



## MEMORANDUM

### OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

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TO: Select Board

FROM: Evan Brassard  
Town Administrator

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: May 7, 2021

#### IMPORTANT NOTICES TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

- Town Meeting will be held on June 5<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. on the Grafton High School Football Field
- The Local Election Date has been moved to Saturday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Polls will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with polling locations remaining the same.

#### TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

- Reviewed lease and toured 1 Grafton Common.
- Met with the developer of 8 Pine Street.
- Met with B.J. Harvey and toured the E.L Harvey facility in Westboro / Hopkinton.
- Finalized budget for submission to FinComm
- Finalized and posted Town Meeting Warrants.
- Attended Fire Chief Search Committee meeting.

#### ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

##### Town Accountant

- Finance Team & School Dept. met with Munis on the Chart of Account conversion for all two application suites: accounting, and utility billing.
- Continued working on revenue projections and salary budgets.
- Continued to assist TA with Police Alliance and GMEA Union negotiations.
- Scheduled interviews for Financial Analyst position starting week of May 17<sup>th</sup>.

### Treasurer/Collector

- Demands for Excise Commitment 2021-01 & 2020-07 were mailed out 5/5/21 and will be due 5/19/21
- Commitments 2020-05 & 2020-06 have been put on first warrant with the Deputy Collector
- RE & PP bills were due 5/3 and we are posted up to date. We anticipate sending demand bills the third week of May.

### Principal Assessor

- 1) Preparing Solar Equipment Information Requests to be sent to all Solar Field vendors. This information will be collected to determine equitable values for assessments. Chapter 8 of the Acts of 2021 was signed into law on March 26, 2021 will go into effect in June. Changes and clarification to Ch 59, section 5, clause 45 have been made for Solar Personal Property taxation.
- 2) Entered Deeds and verified ownership.
- 3) Continuing field inspections for cyclical, building permits and sales verification.
- 4) Attended 7 Hour USPAPS training course.

### Town Clerk

Our office continues to process the mail in voting applications that have been submitted. We have mailed approximately 435 absentee/mail in voting applications as of this week. Election signs have been updated and supplies have been checked and restocked.

The Attorney General's office sent approvals to the By-Laws changes from the November 7, 2020 Semi Annual Town Meeting. The approvals included amending the form of the Grafton Fire Department, Town By-Law amendments to the Finance Committee, and Capital Improvement Planning Committee By-Law. The approvals will be posted at our conspicuous places by Constable hopefully by early next week.

A new ballot drop box was purchased and will be delivered on Monday. It will replace the current red box. The new box will be red with patriotic designs and labeled Town Clerk Drop Box. It is more secure, ADA compliant, weather resistant and will hold up to 1,400 ballots at one time. The cost of the box was covered by a reimbursement received from the state elections division.

We have starting to review the results of the Voter Participation Survey to discuss how to utilize the funds from the Senator Bertonazzi Award.

There is a vacancy on the Board of Registrars as of 5/4/2021. Please help spread the word to fill this position.

We still have several board/committee members who have not completed the conflict-of-interest training and sign off.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### Police Department

**(4/25/21 – 5/1/21)**

404 log entries were made including 58 - 911 calls, 14 alarm calls, 29 ambulance calls, 4 animal complaints, 154 business/area checks, 8 disturbance calls, 2 fraud/ID theft complaints, 5 motor vehicle accidents, 4 arrests, 24 motor vehicle stops and 7 well-being checks.

6 License to Carry Firearms applications were received. Weekly Chief's Column posted on Motorcycle Awareness – Share the Road. Training included MPTC online in-service training for all officers, Legal Updates and Roll Call Bulletins. Dispatchers attended MPI online in-service training. Det. Wenc also attended New England State Police Information Network (NESPIN) training.

### 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. The Brush Dump will be open starting April 3rd. The recycling drop off area has also relocated to 64 Old Westboro and will operate Saturdays 8:00am-1:00pm and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00am-2:00pm. The dept provided logistic support for the upcoming Showtime filming. Seasonal paving has also begun in a North Grafton neighborhood.

Main Street Improvements Project Easement compensation checks were sent to affected property owners. If residents have any questions, they should contact the DPW Director. Project related utility work will be happening on random days over the next few months.

#### Highway Department:

Routine Operation and maintenance of town owned infrastructure and equipment. The staff continues street sweeping operations, drainage system repairs, grass mowing and winter damage repairs. We also have rented a screener to process town owned loam.

#### Cemetery and Parks:

Routine department functions in including, trash pick-up, construction and painting of replacement fencing, and grounds maintenance. Continue to repair areas from winter burials. Assist recreation dept with park improvements.

#### Sewer Department:

Routine operation and maintenance of the towns 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.

#### Engineering Department

No Report Submitted

#### Health Department

As of May 5, Grafton has been informed of a total of 1,164 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases since case tracking started in early 2020. As of the Commonwealth's last weekly COVID-19 risk report (dated May 6), Grafton is at a GREEN 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.

On April 27, the Governor announced a number of planned updates related to reopening of Massachusetts businesses and activities over the next months (subject to public health and vaccination data), and an update to the mask order regarding outdoor mask usage. For more details, visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/reopening-massachusetts>

As of April 19, all people age 16+ who live, work, or study in Massachusetts are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. For more information on the vaccine and how to find a vaccination location, visit <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine>

Additional vaccination locations of varying sizes continue to come online and offer vaccine appointments based on vaccine availability.

### **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

#### Building/Zoning

No Report Submitted

#### Planning Department

This week, the Planning Department completed administrative tasks for the Planning Board, which held an Executive Session to discuss ongoing litigation. Staff also attended a Select Board meeting to discuss implementation of temporary outdoor dining establishments. Per the Board's discussion, staff met at a subsequent Development Team meeting to discuss potential improvements. The Fire Department will pursue working with restaurants to utilize staff parking to temporarily provide additional vehicular protection while the Planning Department will continue review of funding opportunities and potential longer-term solutions for the remainder of the year.

Staff met with representatives of GSX, LLC to discuss timeline considerations for the 17 & 27 Upton Street Redevelopment and attended a webinar, “Laws of Attraction: Marketing, Programming, and Interactive Strategies to Bring People (back) Downtown during COVID-19”, hosted by Street Sense. Staff also met with local business owners in coordination with KARP Strategies, to conduct interviews related to the Local Rapid Recovery Program (LRRP) and reviewed the public realm and private realm lighting scoring criteria for the focus area as provided by the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI).

The Public Realm lighting will receive a grade of “C” (one grade above Fail) as there is only vehicular focused lighting in the focus area. The Private Realm lighting will receive a grade of “Fail”, as businesses are currently required to turn off all storefront and signage lighting 30 minutes before and after regular business hours, as provided in Section 4.4.2.1(4) of the Grafton Zoning Bylaw. We anticipate the final report to identify these subjects as potential opportunities for improvement. The Planning Department is available to discuss in more detail if desired.

#### Conservation Department

Working temporarily as a one-person department, the Agent worked to prepare for the Commission's 5/4 meeting and issue the resulting documents. Site inspections were conducted and inquiries from residents and applicants were fielded. The vacancy for the Conservation Assistant will be posted as soon as possible.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

#### Recreation Department

No Report Submitted

#### Council on Aging

Completed the American Red Cross First Aid/CPR/AED training certification. Completed and submitted the monthly April Worcester Regional Transit Authority report. Completed and submitted the FY22 SNAP partner budget using DTA’s Partner Activity Tracking Hub system. Working on guidelines/plans for reopening the Senior Center on a limited basis beginning June 1st. Support continues to be provided to seniors daily.

#### Library

We put out 164 curbside bags and 50 May activity packets. 8”x 8” canvases are still available for anyone who would like to participate in the Community Art Project Mind, Body & Spirit. Details at <https://www.facebook.com/events/921069722016389>.

60 adult blackout poetry kits went out in April, and 30 youth. Share your creations! #nationalpoetrymonth #graftonpubliclibrary.

The Library added 440 new physical items in April! Subscribe to Wowbrary ([www.wowbrary.org](http://www.wowbrary.org)) for a weekly email delivery of our New Titles newsletter (includes

new OverDrive titles!) or check out the CAROUSELS feature in our catalog, which highlights new titles at <https://grafton.cwmars.org/>.

A volunteer pulled approximately 150 duplicate adult fiction books to donate to The Friends Book Sale. Thank you to our Friends for a fantastic event last weekend, and to Quite Fetching, Anzio's, Sarah Bejer, the Capital Campaign, and adult and youth volunteers for their help. Sales exceeded expectations, and it was so nice to see everyone out to support our cause. Proceeds benefit the Library.

Staff received training on Princh, our remote printing service. Visit [print.princh.com](http://print.princh.com) or download the Princh app to send a document to our Library printer: # 103048!

This week staff member Kristin Pliakas met with Andy Deschenes and Bob DeToma to record a tour of the renovated and expanded library, to be included in a virtual field trip for Grade 3 at MSES and NSES as part of the annual Grafton History Day program. The video should be available soon on demand: <http://reflect-grafton.cablecast.tv/CablecastPublicSite/?channel=2>.

The Children's Staff prepped for curbside kits to go, scheduled social media posts for May programs, prepared for kits for SLP 2021, hosted a STEM class for children ages 3-6, hosted Bookworms Virtual Book Club for 1st & 2nd Grade, and presented 4 sessions (6 classes) of preschool storytime outreach to NGES. A live music and movement program presented by Apple Tree Arts begins next week, register online at <http://www.eventkeeper.com/code/friend.cfm?curOrg=GRAFTON&tEvt=6664371&tfPup=1>

Next week, watch for our ladybug grab and go craft kits, and an announcement about our new partnership with the Grafton Land Trust!

Allison, the Teen Librarian, placed a book order, created individual graphics for each summer reading program badge and developed activities to complete each badge, created samples and felt instructions for one activity, and helped plan a co-presentation on Summer Reading for Library staff.

The Director worked on job descriptions for approved new positions (pending Town Meeting Approval) and updated many Library policies for Trustee review to ensure they will apply to the new facility and worked with the Policy Committee on Minimum Staffing and Meeting Room policies in particular. Building Committee met to approve bills. Interiors Committee is completing the signage package. Beth Gallaway reviewed updated guidelines from the Commonwealth – libraries have been moved to “other sectors” with more relaxed guidelines and no more quarantining of materials required. The Trustees will meet Monday May 10 at 7pm on Zoom to determine if it is feasible to open to public browsing -- we would love to give everyone an opportunity to stock up before we close to relocate back to 35 Grafton Common. Join the public meeting at 7pm 5/10 on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88189458443?pwd=cFpQZ2dEckNCeHFxVjdxR1QxMWtWUT09> Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88189458443?pwd=cFpQZ2dEckNCeHFxVjdxR1QxMWtWUT09>  
Meeting ID: 881 8945 8443; Passcode: 822673

### Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

### GCTV

This week's activities included a "Meet the Candidate" segment with Dawn Anderson who is running for the position of Town Moderator.

We recorded 2 segments of Bus Stop Weather with Julia Koshivos, the days are counting down until her graduation from GHS and she moves on to college.

William Blake interviewed Bob DeToma as he flipped the script during an episode of "Grafton Minute by Minute".

Jim Gallagher stopped by to record a promo for the religious programming we offer to the community. Saint Mary's Sunday Mass airs daily at 6:30 AM and PM.

Last but not least, Bob recorded a promo featuring all the new daily programming aimed at Seniors, and some new programs that feature some of Grafton's elected officials.

GCTV Staff continues to maintain coverage for all GGTV Gov. events whether LIVE or on Zoom, and all special events or projects for the Town Administrator's office.

## **CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS**

### Library project

- Ceiling finishes in vestibule completed
- Millwork ongoing - built-in benches in vestibule, Children's Library. Cabinets and countertops in several rooms on First Floor.
- Light fixtures, other finish electrical items installed
- Patio and sidewalk pavers ongoing as weather permits - overall 60% complete
- Ceramic and re-used marble tile in lobby continues. Tile backsplashes installed in kitchen and drinking fountain areas.

### Municipal Center guardrail/ramp project

- Letter of Intent sent, legal review of contract complete

### Common Improvements project

- Letter of Intent sent, legal review of contract complete

**IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

Upcoming Select Board Meetings

May 11<sup>th</sup> (Workshop)

May 18<sup>th</sup> (Business Meeting)

June 1 (Business Meeting)

Upcoming Department Head Meetings

May 12<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

Town Meeting – June 5<sup>th</sup>