



## **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

*NATHAN R. BOUDREAU*

*January 6, 2022*

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season! Although the past two weeks were short, the Town of Hubbardston still got a lot done.

In December, DPW Director Travis Brown took me on a tour of many of Hubbardston's roads, bridges, and culverts. We did not travel all 89 miles of Hubbardston Roadways, but this tour was an excellent opportunity to view the town from different lenses and discuss past, present, and possible improvement projects.

I will hold my first Department Head Meeting on January 19th, 2023. During this meeting, I hope to get updates from individual department heads, brainstorm ways to work together and introduce a few new communications ideas.

On January 3rd, 2023, Select Board Chair Williams, School Committee Member Debra Chamberlain, and I attended the QRSD Strategic Planning meeting. We joined representatives from QRSD and member communities in doing exercises focused on building a strategic plan through 2028. The final meeting to review the draft plan will be on March 16th from 6 pm to 8 pm at the QRSD central office in Barre. There is also a survey to gather input from all stakeholder groups. Interested residents can access that survey [here](#).

On January 5th, 2023, I attended the Library Trustees' meeting. This group was very welcoming, and we discussed ways to partner on communications, strategic planning, energy, and building maintenance priorities. Taking the time to meet with the boards, committees, businesses, and civic organizations is a huge part of my transition plan, and I look forward to more and more as winter turns into spring.

In early February, there will be a meet and greet for residents to meet new members of the Hubbardston team and myself. Stay tuned for this announcement. This event will complement an informative meet and greet video on Hubbardston Public Access. We look forward to meeting many residents and hearing your ideas!

In the upcoming weeks I will be meeting with MRPC, regional Town Administrators, Michael Rutland Regional Emergency Communication Center, Superintendent Muir, the economic development committee and more. If you would like to schedule a time to discuss topics of importance to you, please reach out at any time!

## **Budget**

Department heads have turned in their department requests to my office. I am expecting to begin reviewing early next week towards the creation of my recommended budget. I truly appreciate all of the departments for getting their budget to me on time, and with all the requested documents, I look forward to working with them toward a final balanced budget.

At the Select Board's January 10, 2023, meeting, I will submit [mid-year budgetary figures](#) and an [FY24 revenue projection](#) for review. I want to thank Town Accountant Kelli Pontbriand and Treasurer Collector Sandy Nason for their help in creating these reports.

The Financial Management Team consisting of the Town Administrator, Town Accountant, Treasurer/Collector, Town Clerk, Assessor, Finance Assistant, and Executive Assistant, met on January 4, 2023, at noon to have our kick-off meeting. This meeting was well attended and meant to allow members of the Finance team to have insight into the budget development process. We will be meeting in late January to review a draft of the 5-Year Forecast to be presented at the February 6, 2023, meeting of the Select Board.

Next week the Capital Improvement Planning Committee meets to review capital requests with department heads and requestees. There will be one more meeting of the CIPC before the five-year Capital Plan is submitted to the Select Board in late February.

Hubbardston Selectboard Jeff Williams, Finance Committee Chair Susan Rayne, and I submitted correspondence regarding the FY24 QRSD Budget to our colleagues in the four other member towns. In the letter, we request a meeting to discuss how potential increases in the FY24 QRSD budget will affect our municipalities and how we can work together to fund the school system without interfering with municipal operations. Several communities have already reached out, stating their willingness to meet. Interested parties can read the letter in its entirety [here](#).

## **Human Resources / Volunteer Recruitment**

The Police Department's Nancy Perron will start as the Board of Health and Building Clerk on Monday, January 9, 2023. I welcome Nancy to her new role and am excited to see her hit the ground running in this crucial role.

We are accepting applications for the temporary full-time position of DPW Truck Driver / Laborer. This position has an hourly rate of \$20.68 - 23.58 per hour, DOQ. Min. qualifications include:

- High school diploma or GED
- CDL License w/air brake endorsement
- Hoisting 2B License
- Experience in the safe and efficient operation of medium and heavy-duty trucks and field equipment in the maintenance of municipal buildings, parks, streets, and construction.

A full job description is available [here](#). Cover letter, resume, and [application form](#) to [admin@hubbardstonma.us](mailto:admin@hubbardstonma.us). Position is open until filled.

A Reminder to all citizens that want to serve their community on boards and commissions. Please click [here](#) to view a list of current availabilities. To be considered, please fill out either the [Appointment Request Webform](#) or the [hardcopy paper form](#) and return it to the Office of the Select Board. Don't hesitate to contact the [Select Board](#), Chair of the entity you wish to serve, or [Town Administrator Nathan Boudreau](#) with questions.

## **Fire Department**

2022 proved to be the busiest year in the department's history with 749 emergency responses. This was a 10 percent increase from 2021.

Some of these included:

- 409 medical emergencies
- 58 motor vehicle accidents
- 40 alarm activations
- 22 mutual aid fires/cover assignments
- 7 brush fires
- 4 structure fires

These numbers don't include the many inspections, permits and training sessions the department is also responsible for.

## **Assessing**

The Town of Hubbardston has set the new tax rate at \$13.03 and third quarter real estate taxes have been mailed as of the new year. The rate for Fiscal Year 2023 is \$0.97 less per \$1,000 of valuation than the previous year, however you may see an increase in real estate taxes due to current real estate market sales. If you believe that your property is overvalued, improperly classified, or has a disproportionate assessment and you would like to file an abatement, please contact the Assessor's Office or the town website for forms, as the required documentation will vary based on the type of property being assessed. Please provide any additional information that you have that supports your application. Real Estate and Personal Property abatement applications are due the same day that the third quarter payment is due. If bills were mailed on or before December 31, abatement applications are due on February 1. If February 1 is not a business day, applications are due on the next business day. The Assessors have three months from the date your application was filed to act on it. If the Assessors do not act on your application by this deadline, it is deemed denied. You will be notified by the Assessors of any action or inaction taken on your application. If you do not agree with the Assessor's action, you may file an appeal to the Appellate Tax Board. Please contact the Appellate Tax Board at (617) 727-3100 for information regarding appeals.

The Assessor's portion of the Hubbardston town website has been reconstructed to better serve the needs of its residents. Please visit [hubbardstonma.us/assessors](http://hubbardstonma.us/assessors) to access updated tax and valuation history, maps, forms, and our new Virtual Assessor™ software. Virtual Assessor™ is an online service where residents can speak to a real agent to request document, property cards, and ask valuation questions. Virtual Assessor agents are available Monday-Friday 9:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M. During off hours, you may leave your information, and an agent will get back to you within 1 business day.

### **Department of Public Works**

This month's focus of the department has been brush mowing, ground cutting, keeping up with potholes around town, and keeping up with this unsettled weather. The paving project on Kruse and Thompson Roads also came out very nice.

#### **2022 - 2023 Crack Sealing**

Pinecrest Rd  
Morgan Rd  
High bridge Rd  
New Westminster Rd  
Grimes Rd. Pavement  
Burnshirt Rd.  
A portion of Williamsville Rd  
New Westminster Rd. (Mare Meadow Ln. to the Town line)

The Paving project for FY24 will be put together. We will also do our best to keep the roads reasonably safe throughout the winter months ahead.

### **Procurement**

We are releasing the RFP for the DPW Garage roof next week with the hopes this project could be completed in summer 2024.

### **Personnel Recognition**

I want to take a moment to recognize COA Director Claudia Provencal and the Council on Aging for doing such a great job with holiday engagement. They truly decked the halls this holiday season with their Annual Christmas Fair and Holiday Concert. An additional highlight is the COA's "Senior Times" which can be viewed [here](#).

### **Grants**

Laserfiche Community Compact IT Grant Update - Kyocera has recently picked up the second half of the Land Use files and will train several new employees to use the document storage system.

In addition, DLS has given the town an extension until the end of the Fiscal Year, and we anticipate completion and opening of the public portal by mid-spring.

I submitted for the Municipal Cybersecurity Awareness Grant Program (MCAGP), which aims to protect municipalities through end-user training. If successful, our employees will get the opportunity to take this training in the second half of 2023.

The town received a \$9700 reimbursement payment for our participation in the MassTrails grant. This covered the town's trail signage costs over the summer.

Members of the Land Use and Economic Development Team and myself will meet with MRPC next week to discuss ongoing projects such and potential funding for future projects.

### **Civic News**



Special Events has announced the return of Frozen Assets! Stop into Hubb Town Diner, Giacomo's Gourmet Foods, The Hubbardston Pizza Palace, or The Country Trail and ask for a Frozen Assets form. Not only does this event help support small businesses in town, but it also helps fund future special events. A \$20 donation per Frozen Assets Form is suggested (however, anything will be appreciated), which will go directly back into the community by helping facilitate other community events. The Outhouse will be located at 5 Williamsville Rd at The Country Hen pond at the beginning of February. All Frozen Assets Forms must be submitted by February 1st. Closest Guess - \$300 gift card, 2nd - \$150 gift card, 3rd - \$75 gift card, and 4th - 1 flat of eggs for eight weeks courtesy of The Country Hen! More information [here](#)

Upcoming Dates:

- Monday Jan 16, 2023 in observance of MLK Day
- Select Board January 10, 2023
- Select Board February 6, 2023

THANK YOU

