



MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Select Board

FROM: Carter Terenzini
Temporary Town Administrator

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: February 5, 2021

CC: All Departments

IMPORTANT NOTICES TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

- Remote work will be ending. All staff will return to their offices beginning Feb. 8th. The building will remain closed to the general public. We will continue to assess the local impact of COVID and the need for in-person service and hope to start taking appointments again soon. We will advise staff when that is expected to occur.
- Annual Town Report – Send via email to Cindy Ide no later than February 12th (idec@grafton-ma.gov). Submit reports in a word document, arial 12, & justified. Please proofread your report thoroughly before submitting.
- February 10th at 7:00 p.m. the Finance Committee will hold a Public Hearing to permit public discussion of the Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets for Fiscal Year 2022 as presented by the Temporary Town Administrator. <https://zoom.us/j/93705079658?pwd=ZHFxQlF1MUhxTjYzaTg5WmpqcmtBQT09>
Passcode: 247567

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

With case counts now receding, most staff having now reached their “Clear to Return” date and vaccinations, while still in short supply, slowly becoming more widely available, the “Remote Work for All” operational status we have been in will end Monday morning February 8th. All staff is returning to being physically present. I have found this absence of staff on a regular ongoing basis (compounded by the number of actual vacancies you have had in the positions themselves) to be brutal in terms of trying to step in and manage. I think it works fine for a while when there is a full complement of

staff and it is a cohesive staff that has been together for a while with a depth of institutional knowledge. However, as we enter the budget and ATM season, and have the transition to a permanent TA, I just believe we need to bring everyone back. Notwithstanding that the federal law required expired on December 31st, we are exploring some options for limited remote work assignments and/or leaves for those who contract COVID or who are quarantined for non-union employees. We received a \$300k grant for sidewalk improvements; kudos to Paul Cournoyer, Chris McGoldrick & Brian Szczurko. The Draft budget has gone out to all Departments with a last call for errors, omissions, and revisits to be done by Noon Tuesday. The conversation with the 59 Pleasant Street developer went well. I do believe we are on track to have this back before you on 02/16. NFP did a great job for us on our insurance renewal with our primary carrier; we held firm at a 3% increase, and they agreed. I must say it is much better than anticipated given COVID loads we are seeing in the marketplace! I remain optimistic we can carry this across the portfolio but cannot guarantee that at this moment.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Town Accountant

No Report Submitted

Treasurer/Collector

Treasurer/Collector – The office is all caught up from the storm and has processed all payments received earlier this week for Q3 Real Estate tax bills. The next two months will be very busy collecting excise tax bills. The following bills will be going out in the next week.

Excise Demands

2020 Commitment #5 - 169 Bills - Mailed 2/8/2021 Due 2/22/21

2020 Commitment #6 - 177 Bills - Mailed 2/8/2021 Due 2/22/21

Excise Initial

2021 Commitment #1 – 16,626 Bills - Mailed 2/12/2021 Due 3/15/21

2020 Commitment #7 - 375 Bills - Mailed 2/12/2021 Due 3/15/21

Principal Assessor

- 1) Personal property discovery started for FY 2022 accounts. RRC in the field visiting and verifying data.
- 2) Full Field inspections were done for 20 abatement applications, processing abatement settlement agreements.
- 3) Received, reviewed, and processed 4 more personal exemptions.
- 4) Resumed Field Inspections for permit sign offs.
- 5) Updating owners according to deeds recorded at the Registry of Deeds.
- 6) Entering permits into Vision database.

Town Clerk

No Report Submitted

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Department

(01/24/20 – 01/30/2021)

380 log entries were made including 39 - 911 calls, 10 alarm calls, 29 ambulance calls, 1 animal complaint, 162 business/area checks, 3 disturbance calls, 3 fraud/ID theft complaints, 11 motor vehicle accidents, 6 arrests and 35 motor vehicle stops.

7 License to Carry Firearms applications were received. Weekly Chief's Columns posted on Winter Driving Precautions. Training included MPTC online in-service training for all officers, Legal Updates, Emergency Medical Dispatch CPR and APCO Public Safety Telecommunicator 1 for Courtney Collins, Dispatcher Trainee.

The Grafton Police Department police officer entrance examination was administered on Saturday, January 30th at the Grafton High School. 72 individuals were registered. 58 candidates sat for the exam and 7 requested a deferral due to military activation or personal reasons including quarantine. They will be tested at a later date TBD. The following is a brief demographic of the candidates provided by the testing company, Public Safety Consultants: Females (12), Minorities (13), College degree (33).

Fire Department

No Report Submitted

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

No Report Submitted

Engineering

- Continue to work with MassDOT and town staff to keep the Main Street Project moving forward
- Performed driveway inspections
- Began working on the Milford Road sidewalk project
- Continue working on contracts to go out to bid for this year construction projects
- Continue to work with town staff and departments on other projects and day to day activities

Health Department

As of February 4, Grafton has been informed of a total of 911 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases since case tracking started earlier this year. As of the Commonwealth's last weekly COVID-19 risk report (dated February 4), Grafton is down to a YELLOW status this week, and a similar level of cases continues to occur in surrounding communities and the Commonwealth.

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.

The Board of Health and Alliance are continuing to monitor the case counts in town and surrounding communities to identify whether any recommendations or policies should be updated or implemented above and beyond the Commonwealth's restrictions and guidelines.

The Worcester/Alliance EDS super site continues to vaccinate individuals from the Alliance communities that are eligible per the MA phased approach, which is currently all of Phase 1 and now the first part of Phase 2 (75+ individuals). There will also be a MA mega site opening at Worcester State University in mid-February, which will be available to vaccinate eligible individuals from across the Commonwealth.

The CVS in North Grafton will be one of the first CVS locations in MA to offer the vaccine. They will be following the MA phased approach for eligibility, and appointments will be required (no walk-in vaccinations). The CVS locations and other similar locations (e.g., Walgreens, Wegmans) are not limited to individuals who live or work in certain communities. More vaccine locations across the Commonwealth will come online in the future, but as with all vaccine locations the supply of doses is limited.

Discussions are continuing around the feasibility of conducting vaccine clinics for Seniors in Grafton, as there are concerns across the Commonwealth with the ability to procure enough vaccine doses and then unknown timing for when the doses may be available, which makes it difficult to plan, schedule and communicate clinics.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Building/Zoning

The Building Department issued several permits this week including building, fire, electric, plumbing, gas, wood stove, and home occupation.

Planning

This week, the Planning Department completed administrative tasks for the Planning Board. The Planning Department also attended the Annual Hazard Mitigation Planning Kickoff Meeting via Webinar and is pleased to announce that Grafton has been awarded the full \$300,000 request for the Shared Winter Spaces Program as applied for by the Grafton DPW.

Staff is continuing coordination with representatives of the GSX, LLC Development Team to discuss possible project adjustments and assist in formulating a strategy to move through the local permitting process and is also reviewing the RFP proposal received for the 27 Upton Street DPW facility in coordination with the Town Administrator's office.

Staff is also continuing working on a presentation update regarding the rollout of the Viewpoint online permitting system detailing achieved successes and anticipated challenges. In addition, staff is coordinating with CMRPC, the Grafton Land Trust and the Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee to finalize submission of the revised OSRP per the State comments and anticipates resubmitting shortly.

Conservation

No Report Submitted

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recreation Department

Spring programming will be announced February 12 and registration opens February 22 at 9am. February vacation week programs are available including Outdoor Adventure and Winter Wonderland Sports. Upcoming programs and registration can be found at GraftonRec.com.

Council on Aging

Completed and emailed the Senior Center's January 2021 operational report to the Worcester Regional Transit Authority. Distributed PAYT bags to those individuals who are part of the low income PAYT program. Planned and prepared for the Friday, February 12th senior drive-thru for hot chocolate and muffins, along with a Valentine gift bag. Participated in meetings regarding the administration of the COVID vaccine for seniors. The Senior Center continues to receive an abundance of calls from seniors and family members regarding the vaccine. Staff is working hard to eliminate fears and panic by reassuring them that there will be plenty of vaccine and to be patient

Library

The Library suspended curbside service Mon and Tue due to the inclement weather. Staff worked from home to reschedule curbside pickups and provide remote services.

This week we celebrated World Read Aloud Day 2/3 with a special digital storytime and book kit. Four families registered in advance to pick up materials and the readalouds are still available on our calendar at www.graftonlibrary.org.

We experimented with making our monthly newsletter online on social media. You can see it at <https://conta.cc/3teVUXD> or sign up to get a monthly delivery of the Children's Teen or General Newsletter at www.graftonlibrary.org – scroll down to find the sign-up button.

The I Love My Library program has gone VIRTUAL! This is a fun and creative way for legislators to hear how important libraries are from their residents/constituents with a personal snapshot of how libraries play a role in people's lives. Visit <https://www.lovemasslibraries.com/> and complete a simple form to share why GPL matters to you!

We pulled together materials and bagged them to offer Valentine's Day craft kits next week, (Mon 2/8-Sat 2/16) for pickup on a first come, first served basis between 10am-4pm weather permitting.

We are excited to be planning our FOURTH Star Wars Symposium on Sat 2/13! Get dressed up as a favorite character, bring your favorite books or collectibles to share, learn more about the Star Wars universe, geek out, and test your knowledge! Full details and registration here:

<http://www.eventkeeper.com/mars/xpages/G/GRAFTON/ekp.cfm?curOrg=GRAFTON&ref=EK&refNote=TaF#2/13/2021>

Finally, we are planning ahead to School Vacation Week and putting together February Vacation Craft Kits to Banish Boredom! Chock full of activities sure to keep the kids busy over break. They will be available at the Library's temporary location during the curbside pick-up hours of 10am-4pm over break (Tue 2/16-Sat 2/20).

Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

GCTV

We recorded 2 episodes of a new program which is the brainchild of Jay Hunter, owner of Hunter's Grille and Tap. The program will be called "Business to Business" and is hosted by Jay. He has contacted businesses in Grafton and asked them to participate in short on-screen interviews. The first two videos feature Madison Place Hair Salon and Stripped Waxing Salon. Jay hopes that his efforts supported by GCTV staff will inform viewers of existing businesses that they may be interested in. GCTV Staff continues to maintain coverage for all GGTV Gov. events whether LIVE or on Zoom.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Library Construction

- Second floor ceiling grid is 40% complete
- First floor drywall is hung, taping/sanding 50% complete
- Pressure testing of mechanical piping systems complete
- Transformer placed, NGrid pulled primary cables from pole

Common Improvements Project

- No update this week

Municipal Center Ramp/Handrail project

- Advertisement for project to be posted

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Town Administrator Office Days Week of Feb 8th

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

Upcoming Select Board Meetings

February 9th (Workshop)

February 16th (Business Meeting)

March 2nd (Business Meeting)

Upcoming Department Head Meetings

February 17th @ 10:00 a.m.