



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen

FROM: John C. Curran, Town Manager

CC: Clancy Main, Cathy O'Dea

SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report, May 4, 2020

DATE: May 1, 2020

Revenue Outlook

As I expressed before, the Local Receipts have exceeded projections for FY2020 already. This puts the Town in a strong position for F2020. Local Aid is also expected to be fully funded. There are no indications that 9C are eminent. Fourth quarter real and personal property receipts are at 70% of total collections. This is 12% lower than last year at this time. This office is projecting a collection rate of at least 85% by June 30th would be a good goal to hit under the current circumstances.

Sidewalk Management Plan Update.

The Beta Group has down a Town-wide inspection of all sidewalks. Priority Areas have been identified. However, upon review the unaccepted roadways were not included in this review. The Town Engineer has instructed Beta to retrieve this inspectional data as well. The Town Engineer will then review the complete data

Nashua Road Project

The sidewalk cost for Nashua Road is \$260,000. The side walk fund money, \$186,000, would go toward this part of the project. The project overall is approximately \$1.2 million. I have attached supporting documentation. The Engineer focused on one portion of the roadway for sidewalks because it had feeder sidewalks – the other end does not. It was also driven by financial resources.

Pinehurst Fire Station

A meeting with the OPM, the design team and Town was held on May 1st. This project continues to move along on schedule. The electrical connection are the teams current logistical challenge.

Food Pantry

Approximately 400 people were successfully served at the food pantry last week.

High School Building Committee Meeting

Branding options were selected for the stadium cladding. The Indian Head was selected by the Committee.

Rec. Department Update from David Grubb:

Throughout this health crisis, the Recreation Department has remained busy offering our residents daily opportunities to participate in a variety of activities. We have been fortunate to partner with some of our best instructors to bring virtual programming to the comfort of home through a variety of videos and live zoom meetups. These include weekly dance classes, exercise classes, and cooking demos. In addition to these weekly videos, each day we are also posting various fun for the whole family activities ranging from “Family Dance Offs” to “Create Your Own Playdough”, and so much more. In such a challenging and unprecedented time for the entire community, we are extremely proud to be able to offer these services at no charge to anyone who wants to participate. We believe we are all in this together, and we are happy to play a role in offering a daily distraction from these challenging times. If you haven’t already done so, please follow us on Facebook to view our activities and join the fun!

COA Update from Jean Bushnell:

Even though our doors are closed the staff of the BCOA continues to support our community.

CARE CALLS: During these harsh times of uncertainty we know a phone call to check in, to touch in; to see how things are is important to our patrons. Our staff is making about 150 calls a week. We are working with Susan Bailey, Chaplain at Merrimack Valley Hospice who runs our bereavement group to triage some of the calls that reflect deep sadness.

FOOD ACCESS: We are preparing 75-80 bags of fresh produce, nonperishable food items and other supplies per week for our senior community using a drive through service. Local residents who have offered to do drop-offs deliver to those lacking transportation. The School Department provides partial packages and with grant funding secured by the Director from Greater Lowell Community Foundation, Stoneham Bank, Enterprise Bank, The Lions Club, Fallon Health, the Friends and Board organization and staff contributions we spend \$500 weekly to augment the packages. Funding will last till mid-June.

MEALS ON WHEELS: Working with Elder Services of Merrimack Valley we have ramped up the number of meals getting out each day from an average of 80 to around 100 to homebound seniors. If you know someone who might qualify for a home delivered meal please have them call Meals on Wheels: 978 686 1422.

SCAM REPORTING: Various callers on scams are being referred to the police department at 978-667-1212.

SUPPORTING FAMILIES CARING FOR SOMEONE WITH DEMENTIA: We keep referring families to The Alzheimer’s Association’s 24/7 Helpline at 1-800-272-3900 for comprehensive support.

OUTREACH: staff is handling a range of requests from food to housing to copies made. There is a fresh outpouring of requests for masks. We are offering 2 disposable or cloth face covering masks and documenting requestors from a limited supply we have aggregated from families in town, Enterprise Bank and members of our Quilting Group.

Library Update from Jan Hagman:

Even though the library doors are closed for a time, the staff has been working diligently to continue to serve our patrons in these difficult times. Staff is daily answering patron inquiries, such as tax form questions, local history questions, electronic device help or library account help, whether they are made through phone, social media or the website. To continue patron engagement a now biweekly newsletter is being sent out, a new social media campaign highlighting Boston Public Library e-resources was recently launched, the next remote Book Buzz was shared, and plans are being made for a new #virtuallibrarystories campaign. Plans for celebrating the library’s 20th anniversary in our current building, were put into action with digital images collected to create a webpage with a narrative and slideshow for launch on May 8th, first day the library officially opened for business. Collaboration is in the works with the COA, Dementia Friendly Billerica and the Billerica Housing authority on continuing joint remote programming. Virtual programming for children and young adults is also taking place on a weekly basis with three new recorded storytimes posted on our website as well as fun

programs such as zoom bingo contests for teens. Plans are moving forward on more virtual programs for youth such as original drama, science, book talks and dance/yoga. As director, I could not be more proud of how the library staff has adapted under these circumstances, with ingenuity and initiative, to continue to serve our community as best we can.

Veterans Department Update from Joe Ruggiero:

Our Veterans Community is still strong and well supported. So far we have added 4 cases to our chapter 115 list. Two Veterans are added do to the early jail releases being conducted. The other 2 are from job layoffs. These are temporary cases as the layoffs are well supported by the updated unemployment system which takes a major load off of our budget. The jail release program veterans are expected to look for work and will most likely be on our rolls for a couple of months while doing so. We have received some generous donations of market basket gift cards and have distributed them as needed. We are in at least weekly contact with all of our cases. VA claims have been slow and frustrating but most understand this with one call to me. We are up to date on bill processing as I have been in the office every other Friday morning to process these and do some maintenance work. To conclude I am happy to report the low numbers of cases thanks to the unemployment increases. I am looking forward to returning and getting back to our full swing of service.

Brightview Concord River Testing

On 4/29 the National Guard tested all residents and staff at the Brightview location in the Town of Billerica. On 5/1 all 143 test were returned negative. This was great news considering at Life Care earlier in the month 47 cases were reported when the National Guard tested the facility.

Coronavirus Update: