

**Town Administrator Report
December 7, 2023**

Employee Training Opportunities

We have distributed a survey to employees requesting feedback on potential training opportunities moving into the new calendar year. I have been in contact with our insurer, MIAA, and plan to coordinate with them once we've identified trainings we would like to offer.

Performance Evaluations

We are currently working to draft an employee performance evaluation format that can be used annually. I was able to compile a variety of templates from other communities and are utilizing those examples as a baseline for our format. The goal is to build the infrastructure to provide constructive feedback to employees and collaboratively develop goals for the new year.

NMCOG Project Ideas Application

We submitted project ideas to NMCOG for their consideration. This is the first part of the process to secure technical assistance for projects in Town. Projects we sought technical assistance for are as follows: Union Building Reuse Feasibility and Restoration Plan (continue), Electric Vehicle Charging Stations (continue), Master Plan Implementation and Planning, Solar Assessment on Public Property, and Complete Streets Grant Application.

Online Resident Survey

Last week, we published the online resident survey and promoted it through the website and social media. The survey will be available for residents to complete for the month of December. The idea is to use the feedback we receive from the survey to help shape our goals and priorities for the coming fiscal year. Thus far, there have been over 100 responses to the survey.

Meeting of the Joint Town-School Budget Committee

The Joint Town-School Budget Committee meeting met for the first time this week. This group will now take the place of the Dunstable Working Group that was formed several months ago. It was a very productive meeting with the Town of Groton and School officials. Our next planned meeting is December 18. One item discussed was the desire of the Town of Groton to have both Towns have a Special Election on April 2 to fund an override. This will mean the Town's budget will need to be finalized by the end of January/early February at the latest.

Volunteer Appreciation Night

Volunteer Appreciation Night was a huge success with a great turnout. Thanks to Sue Fayne for organizing the event. If you want to check out pictures of the event visit the Town website at <https://www.dunstable-ma.gov/home/pages/volunteer-appreciation-night-photos>.

Woodward's Mill Dam – Phase II Assessment

The CPC funded the Phase II Assessment of Woodward's Mill Dam. Hoyle Tanner has contracted with a subconsultant, Stephens Associates, to perform much of this work. To evaluate the integrity and condition of the dam, ideally the pond would be dewatered and, unfortunately, the gate valve is stuck

and won't open to drain the pond. Because of this, we have been considering alternatives which included using in-house pumps and siphoning the water out using fire hose, neither of which appear to be viable. We are close to losing the season at this point, so we are moving forward with Spencer Associates attempting to inspect the dam without dewatering the pond and hoping are able to collect sufficient information and evidence to determine its condition and make recommendations on repairs needed. Unless a proper inspection of the dam can happen without dewatering the pond, which may be possible, we are likely talking about adding cost to the project because of the need to rent pumps.

Bandstand Repairs

The repairs to the bandstand are complete. The only change to the scope of work was the decision not to replace the crown molding – turned out it was in better condition than we thought. Because of this, the project cost was slightly lower than the original estimate at \$38,500. This still leaves a balance of funds in the amount of approximately \$30,000 that we can use to support additional improvements to the bandstand. The funds are available through FY26, so we have plenty of time to plan for bidding additional repairs next Spring.

Union Building Reuse Update

The Union Building Reuse Feasibility Study and Restoration Planning continues. The Union Building Rehabilitation Committee hosted a successful kickoff meeting and are planning to publish a survey shortly to seek additional feedback from the community on preferred reuse options.

New Library Director

The Library Trustees have hired a new Library Director, Dunstable resident, Maureen Strauss. We are now working with the Trustees and the current Library Director to assist with onboarding and her transition to her new role.

Economic Development Committee and Land Use Committee Volunteer Openings

We've received residents interested in serving on both the Economic Development and Land Use Committees but still need more volunteers to fill out both Committees. If people are interested, they should send an email to select-board@dunstable-ma.gov and jsilva@dunstable-ma.gov.

Tom Bacon and Peggy Lynch Donation

I want to acknowledge Tom Bacon for donating his time to paint the fascia and trim on the roof line of the mechanical room at Town Hall. Peggy Lynch also decorated the tree and bandstand this year and it looks terrific. A big thank you to both Tom and Peggy!

Patriot Regional Emergency Communications Center

Following the Town of Dunstable's vote to join the Patriot RECC, the Town of Groton voted this week to join the RECC. Now, the Towns will need to sign a modified IMA between the member communities and the Select Boards in current member communities will need to approve both Dunstable and Groton joining the RECC. Following this, we will need to appoint members to the Board of Directors – as it is currently comprised each member has three representatives.

Annual Audit

The Town's annual audit began this week. We believe it will be wrapped up by the end of next week.

Community Compact Information Technology grant program

The Town of Dunstable was awarded \$29,979 through the Community Compact Information Technology grant program for disaster recovery and server replacement. I have submitted the necessary grant paperwork and expect to receive the funding in no later than 45 days. The grant will allow the Town to replace servers at both Town Hall and the Police Department and will also have access to virtual backup recovery in case of a disaster. The existing Town Hall server is planned to be relocated to the Police Department as a backup.

Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee Meeting – December 13 at 7 PM

I've been asked to join Groton's Town Manager at the GDRSD School Committee meeting on December 13 as the School Committee plans to review and consider the use of some portion of Excess and Deficiency to support the FY25 school budget. As you know, the school's initial budget proposal removed all use of E and D to balance their budget. This year, the school had E and D certified at approximately \$1.4 million.