



## MEMORANDUM

### OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

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TO: Select Board

FROM: Evan Brassard  
Town Administrator

CC: Department Heads

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: March 26, 2021

#### IMPORTANT NOTICES TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

- The Annual and Special Town Meeting will be held June 5<sup>th</sup> on the Grafton High School Football field. The Special will begin at 11:00 a.m. followed by the Annual at 11:30 a.m.

#### TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

This week the Town Administrator's Office participated in several meetings which will have a direct impact on Grafton. Evan and William attended a training on "Police Issues: Reform and Systemic Racism". This training had a large emphasis on the police reform bill signed by the Governor. They both also attended the COVID-19 Municipal Briefing from the State which outlined response, immunization, and the initial overview of the American Rescue Plan Act.

We continued to refine the budget and have made significant process in narrowing down our final numbers.

In conjunction with GPD, GFD, the Building Department, and Parks and Recreation we met with Showtime regarding their desire to film part of a TV Series in Grafton sometime in May.

Evan attended the School Committee Meeting for an introduction, the Finance Committee Meeting, and the Community Preservation Committee Meeting for an introduction as well.

## **ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE**

### Town Accountant

- Attended COVID Municipal CEO Briefing where they discussed the American Rescue Recovery Plan (ARRP). Still waiting on guidance from DOR as to the use of available funds.
- Continue working with our auditors Scanlon & Associates.
- Continued working on revenue projections and salary budgets.
- Attended FinCom meeting to review multiple Department budgets.

### Treasurer/Collector

- Received our ratings report from S & P - The Town held our AA+ rating with a stable outlook on our GO Bonds and a SP-1+ on our BAN.
- Uploaded the Q4 RE/PP billing file and checked proofs. Q4 bills are scheduled to be mailed 3/30 and will be due 5/3.
- The office continues to field calls for 2020 tax information for residents filing income taxes.
- Continuing to work with our Tax Title Attorney updating the tax advertisement coming up on April 8th. This will be any remaining 2018-20 outstanding RE tax.
- Wrapping up February Recon.

### Principal Assessor

- 1) Staff attended workshop on Chapter land and Rollback Calculations via Zoom, given by the WCAA.
- 2) Received ATB filing notice for 2021 on 4 Christopher Drive, date not scheduled at this time.
- 3) Processing MV abatements and fielding calls for MV excise taxes.
- 4) Updated new owners and mailing address changes in billing file for 4<sup>th</sup> quarter bills.
- 5) Continuing field inspections for cyclical, building permits and sales verification.
- 6) Committed 4 Supplemental bills for condo conversions on 19 -21 Orchard Street and 10-12 Murray Avenue in the amount of \$6,772.34 with CPA of \$101.58 due May 1, 2021

### Town Clerk

No Report Submitted

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### Police Department

(3/14/21 – 3/20/21)

386 log entries were made including 41 - 911 calls, 12 alarm calls, 25 ambulance calls, 3 animal complaints, 154 business/area checks, 4 disturbance call, 5 fraud/ID theft complaints, 1 motor vehicle accident, 1 arrest, 30 motor vehicle stops and 8 well-being checks.

8 License to Carry Firearms applications were received. Weekly Chief's Column posted on the Sexting – Think Before You Press Send. 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 Brush Dump will be open starting April 3rd. 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 compensation checks 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 were mailed March 25th.

Highway Department: Routine Operation and maintenance of town owned infrastructure. The recent warm weather has created many potholes 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.

Cemetery and Parks: Routine department functions in including, trash pick-up, construction and painting of replacement fencing, grounds maintenance, and installation of two gravestones. Continue to repair areas from winter burials.

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 25, Grafton has been informed of a total of 1,067 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 25), 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 moved into Phase 4 Step 1 of the reopening plan on March 22. In addition, the Commonwealth changed 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 opened 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 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.

The regional site at Worcester State University (open to all eligible individuals in the Commonwealth) has offered to provide 25% of their weekly allotment (approximately 6,000 doses) for Worcester and the Alliance to hold special clinics. This is in addition to the special teacher and staff 4 days of clinics they are providing to the Alliance. Karyn Clark (Alliance) will be having weekly meetings with the groups leading this site to discuss planning special clinics based on those who are still having difficulty securing a vaccine or one near our geographical area (as well as all eligible phases and those coming online as eligible soon), with more information to come once logistics of these clinics and communication methods for them has been finalized.

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 Commonwealth has developed an in-home vaccination program for homebound individuals, where the single dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine will be administered by the Commonwealth. Appointment requests and questions can be directed to the Homebound Vaccination Central Intake Line at 1-833-983-0485, and the Commonwealth has outlined eligibility criteria for this program.

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

## **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

### **Building/Zoning**

We continue to work through our backlog of building permits. To alleviate this issue we have hired, on an as needed basis, Mr. Ron DeSantis to review permits. Ron was the previous building inspector for the Town of Grafton. He has been here since Tuesday and is working to get through the backlog of permits.

The Building and Zoning Departments continue to handle all requests for permits, inspections, and inquiries from the public.

With the building now being open to the public, we have seen an increase in the number of people walking in to speak to us in the Building Department directly.

### **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 webinar kickoff meeting for the Local Rapid Recovery Plan Program. The consultant will be conducting a preliminary site visit with staff on April 2, 2021, in the afternoon (time TBD). Interested members of the Select Board and Planning Board will be invited to attend.

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, prospective tenants of 109 Creeper Hill Road, prospective tenants of 308 Providence Road, homeowners of 8 Linda Court, and representatives of Fisherville Mill.

The Planning Department also attended a Regional Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) forum, hosted by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC). We note receipt of the Notice to Proceed with the update of the Hazard Mitigation Plan which will be undertaken this year and is an important component of long-range planning efforts related to addressing impacts of weather, climate change and other municipal hazards and will assist in the pursuit of future grant funding opportunities.

#### Conservation

No Report Submitted

### **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 was held for the Summer Days Program and registrants were informed of their status on Tuesday. 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 attended virtually the last sessions of the Massachusetts Recreation and Parks Association Annual State Conference. Summer job openings have been posted [HERE](#) and include Beach Directors and Supervisors, Lifeguards, and Summer Program Counselors. Make sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) for the latest updates.

#### Council on Aging

Sealed, labeled, and mailed the April Senior Center newsletters. The lettering on the new Senior Center's 2021 senior van was completed. The Senior Center's new copier was received and hooked up. Faxing on the machine cannot be done at this time until a phone line is accessible. Attended the EOEA Bi-Weekly COA and ASAP/AAA Vaccine Update Webinar. Support continues to be provided to seniors daily.

#### Library

The Friends of the Grafton Public Library are pleased to announce the 2021 Community Read! In celebration of the library's construction project and National Library Week, The Friends of the Grafton Public Library encourage everyone in town to participate in this year's Community Read. Stop by the Grafton Public Library's temporary location (53 North Main Street, North Grafton MA –the old St. Andrew's Church) to pick up a copy of the adult, young adult and / or children's Community Read title using our no-contact curbside pickup and attend any of the virtual Community Read events.

Learn more about public library services of the past and how libraries change lives by reading this year's Community Read selections. The adult title is *The Giver of Stars* by JoJo Moyes, the young adult title is *A Kind of Paradise* by Amy Rebecca Tan, and the

children's title is *That Book Woman* by Heather Henson, illustrated by David Small. Details, <https://graftonlibrary.org/communityread/>  
136 bags went out for Curbside Pickup between Fri 3/19-Thu 3/25. We completed the Semi-annual Delivery Survey: We received 27 bins, sent out 22 with a total of 629 items. We received 3 new volunteer applications. We delivered 12 items to 5 Home Delivery recipients.

In the last week, the Director attended policy review committee meetings, a summer reading program planning meeting a construction meeting, 2 budget meetings, 2 FF&E meetings, the Board of Library Trustees meeting, and the Friends meeting - the Friends sold 55 Bunny and Book pairs and will be delivering over the weekend.

Furniture and shelving for the new library has been ordered! To see the furniture selections, [click here](#). Half of the staff toured the under-construction library.

GPL Book Worms met on Zoom to discuss the graphic novel SMILE by Raina Telgemeier with Miss Kristin - record attendance!

This Fun Friday, families with school-age children can drop by from 10am-4pm to pick up a Scavenger Hunt kit while supplies last.

Our 2021 Egg Coloring Contest continues through 4/2 - blank coloring sheets are available daily at Curbside Pickup on the porch.

We finalized plans for April Poetry programs and National Library Week celebrations. Many staff attended the keynote panel for the BLOSSOM (Building Life-Long Opportunities for Strength, Self-Care, Outlook, Morale and Mindfulness) Symposium on Wednesday - Director Beth Gallaway was one of 4 panelists on the topic of compassionate self-care in the library profession, in the wake of COVID-19 and moving forward.

Adult Services staff had a pop-up training for ComCat requests. Dracut Library Director and national reader's advisory expert Nanci Milone Hill kicked off a year-long training on pairing the right book with the right reader at the right time on Friday morning.

We conclude Women's History Month Susan B. Anthony: Failure is Impossible. Historical re-enactor Sheryl Faye brings to life Susan B. Anthony as she fights for women's right to vote alongside men on Election Day. Learn more about her struggle and success as we continue to celebrate the passage of the 19th Amendment. All ages welcome! The presentation is only available from 1-8pm on Friday 3/26. <https://vimeo.com/401507420>

#### Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

## GCTV

Two episodes of Bust Stop Weather were recorded. We posted a GCTV update video hosted by Jack Kelley, highlighting plans for future programming, and an appeal for volunteers to join us in creating new projects. Andy Deschenes will stop by next week for an on-camera chat. 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:

- Painting of ceilings in Children's area complete.
- North elevation (facing Upton Street) is 95% painted.
- Electricians are installing light fixtures and other finish items.
- Ceramic tile is being installed in bathrooms
- Interior glazing is 80% complete.
- Exterior sunshades on south elevation are complete.
- Furniture and shelving orders have been placed.
- EV charging stations (4) order has been placed. We received two grants that cover 100% of this cost.
- Site work re-starts next week, and the construction trailers will be removed.

### Municipal Center guardrail/ramp project:

- Project is out to bid.

### Common Improvements project:

- Project is out to bid. Optional walkthrough for bidders is 3/31.

## **IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

### **Upcoming Select Board Meetings**

March 30<sup>th</sup> (Additional Business Meeting)

April 6<sup>th</sup> (Business Meeting)

April 15<sup>th</sup> (Workshop)

April 20<sup>th</sup> (Business Meeting)

### **Upcoming Department Head Meetings**

April 7<sup>th</sup> @ 10:00 a.m.

April 21<sup>st</sup> @ 10:00 a.m.