



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen

FROM: John C. Curran, Town Manager

CC: Cathy O'Dea, Clancy Main

SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report, April 12, 2021

DATE: April 9, 2021

AARP TAX AID

The COA Director has reported that by this Wednesday, April 7th The AARP Team, fully supported by Board Member Bill Neeb and some 12 BCOA volunteers, complete 302 tax submissions. Over the next 1-2 weeks they will reprocess 40 cases for unemployment and premium tax credit issues. She also wanted to express a BIG thanks to AARP's Harry Gong, George Tribuna and Dave Petersante who worked with the BCOA team to establish a very safe and efficient process in their Lobby and Community room on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays to deliver this valuable service to the community.

Recreation Report

As of April 1st, the lights at the PHR Basketball and Tennis Courts have been activated for the season. The lights will stay on until 10:30 each night through October.

After going full remote with programs for the winter, the Recreation Department is excited to be bringing back in-person programming this spring! Programs will begin in the coming weeks and registration is currently ongoing. Please check out their website for a list of programs and register today.

This past Wednesday, the Recreation Department launched registration for summer camps – including their Superstars program and Neighborhood Parks programs. The response has been overwhelmingly positive with several weeks already fully registered.

Due, in part to great weather, the Recreation Department has been working closely with both the Parks Department and Facilities Department to ensure all fields are ready for the youth sports organizations. By all accounts, the leagues have been pleased with the efforts of each department and are off to a smooth start. All leagues will continue adhering to local and state Covid guidelines.

Professional Recognitions

Officer Mike Henckler

Officer Mike Henckler was recently activated by the United States Coast Guard Reserve and is assigned to a vaccination site at York College in Queens New York. Recently, the Vaccination Site where Mike is assigned reached 100,000. We are proud of Mike, his service in the Coast Guard and his most recent accomplishment.

Mike is approaching 20 years of service with the Billerica Police Department and has been activated into military service several times over the years, serving overseas as well as deployments for natural disasters in other states. Mike is a dedicated Patrol Officer and is heavily involved in our training program here in Billerica, he trains in Use of Force/ De-escalation as well as being a Police Mountain Bike certified instructor. I would like to congratulate Mike for this milestone at the Vaccination Center and recognize him for his dedicated service to the residents of this Town as well as his service to our Country in the United States Coast Guard.

Lieutenant Gerald Roche

On March 30, 2021 Lieutenant Gerald Roche was sworn in as member of the Joint Terrorism Task Force. (JTTF) By being a member of the JTTF this allows Lt. Roche to be privy to Federal Investigations in the area as well as surrounding communities. The FBI continues to facilitate better working relationships with its Law Enforcement partners and being a member of this task force meets that need.

JTTFs serve as a national resource and create familiarity among investigators and managers before a crisis by conducting frequent training to maintain the specialized skills of investigators, analysts, and crisis response teams. JTTFs pool talents, skills, and knowledge from across the law enforcement and intelligence communities into a single team that responds together.

The task forces coordinate their efforts largely through the interagency National Joint Terrorism Task Force, working out of FBI Headquarters, which makes sure that information and intelligence flows freely among the local JTTFs and beyond.

Lt. Roche has long been a trusted partner with the area agents assigned to the Lowell Field office. Being involved with Bank Robbery investigations, Narcotic investigations and in one instance he tracked down the suspect in a Human Trafficking investigation and obtained a full confession in the process. His work ethic as well as being a graduate of the FBI National academy simplified the background investigation which ultimately provided him a Security Clearance which is the final step before being sworn in on the Task Force

Farmers Market

This office, Board of Health, the Council on Aging, and the Fire Department, met with a group of residents who are looking to create a new Billerica Farmers Market. The previous group who had ran the farmers market have decided they are no longer able to do so. This new group is excited and knowledgeable but has a few things to work out including insurance and incorporating as a nonprofit. They plan to look into these issues over the next few weeks.

The Council on Aging also had a very strong relationship with the previous market. The Market at the end of the year would donate a sum of money and would also give the COA free tent space in exchange for the use of their lawn. The COA is writing up a similar agreement with the new market. They hope to be able to begin sometime in June / July.

Hybrid Meeting

As the COVID-19 situation evolves and eventually begins to wind down meetings will begin to take place back in Town Hall. In an effort to continue public participation and transparency the Town is working with BATV to figure out how to run these types of meetings. The current infrastructure in Town Hall will not support a hybrid meeting with some people on zoom and others in person. Currently all the rooms lack speakers, feedback eliminators, and other technical equipment needed for a meeting to happen. BATV has had two companies take a look at the job and give a cost estimate. The Town is exploring how and if we would need to bid the job. This project would be covered under COVID Cares Act Money. I will have an update at the next meeting establishing a timeline.

Fire Station

The Fire Station is moving along as expected. Masonry work is ongoing. Visual changes take place almost daily at the site now.

Hutter Construction earlier in the job had a COVID-19 issue with a sub-contractor and no work took place for over a week. The Town recently reached an agreement with Hutter Construction to move the substantial completion date out 5 days to September 29, 2021. As the project progress if the Board would like to make a site visit I would be happy to facilitate.

Capital Interviews

Clancy Main, Mark LaLumiere, Denise McClure and I interviewed three firms to help conduct the Capital Facilities Study. The Town has narrowed it down to two and will bring those forward to the committee. I expect a meeting to be scheduled in the next few weeks.

Yankee Doodle

This office met with the Yankee Doodle Committee earlier in the week. Currently, they are planning to go forward with the normal Yankee Doodle celebration in September with COVID-19 precautions. They are planning to use the teacher parking lot for vendors and Town Hall for visitor parking. They chose this site due to complaints from vendors about visibility in previous years.

Planning and Economic Development Director Position

This office in conjunction with three planning Board Members has interviewed candidates for this position. We are hoping to make an offer this week.

Town Meeting

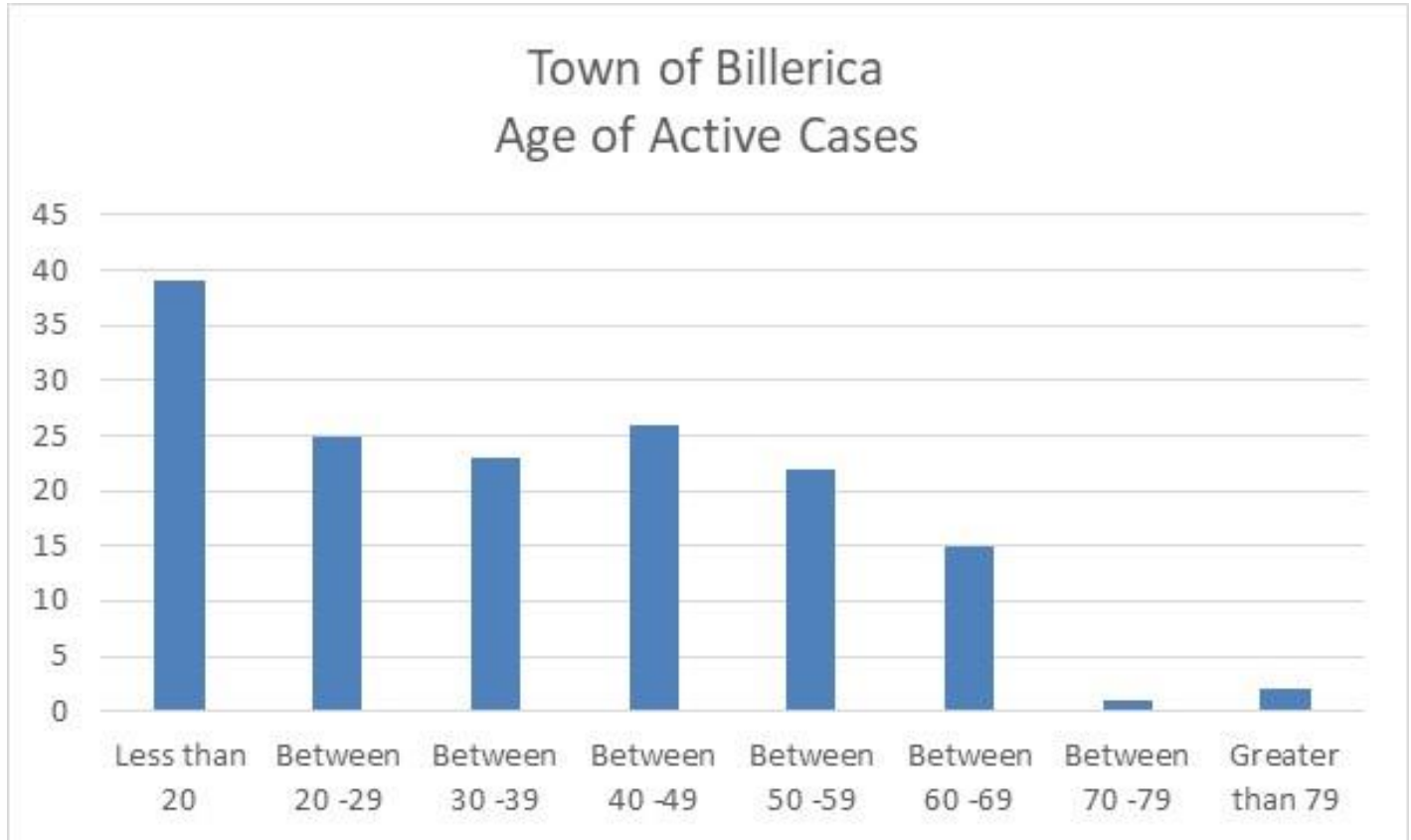
We are in the process of surveying members of Town Meeting about their COVID comfort level. We are also inquiring as to who has been vaccinated and if members would be willing to be vaccinated if the Town could arrange it. Based on initial data it appears that most members are more comfortable with the Zoom format that we have used in the last two meetings as opposed to congregating in one room.

Pond Street Sewer Break

The Town has finally received all the approvals needed from the MBTA and work on the permanent fix will begin on Monday. The Town is negotiating to leave the temporary bypass installed to serve the bigger project that will take place in one year.

COVID 19 Update

The Town has entered the high-risk category. In fact, we are spiking a a greater rate than the county and the state. This suggests that people in Billerica have eased up on social distancing. There is a high instance of cases in people under 20. The schools also seem to be experiencing higher numbers. The one bright spot is that is virtually non-existent in individuals over 70. This is an indicator that the vaccine is working. The positivity rate has gone down to 5.04%. Billerica has 20% of its' residents that are fully vaccinated. We continue to lag behind surrounding communities which may be a contributing factor. We have still not reached 70% with people over 75 (62%) and we are at a 47% vaccination rate with people within 65 and 74 years of age.

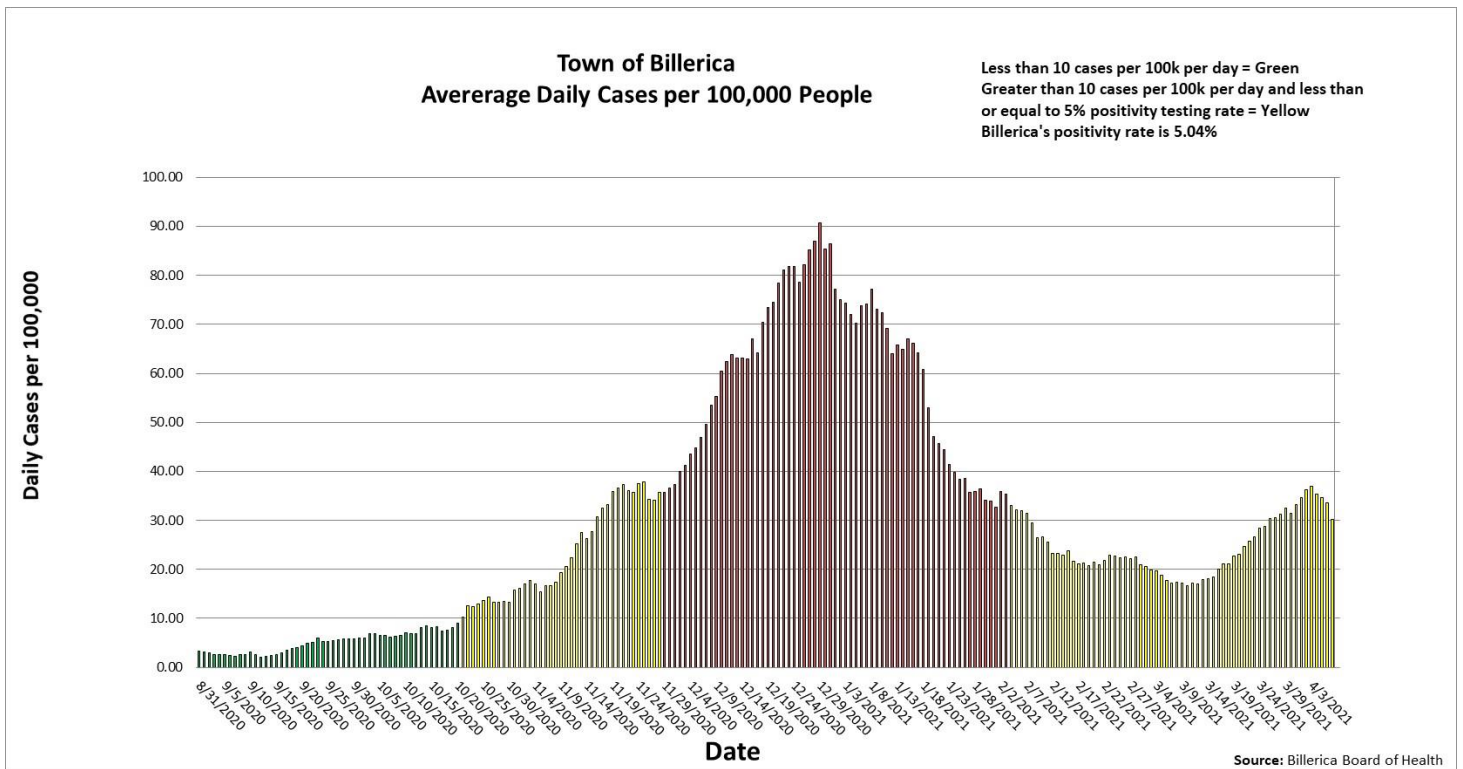




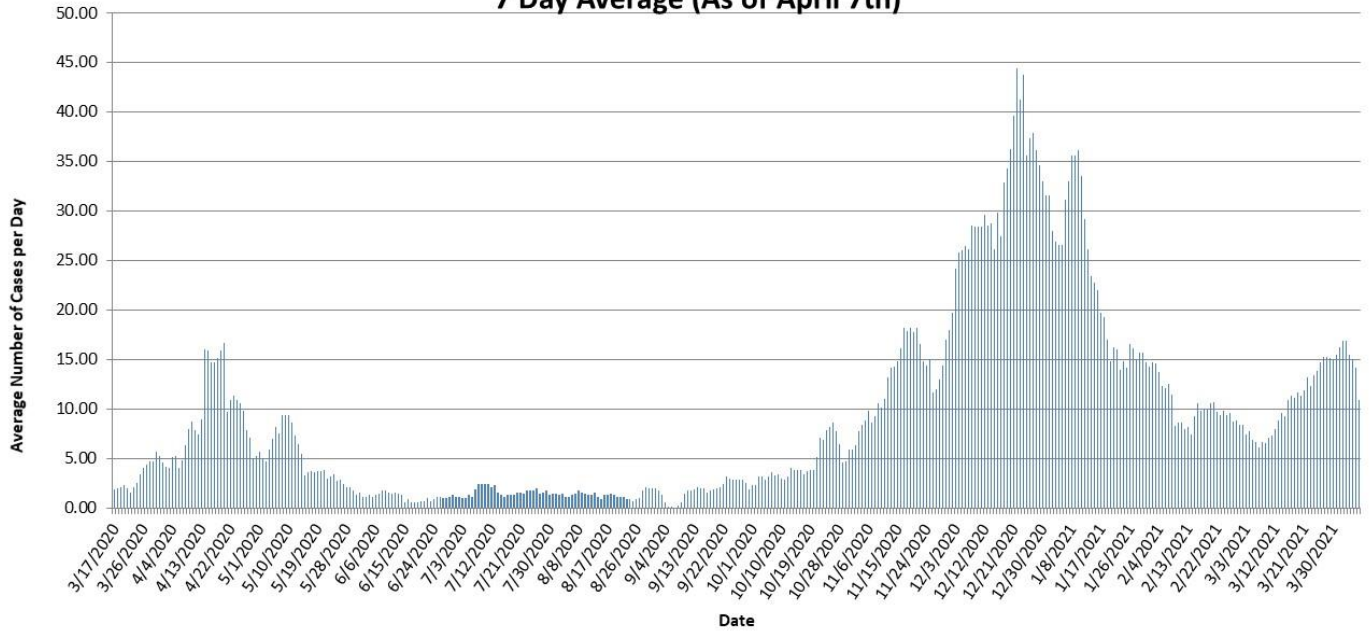
Long Term Care Facilites	118
Middlesex House of Corrections	88
Health Care Workers	116
Apartment Complexes	278
Deaths	35
Active Cases	153
Recovered Cases	3418
Total Cases to Date	3606
Cases per 100,000	24.47
Seven Day Case Average	10.86
Number of Cases last 14 days	149
Positivity Rate	5.04
Billerica Status	[REDACTED]

Friday, April 9, 2021

Source: Billerica Board of Health



Town of Billerica COVID 19 Cases 7 Day Average (As of April 7th)



Source: Billerica Board of Health