



## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Select Board

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

**CC:** Clancy Main, Assistant Town Manager  
Robert Maynard, Director of Administrative Services

**SUBJECT:** Town Manager's Report, February 6, 2023  
Agenda Item

**DATE:** February 2, 2023

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### **Town Center**

On Tuesday, January 24, 2023, this office sat down with BETA, Verizon, Comcast, and National Grid to discuss the utility coordination for the Town Center project. The focus was to define the scope of work for burying the utility lines, some telephone poles are located on the edge of the project and it's in the Town's interest to see those underground. To determine if this work can be accomplished this office and the entities listed will walk the site in March and look at each telephone pole in question to determine what can be done.

### **Post-Audit BMHS Project Summary**

The BMHS building committee held their final meeting on Thursday, January 26<sup>th</sup> on Zoom. This office and Leftfield presented the MSBA audit results and the bonding summary to the committee for review. The total MSBA reimbursement was \$70,698,309 and the total cost to Billerica was \$99,998,677, roughly \$1,300 under our town share goal of \$100,000,000. After the financials were reviewed the committee voted to recommend to Town Meeting that the committee be dissolved.

### **One Stop Grant Application.** <https://www.mass.gov/guides/community-one-stop-for-growth>

Over the past few years, the state has consolidated many of its development-related grants, including MassWorks into a "One Stop for Growth" application. This builds on the idea there is a "continuum of development" and that they can help shepherd good projects through grants from multiple state agencies. The first step is to submit an "Expression of Interest" (EOI) to engage staff at the state level in which grants apply to specific project ideas. The EOIs are due by March 17<sup>th</sup>. The Planning and Community Development department is going to submit an Expression of Interest for two separate projects a) Town Center Redevelopment including feasibility study for town's leveraging Cider Mill property for affordable housing and/or intergenerational center. b) revitalization/repositioning of the tech park. If we get feedback that these are good projects, we would submit a full application for each by June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## **Marketing update**

We're working with Seven Letter on the Marketing Plan in accordance with the goals of the Select Board and the first action will likely be a community-wide survey to inform their work moving forward. Stay tuned for more information when it is ready for distribution. They are working on taglines for the Town. If you have any ideas, please feel free to share.

## **Farmers Market**

The Farmer's Market is potentially looking to operate at the Old Ditson site for this season. They have grown substantially and unfortunately are having a hard time on the COA lawn due to space constraints. This office will reach out the neighborhood for feedback and possible schedule a public meeting if necessary. Code Red can be used to contact this area.

## **Kohlrausch Park**

The Recreation Department applied to the Community Preservation Committee for the redesign of Kohlrausch Park. There are currently water drainage issues at the park which prevents Recreation or any other group from being able to use it. The other problem is that there are no basketball courts, pickle ball courts, or tennis courts in North Billerica which makes summer programming for Recreation difficult in this area of Town. Therefore, Recreation wants to redesign Kohlrausch to fix the water drainage problems and to incorporate these amenities.

The Town will be holding a public information session for the redesign of Kohlrausch Park on Wednesday, February 15 at 7:00PM in the Select Board hearing room in Town Hall.

## **Schools Facility Study**

This was a goal of the Board in Fiscal Year 2021 and 2022. This process has been moving along on the School Department side. The School Department held a forum on 2/1 to briefly go over the options. I have asked Dore and Whittier to present this information to the Select Board. It is possible that the School Department may be looking for a Letter of Intent to the MSBA in April for a Middle School. There is a preferred option within their presentation that the Board should see.

## **Peggy Hannon Rizza Recreation Complex**

PHR is coming to a close in the coming months. Very few items are left as part of the field project and the snack shack is moving along. One of the major impediments is a ongoing supply chain issue. The control panel needed for power is still on back order. The Town is currently aiming to have a ribbon cutting prior to the first lacrosse game on March 31<sup>st</sup>. More details to follow, but please place a hold on your calendar.

## **Financial Work Session**

Due to the potential upcoming projects and future sewer work I would like to have a working session with the Board in late March. This would allow the Board to understand how each project will affect the Tax Bill and where the long-term finances of the Town stand. I would also like to present changes to financial policies to help facilitated these projects.

## **COA / Recreation Feasibility Study**

The Capital Facilities Committee will meet on Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30PM. This will serve as the kickoff meeting for the committee and the selected architect Abacus. Abacus is currently in the process of reviewing community feedback and the programmatic work done by BH+A. They will begin a round of interviews on the week of the 8<sup>th</sup> with Town Staff. Currently the timeline for a project is Fall Town Meeting. To achieve that goal please see the below schedule:

## Capital Facility Committee Meetings

February – Kickoff Meeting with Committee.

March – Presentation of two options. Community feedback and listening session.

April – Refinement of two options based on feedback. Community feedback and listening session.

May – Refinement of two options based on feedback. Vote on preferred option to recommend to the Select Board.

June – Select Board vote to accept or deny recommendation from Capital Facilities Committee.

From there the Town would continue design and public input sessions on the preferred option.

## Retirees Breakfast

On Wednesday February 8<sup>th</sup> at 9:00AM the Billerica Police Department will be holding a retiree breakfast for the following officers:

Lieutenant Troy Opland  
Lieutenant Steve Elmore  
Officer Joe Smith  
Lieutenant Martin Conway

Help us in wishing them well into retirement and thanking them for their years of service to Billerica.

## 21 Canterbury St

During the Boards October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting a motion was made and accepted to declare 21 Canterbury St an unsafe structure and public nuisance. This allowed Marc Lalumiere, the building commissioner to begin the process of removing the structure from Canterbury St. It has been brought to this office's attention that property has since been purchased and the owner is planning to tear it down. This means the Town won't have to pay this cost.

## New DPW Building

Attached below is an updated diagram of the potential new DPW Facility. The Town will be holding a public information session at 7:00PM at the Howe School. The Town has also continued to work with the neighbors. Some of the changes from their feedback are below:

- Shifted the building over 25 feet away from the residents.
- Shifted the entrance closer to the conservation land.
- Flipped the entrance and exit for the vehicle storage bay.
- Added a vegetation buffer and left some natural screening.



The Town is still looking at a few traffic items and a sidewalk on River Street Extension.

## January Bromate Update

This office recently received a January Bromate update from the Water Department. This is good news! For the month of January, the average Bromate level was 0.0017 mg/L. This is within accordance with EPA guidelines. This information has been posted to the Town website.

### **Billerica Mobile Apps**

Fred Russell, the DPW Director, has contracted Connected Bits to develop an app for residents to report issues to the Department of Public Works. This office sat down with Fred and Connected Bits to go over the specifics of the app. This will be a great resource for the community, people will be able to report any DPW emergency and it will be public so others who have the app will see these emergencies as they are reported. Another great resource for the residents of Billerica to stay up to date on their Town.

### **Bike Path**

Due to a significant increase in the estimated construction cost from \$9 million (at 25% design) to \$18.6 million (at 75% design), the project had to be resubmitted to the Project Review Committee (PRC) for approval. The project was approved at the 12/2022 PRC meeting.

The environmental permitting process with the Conservation Commission has started. On 1/25/23 the Order of Resource Area Delineation (ORAD) was issued by the Conservation Commission, approving the wetland resource delineation for the project corridor. The Notice of Intent (NOI) was submitted in January and the first hearing was 1/25/23 where the project was presented to the Conservation Commission. Peer review of wetlands and stormwater is being initiated and we are scheduled to appear again on 3/8/23.

### **Boston Rd**

The Contractor for the Boston Road North Project is in the process of finding a laydown area for material and equipment storage. The Contractor's winter work involves installing new drainage structures and pipe. The Contractor is currently working on Heritage Rd. National Grid Gas is performing some gas pipe relocation on Boston Rd. MassDOT anticipates new utility pole installation project wide to start in February.