



MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Select Board

FROM: Carter Terenzini
Temporary Town Administrator

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: January 29, 2021

CC: All Departments

IMPORTANT NOTICES TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

- Full Remote Work - with limited exception - will continue at the Municipal Center through 02/05. That practice will most likely be terminated with the begin of the 02/08 work week. Formal guidance will be issued by CoB 02/04.
- 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 the constantly changing vaccination program and the increasing level of inquiries about them, after discussion with the Board of Health chair, I have assigned William to take the lead on all PR efforts so it can be coordinated and ensure we're getting periodic updates out to our citizens. This will allow the BoH to concentrate on the day-to-day monitoring and planning activities. Worcester modified the Phase 1 rules to allow vaccinations for inspectors, school nurses, those who deliver senior meals and similar such positions. We did our best to spread the word and a number of our staff were able

to get their vaccinations done this week under the expanded rules. The Attorney General's office advises we may expect their review of the Charter submission (Strong Chief) to be completed on or before 02/20/21. Work continued on the revenue projections with the good news of House 1 and budget reviews continued. I am advised that Mr. Spinney expects to receive his provision license from the CCC and special permit from the Town in March. His targeted open date is July. MJ's Market expects to receive their building permit from the Town in a day now. Construction is budgeted for six to eight weeks. Then the CCC will need to do their inspection. Targeted opening is April 2021. Peter DeCaro expects to submit a set of complete architectural plans within a couple of weeks. He said the fire alarm and sewer line are ahead of schedule. The construction is expected to take three months from the time of approval. This means the resolution of your First Across the Finish Line policy is becoming more important as these three move forward in the process for the two authorized establishments.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Town Accountant

No Report Submitted

Treasurer/Collector

FY21 Real Estate & Personal Property Taxes Q3 are due 2/1. Despite challenges of COVID exposure at both our lockbox facility and in the Municipal Center, payments are all getting processed as of the date they were received. 2021 Commitment 1 & 2020 Commitment 7 Excise tax have been entered into the system by the Assessor's office and will be mailed Feb. 12th and due on Mar. 15th. Whenever possible, residents should be encouraged to mail payments to our Lockbox service or pay online.

Principal Assessor

No Report Submitted

Town Clerk

The annual census form for 2021 has been mailed out. Forms should be returned within 10 days and can be submitted by mail, drop off in the Clerk's red drop box out front of town hall or by email. Please email census forms to our dedicated email at census@grafton-ma.gov.

2021 Dog Licenses are now available. Requests can be returned with completed census forms, mailed, dropped off in the Clerk's red drop box out front of town hall or online through our online payment center <https://unipaygold.unibank.com/customerinfo.aspx>. Online requests can only be completed as long as a current rabies certificate is on file with the Clerk's office. If you are registering your dog for the first time, please contact the office to ensure all required forms are on file to avoid delays or a refund of payment.

Grafton has been awarded the Senator Louis Bertonazzi Award. This Award is recognition for having the highest voter turnout over the last two years amongst the 19 towns that were in Senator Bertonazzi's district. Across the five elections in the last two years, Grafton had a voting rate of 38.79%.

Due to our resident's strong showing at the polls, the Select Board will receive a plaque, which will be displayed for two years, as well as a commemorative banner for the public and a check for \$1,000.00 to the Board of Registrars. The money will be used to help increase voter awareness and turnout.

Nomination papers for the upcoming Local Election on Tuesday, May 18 will be available on Monday, January 25. Interested candidates must make an appointment in advance to obtain papers by email (preferred) at clerks@grafton-ma.gov or calling the office at 508-839-5335 X1195.

- Any registered voter of Grafton may pull papers
- Papers must be returned to the Registrar of Voters, through the Town Clerk's office, by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 30th for certification. An appointment in advance will be required to submit papers due to current events
- Nomination papers must contain the names of at least 50 registered voters of Grafton, but candidates are urged to submit more than the minimum number required in case some names or signatures cannot be verified
- Candidates may withdraw their nomination papers up until 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 15th
- The Local Election is on Tuesday, May 18th from 8 am-8 pm
- The seats available are:
 - Select Board – (1) – 3-year term available
 - Board of Library Trustees – (2) – 3-year terms available
 - Grafton Housing Authority – (1) – 5-year term available
 - Planning Board – (2) – 3-year terms available
 - School Committee – (2) – 3-year terms available
 - Town Moderator – (1)- 2 year term available (to fill a vacancy)

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Department

(01/17/20 – 01/23/2021)

446 log entries were made including 51 - 911 calls, 12 alarm calls, 36 ambulance calls, 1 animal complaint, 200 business/area checks, 3 disturbance calls, 5 fraud/ID theft complaints, 8 motor vehicle accidents, 2 arrests and 65 motor vehicle stops.

9 License to Carry Firearms applications were received. Weekly Chief's Column posted on Ice Safety. Training included MPTC Fair and Impartial Policing – Train the Trainer for Sgt. Mazzola and Officer Atchue, Legal Updates and continued online in-service training for all officers.

Dispatcher Christine Cooper submitted her resignation effective January 29th. She has worked honorably for the department since October 2015 and we wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

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 continue to operate 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 via certified mail to affected property owners. If residents have any questions, they should contact the DPW Director

Highway Department:

Routine Operation and maintenance of town owned infrastructure. Maintenance staff continues to install new and existing equipment at the new facility. There were three snow and ice events this past week.

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 five funerals. Assisted with snow and ice removal

Sewer Department:

Routine operation and maintenance of the towns wastewater treatment and collection system. Routine administrative functions including billing and 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

No Report Submitted

Health Department

As of January 28, Grafton has been informed of a total of 882 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 28), Grafton is still at a RED status, and a similar increase in 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 first responders and others in Phase 1 in the Alliance communities. The Commonwealth's announcement that Phase 2 (75+ individuals) will start on February 1 was surprising to local communities as just a couple days before the announcement the estimate to start Phase 2 was late February at the earliest. 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 and Affordable Housing Trust and Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee. The Planning Department also coordinated collection of the second round of Capital Requests and submitted the finalized forms. The Planning Department also attended a webinar on Affordable Housing: The Developer's Perspective, as part of an ongoing series provided through MAHT and CPA.

Staff met 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. Staff 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. Of note in Planning Board

correspondence this week, a public hearing notice was received for a 640,000sf warehouse and distribution facility to be located in the Towns of Uxbridge, Sutton and Douglas, located at 40 & 100 Lackey Dam Road. The Hearing is scheduled for February 11, 2021 at 7:00pm, with information available on the Douglas Town website. Currently, due to the location, we do not anticipate substantial impacts to the Town of Grafton requiring immediate consideration, however, the Planning staff is available to attend on behalf of the Town and/or to conduct a more thorough review and analysis of the proposal at the request of the Town Administrator, if desired.

Conservation

Staff worked on issuing the resulting documents from the Commission's 1/19 meeting. The Agent conducted numerous site inspections. Phone calls and emails were fielded from residents and applicants. The Agent continued to work on updating the Stormwater Bylaw per requirements of the MS4 Permit, which will be back before the Commission on 2/16.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recreation Department

Recreation led a hike in the Silver Lake Conservation and Fletcher's Preserve area Monday. The Open Space and Recreation Committee met on Thursday to rank the Open Space and Recreation Plan's objectives for the final review by the state. The Recreation Commission will be meeting on Monday. The agenda can be found [HERE](#). 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

Revised the current Grafton COA intake SNAP budget and submitted to UMASS. Received, labeled, and mailed the February Senior Center monthly newsletters. Worked on the COA 2020 annual report. Mailed the FY21 state formula grant contract to the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. The Friends of Grafton Elders will continue to pay for Elder Nutrition's Grab 'N Go lunches for seniors during the month of February. The Senior Center continues to receive an abundance of calls from seniors and family members regarding the COVID vaccine. Most are confused about where to go to get vaccinated, frustrated because they cannot navigate the website, and others have said their physician told them to contact their local Senior Center for information and administration of the vaccine. There is a sense of panic from some of the Grafton senior residents.

Library

Director Beth Gallaway attended the American Library Association's Midwinter conference, attending sessions on core technology trends that included troublesome tech trends such as deepfakes, video surveillance, voice biometric surveillance, disaster

capitalism and privacy concerns; library worker wellness initiatives; library responses to COVID-19; virtual professional development; advocacy; anti-racism work; racial injustice; and the youth media awards (visit ala.org/yma for all the winners!) This year, Michaela Goade became the first Native American artist to win the prestigious Caldecott medal for best illustration in a book for children for her book *We Are Water Protectors* by Carole Lindstrom. A variety of publishers hosted virtual author visits and booktalks that inform library purchasing decisions. Keynote speakers included author Ethan Hawke, groundbreaking and award-winning actor Cicely Tyson, the US Poet Laureate Joy Harjo, and closing speaker Dr. Jill Biden.

Staff put out 158 bags for curbside pickup from 1/22-1/28. As we anticipate more snow in February, we are trying to come up with creative solutions to continue curbside service and protect our library materials. If inclement weather is predicted, please be aware that curbside pickup hours may be limited or cancelled.

This Friday's half-day activity is a crystal snowflake kit. There are 30 kits available. One kit per person, first come, first serve beginning at 10am Friday 1/29. If you did not get a kit, you can follow along with your own materials at home by viewing the instructions for the project at <https://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/crystal-snowflake-ornament-science-activity-kids>. Next week: Star Wars valentines!

Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

GCTV

Three episodes of Bus Stop Weather were produced this week. Bill Riordan of Shrewsbury stopped by this week to tour the studio. He was pleased with the studio, and we will be scheduling his first Tai Chi recording in February. GCTV Staff continues to maintain coverage for all GGTV Gov. events whether LIVE or on Zoom.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Library Construction:

- Second floor painting is 75% complete
- Ceiling grid started on both floors
- Pressure testing of mechanical piping ongoing through 2/1/21
- Exterior siding and trim 90% complete
- Sprinkler main has been flushed
- Elevator installation is ongoing

Common Improvements Project:

- No update this week

Municipal Center Ramp/Handrail project:

- Bid documents are ready

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Upcoming Select Board Meetings

February 2, 2021 (Business Meeting)
February 9, 2021 (Workshop)
February 16, 2021 (Business Meeting)

Upcoming Department Head Meetings

February 3, 2021
February 17, 2021