



MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Select Board

FROM: Evan Brassard
Town Administrator

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: March 4, 2022

Town Administrator

- Attended ARPA Committee Meeting
 - Committee voted to greenlight four priority projects
- Met with department Heads
 - Launch next staff development project:
 - Negotiation Techniques with Chris Voss
- Met with local farmer regarding agricultural opportunities
- Reviewed employee healthcare costs and explored options for pricing stability
- Met with residents regarding potential 4th of July Parade/Celebration
- Attended a demonstration for electronic kiosks for Municipal Center Lobby

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Finance Director/Town Accountant

- Continuing to work on budget adjustments and revenue projections for FY23.
- Accounting Office is working on setting up ClearGov checkbook. This feature allows the Town to share check level expenditure details with residents. This new tool will allow taxpayers and internal stakeholders to explore expenditures by specific transactions and to see every check the town has issued to vendors.
- Attended ARPA Committee meeting. Four projects were approved by the committee: Middle School HVCA 2.2mil, School Nurses 600K, MS4 Stormwater Permit Compliance 50K, and Website revamp w/ ADA compliance 50K.
- Continued working with Traditional Energy, our energy broker who's currently working on bids for a new energy electric and gas supplier for the Town accounts.
- Continued working with Kearsarge to reallocate NMCs on the Town electrical accounts to include both new DPW and Library buildings. Expecting to receive a

credit of 250K from National Grid for high credit balances on accounts due to mis allocation of NMCs.

- Attended the Annual Women Leading Government conference. Topics included Being Productive and Not Just Busy – organizational skills, and Leadership & Resiliency.
- Re-Started negotiations with Grafton Police Alliance.
- Continuing working with Vadar on the chart of account conversion. As February 23rd we're officially "frozen" in Softright, we have sent Vadar the data files which are with development for review and conversion. MXV transfer has been completed and reconciled. Currently working on the R/E reconciliation for the conversion. Tat Title application is being manually set up by Treasurer/Collectors office. Working on the Cloud user set ups for town employees.

Treasurer/Collector

No Report Submitted

Principal Assessor

1. Preparing for Appellate Tax Board hearings for March 10, 2022.
2. Working on Map Changes.
3. Working on lot splits and new growth.
4. Working on 2022 supplemental bills.
5. Working with Vadar and Vision on mismatch parcels as part of the conversion.
6. Receiving and processing Income and Expense forms
7. Receiving Forms of List

Town Clerk

Nomination papers for the Local Annual Election on May 17th have been available since 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
- School Committee- (1)- 1 year term available to fill a vacancy (added 2/1/2022)
- Town Clerk – (1)- 3 year term available

Reprecincting data from the 2020 Census has finally been received and we are working on looking over all data to notify residents of changes to their precinct and/or polling location.

Over 8,500 census forms have been mailed to households in Grafton for 2022. In addition, dog licensing for 2022 has begun. Our staff is working hard to update census

forms in the system and process dog license requests 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 annual acknowledgment of receipt sign-off for the conflict of interest was distributed to employees and board/committee members. The sign off is due within 30 days of receipt (due February 23rd, 2022). The online training is only required for individuals who did not complete it in 2021.

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.

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.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Department (2/13/22 – 2/26/22)

594 log entries were made including 80 - 911 calls, 23 alarm calls, 47 ambulance calls, 7 animal complaints, 185 business/area checks, 10 disturbance calls, 2 fraud/ID theft complaints, 18 motor vehicle accidents, 31 motor vehicle stops and 5 well-being checks.

17 License to Carry Firearms (LTC) applications were received. Weekly Chief's Column posted on IRS Tax Scams and Ice Safety on Lakes, Ponds, Rivers & Streams.

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.

In addition, Sgt. Crosby and Sgt. O'Rourke attended the week-long FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association (LEEDA) Leadership School held in Southbridge. On Wednesday, I participated in Community Reading Day held at the North Street Elementary School. I read to one of the third-grade classes and then had a discussion and answered several questions on police and our role in the community. All students received Grafton Junior Police badges for being such attentive listeners.

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 department had 2 recruits graduate on March 1st from the Massachusetts Fire Academy Recruit Training Program. Congratulations to Max Cleveland and Logan Donohue!

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.

The IT team conducted 2 firefighter training sessions for electronic fire report submittals.

During the past week the department responded to 4 alarms sounding, 1 reported building fire, 2 motor vehicle accidents, 1 public assistance call, and 3 mutual aid structure fire responses. The inspectional services division performed 6 inspections, plan reviews, and continued follow-up services for ongoing property issues.

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

Public Works: With the recent warm weather potholes have started to open, please contact the DPW Office to report any potholes @ 508-839-5335 x 1124. Resident sand and salt mix 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.

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 operations for 4 winter weather events. 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 three funerals. Asst. Highway Department with plowing operations.

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

- Yearly contract bids are going out next week,
- Working with MassDOT, contractor and design consultant for Stowe Road culvert,
- Eversource is making progress on Main Street in preparation of spring construction,
- Fitzpatrick Road culvert plan review and dialogue with design consultant and MassDOT,
- Continue working on Year 4 NPDES Permit requirements,
- Continue to work with town staff and departments on other projects and day to day activities.

Health Department

As of March 4, Grafton has been informed of a total of 3,072 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases since case tracking started in early 2020. The number of new cases continues to be at a lower level than during the recent surge in Grafton, surrounding communities, the state, and the country, but the Omicron and Delta variants are continuing to circulate throughout the US. Individuals are strongly advised to continue to exercise precautions (e.g., mask wearing, social distancing, frequent hand washing) In addition, individuals are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated and to get a booster (if they are eligible).

The Board of Health strongly recommends all individuals continue to wear masks, especially in heavily populated indoor locations and for those individuals who are or come in contact with high-risk individuals (e.g., immunocompromised). We will continue to monitor the ongoing case count trends.

The CDC has released updated guidance on when to wear a mask. See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>. In addition, Massachusetts released updated guidance on when to wear a mask. See <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-mask-requirements>

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

No Report Submitted

Conservation

- Issued documents from the Commission's 2/15 meeting
- Prepared for, attended, and issued documents from the Commission's 3/1 meeting
- Updated templates and workflows in Viewpoint
- Worked on Green Communities grant projects
- Held the pre-bid site walk with Recreation on 95 North Street
- Attended numerous sessions of MACC's annual conference, an Intro to Heat Pumps & VRF webinar, and a webinar on the upcoming updates to the stretch code
- Conducted site inspections
- Fielded inquiries from residents and applicants

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recreation Department

Make plans for the kids during April Vacation! We have Outdoor Adventure, Horse Lovers, Horse Buddies, and Soccer Skilz. Registration is now open for all our spring and summer offerings, too. Check out the spring and summer brochure [HERE](#).

The ice rink at Mill Villages is now closed for the season. Offer letters have been sent to last year's summer staff with hopes that they'll return and any open positions will be posted by mid-March. The Director received her recertification as a Certified Playground Safety Inspector, met with the Finance Committee rep in preparation for the FinCom budget review on March 5, and facilitated the pre-bid site walk for the 95 North St. Passive Recreation Park RFP along with Leah Cameron, Conservation Agent. The next scheduled Recreation Commission meeting is March 14.

Council on Aging

Completed and emailed the Senior Center's February 2022 operational report to the

Worcester Regional Transit Authority. The Senior Center provided 408 rides for the month of February 2022; compared to 192 rides for February 2021. As of February 28th, Grafton has 4,234 residents over the age of 60. The dangerous parking situation in the Senior Center back lot when school is dismissed was presented to the Select Board with a letter from a group of seniors. Evan Brassard and Jay Cummings came up with a possible solution, and the effectiveness will be reviewed in a month. Wellness checks, support, advocacy, and guidance was provided to seniors daily.

Library

Beth corresponded with patrons about meeting room use, kicked off the first session of Ukulele 101 (a partnership program with Apple Tree Arts), and began scheduling programs for April. She completed the Allergen Aware training and TIPS certification and needs a Serv Safe certification and Community First Aid to complete the Library's Food Permit.

We conducted a test of our panic buttons with Grafton Police.

Beth met with Building Committee, the Board of Library Trustees, and attended the Department Heads meeting. She worked on procedures for the new security system, reached out to American Alarm for a quote for a cover for the alarm keypad in the lobby, and scheduled carpet regluing.

We said goodbye and thanked to our Bibliotemps Brianna, Erin, and Kate on Saturday; they have been temping with us since November while we worked to fill vacancies. Appointments for two new positions are on the Select Board agenda for March 8.

Kate put up a March display, "Read Me, I'm Irish!" This display features famous Irish authors (classic and contemporary) as well as stories set in Ireland.

All Borrower Services staff managed the lobby, sorting room and circulation desk. Allie created signage and display for Cozy Mysteries; handled printer issues, continued to troubleshoot faxing, worked with Bibliotheca to troubleshoot gate and PC connectivity issues, updated website with library newsletter links, added to the Readers Advisory database and approved Historical Fiction list of authors (D-F).

Jane finished the report of monthly patrons with wrong library and the report of items with alerts to be removed; set up a monthly display "I don't know the title but the cover is green"; got trained to enter titles in the Blackstone Audio account; and inventoried items waiting for RFID tags.

Sandhya completed 3 sessions of Notary Training; cleared the hold shelf of expired holds; updated the services section of the website and fixed the broken link to museum passes; processed requests for items outside the local library system; sent follow up emails to Bibliotheca regarding some of the items that were going to the incorrect bin; and set up her monthly display: "What I want to learn this year."

Ranjita managed delivery and shelving holds; set up a new display for Women's History Month; and worked on the Library of Things.

Susan ordered fiction and overdrive content; set up a March Madness display; compiled circulation stats, museum use and volunteer stats; conducted a Borrower Services staff meeting; began organizing reviews; began creating a weeding plan with staff; and worked on tutorials for ordering fiction, large print and audiobooks. Our public fax machine is finally fixed! The admin fax is still not functioning.

Sarah attended Community Reading Day at NSES and read to a 2nd grade class, attended the virtual New England Summer Summit, followed up with patrons and shepherded the Young Scientists program, communicated with Willard House, YFCP, and STEM Beginnings, attended the weekly staff meeting, created lesson plans, compiled February statistics, counted February PJ donations (we are up to 53!), and spoke to a mother about a possible home-schooling program.

Jen worked on the March CR newsletter, assisted patrons, lesson planned, assisted patrons, and brainstormed spring programming.

Cyndi wrapped mystery playdate books; decorated the room for March with Stacie; finished making tablecloths for the program room; continued work on the volunteer training packet; shelved books; handled patron questions and concerns; worked on the library of things.

Mare assisted patrons, coordinated with volunteers, and shelved. She completed 2 webinars, "New Homes, New Stories: An Illustrator Panel About Home and Family" and "Young Healthy Minds: How the Clay Center's Resources Can Support Your Library Work." Stacie decorated the room for March, shelved books, and assisted patrons. Kristin organized the CR supply closet, communicated with the schools, and planned for her three book clubs.

This week Allison put up 3 new displays in the teen room: Women's History Month, Doodling (to promote our doodling program later this month), and Books That Start with The Letter (one book that starts with each letter of the alphabet).

Additionally she went through YA fiction books that have missing or lost status and will reorder items that we should have in the collection, and delete missing items (that aren't lost by a patron) that we no longer needed. This makes future searching for missing items easier and faster, while making sure we have copies of books that people are looking for (like the first book in a series). She plans to do this process for video games next.

She also attended North Street Elementary School's Community Reading Day on Read Across America Day and read *The Hole Story of the Doughnut* by Pat Miller to a 6th grade class. I wasn't given permission to bring in doughnut holes, but I did bring in some doughnut bookmarks and doughnut scented and shaped erasers for the class.

Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

GCTV

We recorded 2 segments of Bus Stop Weather this week.

On Tuesday afternoon we met with Paul Cournoyer regarding the Fire Department Recruitment Video.

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

March 8, 2022 (Workshop)

March 15, 2022 (Business Meeting)

April 5, 2022 (Business Meeting)

Upcoming Department Head Meetings

March 16, 2022