



## **Town Administrator's Report Select Board Meeting of December 6, 2021**

Matthew Coogan

### **Community Compact IT Grant**

I'm happy to report we successfully applied for a Community Compact IT grant of \$31,600 to set up online permitting software. There will be more information to follow, but I wanted to let you all know that we will be developing a plan and implementation timeline for calendar year 2022. We have a year to launch so that should give us time for all the departments involved to coordinate.

### **Municipal Cybersecurity Awareness Grant**

The Executive Office of Technology Services and Security is offering this grant to help local governments improve overall cybersecurity posture through end-user training, evaluation and threat simulation. We have been experiencing a recent uptick in email scams, and the phishing is becoming more sophisticated. We work with our IT consultant to ensure we are well protected; what's needed now is training to help employees better identify email scams. I'm planning on applying for this grant, due December 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **27 Main Street – Groundwater Tests**

Groundwater sampling at 27 Main Street was completed Thursday. This was the final on-site test for the environmental assessment. We will have a final report the last week of December. I will coordinate an executive session in January for Weston & Sampson to present the report to the Select Board. I will include Attorney Katie Klein from KP to discuss next steps in the potential acquisition of the parcel.

**Main Street and Washington Street (Rt. 133) Intersection** – Since the presentation at the November 8<sup>th</sup> Select Board meeting, Town Engineer Chris Olbrot has been coordinating with our engineering consultant Bayside on the next steps identified at the meeting. This includes determining whether a WB-67 truck can maneuver the roundabout as designed by Bayside, as well as putting together a scope of services for an engineer to consider a fully signalized intersection. The assigned MaDOT Project Engineer is currently reviewing the intersection, including the geometry of the roundabout design. The state is also utilizing AutoTURN software to determine the maneuverability of a WB-67 tractor trailer

through the intersection as designed by Bayside. I will share with the board the results of their analysis when available.

### **Center at 10 Elm**

The foundation work continues to progress. Fill approved by the Board of Health is being brought onsite for the foundation work and compaction is under way. Layout for the underground plumbing in the kitchen area has also started. For the Cummings House, the entire building has been wrapped in blue skin and the walls are prepared for blown-in insulation. The project was delayed for several weeks as the PBC worked with the architect and contractor on solutions to fortify the east foundation wall. The team is determining how the delays will affect the remaining concrete work heading into winter conditions.

As far as the Zone 1 Water Easement for 14 Elm Street, I worked this week to finalize the agreement. It is in the exact form as presented and approved by the Board in October. I will let you know when the easement is executed and filed at the Registry of Deeds.

### **Little Red School House**

I attended the PBC meeting on 11/23 and participated in the discussion on next steps for the Little Red School House. The Committee is working in collaboration with Laurie Rowen and the Friends of Little Red School House. The PBC has received drawings and a phased plan to complete the necessary renovations to the building. They are working with Savoie Nolan Architects to review the phases, scope, and estimated costs. The PBC anticipates submitting a CPA application for the first phase of the project focused on exterior improvements to the building in order to make it weather-tight. I will be meeting with Chair Margaret Menzer-Chow and architect Ken Savoie on reviewing the scope of work for this project based on the meeting. The CPA holds its annual Public Hearing the evening of December 14<sup>th</sup> and the next PBC meeting is scheduled for this Thursday, 12/9.

### **Finance Committee Meeting 11/30**

I attended the Finance Committee meeting last Tuesday. Finance Director Kathy Benevento provided revenue and expenditure forecasts for the upcoming FY23 budget. The Finance Committee's guidance for Department Heads is to budget within 2.5% of FY22. In addition, I will be working with the Finance Committee to put together a joint meeting with the Board of Health and the Recycling Committee to discuss trash and recycling cost as well as trash sticker prices.

We also continue to work on the FY23 to FY27 5-year capital improvement plan. It will be ready to present to the Board in January.

## **All Staff Meeting**

We held our first “All Staff” meeting this past Wednesday. It will be a regularly scheduled quarterly meeting and an opportunity for all staff members to come together for some team building, training and education, and hopefully some fun. We had 36 staff members attend. It was focused on reacquainting staff, communication, and celebrating department successes.

## **Hunting Working Group**

Based on the discussion at the November 22 Board Meeting, the Hunting Working Group will begin meeting next week. It consists of Board Members Peter Perkins and Charles Costello, my office, Chief Riter, Land Use Director Ross Povenmire, and Jessica Grigg of BTA/ Bolt.

## **Items on 12/6 Select Board Agenda**

- **Appointment of Full Time Patrol Officer Robert Smith and Reserve Officer Deven Fiandaca** – Included in the meeting agenda packet are letters of recommendation by Chief Riter to appoint Robert Smith to full-time Patrol Officer and Deven Fiandaca as Reserve Patrol Officer for the Boxford Police Department.
- **Redistricting Plan** – The Board is being asked to approve the block report, precinct map, and legal boundary descriptions as part of the decennial reprecincting and redistricting process. While Boxford’s precinct boundaries remain unchanged, the Town will be represented by a different State House of Representative district beginning in 2023. Precincts 2 and 3 will be represented by Lenny Mirra of the Essex 2<sup>nd</sup> until the next state election cycle. After that the precinct will be represented by Essex 14<sup>th</sup>, currently held by Christina Minicucci of North Andover. The Essex 18<sup>th</sup>, currently held by Tram Nguyen, will continue to represent Boxford in Precinct 1.
- **Regional School District Committee** – Included in the meeting agenda packet materials is a brief memo outlining the Tri-Town Union’s plan to create a Regional School District Committee in partnership with the Tri-Town communities to analyze and study the Tri-Town Union and consider a process for regionalizing the district.
- **Municipal Aggregation** – The Boxford Sustainability Committee has been working with the Town’s consultant Good Energy on a Municipal Aggregation Plan. The next step is to hold a public review process before the Select Board approves the plan. Upon approval, the plan heads to the MA Department of Public Utilities (DPU) for its review. The plan, as well as information on community aggregation and the process, will be available on the newly launched [project website](#). The meeting agenda packet contains an executive summary and a copy of the draft plan.
- **Participation in Statewide opioid settlements** – I recommend the Select Board vote for the Town to join the Statewide Opioid Settlements. The Settlements will help bring funding to the community and to the Commonwealth as a whole to abate the opioid crisis. A brief memo and a letter from the Office of Attorney General Maura Healey are included in the meeting agenda packet.

### **Upcoming Select Board Meeting Agenda Items**

- December 20
  - Library Update
  - Discussion on process for determining future use of 4 Middleton Road
  - Declaration of surplus
  - Municipal Aggregation and Public Comment Period
- January 3, 2022
  - DPW Update
  - Meeting with Boxford Housing Partnership
  - 2022 Select Board and Town Administrator Goals
- January 18, 2022
  - Presentation of Capital Improvement Plan
  - Municipal Aggregation Plan Public Hearing
  - Medical Response Pilot Update
  - PD Update
  - Tri Town Council Update (Tentative)

### **Proposed Meeting dates through Annual Town Meeting**

- January - 3, 18 (Tuesday), 31
- February - 15 (Tuesday), 28
- March 7 (hold), 14, 21 (hold), 28
- April 4