



MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Select Board

FROM: Evan Brassard
Town Administrator

CC: Department Heads

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: March 12, 2021

IMPORTANT NOTICES TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

- Due to Covid-19 the Spring Town Meeting scheduled for May 10th is expected to be moved to June 5th. Updates to follow.
- Town Meeting Warrant closes March 26th

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

This week we continued with the Department Head overview meetings and the review of ongoing projects. Staff have projects well in hand and we will continue to work together to ensure everything stays on track.

Finance committee continues to meet with various departments to review budgets. The Town Administrator and Finance Director are attending all meetings possible to build a good rapport as well as a collaborative relationship for ensuring the financial stability of Grafton. The Town administrator also met with the CIPC to review capital planning and the future of capital funding in Grafton.

The Finance Team and Town Administrator worked with the Financial Advisor with the intent of issuing/refinancing debt. We are working hard to take advantage of the favorable bond rates and save the residents of Grafton money.

We spent many hours this week reviewing the budget with the Finance Director trying to tie up errors and adjust budgets to be more in line with departmental requests. The unknown variables found in the budget have been largely rectified with only a few things left to prove out. Once the document is corrected adjustments and departmental

reviews will begin in earnest to deliver changes to the Finance Committee in a timely manner.

We have also spent time this week interviewing staff for the positions of HR Analyst and Assistant Treasurer/Collector. We anticipate making offers to qualified applicants next week.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Town Accountant

- Attended MMAAA annual education program Week 2 of 3. This week's sessions include Capital Planning & Cash Reconciliation.
- Continue working with our auditors Scanlon & Associates. Auditors will be onsite next week to collect more data.
- Assisted with Assistant Treasure/Collector & HR Analyst interviews.
- Attended FinCom meeting to review multiple Department budgets.

Treasurer/Collector

No Report Submitted

Principal Assessor

- 1) Supplemental Bills created for 2 condo conversion parcels, 10-12 Murray Ave and 19-21 Orchard Street, totaling \$ 6,772.34 with a CPA of \$101.58. These 4 bills will be mailed and due with 4th quarter bills.
- 2) Board of Assessors meeting Tues 3/9. All 3ABC filing approved, 3 personal exemptions approved, 2 RE and 2 PP abatements approved.
- 3) Assisted in the interviewing of 2 candidates for Assistant T/C position.
- 4) Participated in the Bond Rating call.
- 5) Processing MV abatements and fielding calls for MV excise taxes.
- 6) Reviewed draft maps received from Map Geo with mapping updates from year 2020.

Town Clerk

No Report Submitted

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Department (2/28/21 – 3/6/21)

374 log entries were made including 34 - 911 calls, 7 alarm calls, 28 ambulance calls, 1 animal complaint, 140 business/area checks, 2 disturbance calls, 3 fraud/ID theft complaints, 7 motor vehicle accidents, 3 arrests and 31 motor vehicle stops. Full public logs are available for viewing on our web site and Facebook page.

5 License to Carry Firearms applications were received. Weekly Chief's Column posted on National Crime Prevention Week Safety Tips. Training included MPTC online in-

service training for all officers, Legal Updates and Roll Call Bulletins.

Officers have also begun attending the Fair and Impartial Policing (FIP) program hosted by the MPTC being held at the Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center. The FIP Training Program for Patrol Officers and Supervisors is an 8-hour program that applies the modern science of bias to policing. It trains officers on the effect of unconscious bias and gives them the information and skills they need to reduce and manage their biases. The curricula address not just racial/ethnic bias, but biases based on other factors such as gender, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, age and more. All full-time officers will attend the training.

Fire Department

No Report Submitted

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

No Report Submitted

Engineering

- Continue to work keeping Main Street Project moving forward,
- Working with Eversource who is scheduled to begin gas main and service replacements on Main Street,
- Milford Road sidewalk project has come to the advertisement stage,
- 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 March 11, Grafton has been informed of a total of 1,024 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases since case tracking started in early 2020. As of the Commonwealth's last weekly COVID-19 risk report (dated March 11), Grafton is back to a YELLOW status this week, and a similar 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.

Based on the Federal government's push to have teachers and early educators vaccinated as soon as possible, vaccine locations that are part of the Federal Retail Pharmacy COVID-19 Partnership Program (e.g., CVS) are continuing to allow "Teachers K-12, daycare and preschool workers, and staff" to book vaccine appointments in locations across the country (where vaccine appointments are being conducted). Massachusetts announced that effective March 11 teachers, early educators and school

staff will be eligible to book vaccine appointments in Massachusetts.

A new regional vaccination site is scheduled to open later in March at the former McCloskey Middle School in Uxbridge. This new site will benefit individuals in a number of towns in southern Worcester County, but as with all vaccination sites across the Commonwealth, the site will be open to eligible individuals from across the Commonwealth, not just the towns that are helping out with this site.

The Commonwealth is launching a new vaccination pre-registration tool today. This new site will help eligible individuals file a request to book an appointment at 1 of the 7 mass vaccine sites around the Commonwealth, and then be notified when a time becomes available. The 2-1-1 vaccine registration help line is still active also. There are also plans to add more vaccine locations to this new pre-registration tool in the future.

The Alliance/Worcester EDS site at the Worcester Senior Center has been informed by the State that they must stand down their site after completing any planned second doses, which is planned to be completed by March 30.

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.

Plans are being finalized by a cross-functional group (e.g., Board of Health, Alliance, Council of Aging, Housing Authority) for conducting a vaccine clinic specifically for individuals who live or work in the affordable/low-income senior housing facilities in Grafton on March 15.

There are continued concerns across the Commonwealth and country with the very limited vaccine dose availability, even with the recent emergency authorization of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Building/Zoning

The Building Department has issued various permits this week including building, electric, plumbing, gas, mechanical, fire alarm, home occupation and requests for public inspection.

Planning

This week, the Planning Department completed administrative tasks for the Planning Board and Affordable 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.

Additionally, staff attended two webinars, “MVP Pre-Request For Responses” hosted by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) and the “Rapid Recovery Plan Program Community Information Session” hosted by The Mass Downtown Initiative (MDI) regarding kickoff of the LRRP Program.

The Planning Department has continued to coordinate with residents, developers, and National Grid on a number of ongoing development projects. Staff met with prospective tenants of 29 Hawthorne Street to discuss the potential for small scale mixed use redevelopment, and 104 Creeper Hill Road to discuss high level conceptual plans for future site development.

Conservation

Staff worked on issuing the resulting documents from the Commission's 3/2 meeting and preparing for the upcoming 3/16 meeting. The Agent conducted site inspections. Phone calls and emails were fielded from residents and applicants. The department's budget will be reviewed before FinCom this Saturday, 3/13.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recreation Department

Registration is ongoing for spring programming for preschoolers to adults, yard game rentals, hiking trips, and more. View the brochure [HERE](#). Summer programming will be announced on March 15. A lottery will be held for the Summer Days Program. Signups will occur from March 19-21 with notifications being made by March 23. Registration for all other summer programming opens March 29 at 8am. Make sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) for the latest updates.

Council on Aging

Began working on the April Senior Center newsletter. Attended a SNAP refresher meeting for inputting applicants. Received permission from the Commonwealth for record destruction and began shredding documents. Working with Sunshine Sign to get lettering put on the new 2021 senior van. The Senior Center is still receiving calls every day for assistance in getting a vaccine appointment. Seniors are not able to get appointments through the COVID vaccine website vaxfinder.mass.gov and are very frustrated. The Senior Center is keeping a list of people inquiring about the vaccine should a supply become available for Grafton senior residents. Hopefully, the new State pre-registration site will help aid senior residents looking for an appointment to get vaccinated. Support continues to be provided to seniors daily.

Library

The Director was surprised last Friday upon leaving the jobsite at 35 Grafton Common to bump into a patron looking for curbside pickup items! The Library remains in temporary quarters at 53 N. Main Street, North Grafton. No-contact curbside pickup is provided via the covered front porch at the former St. Andrews church.

We put out 205 bags for curbside, as well as 2 takeaway kits for kids/YA. The Children's Room prepared Daylight Savings Time activity packets, available through Saturday 3/13/21. March Activity Kits and Easter Egg Coloring Sheets were also prepped and made available while supplies last. We are preparing a takeaway kit for adults for next week: "Relax with a DIY lavender journaling kit."

Federal Tax Forms and State Tax booklets are available while supplies last at Curbside Pickup on the Covered Porch. Don't see the form you need? We are happy to print a copy free of charge and put in an envelope for pickup – call 508-839-4649 to request. We do not have any IRS instruction booklets this year, but it is online at <https://www.irs.gov/>

Susan Leto delivered 7 items to 3 home delivery patrons; some only needed a pick-up this week.

Beth Gallaway presented the Library budget request to FinCom on Wednesday evening, requesting an additional \$50,000 for personnel to cover service gaps in the new library. Much of the week was spent working on budget and final furniture and shelving selections for the new library. She consulted with the Capital Campaign on a number of items. She also attended a webinar on Course Correction: How to Guide Library Employees Back on Track and worked on scheduling a professional development series for staff on Reader's Advisory.

The Trustees Policy committee met to begin drafting a Meeting Room policy.

Three museums have notified us they will be reopening next month: Davis Farmland (tickets have been ordered, but not yet received); Boston Children's Museum and Garden in the Woods. Reserve online at <https://griftonlibrary.org/passes/>.

Staff have been creating database tutorials and revamping the library newsletters.

Library staff will be participating in a scheduled staff development day Friday March 12 from 9am-2pm. The theme is self-care, and we will be watching a presentation on Filling Your Cup During COVID: Self-Care Practices in Librarianship; attending a Mobile Digital Photography training and practicing Laughter Yoga. Please email griftonlibrary.ma@gmail.com or leave a message and staff will return calls after 2pm.

Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

GCTV

New Town Administrator Evan Brassard, and William Blake stopped by to record "Mask Up Grafton" PSAs, and asked Grafton Residents to "Show us your mask!". Evan also

introduced himself via video.

Two episodes of Bust Stop Weather were recorded, along with a new episode of “Business to Business” hosted by Jay Hunter. Featured businesses include Anytime Fitness, and King and Queen Dry Cleaners.

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.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Library project:

- Ceiling installation continues, both floors
- Painting/finishing of walls is ongoing
- Installation of windowsills and trim is complete, 2nd floor
- Electricians are installing light fixtures and other finish items
- HVAC registers and grills are 85% installed
- Final pressure testing of HVAC piping is complete
- Alum/glass main entrance is complete
- Framing for the main entrance roof/cornice is complete
- Siding and trim on North side is complete
- Painting of siding and trim on South side is complete
- VCT flooring is being installed
- Wood doors have been received and are being hung

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Upcoming Select Board Meetings

March 16th (Business Meeting)

April 6th (Business Meeting)

April 13th (Workshop)

Upcoming Department Head Meetings

March 17th at 10:00 a.m.