



MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Select Board

FROM: Evan Brassard
Town Administrator

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: September 29, 2023

IMPORTANT NOTICES TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

- Fall Town Meeting, October 16th Grafton High School Auditorium 7:00 P.M.

Town Administrator

- Held weekly meeting with Finance Director
- Municipal Center Staff participated in an active shooter training with Grafton PD
- Held check-ins with department heads to discuss daily operations and ongoing projects.
- Continued union contract negotiations

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Finance Director

No Report Submitted

Treasurer/Collector

- Bill Files generated and sent to printer for Excise Commitment 5
- List of abandoned funds generated and posted on Town Website
- Prepping for Real Estate and Personal Property Tax bills to be send 10/2 for FY24 Q3
- Fixed an issue with balances listed on Trust Funds
- 10 MLCs generated

Principal Assessor

No Report Submitted

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk attended a Clerk's conference on 2024 Election Information.

The last day to register for the Semi- Annual Town Meeting on Monday, October 16th is Friday, October 5th at 5pm (in person).

Kid's voting will be happening on October 16th- October 30th. Be on the lookout for more details!

Dog licenses expire on March 31st. The cost to register a dog is \$10.00 for spay/neutered or \$15.00 for non-altered. Any dogs registered on or after June 1st will have a \$10.00 late per dog in addition to the registration fee. Any dogs not registered will be referred to Animal Control.

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

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.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Department

396 log entries were made including 81 - 911 calls, 8 motor vehicle accidents, 15 alarm calls, 37 ambulance calls, 6 animal complaints, 8 arrests, 125 business/area checks, 9 disturbance calls, 2 fraud/identity theft complaints, 35 motor vehicle stops and 5 well-being checks.

13 License to Carry Firearms (LTC) applications were received this week. Chief's Column posted on "*Beware of Chimney Repair Scams.*"

Officers received legal updates on current court decisions and other roll call notices including Worcester County District Attorney's Office, Commonwealth Fusion Center, New England State Police Information Network (NESPIN) and Worcester Regional Intelligence Bulletins.

Officer Asassy attended MPTC Instructor Development training. Officer Coggans attended Search Warrant Preparation training. Sgt. Crosby attended MPAC assessment review in Upton. Officers Benoit and Alves conducted ALICE training for Municipal Center staff.

Fire Department

No Report

Department of Public Works (Including Engineering, Cemetery & Sewer)
No Report Submitted

Engineering
No Report Submitted

Health Department

Given the COVID-19 public health emergency in Massachusetts and at the federal level ended as of May 11, and the shift to dealing with ongoing community infection as they do other illnesses, the Alliance is no longer providing weekly reporting of COVID-19 case counts and vaccination data to communities.

Given the ongoing concerns with COVID-19, including an increase in COVID-19 cases across the country currently and at least one new variant of concern identified in the US, it is strongly recommended that individuals wear masks in indoor locations, especially those who are at higher risk or those that live with or have family that is at higher risk.

In addition, individuals are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated and to get the newly updated COVID-19 vaccine (if they are eligible).

For the latest information on the COVID-19 vaccines and boosters, including eligible populations and how to find a vaccination location, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html> and <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine>. Vaccination and boosters (if eligible) are strongly recommended.

Tick season and mosquito season are still here, so the BoH reminds everyone to take proper precautions. Grafton was recently put into the Moderate risk level for EEE.

Seasonal flu vaccines are now available at pharmacy locations such as CVS and Walgreens.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Building/Zoning

As published in the Grafton news September 21, 2023
authored by Robert S Berger Inspector of Buildings Grafton MA

Why & When You Need a Building Permit

Introduction:

A building permit serves as a safeguard for homeowners and future occupants of a property. If a professional advises that you might not need a permit, it's advisable to

independently consult the building department. In many cases, obtaining a permit is to your advantage.

In fact, such advice could be a sign that your architect or contractor is attempting to take shortcuts that could negatively affect you. Moreover, there is usually a nominal fee associated with obtaining a permit.

Benefits of Obtaining a Permit:

Acquiring a permit ensures oversight of your contractor's work, as well as your own if applicable. The involvement of an inspector can help prevent errors and subpar craftsmanship, guaranteeing that the construction adheres to established building codes. This assurance allows you to rest easy, knowing that your project aligns with safety standards for both materials and construction techniques.

Facilitating Property Sales:

During the sale of a property through a multiple listing association, the owner is obligated to disclose any enhancements or repairs carried out, along with whether appropriate permits and inspections were obtained. Many financial institutions require proof of a final inspection before financing a purchase. Should you choose to sell a property with modifications lacking proper permits, you might face mandates such as removing the addition, leaving it unused, or incurring costly corrective measures.

Advisory Regarding Electrical Installations in Massachusetts:

On October 26, 2020, the Board issued an advisory to remind inspectors of their inability to approve unpermitted or uninspected electrical work. The question arose whether property owners are obligated to entirely remove such work for inspector approval. The answer is not necessarily. The recommended course of action, as advised by the Board, is as follows:

1. Engage a duly licensed electrician.
2. Have the electrician assess all previously unpermitted or uninspected electrical work. Concealed work must be exposed or eliminated for review.
3. Obtain a permit for this work through the electrician.
4. Ensure the electrician confirms compliance with the Massachusetts Electrical Code, as they take responsibility for the work.
5. Request an inspection from the local inspector of wires, who can then evaluate and approve the work if executed correctly.

Planning

- Grant reporting by 10/1 deadline
- 9/25 PB Meeting prep and follow up
- 10/2 PB Meeting prep
- Drafting PB's Report to the Select Board and associated Town Meeting prep
- Application processing and ongoing assistance to current/pending applicants

- Vetting and addressing public inquiries
- Construction project management and condition compliance reviews – Woodland Hill Website and social media updates
- Master Plan Workshop coordination with MPWG and staff
Office reorganization/filing/panel installation
- Independent research projects for the Planning Board, the public, etc.
- EFA coordination/finalization with consultant prior to Town Meeting
- Long-range project next steps/coordination e.g., Whitney Park, Housing Production Plan, Complete Streets, Wi-Fi Hotspots, & Regional Waste Action Plan
- MAPD Annual Massachusetts Land Use Case Law Review

Conservation

- Issued documents from Commission's 9/5 & 9/19 meetings
- Reviewed applications for Commission's 10/3 & 10/24 meetings
- Attended active shooter training
- Continued gathering data for Green Communities annual report & final report for close out of current grant round
- Project coordination for: 95 North Street Park, Hennessey culvert replacement & treatment of aquatic invasives at Fisherville Pond & Lake Ripple
- Continued to transition to ClearGov, assemble GIS trail maps & digitize archive files
- Conducted site inspections

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recreation Department

- We have a vacancy for a position on the Recreation Commission. This is a three-year term. Please contact recreation@grafton-ma.gov for more info and to apply.
- Our Sponsorship Campaign is up and running! Any interested parties in becoming a sponsor for our events should contact the office at 508-839-8507 or at recreation@grafton-ma.gov.
- Grafton Rec Logo Contest is Complete! We will have the logo edited, and will be used moving forward in our marketing. Thanks to all who participated!
- We are finishing up ADA accessible parking spots and pathways at Ferry Street, Perry Hill, and Norcross Park.
- We are always looking for volunteers to help us with our events! Please contact us at 508-839-8507 or Recreation@grafton-ma.gov for more info.
- Events Coming Up:
 - Fall Festival- Sunday, 10/15 11a-3p on the Common- Scarecrow Making, Pumpkin Painting, inflatables, and more! This is a FREE event!
 - Friendly Trick or Treat- Wednesday, 10/25 from 3-4pm. Ages 5 and under invited!
 - Amazing Turkey Challenge- 11/18 10 am- Are you up for the challenge? Gather your team to drive around Grafton to points of interest. Complete a different

- challenge at each stop. Who will be the winner? Register at <https://tinyurl.com/turkeyrace23>
- Grafton Celebrates the Holidays- Sunday 12/3- Starts with the Craft Fair at the Municipal Center Gym 10 am-3 pm, also Frosty Stops from 12-4pm

Council on Aging

- Tax work off hours received for FY24 and submitted to the Assessor's office.
- Senior Tax Work Off applications for FY25 were completed. They are now available for seniors to apply and begin working starting in November.
- Podiatry appointments were held with podiatrist, Dr. Biancamano.
- Seniors enjoyed a presentation titled, "MassRelay- Let's Talk." This is a no-cost, public service for Massachusetts residents that provides various communication devices to those that are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or have other difficulties speaking on the phone.
- Wellness checks, support, advocacy, and guidance was provided to seniors daily.

Library

This week we circulated 1,794 items, received 496 items in transit, and sent 566 items. We requested 439 items and fulfilled 363 hold requests; registered 12 patrons for library cards, and added 139 new items. The most popular book this week is *The Five-Star Weekend* by Elin Hilderbrand. We hosted 31 meetings in our conference, study, and tutoring rooms for 62 people including Grafton Youth Football & Cheer, and Operation Friendship, as well as private work, study, homeschool, and tutoring sessions.

Admin

We remember with fondness and gratitude Trustee Marilyn Cusher, who passed away on last week. She dedicated four years of service to the Board of Library Trustees and was a strong library advocate during the construction grant process. Her daughter-in-law Allison is a staff member, and staff attended the funeral and shiva. May her memory be for a blessing.

This was the final week of National Library Card Sign Up Month. We've added 76 new cards in September to date. Through Saturday September 30, get your first card (or a FREE replacement card) to access online resources like Tutor.com, and check out materials, including items from our Library of Things: metal detectors, telescopes, cake pans, ukuleles, a sewing machine, yard games, and more.

This week, ServPro removed about a foot of drywall all around the interior of the Community Room and Children's Room. Patrons are advised there may be noise typical of construction work on the lower level between 10am-4pm over the next few weeks, as Preserve 24, the contractor who will install new drywall, flooring and millwork as needed for flood remediation, will be on site soon and expect the process to take 8-10 days. We are still not booking any meetings or events in the Community Room or Children's Room, and the Small Stones Festival of the Arts has been postponed until December.

We continue to assess the doors and drainage to ascertain to why the water from this particular storm of August 18 breached the emergency door gaskets and infiltrated the Library. Beth signed up for COSTEP (Coordinated Statewide Emergency Preparedness for Cultural Heritage in Massachusetts) alerts, registered for accessing to a platform for developing an Emergency Response Policy, and registered for the Northeast Summit on Climate Adaptation for Libraries, taking place via Zoom in November. DPW is not yet available to snake drains, so Beth is working with a septic company that might be able to perform the work sooner.

Last week, Beth attended the MPLCP Construction team meeting, Town Department Heads meeting, responded to emails from Capital Campaign, connected with the Board of Library Trustees chair for a weekly check-in, and met with another board member regarding Long Range Planning. This week, she forwarded reference questions to the Trustee in charge of LRP. She met with staff, department heads, and attended the Board of Library Trustees meeting. She responded to two public records requests, connected the Town Clerk to the Head of Children's Services for Kids Voting in mid-October, and fielded questions from partners on programming.

We are still trying to resolve several building issues from last week, including a network error message for first floor thermostats in the HR-1 group. Beth reviewed the Operation and Maintenance Manual for door warranty information, for instructions on cleaning the skylight, and for warranty information on the folding panels in the Community Room. She and IT did some troubleshooting on the door scheduling software that failed last Tuesday morning following an unscheduled entry through an unauthorized door; it did resolve by Wednesday morning. Three staff key cards stopped working last Tuesday as well, only for one day—it's unclear if it was related. She reached out to multiple roofing companies for quotes to install a metal flange as recommended by the architect to address an issue with water not being directed into the downspout. Staff reported an issue with EKRooms and Beth reached out to Plymouth Rocket regarding an alerts issue--meeting room requests are not showing in the web interface, resulting in delays to responding to patron requests for room reservations, they are working on resolving it.

Patrons who came to the Library on the early release day were generally well-behaved and well-managed. Beth corresponded with people regarding meeting room reservations, updated the calendar and approved requests, made updates to the Procedures Manual, website, and event calendar, and reviewed and submitted bills. Eileen maintained the collection of periodicals, took care of incoming mail, sent late notices, prepared bills, paid invoices and assisted with coverage for Borrower Services. Debby compiled the Weekly Report, covered scheduling gaps in the Teen Room, and worked on payroll, scheduling, social media, and tasks for the Board of Library Trustees. She attended and recorded minutes for the staff meeting, library department heads meeting, and the monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees. She checked in daily on the progress of flood remediation and communicated updates with staff, trustees, and town administration.

Borrower Services

Staff managed the adult circ desk, delivery, museum passes, the lobby, room reservations, and Automatic Materials Handling equipment. We assisted patrons, placed holds, performed readers' advisory, and supervised volunteers.

Kara checked CWMars top titles against the collection; reviewed industry newsletters to add upcoming titles to purchase lists; corresponded with volunteer applicants and staff coordinators; ordered requested e-book and e-audio titles; worked on displays including creating signage and pulling titles for the October staircase and graphic novel displays, taking down September's displays and setting up October displays; and created bookmarks for October. Jane posted the *New York Times* Best Seller List for print and audio fiction and recommended titles for purchase; corrected patron records with the wrong home library; collected items with alerts from invalid RFID tags; processed pending library card applications; prepared materials and graphics for the October endcap display celebrating International Coffee Day and National Homemade Cookie Day. Ranjita posted the *New York Times* Best Seller List for print and audio nonfiction and recommended titles for purchase; processed ComCat requests; processed new adult fiction; and performed a routine check of the Library of Things. Sandhya managed out of network requests for materials; worked on interlibrary loans and followed up with patrons; cleared expired holds from the hold shelf and followed up with patrons; prepared for adult programming in November and December; contacted Roger Williams Park Zoo museum pass about renewal; prepared graphics and selected additional materials for the October endcap display; and performed troubleshooting on the Bibliotheca self-check. Allie worked on newsletter graphics and curation of sections and events; requested books for the October endcap display "Stranger Reads"; created October graphics; and attended to meeting room glitches and email correspondence.

Children's Services

This week the Children's Room staff settled into their temporary space located in the Friends Cafe. Patrons seem disappointed that the CR is closed again, and we have had some tearful friends, but we assure them the CR will be back as soon as possible so they can come play again. Staff also coordinated with local schools about upcoming school visits, prepped for Octoberfest, started a "Name the Frog" contest, and assisted patrons.

Teen Services

Allison attended a department head meeting; spoke with Children's Staff in regards to possible Winter Reading Program, and worked on a book order. Sarah S worked on endcap display lists for next month, attended a suicide prevention workshop at Forbush Library in Westminster, performed reader advisory, and coordinated with teen volunteers. Allison and Sarah held a T.A.G. (Teen Advisory Group) meeting. Shawn monitored the room and interacted with teens during after-school hours.

Reference Services

Heidi and Eric assisted with tech and reference questions as well as circulation. Heidi hosted the "Reads Well with Others" Book Group discussion of *The Reading List*, by Sara

Nisha Adams and the Inspirational Book Group (and Guided Meditation)'s discussion of *52 Ways to Walk: The Surprising Science of Walking for Wellness and Joy, One Week at a Time*, by Annabel Streets; and worked on collection development and event planning. Eric also did collection maintenance for the non-fiction collection, worked on October displays, ordered books for the adult non-fiction collection, and put out new non-fiction books.

Technical Services

This week, Cynthia ordered new books and unpacked items as they arrived; cataloged new adult fiction, nonfiction, DVDs, audiobooks, and CDs; created brief records MARC for new Library of Things items; added grids to items in Ingram; worked on fixing problem items; sent in an order for RFID Tags from Bibliotheca and requests for records to the CatCenter. She helped cover the desk for Borrower Services.

Veterans Services

No Report Submitted

GCTV

No Report Submitted

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Upcoming Select Board Meetings
October 10, 2023

Upcoming Department Head Meetings
October 18, 2023