

Town Administrator's Report
May 28, 2024

Work at Fire Station

The repair work to the Fire Station has been completed by Building Recon Services. The work included the installation of temporary rafter ties/braces in the attic to minimize further "rafter thrust." It also included the installation of temporary posts beneath the roof ridge to reduce further sagging of the roof ridge.

Personnel Policies Review

Sue Fayne is spearheading the review of personnel policies with a group of Town staff. They intend to develop recommendations which I will then review. Once I review, based on their recommendations, I will make recommendations to the Board for your consideration.

Larter Field Tennis Courts contract

The Parks Commission approved the contract with Longo Landscaping in the amount of \$300,850 to construction new tennis courts at Larter Field. I have prepared the contract documents, the Chair of the Parks Commission has signed the contract, and it has been sent to Longo Landscaping. Before work begins, they have been advised they must secure a payment bond and provide proof of insurance based on contract requirements.

Director of Senior Services position

The Director of Senior Services position has been posted with a due date of June 7. We have received a couple of inquiries. I will keep the Board updated and develop an interview and hiring process for the Board's consideration.

Cemetery Superintendent position

The application deadline for the Cemetery Superintendent position has passed. The Cemetery Commission has received interest from 3 candidates. I am now working with the Commission to assist them with the interview and hiring process.

One Stop for Growth Grant Application – Underutilized Properties

I had a productive conference call last week with NMCOG regarding our grant application to the Once Stop for Growth/Underutilized Properties Program for interior improvements to the Union Building. After discussing our options with NMCOG, they believed our best chance to secure funding is to utilize the \$150,000 committed by the School Committee as a match to a \$50,000 grant request. If we are able to secure the \$50,000 grant, we will be able to develop interior design plans ready to bid. Based on the work of Spencer during the re-use process, they have estimated the architecture and engineering fees at a total of \$192,992 - \$104,415 for Phase 1 and \$83,737 for Phase 2. The grant application is due on June 5.

Municipal Citizens Academy

I have developed a draft flyer and schedule for a municipal citizens academy. I am still working to confirm department participation, but I hope to finalize that work this month, and begin to promote the program in July.

Patriot Regional Emergency Communications Center Transition and Start Date

The transition to the Patriot RECC has been moved up and is now planned for June 3. The Director has been in contact with both Fire and Police Chiefs and is coordinating directly with them.

Draft Financial Policies

I have prepared model financial policies for consideration of the Advisory and Select Boards. The policies seek to develop a framework on budget growth, building reserves, use of one-time revenues, capital planning, and financial forecasting, among other things.

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan Submitted

The Town's MVP and update to its Hazard Mitigation Plan has been submitted to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs for their review and approval. Thanks to all departments, volunteers, and residents involved in the process who assisted in identifying vulnerabilities and recommendations to address them. Once approved, the Town will be able to apply for grant funds to implement the recommendations of these plans.

Voting Data – Annual Town Election

This year's Annual Town Election has a total of 584 votes cast or 23% turnout. As you recall, in 2023 the Town had an override question on the ballot and, this year, we had one contested School Committee race. 124 more votes were cast at this year's election than in 2023. I believe this is due to the increased effort to make voting as accessible as possible to residents, with the promotion of early and mail-in voting and making these options readily available for residents. Excellent work to both Brynn and Sue, and all the election workers, for making this happen.

Water Tank – Cell Tower Request for Proposals

I have posted the Request for Proposals for a cell tower on the water tank on the website, at Town Hall, and it will be advertised in the Groton Herald and on the Central Register. Proposals are due August 6.

FY25 State Budget Amendments

In the House budget, Rep. Scarsdale was successful in getting the following language approved: *“provided further, that not less than \$45,000 shall be expended for updates to the Dunstable police department.”* At present, the plan would be to use this funding to

replace all windows in the Police Station. In the Senate budget, while not final yet, Sen. Kennedy proposed and successfully passed the following amendment: “; *provided further, that not less than \$75,000 shall be expended to the town of Dunstable for library improvements and personal protection equipment.*” Of this funding, \$30,000 would support the purchase of PPE for the Fire Department and the balance would support improvements to the library, namely window replacement, but it seems there is flexibility with the funding in case priorities have shifted under the new Library Director. These projects were shared with both legislative offices in accordance with the funding perimeters in each branch based on priorities contained in the Town’s Capital Improvement Plan.