



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen

FROM: John C. Curran, Town Manager

CC: Susan Aker, Cathy O'Dea

SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report, August 14, 2017

DATE: August 11, 2017

Accepted Ways

A place holder has been added to the warrant to make the street acceptance process less burdensome. This office has had lengthy discussions with Town Counsel on this subject. I recommend this topic be put on agenda of an upcoming meeting for further discussion.

Wetlands Restoration Project – Partridge Road

The Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Project is conducting a wetlands restoration project on Partridge Road to Jef Road. This will include the removal of organic debris from the ditch and culverts, and cutting of brush and dead trees which will block and can potentially block future water flow. The work is standard ditch maintenance work that will help reduce the mosquito nuisance, improve the function of the stream as well as enhance the aesthetics of the stagnant streams and ditches.

Billerica Fuel System Progress Report

Construction started on this project in mid-June, all electrical and site work has been completed. Setting of above ground tanks and Canopy installation are intended to be completed by August 25. It is anticipated that the facility be operational by the first week of September. Binder course at the old tank site (police dept. area) will be installed around the middle of September with final paving in the spring of 2018 to allow for settlement time. Training of staff for the fueling procedure at new facility shall start in the last week of August.

The removal of the fuel single wall tank (Diesel) started on August 9th, and will continue for about a week. An above ground tank was brought to the sight in order to continue fueling without interruption. The gas tank (double wall) will remain in the ground until first week in September when the new facility is fully operational. Once operational, the gas tank will be removed. The project is being coordinated between all departments and so far is on budget with only minor changes.

Mass Works Project

The next step for this project is to remove the four poles in the right-of-way so the street can be paved. Three of the four poles have been removed. The Town is waiting on national Grid to remove the last pole. Once the pole is removed the paving will be scheduled. The goal is to get all the paving done before Yankee Doodle Homecoming. The Contractor, Tropeano, is responsible for means and methods as to removal of rock in loam and weeds. This is also scheduled to be addressed by Yankee Doodle Homecoming. The last phase of the project is bringing the utilities into the homes and businesses. This is projected for the fall and pole removal will be the final step of the project.

Mass DOT Boston Road Project (Tar on Vehicles)

Mass DOT applied a tar microfilm coat to the section of Boston Road from Allen Road and Tower Farm Road. This was done in July. It is done in the middle of the night because it takes a while for the tar coating to dry and would splatter up on vehicles. However, in this instance it rained on the night this was done causing a significant delay in the drying process. This resulted in tar splatter particularly on frontline cruisers that were on duty the times this work was done. Additionally, it impacted private vehicles of detail officers that worked this project.

The police department noticed this tar on their vehicles and notified DOT. They referred this to their contractor who contacted their insurance provider. The provider hired a vendor to wash and detail the town vehicles impacted by these events. The vendor washed many Town vehicles “impacted by this work” as well as some private vehicles of Town employees that claimed they were impacted by this work too. As soon as this office became aware that the vendor was still out there after a week I suspended any further claims based on my belief that it is difficult to prove that damage was caused to vehicles several weeks after the event.

Abandoned Property Boston Road

The old Hess Gas Station has been cleaned up in terms of the good will drop-off boxes that invariably become dumping grounds. It was also rezoned at Town Meeting to help increase the marketability of the property. The property was previously zoned residential with a deed restriction disallowing a residential use on the site. It has been changed to a Neighborhood Business Zone similar to the adjacent property. The owner of the property is not local and he is dealing with a national firm to market it to potential developers. Rob continues to monitor this situation.

This office and the economic development team met with Robert Korff, the owner of the old Mobile gas Station on the corner of Treble Cove Road and Boston Road. He is currently considering purchasing the Macs Two site as well. The first order of business in this meeting was to ask them to clean up the existing site which they agreed to do. The Town told Mr. Korff that it is less interested in the idea of a gas station/convenience store and more interested in a retail or mixed use on this site. The Town would like to see a sit down restaurant on this site however Mr. Korff indicated that he has not received any interest from these uses. This makes sense in that the site is next to a strip site and another abandoned site. It is the Town’s opinion that this dynamic could change with the clean-up of the abutting property with a new Panera Restaurant and the discontinuance of the strip club use.

Accordingly, the Town will be working with the developer for the next 90 days to find the highest and best use for the property.

BMHSBC

The building Committee met on July 28th. At this meeting the committee voted to add Terazzo Epoxy Flooring to the common areas of the building and to put the outdoor stage back into the project. Additionally, they increased the height of the tile in the bathrooms for maintenance purposes. The steel is going up and the academic wings are established and floor slabs are being poured.

Town Manager's Blog

Clancy Main has added a Town Manager's Blog to the website which will also be disseminated through Facebook and Twitter. It will be used to provide information to residents on happenings in local government. Additionally, an early overview of what transpired at selectmen's meetings and action items that come out of these meetings.

Agenda Center

One of the goals of the BOS was to ensure minutes and agendas are posted on a weekly basis. While minutes and agendas are posted a new feature was added to the home page called Agenda Center. The Town Clerk's Office now forwards all agendas to Clancy Main and they are posted on the agenda center. These agendas also automatically update on the calendar feature of the website. These enhancements will serve to make these much more useful tools for the public. The agendas also are posted on Facebook and Twitter.

Form Center Updates

Employment Applications are now available on-line. The public can access them on the homepage of the website through the "Employment" button. Boards and Commissions application form are also available on-line through the Boards and Commissions page.

Regulatory Board Decisions

The Permits and variances issued by the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and the Board of Health are now available on the Towns GIS system. They can be accessed through the DPW, Town Manager's or Assessors Pages. The Town Manager's page has a Regulatory Board Decision link. The DPW and the Assessors are accessed through the interactive GIS and maps respectively. You can access this information through any of these three portals through the GIS mapping features. Additionally, you can look at this information in a data table format through the Town Manager's page.

Center Traffic Island

The traffic island in the center across from the COA is being re-landscaped. Landscaper Ray Boulay has generously volunteered to beautify the island and maintain it in the future. You may have noticed a landscape wall constructed on the island. Additionally, there will be tree plantings on the island as well as grass and other plantings. The sign will remain as is and the electrical supply for the lighting committee will remain intact.

Performance Recognition Fire Department

On July 31, 2017 at noon time a New Penn tractor Truck began to leak chemicals on Hadley Street. The Billerica Fire Department responded to find a 55 gallon drum of sulfuric acid actively leaking from the trailer. It had created a 20 foot spill on the roadway. Additionally, there was a vapor cloud caused by a reaction to rainwater and calcium chloride. A 300 foot perimeter was immediately established and the police aided in the evacuation of surrounding buildings.

The Billerica Fire Department HAZMAT Team and technicians were activated. The team made successful entry into the trailer to mitigate the leaking drum and were successful in neutralizing the acid that had leaked out.

The level of response is significant in that it was immediate. It is a credit to the Chief and his department that the Billerica Fire Department has the resources and the training to respond so completely and quickly to a both rare and dangerous event. These facts were recognized by the DEP. Most communities would have to wait for a state hazmat team to arrive. As the Chief so aptly put it, “the ability to respond allowed us to not only minimize the risk to our residents but to reduce the downtime to the neighboring businesses.”