



MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Select Board

FROM: Evan Brassard
Town Administrator

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: January 28, 2022

Town Administrator

- Met with various department heads and school department on budget.
- Continued to develop Capital Plan.
- Continued to develop new electronic budget book.
- Met with Collins Center in attempt to finalize the Salary Study.
- Attended MMA/Suffolk Financial Management Seminar.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Finance Director/Town Accountant

- Continuing to work on revenue projections for FY23. Governor Baker released fiscal 2023 Revenue Projections earlier this week. Please see below Cherry Sheet estimates based on the Governor's proposal. The Governor's budget recommendations are the first step in the state budget process. Following the release of the budget, public hearings are conducted by the Legislature to review the Governor's proposals. The House will then draft its budget proposal in early April. During the month of May, the Senate will release and debate its budget proposal. And, typically, the budget conference committee reviews the differences between the House and Senate budget to come up with a final budget that should be signed into law by the start of the new fiscal year on July 1st.

Cherry Sheet Receipts	FY22	FY23	Flux
Chapter 70	11,350,399	12,617,520	1,267,121
Charter Tuition	15,946	43,272	27,326
School Choice	770,404	724,955	(45,449)

Unrestricted Gen Govt Aid	1,718,430	1,764,828	46,398
Veterans Benefits	32,538	40,141	7,603
Exempt: VBS & Elderly	61,210	58,957	(2,253)
State Owned Land	5,670	5,667	(3)
Library	33,097	33,034	(63)
Total Estimated Receipts	13,987,694	15,288,374	1,300,680

Cherry Sheet Assessments	FY22	FY23	Flux
Mosquito Control Projects	75,379	77,267	1,888
Air Pollution	5,877	6,097	220
RMV Non-Renewal Surcharge	14,980	15,860	880
MBTA	34,225	51,339	17,114
Regional Transit	95,146	86,294	(8,852)
Special Education	361	13,775	13,414
School Choice Sending Tuition	303,360	283,957	(19,403)
Charter School Sending Tuition	249,509	326,106	76,597
Total Estimated Assessments	778,837	860,695	81,858
Net Cherry Sheet	13,208,857	14,427,679	1,218,822

- Accounting Office is concurrently working on the Annual Continued Disclosure Report and the Town Report for the Accounting Dept.
- Town of Grafton has distributed W-2's in the mail to all employees. W-2 information can also be accessed in your Harpers Employee Forward. Please reach out to HR if you need assistance with set up.
- 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.
- Continued meeting with Department Heads to discuss their budget and capital needs for fiscal 2023.
- Continued discussions with School Department regarding revenue projections, school budget, and override capacity available for FY23.
- Auditors will be onsite in the Municipal Center for the week of January 31st.
- Continuing working with Vadar on the chart of account conversion. Working on Parcel ID Identification formatting. Next Steps in the conversion: MVX Installment for FY22 1st commitment, and Tax Title Instalment. Vadar is in the process of setting up all Finance Team user profiles.

Treasurer/Collector

No Report Submitted

Principal Assessor

1. Working remotely answering emails and returning any customer calls.
2. Training with Mayflower Valuation.
3. Minutes and agenda for Board of Assessors meeting.

4. Processed 2 personal exemption applications.
5. Field inspections for 12 new construction property and 4 building permits.
6. Entered building permits into the Vision Database.
7. Processed 5 abutters requests.
8. Processed 4 MVE abatements.

Town Clerk

Nomination papers for the Local Annual Election on May 17th will be available on Monday, January 31st. Any registered voter of Grafton can pull papers and 50 certified signatures are required to be added to the ballot. Visit <https://www.grafton-ma.gov/town-clerk/news/nomination-papers-town-election-available-monday-january-31-2022> for more information. The seats available are:

- Select Board – (2) – 3-year terms available
- Board of Library Trustees – (2) – 3-year terms available
- Planning Board – (2) – 3-year terms available
- School Committee – (2) – 3-year terms available
- Town Clerk – (1)- 3 year term available

Over 8,500 census forms have been mailed to households in Grafton for 2022. In addition, dog licensing for 2022 has begun. We appreciate patience on receiving your dog tag since staff has been working remotely with town hall closure. Our staff is working hard to update census forms in the system and process requests as fast as we can to mail back to residents. Forms can be returned via email at census@grafton-ma.gov, by mail or in the red drop box located out front of town hall. If you have not received your form, please contact our office at clerks@grafton-ma.gov to have a form mailed to you.

The Boston Post Cane Award will begin in 2022. This is an award given to the oldest citizen of Grafton. A replica cane was made to use when recognizing the individuals but will remain in the custody of the town to avoid being lost. More details to follow soon!

Indexing of vital records is ongoing and we have started organizing our plans and map file with help from our long-term helper, Olie, with the Senior Work Off program. Skip Currier has been volunteering to scan maps and plans organized to start the digitizing process of our records.

Committee/board members are taking their oath of office as re-appointments or new members.

2021 Street Lists are available for purchase for \$10.00 a book. An electronic version is available for any departments who would like a copy.

We continue to assist many residents and individuals with vital requests, dog licensing, marriage licenses, business certificates, public records requests, notaries, and town related information.

We still have several board/committee members who have not completed the conflict-of-interest training and sign off.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Department (1/16/22 – 1/22/22)

375 log entries were made including 48 - 911 calls, 12 alarm calls, 29 ambulance calls, 6 animal complaints, 150 business/area checks, 2 disturbance calls, 4 fraud/ID theft complaints, 8 motor vehicle accidents, 25 motor vehicle stops and 11 well-being checks.

6 License to Carry Firearms (LTC) applications were received. Weekly Chief's Column posted on Don't Fall Victim To A Publishers Clearing House Scam.

Training included mandatory MPTC online in-service training for all officers including Human Trafficking, De-Escalation and Use of Force, Police Responding to Emergencies of Those with a Mental Illness, Cultural Competency, Suicide & QPR Certification, Critical Incident Stress Management and Mental Wellness. Officers also received legal updates on current court decisions and roll call notices including Commonwealth Fusion Center bulletins.

On Monday, January 24th, all officers attended firearms training at the Grafton DPW facility located at 64 Old Westboro Road. Training took place in the Blue Line Corporation's Mobile Firearm's Training Range, a self-contained 48-foot trailer designed for live-fire training. Officers were subjected to several realistic virtual "Shoot/Don't Shoot" scenarios which tested their decision-making skills, de-escalation techniques and firearm's proficiency. The training ran from 8:00 am through 5:00 pm.

Fire Department

Open Burning Permits are available at Grafton Fire Headquarters 26 Upton Street. Open Burning continues Monday- Saturday until May 1st at the discretion of the Fire Chief.

The Grafton Fire Department is always looking for residents interested in becoming a call firefighter. Please see the Fire Department page on the town web site for an application or call the fire department office for more information or speak to any current member of the dept.

During the past week the department responded to 5 alarms sounding, 1 stove fire, and 2 motor vehicle accidents. The inspectional services division performed 7 smoke detector inspections and continued follow-up services for ongoing property issues.

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

Public Works: Resident sand and salt is available at the DPW facility, the stockpile is located outside the fence at the entrance closest to the MA Pike ramp. 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. Staff provided road treatment and plowing for four winter weather events this week. Please see the DPW page on the towns website for the snow and ice policy.

Cemetery and Parks: Routine department functions including, trash pick-up, construction and painting of replacement fencing, and grounds maintenance. Provided support for two funerals. Asst. Highway Department with plowing operations. Maintain the ice rink at Mill Villages Park

Sewer Department: Routine operation and maintenance of the town's 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. Assist the highway dept with plowing operations.

Engineering

No Report Submitted

Health Department

As of January 27, Grafton has been informed of a total of 2,936 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases since case tracking started in early 2020. The number of new cases continues to be at an increased level in Grafton, surrounding communities, the state and the country, and the Omicron and Delta variants are circulating throughout the US. Individuals are strongly advised to continue to exercise precautions (e.g., mask wearing, social distancing, frequent hand washing), especially given the Delta variant circulating throughout the country, increased case counts, and the newer Omicron variant. In addition, individuals are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated and to get a booster (if they are eligible).

Effective January 5 in Grafton, face coverings are required in all indoor private common spaces in the workplace and indoor private spaces open to the public. This includes but is not limited to the premises of a business, club, place of assembly or other place that is open to members of the public, including but not limited to retail establishments, restaurants, bars, performance venues, social clubs, houses of worship, personal care and fitness establishments and event spaces, except when an individual is alone in a workspace or alone in a room at a workplace with a closed door or socially distanced

from other individuals. For the full emergency order please see <https://www.grafton-ma.gov/board-health/news/covid-19-related-boh-executive-orders-effective-january-5-2022>

For those that may live, work, shop or socialize outside of Grafton and other communities that have indoor mask mandates, the CDC advises that all individuals wear face masks when indoors in public places (regardless of vaccination status). In addition, Massachusetts 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 the latest information on the COVID-19 vaccines and boosters, eligible populations, and how to find a vaccination location, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html> and <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine>. Vaccination and boosters (if eligible) are strongly recommended.

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

This past six weeks, the Planning Department completed administrative tasks for the Planning Board, drafted the Planning Board's Annual Report for review at their February 7th meeting, submitted the MEMA Quarterly Report regarding the Hazard Mitigation Plan Update, and submitted a Request for Proposals for the Master Plan Update. Staff also attended an informational webinar regarding the MBTA Communities Zoning and developed an associated memorandum regarding preliminary analysis.

Staff is continuing coordinating with representatives of the 244 Worcester Street 43D application, as well as developing a number of proposed zoning changes for the Spring Town meeting as well as applying for Tier II funding via the Complete Streets Program for Development of a Prioritization Plan (Application Deadline April 1, 2022). Staff

coordinated with the Planning Board and Town Administrator's Office regarding the preliminary budget proposal and met with a number of developers regarding potential projects in Grafton.

Conservation

- Issued documents from the Commission's 1/4 & 1/18 meetings
- Updated templates and workflows in Viewpoint
- Worked on Green Communities grant projects
- Worked with Recreation on RFP for landscape architect services for 95 North Street
- Attended training on community & pollinator gardens
- Conducted site inspections
- Fielded inquiries from residents and applicants

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recreation Department

Make plans for the kids during February Vacation! We have Outdoor Adventure, Horse Lovers, Winter Wonderland Sports, Babysitting Certification and Home Alone Safety. Check out all of our winter offerings including snowshoe and outdoor game rentals [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!

We are excited to announce that our Spring & Summer lineup has arrived! View the brochure [HERE](#). Registration opens February 7 at 8am.

Council on Aging

The February Senior Center newsletter was sealed, labeled, and mailed. Began to notify seniors that the Senior Center will be opening February 1st. Worked on the Council on Aging 2021 Annual Report. Making appointments for Grafton seniors to get their taxes done by AARP, and time slots are filling up quickly. Meals on Wheels and transportation continues even though the building is closed. General information, advocacy, and support was provided to seniors daily.

Library

We continue to operate short-staffed, with multiple people out for COVID-related reasons. We have not yet traced contact to in Library transmission and remain open so long as we have staffing. The Library will be CLOSED in anticipation of the blizzard Saturday January 29. No materials are due, and we are fine free. Borrowers should stay home and wait until Monday, when we know our parking lot and walkways will be cleared and safe, to return any items due.

We received several cultural council grants, including one we applied and one that a performer applied for on our behalf. We look forward to welcoming Animal Adventures and up to 10 exotic animals this summer, and singer/songwriter Matt York this spring for a program on the music of The Highwaymen.

The Library was awarded a grant from MA Office on Disability for over \$23,000 in funding for accessibility hardware. Evan signed off on the project and we have been authorized to proceed with procurement.

We registered for the Boston Bruins [Cradles to Crayons PJ Drive](#) and will be collecting NEW pajamas from children and teens from February 1 through March 31. Staff will be wearing pajamas on Fridays to promote the program and host several virtual and passive programs on theme. The goal is to collect 5,000 pairs of pajamas statewide.

Monetary donations are also accepted via <https://www.cradlestocrayons.org/boston/pjdrive/>

Beth covered the teen and reference service desks, and spent a substantial portion of the week working on reports (weekly, monthly, annual – a perfect storm of reports due!) She also did a lot of professional development this week and last weekend, attending virtual workshops on privacy and patron records, weeding library collections, and being prepared for book challenges. She attended online sessions from the ALA midwinter conference on user experience and CVA, future-sight, trauma in the library, project management, youth media, sustainability, fair use, ADA makerspaces, late career motivation, local history, international games week, EDI, comics organization, comics programming, community engagement, middle management, escape rooms, romance collections, team collaboration tools, problematic authors and their works, and more.

Beth met with Renaud HVAC for system maintenance, which took three men sixteen hours to complete. They washed or replaced filters and became familiar with the system. Olde Bostonian brought back a repaired window for the Teen Librarian's office. IT was on site Thu to set up patron computers – it's still not clear why the previous IT company did not furnish what was requested for hardware and software. The donor funded clock for the Large Print and New Book room arrived, and Beth is working with DMH to schedule the electrical work, to be paid from the Capital Campaign. Signet returned to deal with a staff key card issue, and recommended reviewing the door and closer (again) as it does not seem to be functioning with ease. Beth reached out to Grafton Police to confirm we can use the panic buttons if needed.

Beth met with Evan to review the Library's FY23 budget request and capital requests, and was asked to make a significant revision. She attended a Library Planning & Building committee meeting, a construction meeting, and a Board of Library Trustee meeting. She also responded to a question about the Library's Electric Vehicle Charging Stations. Along with the usual circulation activities, Borrower Services staff edited a list of romance titles for a volunteer to put stickers on, Jane, Ranjita, Allie and Sandhya began

preparing February displays, Jane removed alerts from a list of items in the catalog, Allie worked on a new Readers advisory chart, put up twelve read-a-like posters and began creating artwork for the February displays.

Sandhya updated the museum passes and made a handy reference chart for which museums require physical passes (information about the museums changes on a weekly basis), and processed ILLs. Ranjita also updated the NYT bestseller lists. Allie and Sandhya expressed interest in attending a weeding webinar. Susan placed orders for overdrive content, Large Print, weeded audiobooks, and delivered nine items to Home Delivery patrons. All of us are looking forward to our first Departmental meeting since October, and are thankful to staff members who are covering the service desks for us to do so.

This week Allison ordered any missing titles from the ALA Youth Media Awards and displaying any YA copies we own. She worked on the Blind Date with a Book program for February. She met with Sarah to talk about summer program ideas and we went through the donated toys that we will be putting together for a Frankentoy program.

Sarah placed a book order with newly announced youth media award winners, handled an unaccompanied adult policy violation and patron complaint, contacted Bibliotheca for ticket support for the self-check printer, held two storytimes via Zoom for SGES, corresponded with the schools, assisted with reader's advisory, managed volunteers, attended the weekly staff meeting, met with Allison to brainstorm about the upcoming SLP, met with Allison to brainstorm Feb and March programming.

Cyndi coordinated with volunteers and managed the Library of Things in addition to regular circulation duties. Stacie prepped book displays and began to decorate the room for February.

Heidi is working on a resource list for disenfranchised and marginalized people. We have emergency go-bags with a blanket and snacks for homeless, veterans, and displaced people; we are seeing an increase in visitors of all ages struggling with mental health, and provide information and referral services.

Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

GCTV

There are no studio activities to report this 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

Upcoming Select Board Meetings

February 1, 2022 (Business Meeting)

February 8, 2022 (Workshop)

February 15, 2022 (Business Meeting)

Upcoming Department Head Meetings

February 9, 2022

February 16, 2022