



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen

FROM: John C. Curran, Town Manager

CC: Susan Aker, Cathy O'Dea

SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report, June 17, 2019

DATE: June 14, 2019

Comcast Contract Negotiations

The Town will be meeting with Comcast to commence negotiations on July 21st. The current contract expires in November 2019.

Neighborhood Meetings

The Neighborhood meetings were attended by significantly fewer people than years past. These meetings were publicized in the same media venues as they have been previously and continually pushed in social media. There could be several contributing factors to the decrease in attendance. There seem to be fewer issues of concerns at this time and people seem to be satisfied. Most people can have their questions answered immediately through the Town's increased social media presence. The community presence of the Billerica Minuteman seems to have diminished significantly in the last year.

The only real issue of note was the old Ditson School. It was brought up by a handful of residences from that neighborhood. The major concern is the absence of a long range plan for the site. It was conveyed that it would be used to temporarily house the Pinehurst Fire Station. Based on the feedback, I would recommend setting up some type of forum in the fall.

We did air the meeting on facebook live and below are the statistics from that session:

- Peak Live Viewers: 18
- Average Video Watch Time 0:28
- 87% of people watching "Follow" the page
- 918 Unique Viewers
- Top Audience – Women 45 – 54
- Estimated Reach – 2,164
- 1.8K Minutes Viewed

It might be time to reassess the concept of these meetings.

Veteran Services Director

The Town is happy to announce that the new Veteran's Services Director started on June 13th. Joe Ruggiero of North Andover is coming to us from Veteran's Northeast Outreach Center of Haverhill. He served in the U.S. Army from 2005 through 2012. He earned his Bachelor's Degree from Southern New Hampshire University and is pursuing his Masters in Public Affairs from Merrimack College. He served in Afghanistan in the U.S. Army Airborne.

MDI Meeting

Several Town officials met with the technical consultants from Stantech to review the Town Center Plan from 2013. Stantech is the consultant hired by the state through Massachusetts Downtown Initiatives. They will review the plan and consider comments provided about the original process and present alternatives at the next meeting.

Adult Use Marijuana Procurement Process

The Town is currently considering three proposals for two licenses for retail sale of adult use marijuana. An initial meeting was conducted with each of these proponents on May 15th with a committee of Town Officials. A public hearing was held on June 5th in the Buck Auditorium to solicit feedback from the public. The committee of Town Officials including one Selectmen, Kim Conway, will be meeting to hear the proponents final proposals on June 19th and make a recommendation to the BOS.

Personnel Changes

In addition to a new Veteran's Services Director we have hired a new principal clerk for the Planning Department, Kerri Rufo. A new payroll clerk has also been hired, Kimberly Sandeffer.

Surplus Furniture from High School

The School Department will be allowing the public to come and take away any surplus furniture still left at the High School on June 22nd at 8:00AM in the Gymnasium in the old High School

111 F Police and Fire Coverage

The Town was able to procure 111F coverage for Police and Fire IOD insurance up to \$1.5 Million. This will protect the Town against large liability exposures and prevent us from going to Town Meeting for additional appropriations. The deductible is \$75,000. This was done with savings from our other insurance programs thereby eliminating the need for additional appropriations.