



## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Board of Selectmen

**FROM:** John C. Curran, Town Manager

**CC:** Susan Aker, Cathy O'Dea

**SUBJECT:** Town Manager's Report, April 3, 2020

**DATE:** April 3, 2020

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### **The Howe School -**

The Town, Left Field and PRA, met virtually on Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup> at 10:00AM. The discussion focused on how to keep things moving during the shut-down. A virtual meeting will need to be done with the Historic District Commission for their review and approval. The final report of the feasibility study is expected to be delivered between April 6<sup>th</sup> and April 10<sup>th</sup>. The Town's stormwater consultant, BETA Group, will handle the filing with the Conservation Commission. The CPC will need to reschedule their April 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. The design team will continue to advance toward construction documents.

### **Parks and Trees**

This department received delivery on their new infield roller. Some field work is still ongoing in preparation for when fields open again.

### **LED Streetlights:**

The Town selected Pine Ridge Technologies as their installer for the LED Streetlights. Install has begun in the North Billerica section of Town. They currently have switched over 10% of the Town. Due to COVID-19 Pine Ridge was at 1/3 capacity for the first week and missed two days of installation. One of the installers needed to be tested before going back to work due to exposure. He tested negative and they had no issues since then. They will have three crews out changing lights going forward. They will install anywhere from 300-400 fixtures a week. They started install in the Pollard Street area. You can follow along at the live install map at this link -



<http://tankolighting.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=a8f1b6dacc494d9793836b8d8d54dbfd>

### **Pinehurst Fire Station**

The Town is continuing to move forward on the Pinehurst Fire Branch. Late last week the Parks & Tree's Department began to do some site work at Old Ditson Grove Street Parking Lot for the temporary headquarters. DPW placed a water and sewer line in the area for the temporary station and the area has been paved. The rooming quarters for the fire station will be dropped a month earlier than previously planned due to covid-19 precautions. Currently everything is moving forward according to schedule. The Board will need to vote on a temporary license agreement for National Grid. This office is waiting for the license language and it will be introduced at a future meeting.

### **Public Meetings**

The Town has purchased a subscription with ZOOM. The Town will be utilizing the Webinar function to conduct public meetings. After multiple test and trials the Zoom Webinar function was the closest match to an actual Board Meeting / Public Hearing that this office was able to find. It allows the Chair, Department Head, or Designee to choose who is allowed to speak on the Board similar to an actual Board Meeting. They also can take public participation from residents. For a resident to speak during one of these meetings requires them to "virtually raise their hand by pressing a button" then the Chair would unmute them, and call on them to speak. Clancy will be running a training session for all Boards and Committees sometime this week or next for anybody who is interested.

### **Trash**

Due to the COVID-19 situation WM has asked the Town to remind residents to bag all of their trash. Also please remember gloves and wipes go in the trash not recycling. Bulk Item Pickup is back in place. It was previously put on hold due to COVID-19. Also the first yard waste collection will take place on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **FinCom / Town Meeting**

The Finance Committee will continue to hear the budgets. The Finance Committee convened on Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup>. This meeting included the DPW, Library, and COA. FinCom was scheduled to hold their public hearing on the warrant articles on April 7<sup>th</sup> This is being rescheduled due to change in Town Meeting Schedule. The remainder of budgets will be reviewed at the next meeting.

### **Coronavirus Update**

The Town Continues to monitor the current situation with COVID 19. Adjustments are made on a daily basis to protect the public and maintain, to the extent possible, Town Services and normalcy.

### **PHR Project**

The Town, Left Field and Warner Larson met virtually on Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup> at 1:00PM. This meeting was also geared toward reviewing what needs to get done in this age of COVID-19. This project also must go before the Conservation Commission and the CPC must reschedule their April 2<sup>nd</sup> vote.

### **Meetings with State Agencies**

I have been constantly meeting with colleagues and state agencies on conference calls to stay abreast of the rapidly evolving COVID-19 Virus. I have repeatedly met with the Town Managers of Tewksbury, Chelmsford, Dracut, Westford as well as the Mayor of Woburn. All of these communities have been imposing similar restrictions. I have also participated in repeated meetings with DPH, MMA the Governor's Office, Lowell General and MEMA. I will continue attending to stay informed on the latest developments.

## **Town Election**

The vote the BOS already made about changing the election is valid because the enacted legislation was retroactive. The election is scheduled for June 6<sup>th</sup>.

### **Waiving fees and Late Payments enacted by H4589 and delay of Tax Bills**

The Legislature enacted and the Governor signed an act that allows the chief executive officer of a city or the prudential committee or commissioners of a district, as a result of the outbreak of the 2019 novel coronavirus and the declaration of a state of emergency issued by the Governor on March 10, 2020, to waive the payment of interest and other penalty in the event of late payment of any excise, tax, betterment assessment or apportionment thereof, water rate or annual sewer use or other charge added to a tax for any payments with a due date on or after March 10, 2020 and made after its respective due date but before June 30, 2020.

This legislation gives municipalities the option to delay property tax due date from May 1<sup>st</sup> to June 1<sup>st</sup>. It allows the municipal chief executive (BOS) to delay the due date for municipal property tax bills to June 1. (Section 10).

### **Items for next Selectmen' agenda**

The NGrid License agreement for Grove Street will not be ready for the April 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- **Move back Tax Bills**
- **Waive fees and Late Payments**
- **Consider Water and Sewer Rates**
- **Affirm Compliance with local by-laws for Marijuana Establishment**
- **Coronavirus Update**