

Town Manager Report

Town of Lunenburg- July 13, 2021



Contact Information

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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)
- Board of Assessors (1 vacancy-joint appointments between BOA and BOS until next ATE)
- Bylaw Review Committee (1 vacancy)
- 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)
- Housing Authority (1 position to be held by a tenant at Pearl Brook Apartments)
- 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.

Update on Bright Farms Development Project:

Earlier this month I learned that Bright Farms has decided to not purchase the property at 351 Mass Avenue where they were going to build a major greenhouse. After speaking with Sean O'Neill, the project developer from Bright Farms, he relayed to me that as part of a "bottom-up review of all their operations, corporate wanted to serve New England from another site". He said this had to do "with efficiencies with other greenhouses owned by Bright Farms" and had nothing to do with what the Town did or did not do. He expressed that the Town was terrific to deal with from town officials down to the owner of 351 Mass Avenue, Steve Powell, and although he couldn't disclose the other site that was chosen, once it was known it would make sense to us why this decision was made.

I know that many, like myself, will be disappointed by this news. Many of us spent a lot of time and energy to promote the passage of the TIF agreement and how bringing a business like Bright Farms into Lunenburg would promote economic development with little impact on town services. However, given the reasons that were relayed on why another site was chosen, it is understandable from a business perspective and there was nothing more we as a Town could have done to prevent this.

Resignation of Veterans Agent:

The Veterans Agent notified our office that he will be resigning from his position as of August 31, 2021. The Assistant Town Manager/HR Director will be posting this position this week and reaching out to other local Veterans Agents to see if they would be interested in applying.

Curbside Collection of Trash and Recycling and PAYT Bags:

We are aware of a few issues that have occurred in the first two weeks of EL Harvey taking over collection of curbside trash and recycling, including missed recycling pick-ups and three streets that were not on the collection route that Casella provided and had verified prior to switching companies. Our office is addressing these issues with EL Harvey as soon as we are made aware of them and ask for everyone's patience as these are worked out with the new company.

We were also notified that retailers were out of PAYT bags this week but after talking to the bag vendor and after the DPW Administrative Assistant spoke with all the retailers, there were still bags available at stores. Hannaford, who had been put on automatic delivery a while back, recently took themselves off automatic delivery but this has been corrected. We have also added the Gulf Station on Mass Avenue as another retailer to the list of retailers where bags are available.

Invitation for Bids:

The Assistant Town Manager assisted the Land Use Director in putting together an Invitation for Bids for Master Planning Services. This is currently being advertised and bids are due August 12th.

DPW Updates:

- The Recreation Director notified our office recently that she was going to be out on extended leave. The Assistant Town Manager is currently advertising for a Temporary Recreation Director but in the interim the DPW Director and DPW Administrative Assistant have assumed the coordination and oversight of the remaining programs that are being held at the TC Passios building. Currently there is a "Ninja Warrior" camp this week and next week and a Multi Sport program the week of July 26th and August 9th. There will be no other programs offered at this time.

- **Complete Streets:** The contractor for the Complete Streets project was mobilizing onsite today to get the sidewalk project underway. They will be keeping some smaller equipment on Memorial Drive overnight while they are working. Work will begin on Memorial Drive starting tomorrow and they will be able to work around the parking spots along Memorial Drive without having people to park elsewhere.
- **Line Painting:** The DPW Director is currently working on scheduling certain newly paved roads and certain other roads that are not lined, to be striped as soon as feasible.
- **Chase Road Speeding and Excessive Noise Complaint:** The Town received a complaint from a resident on Chase Road that had previously met with the DPW, Police Department and former Representative Benson about the speeding and excessive noise on that road and requested we request the State to address these issues. The DPW Director, Police Chief and I are meeting tomorrow and will be attempting to set up a meeting with the State regarding this at a later date.

Repairs at Town Facilities:

- The decking on the front entryway at Town Hall is currently being replaced in order to address the poor condition the decking boards were in. This will be completed shortly.
- The Facilities Director coordinated with the Fire Department to use the Ladder Truck to take pictures of the exterior of the Town Hall Clock Tower. A site visit is scheduled for this Friday for the engineer and structural engineer to inspect the interior of the tower as well.
- We are currently looking at cleaning up all the wiring in the Town Hall basement. This is a large and tedious project, as there will be a significant amount of troubleshooting where old wiring goes, working with IT and PACC on wiring to all the related equipment in the building, and cleaning up the vast amount of old wiring that is no longer functional. This will likely be done in phases to address the most imminent wiring needs first.
- The Facilities Director is currently in the process of having the USB Battery Backup at the Public Safety Building replaced, having a contractor address the dumpster enclosures at the Library and Public Safety Building, and trying to address rebuilding the front doors at the Library.

FY22 State Budget Updates:

- Representative Kushmerek let us know that \$40,000 for LED lights at the Library made it through the Senate and House Conference Committee and into the FY22 state budget report. The FY22 State budget is currently awaiting signoff by the Governor.
- DLS released the preliminary State Aid figures based on the Conference Committee's budget that was sent to the Governor to be signed and the overall impact to Lunenburg would be approximately \$100,000 less in State Aid than the estimate in the FY 2022 budget.

American Rescue Plan Act Funds:

The Finance Director reported to me on June 29th that we received our 50% disbursement of American Rescue Plan Act funds (aka Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds) totaling \$614,195 on June 22nd.

Update on Flat Hill Drainage Issue:

After significant discussion between the DPW Director and the two residents on Flat Hill Road regarding their drainage concerns surrounding their properties, the DPW Director is going to look at another alternative with McCarty Engineering. Once this alternative is ready to present, the DPW Director will present this option to the Select Board and the residents will be invited to attend as well.

Meetings, Events and Other Announcements:

- Lunenburg Farmers Market on the Ritter Lawn is being held Sundays until October 10th 10 a.m. until 12:30p.m.
- Summer Band Concerts have begun and are on Monday evenings at 7 p.m. until August 9th (with a rain date of an additional Monday on August 16th) and will be outside the front entrance of the TCP Building.