



## MEMORANDUM

### OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

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TO: Select Board

FROM: Evan Brassard  
Town Administrator

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: September 10, 2021

#### IMPORTANT NOTICES TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

- Fall Town Meeting is October 18<sup>th</sup>

#### Town Administrator

- Library shelving has arrived and is being installed.
- Performed Punchlist walkthrough at Library.
- Toured Common Project. Walkway installation ongoing.
- Hosted first annual Capital Summit.
- Toured culvert replacement on George Hill Rd.
- Reviewed current policies and procedures for emergency evacuation of Municipal Center.

#### ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

#### Town Accountant

- Accountant's Office has rolled forward fund balances into FY22. Please review your Grant Funds, Revolving Funds, Capital Funds, and Special Revenue Funds balances for accuracy.
- Accountant's Office is currently in the process of closing FY21 books and concurrently working on the Combined Balance Sheet submission.
- Attended Town of Grafton Capital Summit. Presentation discussed different funding methods (i.e., lease vs bonds), and sources (i.e., free cash, grants, operational budget) and Return on Investment. ROI is used to evaluate the efficiency of an investment.
- Town of Grafton will now require all non-union employees to receive their compensation via direct deposit effective 10/1/21. This policy will help reduce tailing

balances. Tailings are unclaimed property that is held in a repository account known as tailings. Tailings include unclaimed tax refunds, uncashed payroll, and vendor checks.

#### Treasurer/Collector

- In accordance with MGL Ch. 60A §7 and 8, excise & boat tax older than 4 years have been submitted to the Board of Assessor's to abate the taxes to settle the levy. They will remain collectible at our Deputy Collector and upon payment will be turned over to the general fund.
- 16 MLC requests have been received/processed this week.
- Working to finalize the DE-1.
- Will begin reviewing older personal property tax that may be uncollectible.

#### Principal Assessor

- 1) Notice of 5 FY21 ATB Hearings received. They are scheduled for December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021, for 1 Hollywood Drive, 4 Christopher Drive, 3 Glenwood Drive, and 2 Solar fields on 43 & 44 Estabrook Ave.
- 2) Board meeting held on 9/7,
  - ✓ Notice of Intent on 116 Upton Road, Board recommended to exercise first right of refusal,
  - ✓ Signed Policy regarding Settlement of Levy for uncollectible MV excise, Reorganized the Board
  - ✓ Board signed Authorization letter for Assessor to sign RECAP forms on behalf of the Board.
- 3) Calculated rollback taxes for 9 George Hill Road for the 1.488 AC being removed, Taxes: \$ 1,078.50, CPA: \$16.18, Certificate Fee \$6.00, Total \$ 1,100.68. Prepared Partial Lien Release. The rollback was paid in full on 9/9.
- 4) Staff attended Zoom Workshop on Lot Splits, Deeds, GIS mapping and Street Numbering.
- 5) Received and reviewed 15 personal exemption applications.
- 6) Received and reviewed 13 Chapter land applications.
- 7) 19 Deeds were recorded this week and owners have been updated.
- 8) Processed 7 Abutters request.
- 9) Processed 8 MV abatements.
- 10) Field inspections for 3 cyclicals, 7 building permits and 1 sales verification.

#### Town Clerk

Approximately 502 dogs have been registered since sending out the licensing reminder mailer from Animal Control. Our Animal Control Officer will begin visiting households of any unregistered dogs to date in attempt of getting them licensed.

Census 2020 data from Umass Donahue Institute is available [here](#): An interactive map to view Grafton data or by city/town can be found [here](#).

The Town of Grafton does not have an election in November. This is an election for certain cities. The list of communities that have an election can be found [here](#) on the Secretary of Commonwealth webpage.

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.

Committee/board members are taking their oath of office as re-appointments or new members.

2021 Street Lists are available for purchase for \$10.00 a book. An electronic version is available for any departments who would like a copy.

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.

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

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### Police Department (8/29/21 – 9/4/21)

384 log entries were made including 51 - 911 calls, 13 alarm calls, 23 ambulance calls, 2 animal complaints, 111 business/area checks, 6 disturbance calls, 1 fraud/ID theft complaint, 4 motor vehicle accidents, 53 motor vehicle stops and 2 well-being checks.

5 License to Carry Firearms applications were received. Weekly Chief=E2=80= =99s Column posted on What to do When Stopped by a Police Officer. Lt. Minardi attended SWAT in-service training. Officers received legal updates on current court decisions and roll call notices including Commonwealth Fusion Center bulletins.

We received notification from the State 911 Department that we were the recipient of the State 911 Support & Incentive Grant in the amount of \$56,732.00 and the State 911 Training Grant in the amount of \$21,852.36.

These grants will help defray the cost of salaries for telecommunicators and provide funding to fulfill mandatory in-service training requirements for existing dispatch personnel and training for newly hired dispatchers.

## 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. Starting September 7th, the Brush Dump is open Monday-Friday 10am- 1pm and Saturdays 9am-1pm. 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. Seasonal paving continues on several streets in all areas of town. The Milford Road sidewalk installation is underway and should be completed by the end of September. Main Street improvements project related utility (gas, electricity, communications) work will continue on random days.

Highway Department: Routine Operation and maintenance of town owned infrastructure and equipment. The staff continues street sweeping operations, drainage system repairs, grass mowing, roadside brush mowing, and line painting. Staff continues clean-up and repairs from the past weeks rain and windstorms, and temporary drainage improvements on George Hill Road.

Cemetery and Parks: Routine department functions in including, trash pick-up, construction and painting of replacement fencing, and grounds maintenance. Provided support for three funerals. Asst. recreation dept with ongoing park improvements and seasonal programs.

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. Continue clean-up related to the past heavy rain events.

## Engineering

No Report Submitted

## Health Department

As of September 9, Grafton has been informed of a total of 1,287 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases since case tracking started in early 2020. The number of new cases continues to increase in Grafton, surrounding communities and the State compared to recent weeks. Individuals are strongly advised to continue to exercise precautions (e.g., wearing masks, social distancing, frequent hand washing), especially given the Delta variant circulating throughout the country and increasing case counts.

Worcester County and surrounding areas are considered to be “high risk” areas for COVID transmission per the CDC’s classification methods. Given this elevated risk level, the CDC advises that all individuals wear face masks when indoors in public places

(regardless of vaccination status). In addition, Massachusetts released a mask advisory that fully vaccinated individuals are advised to wear face masks when indoors (and not in your own home) if you have a weakened immune system, or if you are at increased risk because of your age or an underlying medical condition (or if someone in your household falls into those criteria).

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.

As of April 19, all people age 12+ who live, work, or study in Massachusetts are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. For more information on the vaccines and how to find a vaccination location, [click here](#). Vaccination is strongly recommended.

The FDA recently authorized and the CDC also recommended that individuals who are moderately to severely immunocompromised receive an additional dose of mRNA vaccine COVID-19 vaccine after the initial 2 doses. More details can be found [here](#).

As a reminder, the mosquito and tick season is still upon us. Grafton was notified last week of a mosquito in Grafton that tested positive for West Nile Virus. Please [click here](#) for more information and the expected spraying area.

- For mosquitoes, please remember the 5 D's. Dress in long sleeves and pants when possible, especially during periods of mosquito activity. DEET is an effective repellent. Dawn and Dusk are the most active periods for mosquitoes. Drain water from containers regularly. Please visit the Grafton Board of Health website for more information, helpful tips, and information on the services the Central Mass Mosquito Control Project offers.
- For ticks, use DEET or another effective repellent. Do a tick check on each person in your family who has been outside, especially the hard to see areas (e.g., hairline, scalp, armpits). If you have pets, check them for ticks after each time they have been outdoors.

## **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

### Building/Zoning

The building department has been issuing building, electric, mechanical, gas and plumbing permits.

### Planning

This week, the Planning Department completed administrative tasks for the Planning Board and Affordable Housing Trust. Staff is developing a first draft Complete Streets Policy to be reviewed by the Planning Board prior to final referral to the Select Board.

Staff attended the Capital Summit and held a kickoff meeting for the Hazard Mitigation Plan Update with municipal staff and local stakeholders. Staff also participated in a site visit to Providence Road Commons (Luka Drive) to review outstanding project items. Additionally, staff met with representatives of KARP Strategies regarding the Local Rapid Recovery Plan Draft which will be presented at the Select Board's September 21st regularly scheduled meeting, prior to finalization.

Staff continues to coordinate processing of the 43D application for 244 Worcester Street, and is working on "Request for New Units" applications to the Department of Housing and Community Development on behalf of the Zoning Board of Appeals in order to add recently completed projects to the Subsidized Housing Inventory.

### Conservation

Staff worked to issue the resulting documents from the Commission's 8/17 meeting. Staff reviewed applications filed for the Commission's 9/21 meeting. Site inspections were conducted and inquiries from residents and applicants were fielded.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### Recreation Department

Our fall and winter programs have arrived, and registration is now open. View a brochure [HERE](#); NEW Teen Barre, NEW Adult Horse 101, pre-school, youth afterschool, weekend and vacation week programs, and more plus all your favorite events are back! First up, the Scarecrow Building Contest on October 17!

Please contact the department with any questions at [recreation@grafton-ma.gov](mailto:recreation@grafton-ma.gov) or 508-839-5335 x1156, visit our website at [GraftonRec.com](http://GraftonRec.com), and follow us on Facebook (@GraftonRecDept) for the latest updates.

### Council on Aging

Pay as You Throw bags were distributed to those individuals who are part of the low income PAYT program. A new senior exercise program "Breathing and Healing Chair Yoga" started on September 10<sup>th</sup> and will continue to be held on Fridays at 10:00 am. Uploaded all the necessary requested SNAP documentation to the UMASS portal for an upcoming annual audit which will take place on Wednesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Senior Tax Work-Off Certificates of Completion are beginning to be turned in. All times sheets and Certificates of Completion need to be in the COA office by October 31<sup>st</sup>. Attended the monthly Council on Aging board meeting, and a Capital Summit meeting. Support, advocacy, and guidance was provided to seniors daily.

### Library

We are still unable to announce a reopening date and are postponing our Ribbon Cutting and Grand Reopening and will announce a new date ASAP. All staff had

Monday, Labor Day, off. Beth was out Tue & Wed in observance of Rosh Hashanah.

The Select Board proclaimed September as National Library Card Sign-up Month! [Register online](#) for a free or replacement library card.

Parking lot striping was completed. The retention basin was seeded. More shelving arrived and some A/V shelving is assembled. We are still waiting for framing and shelving for historical, new books, large print, and children's collections. One of the EVSE was repaired and training is scheduled for 1pm on Friday. Don from Bibliotheca walked through on Thursday to see the new Automated Materials Handler and gates. Integra is coming on Fri to test the phone system but not date yet for arrival or installation of phones.

The Friends kindly delivered lunch from the Grafton Inn for Staff on Thursday afternoon – thank you!

Beth attended the Capital Summit, fielded many questions about reopening and COVID. We have reinstated contact tracing. Beth updated the punch list – her list and the construction team's list are not aligning.

Sarah, Cyndi, and Kristin discussed upcoming October programming. Sarah reached out to Allison and Heidi about booking art programs for this fall, contacted Pop Up Art School, submitted final SLP stats to MLS, attended two webinars (Anti-Racist Education: Building Your Inclusive Collection & Curriculum and Worthy Kids Author Extravaganza!), submitted August Stats and narrative to Beth, followed up with patrons needing assistance with SLP activity codes and damaged items due to a unexpected flood in their classroom, communicated with ATA about upcoming music programming at the library, and booked the fall session of the YFCP grant funded program, Young Scientists, with STEM Beginnings.

Cyndi looked into storage solutions from the approved vendor list, organized and inventoried the CR game collection, brainstormed programming ideas, and added month stickers to all of our new books. Jen worked on Event Keeper events and the October CR newsletter. Mare reviewed volunteer applications and organized volunteer correspondence.

Circulation staff practiced with AMH and A/V systems; attended the staff meeting, and brainstormed workflow. In addition, Ranjita and Jane had *NYT* best seller list training, (searching for what we own and putting titles in A FIC HOLD cart in Ingram); Sandhya updated museum pass info and the website, Allie worked on the Mind, Body Spirit canvases, and signage. The four circ assistants spent time reading *Library Journal* and *BookPage* to become more familiar with adult fiction. Susan conducted a BookWagon program at Crescent Manor Rest Home; delivered material to four homebound patrons, worked on tasks for circ staff; ordered supplies; made arrangements to begin receiving our 53 bins of material that has been held at the sorting center, and started tweaking

the schedule. We continue to be thwarted from completing our set-up due to lack of shelving and storage space!

Heidi answered questions about passwords, holds, museum passes, where they can return materials, and when are we opening? She updated library accounts and created new ones for patrons. She attended a webinar titled "From Theory to Practice: How to Make Open Access Content Work for Your Library."

#### Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

#### GCTV

This week's activities included . . . . interviews with Bonnie Frederico and Ken Crater regarding the Annual Small Stones Art Festival. We produced 4 Bus Stop Weather segments this week, hosted by Freshman Sophie Kling. We also looking forward to working with Cadence Tucker a Grafton Junior who wants to volunteer at GCTV.

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**

#### **IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

##### Upcoming Select Board Meetings

September 14, 2021 (Workshop)

September 21, 2021 (Business Meeting)

##### Upcoming Department Head Meetings

September 15<sup>th</sup> 10:00 a.m.