

# Town Manager Report


Town of Lunenburg- November 2, 2021





## Contact Information

 Facebook

 17 Main Street, Lunenburg, MA,...

 [hlemieux@lunenburgonline.com](mailto:hlemieux@lunenburgonline.com)

 978-582-4130

 [lunenburgma.gov](http://lunenburgma.gov)

## Announcement on Existing Vacancies:

The following is a list of current vacancies on the following committees:

- Architectural Preservation District Commission (2 vacancies, one citizen at large and one representative from Historical Commission)
- Commissioner of Trust Funds (2 vacancies-joint appointment between CTF and BOS until next ATE)
- Economic Development Committee (1 person recommended by the Open Space Committee, 1 citizen at large, and 1 ex-officio member that is business owner)
- Green Communities Committee (1 regular member vacancy and 2 Associate vacancies)
- Zoning Board of Appeals ( 1 Associate vacancy)

Interested persons can find application forms on the Town Website and completed forms can be sent to the Select Board's Office.

## Current Employment Opportunities with the Town:

The following is a list of current employment opportunities with the Town:

- Assistant Accountant (Part Time Benefitted)
- Digital Services Staff Librarian (Part Time Benefitted)

- Assistant to the Sewer Business Manager (Part Time)
- Public Access Videographers (Part Time Non-Benefitted)

More information on each position can be found on the job postings, which are located on the town website.

## Grants:

The Fire Chief received the EMPG (Emergency Management Planning Grant) and the Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant. The EMPG grant is for \$3,500 and this will be used to purchase Specialized Rescue Equipment. The Firefighter Safety Grant is for \$15,000 and can be used for turnout gear.

## COVID-19 Update:

The weekly update from the Board of Health on the total number of new cases reported as of October 23rd was 54. The current positivity rate for Lunenburg as of October 23rd was 5.76%.

## Unitil Rate Increase

The DPU has approved Unitil's revised submittal for a winter rate increase of 15.6 cents per kWh and a deferred 4.3 cents per kWh to the summer rate increase. There is a pending submittal by Unitil to decrease the "Basic Service Costs Adder", which would bring the Basic Supply Winter Rate to 15.2 cents per kWh for Residential and Small Commercial customers. A mailer will be sent out to over 900 customers that are currently not enrolled in the Municipal Aggregation Program to notify them they can opt in at any time at a electricity supply rate of 11.2 cents per kWh.

## Space at TC Passios


I have been working with resident Pam Porter about use of a classroom at the TC Passios for a Prom Dress and Coat Drive. There were a number of logistics to work out, including locating an appropriate space, as there are a number of unoccupied but unusable spaces at the TCP and access to the space. I had previously been asked at a meeting to estimate how much space is being used there and guesstimated 80%. With all the unusable space, this figure is closer to 97%. We have ironed out all the details for her to use Room #8 at the TCP until around April. Ms. Porter already has 180 prom dresses that have been donated, that girls can go and try on at the TCP. She is also accepting donations for coats as well.

I'm glad we could identify an appropriate space for this donation drive, as this will be greatly beneficial to our community.

I also want to remind everyone that there is no appropriation for this building. The more users we add, without any revenue to support operating costs, the greater risk we run that there will be a deficit. This will be something that between the Finance Director and I will need to be monitored and possibly addressed in the FY23 budget process.

## Department Head Updates:


- DPW: The DPW is preparing for snow season. The Pleasant Street Bridge project is fully complete. The Town is waiting on the Small Bridge Program application to open to apply for additional



funding needed for this project. The MassDOT has done regular inspections on the culvert and there have been no new changes. The Mass Ave Bridge project through MassDOT should be reopening to two lanes by November. The Complete Streets project is wrapping up with the line striping remaining. The Sewer Commission is currently surveying residents on Upland Eastern Avenue and Maple Avenue on the feasibility to install sewer on those roads. The Director is waiting on a proposal from consultants for the cost to do the preliminary project design. The Facilities department is catching up on outstanding items now that the Facilities Technician position has been filled. The DPW is seeing supply issues such as not being able to get prices on trucks and the delivery of the new plow truck is 6-8 months out. McCarty Engineering is modifying their original concept for addressing drainage complaints on Flat Hill Road by connecting to the existing drainage and infiltrate as much as possible on that road with the existing infrastructure as possible. Soil testing for this project is estimated to occur this week.

- Land Use: 711 Mass Avenue received approval for four 2 unit townhouses from the Planning Board. 101 Pleasant Street is downsizing their submittal from six duplex buildings to 3 units. Things are moving along for the Lunenburg Central project on Leominster Shirley Road. The traffic consultant review recommended widening the road at the entrance by 4-5' to accommodate cyclists. The easement description would stay the same but may be a paved area instead of grass. The plan includes clearing all the vegetation alongside road and at the corner of Reservoir Road, as well as installing driver feedback signs as drivers approach that corner at the applicants cost. The overall plan includes 600' of frontage area that will repaved.
- Public Access: The public access staff has been busy doing segments with the Eagle House, covering football games, and doing a feature on the Fire and Police staff. Public Access was encountering server issues at the Town Hall that were fixed.
- Treasurer/Collector: Second quarter taxes are due November 1st. The Treasurer/Collector anticipates doing a tax lien sale in February and liens that are not sold will be moved through the foreclosure process. The Treasurer/Collector is still working on the tailings process with uncashed checks, as this is a multi-year process.
- Finance Director: The Finance Director is working on the tax recap materials with the Principal Assessor in order to submit after town meeting. Based on the current draft, since the property values have increased, the tax rate is expected to go down. The Finance Director also submitted the CARES Act report that was due by the end of October.
- Town Clerk: November 5th is the last day to register to vote for the November 16th Special Town meeting. The Town Clerk's Office will be open on Friday, November 5th from 9 am until 8 pm. If there were to be a ballot vote related to the debt exclusion article on the STM, the special election would have to be held on or before February 14th.
- COA: The COA has continued to offer a variety of programs such as the Sherriff's Office educating seniors about scams, a craft class, armchair travel to Chine, and Coffee with the Police Chief. The recent Tea Party event raised \$3,000.
- Police: The two cruisers on the FY22 Capital Plan have been ordered but will be 6-7 months before they are delivered. Two officers will be attending the academy this year, one entering in December and one entering in January. The department has been busy with traffic issues, will be conducting active shooter training with town offices after they complete the training with the schools. The PD will be doing resiliency training for staff the week of November 1st.
- Fire: The FD is also seeing supply chain issues, specifically with purchasing turnout gear. The main supplier was recently bought out and there is a delay in getting this equipment.

## Meetings, Events and Other Announcements:

- Yard Waste Days at the old landfill off of Youngs Road are November 6th, 12th and 20th from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m.
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- The last day to register to vote for the fall Special Town Meeting will be Friday, November 5th. The Town Clerk's Office will be open 9 AM until 8 PM. The Special Town Meeting is Tuesday, November 16, 2021 at 7 PM at the MS/HS Auditorium.

