

Town Manager Report


Town of Lunenburg- September 14, 2021





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Announcement on Existing Vacancies:

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

- Architectural Preservation District Commission (2 vacancies-1 citizen at large and 1 representative from Historical Commission)
- Bylaw Review Committee (1 vacancy)
- Capital Planning Committee (1 vacancy for Citizen At Large appointed by Town Moderator)
- 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)
- Senior Work Off Program Committee (1 vacancy)
- 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:

- Board/Committee Clerk (Part Time Non-Benefitted)
- Digital Services Staff Librarian (Part Time Benefitted)
- Assistant to the Sewer Business Manager (Part Time Non-Benefitted)
- Seasonal Cemetery Laborer (1)
- Public Access Videographer (Part Time Non-Benefitted)

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

671 West Street-Disposition of Parcel 7 (New Business):

As a follow-up to the last meeting and discussion on getting input from the Open Space Committee prior to re-bidding the disposition of parcel 7 of 671 West Street, I reached out to the Open Space Committee Chairman. The Chairman responded that the committee is aware of the prior town meeting vote that authorized conveyances to abutters and the committee has supported the idea of the town continuing to pursue conveyances of the parcels that were authorized by the prior town meeting vote until (and if) a new town meeting vote authorizes a change in the care and control of that land to a permanent open space purpose. The Committee has also discussed making sure that any such town meeting authorization to change in the care and control in the larger parcel would give abutters one final chance to acquire a portion of the parcel under the prior authorization if the Select Board did agree to allow the Town to vote on conveying this property to Open Space given the implications.

DPW Updates:

- Line Striping: The line striping contractor had to push this from Sunday, September 12th to Tuesday, September 14th.
- Follow-up with MassDOT: The DPW Director followed up with MassDOT about the road markings on Mass Ave and the Right Hand Turn Lane into Lunenburg Crossing after the September 7th meeting. MassDOT will be scheduling to have the current markings restriped and expect that work to be completed fairly quickly. In regards to the Right Hand Turn Lane, they conducted the analysis at the Route 2A/Electric Ave/Lunenburg Crossing driveway with a left turn lane, a through lane, and a right turn lane on the Route 2A WB approach and found acceptable operations. However, it is not an easy striping fix as the outside lane currently accommodates the free right turn from Chase Road. Given this complexity, this change would require a review of the operations of both Route 2A/Electric Ave/Lunenburg Crossing and Route 2A/Chase Road intersections, as well as the segment of Route 2A between the two intersections. This review requires additional data collection, which they can schedule now that traffic volumes seem to be closer to normal, but will take some time. MassDOT also said they will be removing the conflicting right turn only sign.

Information Technology updates:

- Remote Meeting Coordinator: The Remote Meeting Coordinator position will be filled by Heidi Spinney and this transition will begin this Thursday. An email will be sent out to all staff and board/committee members to notify them of who to contact to schedule Zoom meetings.
- IT Assessment: With the departure of the IT Director, I have engaged an IT consultant to come in to provide an assessment of our IT needs. This assessment will audit our core IT infrastructure, storage of data, and capital needs. This transition will also provide an opportunity to engage with a company that specializes in security assessments and a Cyber Security Posture Review.

Another component of the assessment will be the Town's phone system that was installed around 2010. I plan on having a further update next week.

Records Management:

I have engaged a consultant to come in to assess the status of our records management. This company, King Information Systems, has been in business since 1972 and has provided records management services to approximately 160 communities. Yesterday I went around with a representative to all our town buildings and meet with staff to conduct a preliminary assessment. The next step will involve the company spending 3-4 days performing a complete assessment of all our records and submitting a written report on creating a new records management system. Typically towns that implement a records management plan will eliminate up to 30% of their current records due to duplication and will catalogue all archived records for retrieval and timely disposition according to the State's Retention Schedule. This will also ensure that we utilize the appropriate amount of space for records that we are required to keep until they can be disposed of. We should have a cost estimate for this in time for the FY23 capital planning process.

Home Rule Petitions for Library Trust Funds:

Representative Kushmerek notified me last week that the bill to authorize the Library Board of Trustees to invest the library trust funds has moved to the third reading.

Authorized Change to Assessors Records on 26 Sunset Lane:

Another parcel has been corrected in the Assessors records based on the relevant town meeting and deed information. 26 Sunset Lane was identified as "Owner Unknown" under the care and custody of the Select Board but in fact is part of the bigger parcel of the Robbs Hill Conservation property. This has been now changed from "Owner Unknown" to "Town of Lunenburg/Conservation".

New Growth:

The Assessors Office has submitted the required forms to the Department of Revenue to certify New Growth. The New Growth figure submitted was \$430,254, which is \$149,664 more than the ATM estimate for New Growth. This will eliminate the deficit of \$126,551 that was due to the final State Aid figures that was due to an increase in School Choice and Charter Assessments to the State.

Participation in LHS Civics Class Discussion:

Annually I have attended Ms. Foyle's Civics Classroom Discussion related to their Community Service Learning projects. This is an opportunity to speak with students about current issues within the community and I will be participating again this year.

State Budget and Legislative Updates:

At a Town Administrators Association Meeting last week we heard updates from the new MMA Legislative Director David Koffman and Legislative Analyst Jackie Lavender Bird on the following:

- The State closed out the FY21 State budget with a \$4B surplus, largely due to actual tax collections exceeding estimates. The Governor has filed a Supplemental Budget Bill that includes using these funds to replenish the State's Stabilization Fund that originally was going to be drawn down and to support the Unemployment Fund. MMA has asked that the Supplemental Budget also include an additional \$200M for Chapter 90 funding.
- The State will be receiving \$5.3B in ARPA funding. The Governor has issues a short term proposal for \$2.9B of these funds to be used on housing, water and sewer infrastructure, economic development, and environmental funding. The State is currently discussing the proposal. It was noted that given the ARPA funding that is proposed to be spent on water and sewer infrastructure and environmental programs, there is a high likelihood that there will be matching funds from the State on various programs that Towns would be eligible and we should be flexible in how we in turn use our ARPA funding.
- In terms of current bills before the legislature, the State is in the midst of the redistricting process, debating the Votes Act (same day voter registration), there are several bills that could affect Host Community Agreements with Cannabis retailers, and a Sports Betting Bill.

COVID-19 Update:

The weekly update from the Board of Health on the total number of new cases reported between August 22nd and September 4th was 60. The prior two week period had a total number of 38 new cases. The current positivity rate for Lunenburg as of September 4th was 7.15%.

Meetings, Events and Other Announcements:

- The Lunenburg Farmers Market is being held on the Ritter lawn every Sunday until October 10th, 10 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.
- The fall Special Town Meeting will be Tuesday, November 16, 2021 at 7 p.m. Warrant articles can be submitted to the Town Manager's Office until Tuesday, September 28th at 5 p.m.