



MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Select Board

FROM: Evan Brassard
Town Administrator

RE: Administrator's Weekly Report

DATE: October 20, 2023

Town Administrator

- Met with the Finance Director for weekly updates and Town Meeting Prep
- Met with Meridia for clicker review and set up
- Tested AV system with vendor and school department IT Department
- Attended Town Meeting
- Held a welcome coffee for our new Recreation Director, Treasurer/Collector & Payroll and Benefits Coordinator
- Met with Department heads for weekly updates

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Finance Director

- In process of completing EOY School report Schedule 1 & Schedule 19.
- Continued working on the Tax Rate Recap with Assessing Dept.
- July and August cash and trust funds have been reconciliation.
- July, August, September receivable reconciliation has been completed.
- Accounting Department is continuing to work on Schedule A reporting.
- Attending Student Activity Training. Focus was on operational management and procedures.
- Attended MSHG Board of Directors Meeting. Agenda included treasurer's report, participation agreements, vote to approve AETNA Medicare renewal rates for FY24.
- Attended meetings with RetireeFirst. Announcement letters for the Town of Grafton retirees will be mailed this week. RetireeFirst will hold an informational breakfast event well as a virtual event detailing the new plan and answering any questions you may have. Retiree breakfast will be held here at the Grafton Municipal Center Thursday November 2nd, at 9am.

- Attended Welcome Coffee hour to welcome our new recent hires here at the Municipal Center.
- Met with our Financial Advisor to review our bonding obligations for Spring of 2024.
- Attended MMA Personnel & Labor Relations Policy Committee. Agenda topics included discussion on civil service and the Salary Transparency legislation. Reviewed and discussed [H. 2339, An Act relative to the reduction of certain toxic chemicals in firefighter personal protective equipment](#). This is related to the work of the [PFAS Interagency Task Force](#).

Treasurer/Collector

- Attended the Worcester County Collector Treasurers Association fall meeting- Coppola & Coppola discussed the effects of the supreme court ruling in Tyler v. Hennepin County, Minnesota will have on Massachusetts municipalities.
- Tom and Christine attended Vadar's User Group training held in Southbridge, Ma.
- Working on delinquency letters for FY21, 22 & 23 Real Estate bills. Will be sending out roughly 166 letters 10-31-2023 with a due date of 01-02-2024.
- Met with UniPay to discuss adding features to the online bill pay to help residents. Will be adding bill presentment access (PDF copies of bills), quick pay option for sewer bills, email notifications to residents with accounts when bills are generated, as well as autopay feature for Real Estate, Personal Property, and Sewer.
- 4 MLCs generated.

Principal Assessor

- Working on classification hearing presentation.
- Going through visit histories for all properties in town as part of our cyclical inspection process and in preparation for FY 2025 Revaluation.
- Attended the Massachusetts Association of Assessing Officers Fall Conference on October 19, 2023. New ATB Rules; Live ATB Motion Session; Abatements and Their Timelines; Jurisdictional Documents; Differences Between Formal and Informal, Motions-Dismiss for Interest/No I & E, Compel for Inspection or Documents; Interrogatories, Production of Documents; Settlement Talks-Strategy, What to Look for and Mediation Process-When to Consider. The speakers were ATB Commissioner Mark DeFrancisco, ATB Chief Clerk William Doherty, ATB Tax Counsel David Cella Esquire, Matt Thomas Esquire and Ellen Hutchinson Esquire.
- Attended the Massachusetts Association of Assessing Officers Fall Conference on October 20, 2023. Navigating MAAO Website; Findings of Fact; Appeal or Not and Mock Trial. The speakers were ATB Commissioner Mark DeFrancisco, ATB Chief Clerk William Doherty, ATB Tax Counsel David Cella Esquire, Matt Thomas Esquire and Ellen Hutchinson Esquire.
- Processed 4 motor vehicle abatements.
- Entered 8 deeds.
- Took in 7 personal exemption applications.
- Took in 12 Chapter Land applications.

- Entered 38 building permits.
- Performed 3 permit inspections.
- Performed 28 cyclical inspections.

Town Clerk

Kid's voting is happening through October 30th at the Grafton Public Library lobby area. Stop by to vote on the dog tag for 2024. Don't forget to take a picture at the selfie wall and grab a sticker!

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 (Activities (10/8/23 – 10/14/23))

417 log entries were made including 56 - 911 calls, 3 motor vehicle accidents, 19 alarm calls, 22 ambulance calls, 2 animal complaints, 1 arrest, 140 business/area checks, 5 disturbance calls, 1 fraud/identity theft complaint, 61 motor vehicle stops and 7 well-being checks.

No License to Carry Firearms (LTC) applications were received this week. Chief's Column posted on "*National Bullying Prevention Month and the Effects of Cyber Bullying.*"

Officers received legal updates on current court decisions and other roll call notices including Worcester County District Attorney's Office, Commonwealth Fusion Center, Commonwealth Critical Infrastructure Program (CCIP), New England State Police Information Network (NESPIN) and Worcester Police Tactical Analysis Reports.

Officers also attended MPTC in-service training held at the Boylston Police Academy or online. Mandatory classes include Legal Update, Rules of the Road, Reports and Testimony, Officer Wellness: We Are What We Do, and Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission training.

Deputy Chief Minardi attended CEMLEC SWAT in-service training. Officer Spellman attended a Blackstone Valley Emergency Shelter meeting to learn what resources are

available should we need to assist homeless individuals. School Resource Officer Alves conducted ALICE training for staff at the Millbury Street Elementary School.

Fire Department

No Report Submitted

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. The new RSV vaccine is also available at pharmacy locations for eligible individuals.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Building/Zoning

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

Planning

- 10/23 PB Meeting prep
 - Town Meeting prep and follow up
 - Application processing and ongoing assistance to current/pending applicants
 - Vetting and addressing public inquiries
 - Construction project management and condition compliance reviews
 - Website and social media updates
 - Master Plan Workshop
 - Meeting with Counsel for Brigati Village and follow up
 - Housing Production Plan Workshop walk through
 - Independent research projects for the Planning Board, the public, etc.
 - Long-range project next steps/coordination
 - Meeting with Planning Consultant
 - Preparation of District Compliance Application to EOHL
 - Compiling SHI Inventory and Tracking List
- **The Planning Board has an opening for an Associate Member!** Please contact the Town Administrator's Office if you are interested in applying!

Conservation

- Issued documents from Commission's 10/3 meeting
- Reviewed applications for Commission's 10/24 meeting
- Worked on Green Communities annual report & final report for close out of current grant
- Project coordination for: volunteer projects on conservation lands, 95 North Street Park, Hennessey culvert replacement & treatment of aquatic invasives at Fisherville Pond & Lake Ripple
- Fall mowing of fields on four conservation lands is underway thanks to DPW
- Attended Town Meeting
- Conducted required fall public outreach regarding proper leaf disposal per MS4 permit
- Continued to transition to ClearGov, assemble GIS trail maps & digitize archive files
- Conducted site inspections

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Recreation Department

- Thanks to all who participated in Rec's first combined Fall Festival!
- Our CPC project for ADA Accessibility at all of our parks and playgrounds is complete! Thanks to the CPC for funding the project.
- The Recreation Department, with support from ARPA funds, is engaging in a Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan. This plan is highlighting 6 of our current recreational assets, and will highlight current and future needs, recommendations, and short term and long-term capital planning to improve these facilities. The first step in the process is resident feedback. Survey is open until 11/1/23. Link to the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GL2JBWZ>
- We have a vacancy for a position on the Recreation Commission. This 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.
- 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:
 - 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

- Appointments were held with Attorney Carolyn Spring.
- Outreach Coordinator, Lisa Kelley, was appointed to the Elder Services of Worcester Area Board of Directors.
- November's calendar of programs was finalized and the *Senior Gazette* was submitted for print.
- October's Birthday Luncheon took place to celebrate folks with October birthdays.
- Senior Center staff participated in CPR training.
- The COA Board monthly meeting was held to discuss current events and short-term goals for the future.
- Tax work off paperwork and applications were received and processed.
- A Flu/ COVID vaccine clinic was held in partnership with DPH in the Senior Center Gym.
- A pie potluck took place with prizes given out to the best pie.
- Seniors enjoyed an afternoon of Oldies Singalong on Friday.

- Wellness checks, support, advocacy, and guidance was provided to seniors daily.

Library

This week we circulated 2,013 items, received 702 items in transit, and sent 607 items. We requested 542 items and fulfilled 433 hold requests; registered 8 patrons for library cards, and added 233 new items. The most popular book this week is *The Richest Woman in America: Hetty Green in the Gilded Age* by Janet Wallach. We hosted 25 meetings in our conference, study, and tutoring rooms for 60 people including Brownie Troop 65197, office hours for Senator Michael Moore, and Grafton Girls Softball, as well as private work, study, homeschool, and tutoring sessions.

The Grafton Public Library was closed 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. for staff development on Thursday, October 19. The event was attended by all available staff and was a chance for staff to collaborate across departments.

The Children's Room and Community Rooms continue to be closed awaiting reconstruction to remediate flood damage. Assistant Town Administrator William Blake is in communication with and will be notified by MIIA insurance adjusters when work can begin. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Admin

The Director is out on FMLA leave through the end of 2023. In her absence, things are running smoothly with no disruption to service as GPL staff and Town of Grafton employees are pitching in. Special thanks to Jen McNeil from the Children's Department for updating the website and making a number of corrections and additions to EventKeeper, trustees Roger Trahan, John Bubriski, and Carrie Hogan who have come in to sign warrant sheets so that bills can be paid on time, Town Accountant Mary Lauria for assisting with payroll submission, and to William Blake and who has been maintaining communication with department heads and providing staff and facilities support.

Eileen maintained the collection of periodicals, took care of incoming mail, sent late notices, prepared bills, paid invoices, picked up lunch for staff development, and assisted with coverage for Borrower Services. Debby planned and coordinated details for Thursday's staff development; compiled the Weekly Report; worked on payroll, scheduling, social media, and tasks for the Board of Library Trustees; and completed a number of tasks left on the Director's To-Do List.

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 helped plan for upcoming staff transitions; prepared adult fiction orders for November; prepared the large print adult fiction order for November & December;

prepared an order of graphic novels and manga for November; prepared for the move of the second and first floor desks; and helped organize storage and free up workspace in the Technical Services office. 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; collected items with alerts from old displays; and continued weeding adult fiction. Ranjita posted the *New York Times* Best Seller List for print and audio nonfiction and recommended titles for purchase; processed ComCat requests; and performed a routine check of the Library of Things and First Aid Kits throughout the building. Sandhya managed out of network requests for materials and followed up on open issues; worked on interlibrary loans and followed up with patrons; cleared expired holds from the hold shelf and followed up with patrons; worked on the home delivery service; hosted the final session of the Diamond Art program; hosted a craft session for attendees at staff development; prepared graphics and selected materials for the November endcap display; planned for and tested adult programming options for November and December and ordered supplies; processed museum pass renewals and reviewed upcoming expiration dates; and continued preparing for the next season of the Seed Library. Allie created and adhered shelf labels for Blu-ray, DVD, Video Games, and Manga sections; requested additional shelf labels; worked on the November newsletter by requesting content from staff members and creating a new design, including new graphics, an updated Upcoming Events section, and an updated High Demand Holds section; created graphic for November's Native American Heritage Month staircase display and a printable general events calendar for November; worked on the New Fiction shelf display, including processing new adult fiction; researched an older mystery book series for a patron; and discussed Art Rail additions with a trustee.

Children's Services

The Children's Room staff continues working out of the temporary CR space while we await repairs to damaged sustained in the August flood. As we enter our fourth week of displacement, we are feeling the strain and challenges of working with limited space and resources. Staff have continued to field questions and concerns from the public ranging from sympathetic understanding to frustration about the closure of the Children's Room, our current programming hiatus, and the temporary suspension of the Friends of the Grafton Public Library's book sale on a daily basis. At this time, the timeline of the project continues to be unclear, making it challenging to alleviate the concerns of the public.

Children's Outreach programming is back in full swing with staff providing outreach to NGES preschoolers, Silver Spruce, and hosting a table at Octoberfest.

Teen Services

Sarah S shelved new books, facilitated Dungeons and Dragons, ran Anime Club, and coordinated with teen volunteers. Shawn supervised the Teen Room during after school hours and provided much needed support to Borrower Services staff when there was an altercation between patrons on Tuesday.

Reference Services

Heidi and Eric assisted with tech and reference questions, circulation, room reservations and museum passes. Heidi hosted the Daytimers' Book Group discussion of *Other Birds*, by Sarah Addison Allen, the GPL Mystery Book Group discussion of *Artifacts* by Mary Anna Evans; and worked on a grant and event PR. Eric also set up their new desk space and helped clear out the reference desk before it was moved.

Technical Services

This week, Cynthia ordered new books and unpacked items as they arrived. She cataloged new YA graphic novels, adult fiction, and audiobooks; worked on fixing problem items and replacement items; added grids to items in Ingram; sent in requests for records to the CatCenter; and covered the desk for Borrower Services.

Veterans Services

- CMVSD website is being designed to needs of district, projected live date of Nov 16th. We will be asking each community for input on images representing each town.
- VSO's will be attending State run training in Leominster week of Oct 23-26. All offices will be closed during that time but available by phone and email.
- VA Claims filed, 1 DIC claim, 3 disability claim, Assisting with 2 other burial claims.

GCTV

No Report Submitted

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Upcoming Select Board Meetings
October 24, 2023

Upcoming Department Head Meetings
November 15, 2023