

Town Manager Report


Town of Lunenburg- December 1, 2020





Contact Information

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Announcement on Existing Vacancies:

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

- Architectural Preservation District Commission (1 vacancy)
- Cultural Council (1 vacancy)
- Finance Committee (1 vacancy)
- Historical Commission (1 vacancy)
- TCP Building Design Committee (1 vacancy appointed by Select Board and Town Moderator for member at large)
- 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.

MIIA Risk Management Grant:

Chief Gammel submitted a Risk Management Grant through our insurance company MIIA and was notified of an award of approximately \$8,000 towards an upgrade to the software that the Police Department uses to store and maintain recordings and additional cameras for the evidence room and evidence entry.

Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Local Enforcement Grant:

Chief Gammel received notification on Monday, November 23rd that his application for funding for Body Worn Cameras was approved in the amount of \$36,404.50. The Chief has already worked with the union to implement a policy regarding the use of Body Worn Cameras and will review the policy if any changes are needed once the cameras are implemented.

Click It or Ticket Grant

Chief Gammel received notification that the application for the Click It or Ticket Grant was awarded to the Town again this year in the amount of \$9,800.

Donation for Remote Technology Equipment:

The Town received a gift donation of \$10,000 from Mr. Richard and Mary Ellen Letarte to be used to purchase remote learning devices for Lunenburg students. The School was informed and will be using this donation towards purchasing new Chromebooks. We are very gracious to the Letartes for this generous donation.

Update on Local Incentives Tax Increment Financing Agreement with Bright Farms:

Subsequent to the town meeting vote on November 17, 2020 I contacted the MA Office of Business Development to find out what the next steps would be under the Local Incentives Only Project per the Economic Development Incentive Program. Bright Farms will be put on the March Economic Assistance Coordinating Council meeting agenda for their Local Incentives Only Application. Thus far I have provided them the necessary documents they will need to accompany the application, including a certified copy of the town meeting vote and a completed valuation worksheet that they provided with the 8 year tax exemption amounts displaying the maximum allowed exemption of \$996,600. Once the TIF agreement is fully signed off by MA Greenhouse. LLC, this will also be forwarded to the state. In corresponding with Sean O'Neill of Bright Farms, he relayed they are finalizing the purchase of the site and the closing is expected to be in January.

Council on Aging Update:

The Council on Aging Director did an outreach effort with informational postcards about services at the Eagle House titled "You Don't Have To Go It Alone". Postcards were sent out to 2,262 homes in Lunenburg to persons 60 and older, all paid through the CARES Act funding. The Director reported that they have already received calls from people that have not been to the Eagle House before and drop-ins. Another mailing will be sent out in the spring.

Update on FY 2021 Capital Projects:

- Marked Police Cruiser: The hybrid marked cruiser that was approved at the Annual Town Meeting has been received.
- ACO Vehicle: The Trans-it Connect ACO vehicle is now at the port in Spain and expected delivery is January 2021.
- Senior Center Front Entrance Reconfiguration: This project has begun and is expected to be finished by the end of this week.
- Public Safety Carport Extension: The DPW Director, Police Chief, Fire Chief, Facilities Director and I met with the architect today to review design details that would be relevant to the specifications for this project. The specifications, drawings, and bid materials should be ready to put out to bid around February with a spring construction start.

Agricultural Preservation Restriction for Lanni Orchards:

MA Department of Agricultural Resources notified the Town in June of 2016 of their proposal to purchase an Agricultural Preservation Restriction for the farmland located at Lanni Orchards and as part of that purchase the Town puts forth a 10% local match. The Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program is a voluntary program intended to offer a non-development alternative to farmers and other owners of agricultural land who are faced with a decision regarding future use of their farms. The program offers to pay the farm owners the difference between the fair market value and agricultural value of their farmland in exchange for a permanent deed restriction which precludes any use of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability.

The Town approved appropriating \$58,000 as the 10% local match towards the purchase at the August 22, 2016 Special Town Meeting. This process is just now being finalized by the Department of Agricultural Resources, with the proposed closing on the property within the next couple of weeks. The Agricultural Preservation Restriction document is the final document that needs to be signed off by the Board.

Meetings, Events and Other Announcements:

- The Conservation Commission has a meeting through Zoom on Wednesday, December 2nd at 7 p.m.
- The School Committee has a meeting through Zoom on Wednesday, December 2nd at 7 p.m.
- The Planning Board has a meeting through Zoom on Monday, December 7th at 6:30 p.m.
- The Capital Planning Committee has a meeting through Zoom on Tuesday, December 8th at 5:15 p.m.