

Town Manager Report


Town of Lunenburg-July 7, 2020





Contact Information

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Announcement on Existing Vacancies:

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

- Agricultural Commission (2 alternate vacancies)
- Americans with Disabilities Act Commission (1 vacancy)
- Architectural Preservation District Commission (2 vacancies)
- Board of Health (1 vacancy)
- Fence Viewers (vacancies)
- Finance Committee (2 vacancies appointed by the Finance Committee Appointing Committee)
- Historical Commission (1 vacancy)
- Open Space Committee (1 vacancy-citizen at large)
- Personnel Committee (1 vacancy)
- Senior Center Property Tax Work Off Committee (1 vacancy)
- Zoning Board of Appeals (2 Associate vacancies)

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

Fuel Tank Update:

The Conservation Commission approved the Notice of Intent for the installation of new above ground fuel tanks located at the DPW at their meeting on July 1st. The project engineer will now move forward to putting the bid package together for the project to go out to bid. I will update the Board when the advertisement date is known.

Saliba Property Acquisition and Submittal of PARC and LAND Grant documents:

The last few weeks I have worked with Town Counsel, Open Space Chairman Brandon Kibbe, the Conservation Administrator Matt Marro, the Finance Director Karen Brochu, the DPW (for the installation of the parking lot), and the Chairman of the Board to ensure we had everything lined up for the closing of the Saliba property at 994 Northfield Road on June 24th and in order to submit a reimbursement request by June 30th. Subsequent to the closing there was a significant amount of coordination to put together the reimbursement submission for the \$400,000 LAND Grant and the \$100,000 PARC Grant by June 30th. I submitted all the required documents on June 26th and received confirmation of receipt by the Grant Programs Supervisors at the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs shortly thereafter. Thank you to all parties involved in order to finalize the acquisition and reimbursement request.

17 and 23 West Street Disposal:

Mead, Talerman, and Costa handled the closing for the property at 17 and 23 West Street on June 24th and the Town received the funds on June 26th. This additional revenue will positively impact our certified Free Cash this coming fall.

Updates from Town's Workers Compensation, Liability, Property and Health Insurance Company:

The Town's insurance company, Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA), has provided the Town with financial relief during FY21 in two significant ways. Our FY21 payment for Workers Compensation, Liability and Property Insurance is normally due at the beginning of July in order to receive a 3% discount and they have extended this deadline until September 15th to provide for more flexibility to towns. Another significant decision by the MIIA Health Trust Board of Directors was to approve a relief package designed to assist its members by releasing a total of \$25 million of reserves back to the membership in the form of a premium holiday for the July Health Insurance premiums. This means that the July, 2020 medical premiums for all HMO and PPO plans will be reduced by 50%. This affects both employees and the Town positively, as employees only had to pay 50% of their health insurance premium for the month of July and the Town and School will have to pay 50% less for the premiums that are due in July. This equates to approximately \$50,000 savings on the Town side and \$118,000 on the School side. We will reserve this money as surplus funds that can be reduced or reallocated at the fall Special Town Meeting.

We also received participation and dividend credits from MIIA totaling \$16,778 that will go towards reducing our FY 2021 insurance payment.

FY21 Budget Updates:

- The legislature passed a compromised Chapter 90 bill for municipal road and bridges totaling \$200 million. Lunenburg's apportionment for Fiscal Year 2021 is \$415,929. This past fiscal year

our apportionment began at \$414,649 and then was increased to \$456,114 due to a supplemental budget that added \$20 million in Chapter 90 funds in January of 2020.

- On June 26th Governor Baker signed a \$5.25 billion interim budget for Fiscal Year 2021 that will allow the state to pay its bills beginning July 1st in the absence of a final appropriations bill. The interim state budget will fund local aid payments based on the Fiscal Year 2020 Cherry Sheet estimates for the month of July unless a final state budget is approved.
- On today's weekly call with the Lieutenant Governor, it was relayed they will be focusing heavily over the next couple of weeks on the FY 2021 budget and will have more information on incoming revenues by the end of the month, as well as having our US Senators and Representatives actively trying to create more flexibility with federal relief packages to cities and towns.

925 Mass Ave

The firm that is conducting the Phase II site assessment of 925 Mass Avenue submitted the Quality Assurance Project Plan in April as required to the EPA. This is a written document that outlines the procedures a monitoring project will use to ensure the data it collects and analyzes meets project requirements. The EPA responded today that they will be approving the Quality Assurance Project Plan. I will have further updates after the Montachusett Brownfields Group Meeting scheduled for July 16th.

Police Chief Position:

Due to Chief Marino's retirement on July 31st, the Police Chief position has been posted and we will be accepting applications until July 23rd. When conducted, the interviews will be conducted by a panel that will consist of a current Police Chief from another community, a retired Police Chief, the Fire Chief, the HR Director, and myself. I fully expect that a decision will be after Chief Marino's retirement and therefore I expect to be presenting an appointment request to the Board at an upcoming meeting for an Interim Police Chief until the position is permanently filled.

Meetings, Events and Other Announcements:

- The Finance Committee has a meeting via Zoom on Thursday, July 9th at 7 p.m.
- The Planning Board has a meeting via Zoom on Monday, July 13th at 6:30 p.m.