart of Account conversion for all three application suites: tax, accounting, and utility billing.
- Continued working on revenue projections and salary budgets.
- Continued to assist TA with Police Alliance and GMEA Union negotiations.

##### Treasurer/Collector

No Report Submitted

##### Principal Assessor

- 1) Attended Vision Conference. All day webinars. Subjects discussed were Covid impact on commercial RE market, Land valuation and modeling, sketching, and using imagery to assess properties in a virtual world.

- 2) Researching Eagle View software for new imagery technology.
- 3) Sent second notices for Income and Expense filings.
- 4) Attended Vadar Tax demonstration.
- 5) Entered Deeds and verified ownership.
- 6) Continuing field inspections for cyclical, building permits and sales verification.

#### Town Clerk

The mailer containing the Charter change question and election information was sent out to voters on April 21st. Our office is busy processing the mail in voting applications that have been submitted over the past week. We have approximately 317 absentee/mail in voting applications received and all ballots for these requests have been mailed out as of Thursday, April 29th.

A new ballot drop box was purchased and will be delivered over the next two to three weeks. It will replace the current red box. The new box will be red with patriotic designs and labeled Town Clerk Drop Box. It is more secure, ADA compliant, weather resistant and will hold up to 1,400 ballots at one time. The cost of the box was covered by a reimbursement received from the state elections division.

The voter engagement survey has gone live to obtain feedback about voting behavior and how to utilize the funds awarded from Senator Bertonazzi. The survey will be available until April 30th and then data will be analyzed and discussed.

Wave 2 of dog licensing for 2021 has begun. The 2020 dog licenses expired March 31st, but dog owners can register their dog without a late fee before June 1st.

Reminders to staff and board/committee members were sent to complete and submit their conflict-of-interest certificates, sign off and open meeting law sign off due Friday, April 9th. We have many board/committee members who have not completed the training and sign off forms.

### **PUBLIC SAFETY**

#### Police Department (4/11/21 – 4/24/21)

850 log entries were made including 102 - 911 calls, 23 alarm calls, 55 ambulance calls, 5 animal complaints, 308 business/area checks, 8 disturbance calls, 7 fraud/ID theft complaints, 11 motor vehicle accidents, 7 arrests, 127 motor vehicle stops and 14 well-being checks.

13 License to Carry Firearms applications were received. Weekly Chief's Column posted on Older Adults and Driver Safety. Training included MPTC online in-service training for all officers, Legal Updates and Roll Call Bulletins. Officers and staff also attended annual CPR and AED recertification held in the police station training room.

The police department continued its traffic safety mobilization focusing on distracted driving. The effort is part of a statewide enforcement and education campaign funded by a grant through the Highway Safety Division (HSD) of the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) to reduce crashes, injuries and fatalities caused by distracted driving.

#### Fire Department

No Report Submitted

#### Department of Public Works (Including Engineering, Cemetery & Sewer)

Public Works: The Highway division of the DPW has relocated the new facility at 64 Old Westboro Road. Residents should be aware that the administrative office which was at the town hall has also relocated to the new facility. The Brush Dump will be open starting April 3rd. The recycling drop off area will be relocated to 64 Old Westboro and will operate Saturdays 8:00am-1:00pm and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00am-2:00pm. Main Street Improvements Project Easement compensation checks were sent to affected property owners. If residents have any questions, they should contact the DPW Director. Project related utility work will be happening on random days over the next few months.

Highway Department: Routine Operation and maintenance of town owned infrastructure and equipment. The staff continues street sweeping operations, drainage system repairs, and winter damage repairs. Grass mowing has also begun.

Cemetery and Parks: Routine department functions in including, trash pick-up, construction and painting of replacement fencing, grounds maintenance. Provided services for one funeral. Continue to repair areas from winter burials. Asst. recreation dept with park improvements.

Sewer Department: Routine operation and maintenance of the towns wastewater treatment and collection system. Routine administrative functions including quarterly billing, collection issues, final billing, and resident questions and requests. Provided inspection services and reviews for new service connections and new subdivisions.

#### Engineering

- Main Street Project has gone out for bid. Deadline is May 25<sup>th</sup>
- Milford Road sidewalk project has reached award stage and is moving forward
- Continue working on Fitzpatrick Road culvert project. Notice of Intent has been filed with Conservation
- Jay, Kay, Elizabeth, Francis, and Martin Streets have been reclaimed and are being prepared for surfacing next week
- Continue to work with town staff and departments on other projects and day to day activities

## Health Department

As of April 29, Grafton has been informed of a total of 1,155 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases since case tracking started in early 2020. As of the Commonwealth's last weekly COVID-19 risk report (dated April 29), Grafton is at a GREEN status this week, and a similar level of cases continues to occur in many surrounding communities.

The Worcester DPH nursing staff contacts any confirmed positive cases to review the protocols for proper isolation and quarantine with the cases and monitor each case per protocol. The nurses also contact any close contacts of each case regarding the appropriate protocols.

On April 27, the Governor announced a number of planned updates related to reopening of Massachusetts businesses and activities over the next months (subject to public health and vaccination data), and an update to the mask order regarding outdoor mask usage. For more details, visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/reopening-massachusetts>

As of April 19, all people age 16+ who live, work, or study in Massachusetts are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. For more information on the vaccine and how to find a vaccination location, visit <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine>

Additional vaccination locations of varying sizes continue to come online and offer vaccine appointments based on vaccine availability.

## **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

### Building/Zoning

The building department has been issuing building, electric, mechanical, gas and plumbing permits.

### Planning Department

This week, the Planning Department completed administrative tasks for the Planning Board. An Executive Session to discuss ongoing litigation has been scheduled for Monday May 3, 2021 prior to the regularly scheduled meeting.

Staff met with representatives of 109 Creeper Hill Road to discuss potential redevelopment and facility improvements, as well as local residents interested in reviewing the feasibility of a public skate park. Staff attended a webinar, "FEMA Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA)", hosted by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), and the "Fair Housing Month Symposium" hosted by the Citizens Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA).

CMRPC has indicated that due to minimal expressed interest in the joint MVP grant application, noted in the previous week's report, they will no longer be moving forward

with this application. Staff will meet internally to develop a revised strategy and path forward in regard to this grant opportunity.

### Conservation Department

Working temporarily as a one-person department, the Agent worked to issue the resulting documents of the Commission's 4/20 meeting, prepare for the 5/4 meeting, and review applications filed for the 5/18 meeting deadline. Site inspections were conducted, phone calls and emails from residents and applicants were fielded, and work continued on the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant application. The vacancy for the Conservation Assistant will be posted as soon as possible.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### Recreation Department

Summer program registration is ongoing for preschoolers to adults and family; sports, STEM, paddling nights, yard game rentals, and more. View the brochure [HERE](#). Information on the operation of Silver Lake plans to be announced late spring/early June. We are accepting applications for seasonal positions including Beach Directors and Summer Program Counselors (PT/sub) as well as a new year-round part-time Recreation Coordinator. View job openings [HERE](#).

From May 17 – May 21, the Norcross Park parking lot, basketball court, and surrounding grass areas will be closed to the public for a special event. The playground will remain open. The baseball field is closed for organized group use.

The ADA improvement project in our parks and playgrounds continues as weather improves; Airport Park is under construction and will continue until the end of May. The fields are closed but the playground is open; please use caution in accessing. Make sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) for the latest updates.

### Council on Aging

Sealed, labeled, and mailed the May Senior Center newsletters. Faxing capabilities have been added to the new Senior Center copier. Attended the monthly Worcester Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board meeting. Attended the MassDOT Community Transit Grant Program application training for State fiscal year 2022. Working on having a tent set up on the Senior Center side lawn so certain senior activities can be held outside. Assisted seniors with vaccine appointments. Support continues to be provided to seniors daily.

### Library

Congratulations to Cyndi Zarriello, who received a Paralibrarian II certification from the Massachusetts Library Association!

March stats: 850 curbside pickups (including 22 museum pass reservations), 8 home deliveries, 665 reference questions, 518 new items added, 11 new library cards issued, 2

volunteers, and 277 participants in 14 programs. Read the full Director's report online at <https://graftonlibrary.org/2021/04/30/directors-report-march-2021/>

The Community Read culminated in a virtual book discussion on Slack Thursday April 29. Thank you to the Friends for sponsoring the program, and to Heidi Fowler, for representing the selected titles through dramatic costuming all month.

The Library promoted the Friends Book Sale, which takes place Saturday May 1 from 10-2 at Mill Villages Park in South Grafton. Purchase a canvas tote bag and/or gently used books and media that have been quarantined per state guidelines, and snacks available from Anzio's, Gary's Ice Cream Truck, and pet treats from Quite Fetching. This fundraiser will include a Capital Campaign fundraiser as well: sale of bookmarks by local artist Sarah Bejer. Masks are required, please follow social distancing guidelines at this outdoor event.

Director Beth Gallaway worked on the May newsletter, copier procurement, a LEED pilot project regarding the innovative patio spaces in the new library, and worked with C/WMARS on SIP2 protocol (setup for the Automated Materials Handler (AMH) and Andy Deschenes on phones for the new library. She planned an author visit with local author Pamela Hollander (Wed 6/2) to discuss Pam's new book Gen X at Middle Age in Popular Culture. Beth completed the March MA Public Library Construction Program Grant Report and an EBSCO grant application for Solar Panels this week.

We prepped our Community Art project Mind, Body & Spirit, designed by staff member Allison Coelho Picone. Take home a canvas the week of May 3-8 and return the finished product the week of May 24-28 to take part in a Community Art Quilt display when our renovated library opens! For more information, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/921069722016389>.

Coghlin (IT) visited to reconnect some printers that went rogue after the Evergreen catalog update over Patriots Day weekend.

The Board of Library Trustees met and had a conversation around COVID-19, deciding the library should remain closed to the public through the move to the new building, scheduled to begin the week of July 12. Social distancing and ventilation in the temporary quarters pose a challenge that town departments and other libraries in the area. We continue to offer curbside pickup 6 days a week from 10am-4pm plus one evening a week until 8pm, and remote reference and readers advisory as well as virtual and DIY programming.

#### Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

#### GCTV

This week's activities included a "Meet the Candidate" segment with Ray Mead who is running for the open seat on Select Board. We recorded a new segment of Jack Kelley's

program “This Week in Grafton Government. Bob had a video chat with Marjorie Albright of the League of Women Voters.

And last but not least we hosted Parker Marshall a 9 year old Cub Scout who recorded his “Show Us Your Mask” PSA. GCTV Staff continues to maintain coverage for all GGTV Gov. events whether LIVE or on Zoom, and all special events or projects for the TA’s office.

## **CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS**

### Library Project

- Interior painting at existing building is complete.
- Electricians are installing light fixtures and other finish items. Lights have been turned on, both floors.
- Ceramic floor tile installation at lobby/hallway ongoing.
- Millwork installation continuing first floor.
- Carpet installation 80% complete second floor.
- HVAC testing and startup ongoing.
- Planting beds along building have been built.
- Bollards installed, sleeves for site sign in place.
- 2 of 3 patios have pavers installed.
- Drainage structures lifted for final paving.

### Municipal Center guardrail/ramp project

- Kickoff meeting completed, GC starting submittals process.

### Common Improvements project:

- Kickoff meeting at Common completed. GC starting submittals process.
- Estimated start date June 1.

## **IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

### Upcoming Select Board Meetings

May 4<sup>th</sup> (Business Meeting)

May 11<sup>th</sup> (Workshop)

May 18<sup>th</sup> (Business Meeting)

### Upcoming Department Head Meetings

May 5<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

May 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

Town Meeting – June 5<sup>th</sup>