



MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Select Board

FROM: Carter Terenzini
Temporary Town Administrator

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: January 8, 2021

CC: All Departments

IMPORTANT NOTICES TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

- The Municipal Center remains closed to the General Public due to the recent designation as a "Red" or High-Risk Community. Shortly after the Red designation is lifted, we will return to appointment scheduling. Customer business/services will be done remotely during this time.
- Annual Town Reports Due to Cindy Ide by January 29, 2021

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

William Blake started in the office this week and has begun the rounds of getting to know everyone. You may notice the home web page has had the "Email Alerts" changed to a "Subscribe to Town News" button which we thought was more user friendly and the Press Release on the availability of – and how to subscribe to - the weekly report was finally gotten out the door. We have begun the review of applications for HR Analyst and will be involving Ms. Lauria in that process. Working with Ms. Kremer, and your comments, we finalized a second cut at the Draft "Processing Policy" for your consideration. Research continued on the Solid Waste cost challenges. We have received a proposal from the Food Bank to re-open to the general public in one of two options. That has been referred to staff for comment which I expect to have back early next week so we may respond. We received the WRRS assessment; It is up a little over 13% or some \$235k leaving roughly \$500k to cover all other General Fund budget needs.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Town Accountant

No Report Submitted

Treasurer/Collector

No Report Submitted

Principal Assessor

- 1) Field Inspections for permit sign offs, sales, and cyclical Inspections.
- 2) Updating owners according to deeds recorded at the Registry of Deeds
- 3) Educating Taxpayers on why their bills have increased and offering exemption application to seniors, veterans and others suffering from financial hardships.
- 4) Reviewed and qualified 3 more applications for personal exemptions to present to the Board for approval.
- 5) Started data entry for FY2022 on property changes and updates

Town Clerk

No Report Submitted

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Department

917 log entries were made including 94 - 911 calls, 33 alarm calls, 71 ambulance calls, 5 animal complaints, 392 business/area checks, 8 disturbance calls, 7 fraud/ID theft complaints, 17 motor vehicle accidents, 6 arrests and 31 motor vehicle stops.

17 License to Carry Firearms applications were received. Weekly Chief's Columns posted on Holiday Gatherings During COVID-19 and Gift Cards - Rules and Rights. Training included MPTC Biased Base Policing for all officers, Use of Force, Legal Updates, Range Safety and Firearms Qualifications including Low Light Shooting for all officers.

We are happy to report that the holiday season was fairly quiet without any major incidents. We would also like to thank Mike Labbe of All Phase Glass and his family for stopping by on Christmas Day to provide lunch for GPD staff members who were working the holiday. We are grateful for their continued support and generosity.

Fire Department

No Report Submitted

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

No Report Submitted

Engineering

No Report Submitted

Health Department

As of January 7, Grafton has been informed of a total of 621 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases since case tracking started earlier this year. As of the Commonwealth's last weekly COVID-19 risk report (dated January 7), Grafton is at a RED status, and a similar increase in cases continues to occur in surrounding communities and the Commonwealth. Based on the surge following Thanksgiving, there are concerns that communities will see a similar surge following the Christmas and New Year holidays.

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 Alliance has finalized plans for Worcester to host a COVID-19 vaccine clinic for first responders in the Alliance communities.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Building/Zoning

The Building Department processed roughly 8 building permits and 21 mechanical permits including: electric, plumbing and gas. We also processed a fire permit and 4 requests for public inspections. This week the building department started conversation with the general contractor for the Pine Street project with an anticipated date to start construction June 2021.

Planning

This week and the previous, the Planning Department completed administrative tasks for the Planning Board and Affordable Housing Trust. The Planning Department also coordinated collection of the second round of Capital Requests, of which the finalized forms will be submitted shortly. The Planning Department also attended the MEPA "Reclamation on Route Main Street" Environmental Notification Form (ENF) review meeting and COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall Webinar coordinated through the Board of Health.

Staff submitted an application on behalf of Grafton for the Local Rapid Recovery Planning Program, with a proposed focus on the Rt. 122 and Rt. 30 corridors which serve the majority of Grafton's local business and higher density cores. Planning staff will

continue to follow up with the status of this application. Additionally, staff is working to provide a presentation update regarding the rollout of the Viewpoint online permitting system detailing achieved successes and anticipated challenges.

Staff also called and spoke with local businesses and restaurant owners experiencing challenges, informed them about the Sector-specific Relief Grant Program from the Commonwealth, and discussed this year's business performance, as well as expectations for next year. In coordination with GCTV, staff filmed and posted two public service announcements ("Return your shop Grafton card" and "Thank you for supporting Grafton businesses").

Staff also spoke with the Oxford Town Planner about the goal of ShopGrafton, which is to help local businesses to succeed and prosper contributing to a more vibrant community. The discussion included financing, process, business community involvement, promotion, and growth over the years, as well as the annual training seminars and the concept of a business community association.

Conservation

No Report Submitted

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recreation Department

A Recreation Commission meeting was held on Monday. Meeting minutes will be approved in February and posted on the town's website for viewing. Most all of the holiday decorations on the common were removed and in conjunction with Shrewsbury DPW (thank you), the holiday telephone pole banners have been removed. Spring and summer programming is being planned. Please join us for our next Free Fun Friday on January 15 by registering at GraftonRec.com. And don't forget, Tower Hill Botanic Garden passes are available for a free day entry for up to 3 people. Reserve yours by emailing us at recreation@grafton-ma.gov.

Council on Aging

Completed and mailed the Senior Center's December 2020 operational report to the Worcester Regional Transit Authority. Mailed "Thank You" cards to those individuals the Senior Center is aware of who donated gift cards for the Senior Center's Holiday Gift Card Drive or made a monetary donation. Met with various local Senior Center Directors via ZOOM to share ideas and support. Worked on the October 2020-December 2020 SNAP reimbursement reports. The reports need to be submitted to UMMS through their Partner Portal for reimbursement to the Senior Center. The reimbursement is for time spent processing SNAP applications, attending trainings, and promoting the SNAP program. Distributing PAYT bags to those individuals who are part of the low income PAYT program.

Library

The Library has renewed the Freegal digital music subscription – stream up to three hours of music per day and download up to three songs per week to keep! Visit <https://grafton.freegalmusic.com/> to set up a free account.

In other music news, our technical services librarian has been working to make our CD music collection more user friendly, and today staff took the final step of alphabetizing genres. Now, instead of deciphering labels against a chart, the collection has common genres like Opera and Pop-Rock instead of Q or MA.

Star Wars buttons were distributed to Winter Reading Program participants this week. It is not too late to register, participate, and earn a button in the February distribution round. Go to www.graftonlibrary.org/wrp for more information. This week we learned the Discovery Museum is offering a free speaker series via Zoom. Check out the 2021 lineup at <https://www.discoveryacton.org/education/discovery-museums-speaker-series>. To see what other museums are offering in lieu of in-person visits, go to <http://www.eventkeeper.com/mars/tkflex.cfm?curOrg=GRAFTON&curApp=passes> – click on any museum name, then click SITE.

We completed 680 curbside pickups in December! Call 508-839-4649 to place a hold or request a bag of books to delight and surprise you.

We have started working on our Annual report. In 2020, 30 unique volunteers donated 286 hours of service shelving library materials, delivering items to homebound patrons, completing clerical tasks and other activities. We are not currently accepting new volunteers and have suspended the program with the change in COVID status to red. Thank you to all our volunteers!

Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

GCTV

We produced 2 videos for John Allen. The first thanked the community for its support of ShopGraftonMA. The second reminded people to turn in their game cards to be entered into the prize drawing. Staff produced a video for Lisa Kelley letting those who are currently suffering from food insecurity, that they can contact her directly for assistance. Our last batch of videos was Bus Stop Weather for Jan. 7th, 8th, and 11th. As always, staff continues to maintain coverage for all GGTV (GOV) events whether LIVE or on Zoom.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Library Construction

- Exterior windows are 95% complete.
- Brick and limestone is complete

- Exterior trim has started with siding to follow.
- Interior drywall is 100% complete on the second floor, 80% on the first floor.
- The main stair has been installed and concrete treads poured.
- MEP trades are ongoing and making good progress.
- Weekly safety and COVID protocol reviews have been generally good.
- Coming up next week: painters on the second floor, complete last section of flat roof and start asphalt shingles

Common Improvements project

- Design team is working on final edits to their documents, plan to get bid docs out by the end of the month.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Town Administrator Office Days Next Week
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

Upcoming Select Board Meetings

January 12 (Workshop)
January 19 (Business Meeting)
February 2 (Business Meeting)

Upcoming Department Head Meetings

January 20th at 10:00 a.m.
February 3rd at 10:00 a.m.