



MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Select Board

CC: Department Heads

FROM: Evan Brassard
Town Administrator

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: February 26, 2021

IMPORTANT NOTICES TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

- Articles for the Spring Town Meeting accepted through March 26th, end of business day.
- March 6th Drive Thru Re-Use & Recycle Event (electronics, furniture, textiles & more) This event will be held from 10-1 p.m. behind the Municipal Center

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

The majority of this week was spent assessing the current state of the community and meeting with staff. To date, I was able to meet most of the Department Heads and will conclude the initial meet and greets next week. As this is my first week, I spent the majority of my time, when not meeting new people, reviewing projects in various states of completion. The budget will be the first item that needs immediate attention, and we began a deep review on Thursday. It is our hope to have answers to most of our budgetary questions so that we can recommend minor changes to clean up the final document. While glad this first week is in the books, I remain excited to be here and grateful for this opportunity.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Town Accountant

- Reviewed account structure with Scanlon & Associates Auditors.
- Started working on OPEB 2020 audit with Treasurer/Collector & H/R.
- Reviewed budget with Town Administrator.

Treasurer/Collector

No Report Submitted

Principal Assessor

- 1) Working with Auditors for FY 2020 audit. Providing requested documentation from Recap. Completing Assessor Compliance and Internal Control questionnaire.
- 2) Reviewing income and expense returns and 3 ABC filings.
- 3) Researching 39 rear Countryside Road, assessed to Owner Unknown, a Carlo Brescia of Rhode Island, claims he is the owner.
- 4) Cody attending Course 5, Mass Appraisal, 2/25,2/26,3/4,3/5 via Zoom. Test will be given on Monday, 3/8.
- 5) Processing MV abatements and fielding calls for MV excise taxes.

Town Clerk

No Report Submitted

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Department (Feb 7-20, 2021)

614 log entries were made including 76 - 911 calls, 23 alarm calls, 42 ambulance calls, 4 animal complaints, 236 business/area checks, 3 disturbance calls, 3 fraud/ID theft complaints, 14 motor vehicle accidents, 2 arrests and 62 motor vehicle stops.

12 License to Carry Firearms applications were received. Weekly Chief's Column posted on Snow Removal from Vehicles and Keeping Warm – Keeping Safe Fire Prevention Tips. Training included MPTC online in-service training for all officers, Legal Updates and Roll Call bulletins.

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 and is open by appointment.

The recycling drop off area will operate (Saturdays only) at the Upton Street facility through the winter. The resident winter sand pick up area will also remain at the Upton Street facility.

Main Street Improvements Project Easement Packages were sent to affected property owners. If residents have any questions, they should contact the DPW Director. The

Select Board voted to approve the takings at their meeting held on February 16, 2021

Highway Department:

Routine Operation and maintenance of town owned infrastructure. The recent warm weather has created many potholes which the staff continues to repair, please call the DPW office to report any potholes. The recent warm weather has also afforded the staff time to start catching up on maintenance and repair projects.

Cemetery and Parks:

Routine department functions in including, trash pick-up, construction and painting of replacement fencing, grounds maintenance, and installation of one gravestone, and support for one funeral. Assisted with snow and ice removal.

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. Assisted with snow and ice removal.

Engineering

- Continue to work keeping Main Street Project moving forward,
- Performed driveway inspections,
- Continued progress on the Milford Road sidewalk project,
- Continue working on Fitzpatrick Road culvert project,
- Continue to work with town staff and departments on other projects and day to day activities.

Health Department

As of February 25, Grafton has been informed of a total of 970 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases since case tracking started in early 2020. As of the Commonwealth's last weekly COVID-19 risk report (dated February 25), Grafton is still at a YELLOW status this week, and a similar lower 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.

The Commonwealth announced yesterday that effective March 1 the Commonwealth will be moving into Phase 3 Step 2 of the reopening process. This move primarily impacts the capacity limits at a number of business types. In addition, restaurants will

no longer have a percent capacity limit but rather will revert back to the 6-foot distance separation requirement (may be closer if tables are separated by non-porous barriers not less than 6 feet high), with the maximum table size remaining at 6 people and the 90 minute time limit still in place. Restaurants may also have musical performances again (with appropriate distancing) but singing is not permitted indoors at this time.

All other public health orders and requirements remain in place (e.g., public and private gathering limits, mask order).

For more information on both the move into Phase 3 Step 2 on March 1, and the tentatively planned move into Phase 4 Step 1 (planned for March 22 depending on public health data) visit [click here](#). As always, there are sector-specific standards that each business type must follow, and those standards are currently being updated to reflect the move into Phase 3 Step 2. The updated standards will be available at <https://www.mass.gov/resource/reopening-sector-specific-protocols-and-best-practices> once they have been completed.

The Commonwealth recently announced that individual communities would no longer be able to obtain vaccine doses for clinics and they are shifting to a regionalized super site approach. This approach would require any regional super sites to administer 750 doses per day, 5 days per week, and the site cannot restrict the doses to individuals within certain communities. Given this announcement, there are outstanding questions from the Alliance to the Commonwealth around whether the Worcester/Alliance EDS site can continue operations as they have done (i.e., 975 doses per week restricted to eligible individuals in Alliance communities).

The super site at Worcester State University has opened and is able to vaccinate eligible individuals from across the Commonwealth. There is also a mass vaccine site that opened at the Natick Mall which is available to vaccinate eligible individuals across the Commonwealth. The CVS in North Grafton continues to offer vaccine appointments based on vaccine availability, and other smaller locations (e.g., additional CVS locations, Price Chopper/Market 32, Walgreens) continue to come online and offer vaccine appointments based on vaccine availability.

Discussions are continuing around the feasibility of hopefully conducting vaccine clinics for individuals who live in affordable/low-income senior housing in Grafton. There are continued 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 has issued several permits this week including building, fire, electric, plumbing, gas, mechanical and home occupation.

Planning

Housing Trust. 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. 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. Staff will also be meeting with Fin Comm to discuss the Planning Department Budget.

Additionally, staff met with the new Town Administrator Evan Brassard to discuss Planning Department tasks and objectives, attended the Webinar, "The Local Initiative Program: how to create community-supported affordable housing using LIP comprehensive permits and Local Action Units (LAUs)" hosted by Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and coordinated with residents, developers and National Grid on a number of ongoing development projects.

In accordance with the funding agreement between CPC and the Affordable Housing Trust, the remaining unutilized funds will be transferred back to the CPC account by the beginning of next week. A summary report of the program to date will be provided shortly thereafter.

Conservation

Staff worked on issuing the resulting documents from the Commission's 2/16 meeting and preparing for the Commission's 3/2 meeting. The Agent conducted site inspections. Phone calls and emails were fielded from residents and applicants. The Commission continued the process of updating the Stormwater Bylaw & Regulations per requirements of the MS4 Permit.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recreation Department

Our spring brochure is here! View programming for preschoolers to adults, yard game rentals, hiking trips, and more [HERE](#). Registration is open online at GraftonRec.com or email our office to pay by cash or check. Snowshoe rentals are available for March. Submissions of entries to enter to win a \$75 Grafton Rec 2021 Program Gift Card for participating in the Explore the Outdoors Activity Guide are due March 1. Submit entries at tinyurl.com/funoutdoors2021. Summer programming is expected to be announced by April 1. Make sure to follow us on Facebook for the latest updates.

Council on Aging

Completed and submitted the Tufts Community Grant application. Grant awards will be announced in April. Sealed, labeled, and mailed the March Senior Center newsletters. The Senior Center is still receiving calls for assistance in getting a vaccine appointment.

Seniors are not able to get appointments through the COVID vaccine website vaxfinder.mass.gov and are frustrated. The Senior Center is keeping a list of people inquiring about the vaccine should a supply become available for Grafton senior residents. Support continues to be provided to seniors daily.

Library

We put out 126 curbside pickup bags and delivered 7 items to 3 home delivery patrons. Beth Patch resigned from her position of trustee scribe and administrative assistant. We thank her for her 11 years of service to the Town of Grafton.

Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

GCTV

We received a phone call from a grateful Grafton Senior for our ongoing broadcasting of Strength/Balance Exercise, Zumba Gold, and Line Dance programs. In addition, we received a thank you card from Senior Joanne Dempsey expressing the same gratitude. Julie Flynn of NGES will stop by to record her book read for the students as part of the Annual Read Aloud program. Hosted a guided tour of the GCTV studios for new T.A. Evan Brassard and Select Board Chair Peter Carlson. GCTV Staff continues to maintain coverage for all GGTV Gov. events whether LIVE or on Zoom.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Library project:

- Ceiling installation continues, both floors
- Painting/finishing of walls is ongoing.
- Installation of windowsills begun.
- Electricians are pulling wire, various locations.
- HVAC registers and grills are being installed.
- Roof boots installed
- North facade siding and trim complete except for book drop.
- Temp plywood at front entrance removed, alum/glass door installation completed by 3/1.

Upcoming Select Board Meetings

March 2nd (Business Meeting)

March 9th (Workshop)

March 16th (Business Meeting)

Upcoming Department Head Meetings

March 3rd @ 10:00 a.m.

March 17th @ 10:00 a.m.

[Prior weekly reports](#)