



MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Select Board

FROM: Evan Brassard
Town Administrator

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: December 30, 2021

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Finance Director/Town Accountant

- Continuing to work on revenue projections for FY23.
- Accounting Office has submitted Schedule A Reporting to DOR.
- Accounting Office is concurrently working on the Annual Continued Disclosure Report and the Town Report for the Accounting Dept.
- Currently working on personnel budgets. Will be reaching out to department heads for their departments personnel wage worksheets to verify the accuracy of the salary totals.
- Will be meeting with department heads in early January to research older accounts. I would like to review all accounts with department heads to determine which accounts should be closed prior to the conversion.
- Town of Grafton will be participating in the Turbo Tax 2021form Import program. Employees will have the ability to automatically import their W-2 data into TurboTax.
- Received WRR Assessment for FY23. Retirement assessment increased 9.8% from FY22 for a total of 2,579,015.
- Attended the public meeting for Finance Committee. Agenda included Interview candidates for the FinCom vacancy.
- Met with NFP to go over Health Care rate increases for FY23. Past Health Insurance increases are as follows: FY21 increase 0%, FY22 increase 3%, FY23 increase 8-10%. Discussed Medical loss ratio, and the Towns high-cost claims. NFP is still currently in negotiations with Harvard Pilgrim.
- Met with Town Clerk to go over available funding sources for voting booth purchases.

Treasurer/Collector

- Q3 RE/PP Mailed due 2/1/2022
- Delinquent files submitted
- Pilot bill mailed due 2/1/2022
- 19 MLC requests have been received/processed.
- 1 Tax Title Certificate of Redemption processed
- December cash reconciliation on track for submission to accountant
- December trust funds reconciliation on track for submission to accountant
- Steady flow of call and payment traffic online and in house.

Principal Assessor

No Report – Position Vacant

Town Clerk

No Report Submitted

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Department

No Report Submitted

Fire Department

No Report Submitted

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

Public Works: The Brush Dump is closed for the season and will reopen in early April 2022. The recycling drop off area is located to 64 Old Westboro and operates Saturdays 8:00am-1:00pm and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00am-2:00pm. Main Street improvements project related utility (gas, electricity, communications) work will continue on random days.

Highway Department: Routine Operation and maintenance of town owned infrastructure and equipment. Maintenance staff continues to maintain and repair equipment for winter operations. We provided road treatment for four winter weather events this week.

Cemetery and Parks: Routine department functions in including, trash pick-up, construction and painting of replacement fencing, and grounds maintenance. Provided support for three funerals. Asst. recreation dept with ongoing park improvements and seasonal programs.

Sewer Department: Routine operation and maintenance of the towns wastewater treatment and collection systems. 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.

Updates to the treatment plant polymer system continue and is expected to be completed by January 7, 2022.

Engineering

No Report Submitted

Health Department

As of December 29, Grafton has been informed of a total of 2,018 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases since case tracking started in early 2020. The number of new cases continues to increase even further in Grafton, surrounding communities and the State, and the Omicron and Delta variants are circulating throughout the US. Individuals are strongly advised to continue to exercise precautions (e.g., wearing masks, social distancing, frequent hand washing), especially given the Delta variant circulating throughout the country, increased case counts, and the new Omicron variant. In addition, individuals are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated and to get a booster (if they are eligible).

Worcester County and surrounding areas are considered to be “high risk” areas for COVID transmission per the CDC’s classification methods. Given this elevated risk level, the CDC advises that all individuals wear face masks when indoors in public places (regardless of vaccination status).

In addition, Massachusetts recently released an advisory that all residents, regardless of vaccination status, wear a mask or face covering when indoors (and not in your own home). Massachusetts particularly urges this recommendation if you have a weakened immune system, or if you are at increased risk for severe disease because of your age or an underlying medical condition, or if someone in your household has a weakened immune system, is at increased risk for severe disease, or is unvaccinated.

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.

For more information on the COVID-19 vaccines and how to find a vaccination location, visit <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine>. Vaccination and boosters (if eligible) are strongly recommended.

The FDA has authorized and the CDC also recommended that individuals receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster if eligible. More details on the eligible populations and timing can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.htm>

The FDA authorized and the CDC also recommended that children ages 5-11 years get vaccinated for COVID-19. Currently, the only vaccine authorized for children ages 5-11

years is the Pfizer vaccine. More details can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/children-teens.html> and <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-vaccinations-for-children-ages-5-11>.

In addition, the FDA authorized and the CDC also recommended that individuals who are moderately to severely immunocompromised receive an additional dose of mRNA vaccine COVID-19 vaccine after the initial 2 doses. More details can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/immuno.html>.

Flu shots are available at pharmacies and other locations (e.g., doctor's office).

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Building/Zoning

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

Planning

No Report Submitted

Conservation

No Report Submitted

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recreation Department

Gnome for the Holidays returns! Five gnomes are hiding near trailheads in Grafton. Locate them, tell us which trail you found them on and what item they had. E-mail your answers by Jan. 3 and correct entries will be entered to win a Movie Night Gift Set! Click [HERE](#) for the map of trails and more details for this fun activity!

Have you seen our new winter brochure? NEW afterschool, teen, and adult programs (including an adult pickup games program - all your favorite camp and recess games..come be a kid again!). Check it all out [HERE](#).

During the winter season, a temporary 60' x 90' ice rink is installed at Mill Villages Park, 61 Main St., South Grafton for use by all, daily weather-permitting from 8am-9pm. Please make sure to check our Facebook page for any operational updates and follow all posted rules. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information. Happy skating!

Spring & Summer Registration is almost here! The spring & summer brochure will be out the week of Jan. 17th and registration for all spring & summer programs will begin Feb. 7th at 8am. Please contact the department with any questions at recreation@grafton-ma.gov or 508-839-5335 x1156, visit our website at GraftonRec.com, and follow us on Facebook (@GraftonRecDept) for the latest updates.

Council on Aging

No Report Submitted

Library

Library services were disrupted intermittently on Monday and Tuesday due to an Internet outage at the Municipal Center that affected department phones, Wi-Fi and use of our circulation and cataloging system. Thanks to all for their patience until it was resolved on Tuesday afternoon.

Beth was delighted to receive a citation from the Massachusetts Senate commending the Grafton Public Library on their Library construction project and Grand reopening!

Beth reviewed COVID protocols with staff, ordered office supplies, reviewed a list of outstanding out-of-scope projects for Capital Campaign to consider funding, worked on a non-fiction book order, reviewed the FY23 budget request, and covered multiple service desks during staff leave. She fielded questions to clarify the materials selection policy and set up an appointment to meet with a donor from Willard House to install a Willard Clock in the Historic Reading Room.

Beth met virtually with Trustee Chair Aaron Vandesteen to discuss moving all programming to a virtual or take-home DIY model, and suspending meeting room use, effective January 3, 2022, due to the increasing COVID-19 case numbers; all in-person programming for children ages 0-5 has been canceled and an update will be issued on the Library website by end of the week.

Congratulations to Sandhya Shenoy, who is an authorized Notary Public and has expanded the Library's capacity to offer notarization. Notary service is available by appointment only; please call 508-839-4649.

Congratulations to Marilyn Wilcox, who achieved Para librarian level II and will be honored at the MA Library Association Conference this spring! This certification is a mark of professional development for library staff without a Master's degree in Library and Information Science.

The Children's Room was steady in traffic all week, teen services was quieter. Cyndi spent the majority of time welcoming patrons to the children's room and giving the layout of the room (aka - tours!); teaching how to use the self-check and shelving books. Stacie updated the Holiday decorations in the Children's Room and did a room refresh to keep everything with a winter theme. She created a fun Snow Globe Zoo with the animals all having names of alliteration to match their species. The patrons can just gaze at the zoo animals as they browse in the children's room. I also updated all the coloring sheets and end caps for winter as well.

Cyndi and Jen worked on assembling 60+ tinker bags, planning programs for January, and manned the desk during a very busy school vacation week. Jen worked on finishing the newsletter and updating the Library calendar. Kristin worked on assisting

patrons, shelving books, gathering books for hold requests, preparing displays and bookmarks for upcoming January Bookworms Book Clubs for grades K-5 and creating slides to be included in upcoming Literacy Family Nights for SGES and NGES families.

We renewed our Wowbrary subscription! Wowbrary is a new book newsletter that arrives weekly via email and links to books the Library own. Any titles purchased through Wowbrary net a discount for our annual subscription fee. Sign up at <https://www.wowbrary.org/>.

Borrower services staff continued to perform circulation duties, provide orientation to visitors to the Library, train and supervise volunteers and more. In the last week, we circulated 2,313 items in the last week, and issued 13 new library cards.

The Board of Library Trustees approved a \$10,000 purchase from State Aid that will allow books from other libraries to sort more efficiently into bins, and will also allow borrowers to confirm the titles returned were accepted through the automated materials handler. Thanks to the Borrower Services staff for their advocacy and hearing patron complaints about the issue and assisting with the solution!

Heidi's appearance on Be Our Guest is online on Upton Community Television at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PvYP82C87M>

As a reminder the library will be closed in observance of New Year's on December 31st and January 1st. No items are due, but materials may be returned 24/7 in the automated book drop.

Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

GCTV

There has been no studio activity during the Holiday week. As always, 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.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

**Town offices will be closed Friday, December 31st
Happy New Year!**

Upcoming Select Board Meetings

January 4, 2022

January 11, 2022

January 18, 2022

Upcoming Department Head Meetings

January 5, 2022 @ 10:00 a.m.

January 19, 2022 @ 10:00 a.m.