



MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Select Board

FROM: Evan Brassard
Town Administrator

CC: Department Heads

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: March 19, 2021

IMPORTANT NOTICES TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

- Due to COVID-19, the Spring Town Meeting scheduled for May 10th has been moved to June 5th, with a rain date of June 6th.
- Due to this change the Town Meeting Warrant will close on April 21st.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

This week in the Town Administrator's Office we continued to work on the budget with our eyes on the upcoming Saturday round of Finance Committee. The budget is being refined as we go through the process with department heads, committees, and everyone else in the process. We truly appreciate the collaboration and look forward to creating the best budget we can for the residents of Grafton.

William spent three days at MCPPO training: step one in becoming a procurement officer. This training fills a much-needed gap in our organization.

We were able to fill two full-time positions this week: Assistant Treasurer/Collector and HR Analyst. These are two key positions that have been vacant. We can't wait for these new employees to start!

This week was also a big week for meeting with business leaders, community advocates, and other stakeholders. We are building relationships and doing our best to continue creating opportunities for Grafton.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Town Accountant

- Attended MMAAA annual education program Week 3 of 3. This week's sessions include DOR Reporting Requirements.
- Continue working with our auditors Scanlon & Associates. Auditors were onsite this week to collect expense, contract and bid documents.
- Continued working on revenue projections and salary budgets.
- Attended FinCom meeting to review multiple Department budgets.

Treasurer/Collector

- Reviewed Supplemental bills with Assessor and mailed.
- Made an offer to Thomas Merolli for Asst. Treasurer Collector and looking forward to bringing him on board.
- 2021 Commitment 1 & 2020 Commitment 07 excise tax were due on Monday March 15th. Late payments are trickling in but we've collected about 80% (\$1.7 million) for commitment 1 and 74% (\$10k) for commitment 7.
- The office is fielding calls for 2020 tax information for residents filing income taxes.
- Met with my Fin Comm. Representatives to go over the T/C budget in advance of the meeting this Saturday morning.

Principal Assessor

- Started sales analysis for 2022 values.
- ATB case for 1 Hollywood Drive has been postponed at the appellant's request.
- Participated in the Bond Rating call.
- Processing MV abatements and fielding calls for MV excise taxes.
- Generated labels for the Main Street project.
- Processed 5 abutters list for taxpayers.
- Meeting with Finance Committee to review budget on Sat 3/20.

Town Clerk

No Report Submitted

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Department (3/7/21-3/13/21)

408 log entries were made including 40 - 911 calls, 14 alarm calls, 27 ambulance calls, 6 animal complaints, 142 business/area checks, 1 disturbance call, 7 fraud/ID theft complaints, 8 motor vehicle accidents, 2 arrests and 37 motor vehicle stops.

6 License to Carry Firearms applications were received. Weekly Chief's Column posted on the Signs of Cyberbullying - What Teens Need to Know and How Parents Can Help Stop It. Training included MPTC online in-service training for all officers, Legal Updates and Roll Call Bulletins. Officers continue to attend the Fair and Impartial Policing (FIP) program hosted by the MPTC being held at the Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center.

Fire Department

No Report Submitted

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

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. The towns tree removal contractor removed 10 dead trees this week.

The recycling drop off area will operate (Saturdays only) 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 taking letters were sent to affected property owners. If residents have any questions, they should contact the DPW Director. The Select Board voted to approve the takings at their meeting held on February 16, 2021. Checks will be mailed March 25th.

Highway Department: Routine Operation and maintenance of town owned infrastructure. The recent warm weather has created many pot holes which the staff continues to repair, please call the DPW office to report any pot holes. The recent warm weather has also afforded the staff time to start catching up on maintenance and repair projects. Assisted the rec dept with material removal

Cemetery and Parks: Routine department functions in including, trash pick-up, construction and painting of replacement fencing, grounds maintenance, and installation of three grave stones, and support for one funeral.

Sewer Department: Routine operation and maintenance of the towns wastewater treatment and collection system. 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.

Engineering

No Report Submitted

Health Department

As of March 18, Grafton has been informed of a total of 1,050 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 18), Grafton is still at 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.

The Commonwealth confirmed the move into Phase 4 Step 1 of the reopening plan will happen on March 22. In addition, the Commonwealth is changing the Travel Order to a Travel Advisory effective March 22. More information on these updates and other current COVID-related orders and standards can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/reopening-massachusetts>

The Commonwealth announced the expected timeline for vaccine eligibility for the remaining groups, and also made some updates to the eligibility groups. For more information on the timeline and updated groups, visit <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine>

The new regional vaccination site is scheduled to open on March 22 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 also be open to eligible individuals from across the Commonwealth, not just the towns that are helping out with this site.

The Commonwealth launched a new vaccination pre-registration tool late last week. This new site helps 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.

The vaccine clinic conducted on Monday for individuals who live or work in the affordable/low-income senior housing facilities in Grafton was a success, and a similar clinic will be held in a few weeks so those individuals can receive their second dose of the vaccine.

There are continued concerns across the Commonwealth and country with the very limited vaccine dose availability.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Building/Zoning

The Building Department has issued various building and mechanical permits this week.

Planning

This week, the Planning Department completed administrative tasks for the Planning Board and Affordable Housing Trust. Staff is continuing review of the RFP proposal received for the 17 & 27 Upton Street DPW facility in coordination with the Town Administrator's office. In addition, staff is coordinating with CMRPC and the Select Board to submit the revised OSRP per the comments provided by Melissa Cryan, Grant Programs Supervisor. Per the Board's request, staff will prepare a more detailed presentation on the plan development efforts and relations to other municipal plans.

Additionally, staff attended a site visit for the Prentice Place 40B project. The Planning Department has continued to coordinate with residents and developers on a number of ongoing development projects in various stages. Staff met with a number of restaurants applying for Temporary Outdoor seating as well as representatives from Mass Development regarding potential disposal and development of property within the Town.

Conservation

Staff prepared for and issued documents from the Commission's 3/16 meeting. Staff reviewed applications that were filed for the 4/6 Commission meeting. The Agent conducted site inspections. Phone calls and emails were fielded from residents and applicants.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recreation Department

Registration is open for spring programming for preschoolers to adults; esports, April vacation programs, yard game rentals, hiking trips, and more. View the brochure [HERE](#). Our summer brochure has arrived! View the brochure [HERE](#). A lottery signup for the Summer Days Program will run March 19-21. Registration for all other programs opens March 29 at 8am. Information on the operation of Silver Lake plans to be announced later this spring.

Staff have been attending the Massachusetts Recreation and Parks Association Annual State Conference virtually with sessions on capital planning, camp regulations, inclusive playgrounds, and more. Work has restarted to make ADA pathways to amenities at Norcross and Airport Park as part of the CPA funded ADA accessibility project in parks. The Director met with the Select Board this week to finalize a conversation regarding beach fees for the summer of 2021. Make sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) for the latest updates.

Council on Aging

Attended via Zoom a SNAP PATH claims training for SNAP partner reimbursement. Finalized the April Senior Center newsletter and sent it to press for printing. On 3/17/2021, St. Patrick's Day 70 seniors participated in the Senior Center's Drive-Thru Grab 'N Go Lunch of corned beef and cabbage which was provided by Elder Nutrition and paid for by the Friends of Grafton Elders. Each senior also received a gift bag from the Senior Center. Attended the monthly Worcester Regional Transit Authority Advisory Board meeting. The volume of phone calls inquiring about the COVID-19 vaccine are starting to subside. After the recycling event held at the Municipal Center on 3/13/2021, the gym was filled with bags and boxes of Styrofoam on Monday. There were many small pieces of Styrofoam in the hallway and several of the Senior Center's rooms. Support continues to be provided to seniors daily.

Library

We continue to provide virtual and DIY curbside pickup programs - visit <http://www.graftonlibrary.org/events> for the Library Calendar.

The Director continues to focus on FY22 budget, meeting room policy, and furniture, fixtures and equipment for the new building.

We were pleased to accept a book on Grafton Land Trust Reference Guide from local Girl Scout Gold Award recipient Madison Berardi - thank you for the donation, the books are available for checkout!

We received a nice compliment from Grafton Public Schools on our Teachables database - access free with your library card at https://www.galepages.com/mlin_c_graftpl/all

Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

GCTV

We've hosted Mat and Laura Often, Lisa Kelley, Amy Marr, Julia Koshivos, Jack Kelley, and Bill Robidoux in studio to record "Mask Up Grafton" PSAs, and asked Grafton Residents to "Show us your mask!". Lisa Kelley also came in for a brief on camera interview related to her role as Senior Outreach worker.

Two episodes of Bus Stop Weather were recorded, along with a new episode of "Business to Business" hosted by Jay Hunter. Featured businesses include Dr. Polasky (dentist) and Home Town Nutrition where Jay sampled some healthy drinks prepared by owner Cam O'Toole.

Bob took a guided tour of the new Library with Andy Deschenes, and prepared a photo montage which is currently displayed on FB.

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 and ceilings is ongoing.
- Installation of window seats and countertops is ongoing
- Electricians are installing light fixtures and other finish items.
- HVAC registers and grills are complete
- Cornice and trim at the main entrance is complete
- VCT flooring and ceramic tile is being installed.
- Wood doors are 100% installed on the second floor.
- Interior glazing is 50% complete.
- Tel/data wiring is 80% complete.
- Exterior sunshades on south elevation are 70% complete.
- Furniture selections have been finalized.

Municipal Center guardrail/ramp project:

- Advertisements for bidding have been posted.

Common Improvements project:

- Final bid documents received
- Invitation for bids finalized.
- Advertisements for bidding to be posted next week.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Upcoming Select Board Meetings

April 6th (Business Meeting)

April 13th (Workshop)

April 20th (Business Meeting)

Upcoming Department Head Meetings

April 7th @ 10:00 a.m.

April 21st @ 10:00 a.m.