



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen

FROM: John C. Curran, Town Manager

CC: Susan Aker, Cathy O'Dea

SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report, February 4, 2019

DATE: February 1, 2019

Recycling PSA

The Town will be releasing the first part of a recycling PSA with BATV in the next week. Selectmen Conway visited the Waste Management facility and recorded a short video about what residents are placing in their recycling. At the tour it was found that people are placing crock pots, yard waste, TVs, and more in their recycling bins. This is much more serious than just a greasy pizza box. Some of the above materials can damage the equipment and cause higher recycling cost to the Town. Our Recycling Coordinator and DPW Director are exploring other educational grants for the residents.

Food for Fines

The Billerica Library held an extremely successful food drive during the month of January for the Billerica Community Food Pantry. If you had an overdue item that caused a late charge the Library would be willing to waive the fine for a non-perishable donation. They had delivered 400+ towards the end of the month to the pantry. The final count is still being worked out after quite a few donations were made during the last few days. Thank you to the Billerica Library for supporting our local food pantry.

Cable Ascertainment

This office will be meeting with Bill Solomon in the next week to start the process of renegotiating the cable contracts. The Town's contracts are due to expire in late 2019. I have worked with Bill in the past and he has been very efficient in negotiating the best contracts possible. I will update the Board on the progress in the coming weeks.

Board of Selectmen BATV Outage

Last week the Board of Selectmen meeting was not broadcast live due to a Comcast Amplifier outage issue. Comcast was in Town Hall on Friday to fix the problem with BATV. BATV expects the meeting to be broadcast live with no issues this week.

Town Website Update

This office recently had a conversation with Civic Plus in regards to updating the Town Website. Currently the website analytics show that when people go to the webpage they come for a specific topic and not to browse the site. Our Town website mirrors the organizational chart of the Town. This set up works well for people who are involved in the Town Government, but may not be the most efficient for a layperson. A potential new setup would be based around topics. For example the current website to find information about Snow and Ice operations you have to navigate to My Government, DPW, Highway Division, and then Snow Removal Operations. Instead of just being able to have a Snow and Ice Removal Topic. People end up sending us messages on Social Media & Email especially in off hours instead of being able to find the information effectively.

The Town would use the historical website analytics to understand what topics need to be made and where they should be placed on the site. During a Snow Storm it would make sense to move that topic to a prominent place and replace it with the Road Work Schedule in the Spring. This office is interested in your feedback on the potential idea. Two examples are attached – www.boston.gov & www.miamigov.com

Town Meeting Vacancies

The Town has over 100 Town Meeting seats up for elections. The Town Clerk had shown some concern over the lack of participation that was occurring. As of earlier this week very few people had pulled papers and even fewer had returned them. After an article in the Minuteman and the community sharing social media post on the issue it seems that the Town is now in a stronger position. The Town Clerk said on Friday afternoon that “if all people who pulled papers return them we would have almost a full slate.” Shirley is very happy with the response and will be keeping the office open on February 11th until 7PM for residents to pick up nomination forms. Forms are due on February 19th by 5PM.

Budget Update

This office has met with all department heads and is in the process of compiling the FY2020 budget. More information will be provided at the meeting.