



Town of Wenham

Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator Memorandum

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Anthony M. Ansaldi, Jr., Town Administrator
DATE: November 5, 2019
RE: Town Administrator Report

Department of Public Works

With loose leaf pickup beginning on November 12th, the DPW is busy preparing all of the equipment for this operation. In addition, they continue to pick up storm debris from the wind storm on October 17th, as well as, mow since the grass continues to grow. They expect to finish some paving projects as well as rebuild the sidewalk near the Buker School.

Fire Department

The Fire Department has four recruits that started the Fire Academy on November 3, 2019 which will run until February 25, 2020. In order to train the recruits in pump operations, the department will be sending an engine to Hamilton on November 9th and 23rd from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm. The department is also working on having the station ready for Veterans Day, November 11th, for the Remembrance Ceremony at the Veterans Memorial.

Police Department

The Police Department has begun its annual recertification training this month with each officer spending a week at the police academy. This takes several months to complete but is mandatory training. Additionally, new reserve officers have been signed up to participate in MIIA EVOC training (emergency vehicle operators course). Chief Perkins and Captain DiNapoli will be taking a legal update class this month, also sponsored by MIIA. The Department also remains busy in the areas of investigations and court proceedings.

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk has been the project manager for the Town Bylaw Codification Project and is happy to report that it is back in the hands of General Code. Annually, the Town Clerk has the students of the Buker School select the dog tag shape for the next calendar year, and this year a paw was selected. Current dog owners will receive a registration reminder in November with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) flyer about dog waste.

Council on Aging

The November 2019 issue of the Wenhamite is out! On Friday, October 25th, State Representative Brad Hill entertained a group of 12 residents from Wenham who received a 1st class tour of the State House and lunch in the State House dining room. Our director is working diligently on compiling usage data for Formula Grant and next year's budget. Our DPW team was recently recognized for helping offload the raw materials – pinto beans, dehydrated vegetables, rice and vitamin packs, from an 18 wheeler at Christ Church of Hamilton & Wenham on Asbury Street and sealing the food bags for village in Haiti. The DPW volunteered and came back on Saturday and reloaded 51,800 meals. The shipment is currently held up in port waiting to be released to Haiti once the political unrest settles down and the shipment is cleared. Many thanks to the Town of Wenham for their help with this epic event.

Finance Department

We are very excited that Sherrie LeBlanc will be joining the finance team as the Assistant Treasurer/Collector, Payroll and Benefits Coordinator. Sherrie comes to us with approximately 10 years' municipal experience, most recently for the Town of North Andover and a wealth of experience. The second quarter real estate taxes were due on November 1st. We have collected about 90% of Q1 & Q2 taxes through 11/4/19 but still have approximately 150 unpaid invoices totaling about \$450,000. Department Budgets have been submitted and our budget team will begin to review with department heads. The MA Dept. of Revenue (DOR) has also certified free cash at approximately \$954K.

Assessing Department

Several forms relative to the approval of a tax rate for the Town have been submitted and approved by the DOR. One of the forms approved was the LA13, which includes approved "new growth" of over \$12,500,000. We remain on schedule for our Classification Hearing with the BOS on 11/19. Several new \$1m+ homes are nearing completion at Spring Hill (off Dodges Row). MLS lists 10 sales of Wenham real estate for October, eight single family homes, two condos. The price range of the ten sales was \$420,000 to \$1,400,000. Setting the tax rate remains their top priority.

Hamilton/Wenham Public Library

The fall has been a busy season at the Library. The ARIS (Annual Report Information Survey) and Financial Report have both been submitted to the State and we are on track to receive our full state aid grant award. A new phone system was installed at the end of August to replace the near twenty-year old system – both staff and patrons are adjusting very well. Our new logo design was completed and can now be seen on our website, social media channels, name tags, and signage. We held a ½ day staff training day in September where staff learned techniques to assist patrons on the autism spectrum. The Friends of the Library had a very successful fall book sale raising over \$7,000 for library programs, museum passes and technology. Their annual membership month mailing will be going out in December and all residents should be receiving a flier in their mailboxes. Finally, we were able remain open during the October power outage, and we saw over 1,600 patrons through the doors in three days (we average about 950 people in a three-day span). We were able to provide a warm space with access to charging for phones and devices, internet access, and a safe space for

residents and families to be while waiting for their power to come back on. We truly were a two town community resource during this emergency.

Board of Health, Permitting, Community Preservation, Special Projects

The BOH held a Flu Clinic in October which went very well. An After Action Report on the Emergency Dispensing Site Drill is being finalized and will be provided to the TA, Police, Fire, and Regional Health Coalition. We have also held a smaller clinic at Town Hall for staff.

We were happy to welcome Angelo Salamone to the Permitting Office in October 2019. The Building Department is keeping busy with smaller projects, several rebuilds of single family homes, and the developments on 1A and Dodges Row. We've finalized the records conversion for the new e-permitting software. We will continue providing training to the inspectors and are getting caught up with data entry for 2019 in the office. We announce a date for the citizen's portal launch in the coming weeks.

The CPC held their annual public hearing last night. They have begun working on an update to the Preservation Plan, which is CPC's governing document and was last updated in 2005. The CPC's deadline for Annual Town Meeting 2020 is Monday, January 6, 2020 at 4:30 pm in the Permitting Office. Questions can be directed to Jackie Bresnahan at jbresnahan@wenhamma.gov.

The Citizens Leadership Academy is on Day 8 this week and will be having presentations from our Veterans Agent Karen Tyler, Town Clerk Dianne Bucco, and Town Moderator Trudy Reid, and Jackie Bresnahan will be conducting the Mock Town Meeting Warrant Hearing in preparation for the final week's Mock Town Meeting.

Recreation

The Recreation Department will be holding our first annual Flashlight Candy Cane Hunt on Friday, December 13th. The event starts at 6pm and Pre-Registrations is required by Monday, December 9th. Folks can register on our website www.hwrecreation.com. The damaged fence from the rain/wind storm at the Pingree Park Playground was fixed yesterday, this was partially funded through an insurance claim to MIA. The Recreation Department Winter Brochure will be released electronically next week; the hard copies will be available the following week. Registration for our winter programs will begin on Monday, December 2nd.

Land Use Department

We are working on a grant proposal for our MVP Hazard Mitigation Plan Action Items. Weston and Sampson are working with us to apply to the State for funds to 1. Update all of the Bylaws/ General and Zoning and Rules and Regs/ Water Resources Bylaw to bring all regulations into compliance with state regs and best practices for sustainability and ensure compatibility throughout. We anticipate that these will be ready for adoption at the 2021 Town meeting.

Planning Board recently approved a preliminary subdivision plan for 51 Cherry Street. The plan shows 2 additional single family house lots being serviced by a 20-foot-wide dirt road. The plan was reviewed preliminarily by the Town's departments and certain revisions were made that showed the required frontage for each lot on the roadway after construction. This is a preliminary subdivision and does not give approval for the construction. The owners will be required to submit more

detailed plans in a definitive subdivision filing. I am attaching the Planning Board's decision on the Preliminary Plan.

Planning Board will be holding the annual Scenic Roads Street Tree public hearing on November 14. There are 12 trees identified for removal this year. I am attaching that list. The Planning Board will go out and inspect each tree and report at their hearing on the appropriateness of removal. All of these trees have been recommended for removal by the Tree Warden.

ZBA is scheduled to meet again on November 18. The only hearing currently scheduled is the continuance of the 35 Arbor Street hearing on the Agricultural exemption for that property. Town Counsel Robin Stein has been involved as this original case was appealed and remanded back to the ZBA. The owners Allyson and David Standley are claiming an agricultural exemption from zoning under MGL chapter 40A Sec 3.

ZBA has not received any application from Harborlight or any direction from the court on the Maplewoods project.

Conservation/Open Space

Missy has been working with volunteers to identify and map walking trails throughout the Town as part of the new Open Space and Recreation Plan action items.