



Town Administrator

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To: Board of Selectmen

From: Ryan M. McLane
Town Administrator

Date: October 30, 2020

Subject: Town Administrator's Report

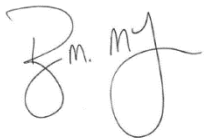
The following is the Town Administrator's report for the period ending October 30, 2020.

1. **COVID-19 Information** – The Town of Hubbardston is now a “red” community [according to the state](#). This means that we have greater than 8 cases per 100,000 residents. While this is a low bar for smaller towns, it does demonstrate that we have had significant spread in the last 14 days. The report cites Hubbardston as having 6 cases in the last 14 days and 14 (including the new six) since the COVID-19 outbreak. The Board should continue to monitor the situation in consultation with the schools and the Board of Health to determine any changes in service delivery. At this time, I am recommending no change from our current Town Department posture of appointment-only services at the Town Offices. Our employees are continuing to work in their offices and are complying with social-distancing guidelines.
2. **Department Report** – For the next six weeks we will be testing a new online service in the Assessing Department that allows residents the ability to speak with a customer service representative at the touch of the button. The service connects directly with RRG via chat, phone or video and allows residents to upload documents, print documents or get shared-screen instruction. We are testing the program to see if this would be a good fit for our assessing services. Winter came early this year and our DPW completed their first winter treatment. The Town Clerk's office is working overtime to provide mail-in, early and in-person services for the Town Election. And finally, our Board of Health team has been working overtime to keep up with the changes in guidance from the state regarding rising levels of COVID-19 infection.
3. **Financial Management** – Our finance team is currently engaging with Scanlon Associates for our annual financial audit. We hope to bring you findings from this important engagement by early December. Our accounting and assessing offices are

almost complete with the tax rate process. Your annual classification hearing is currently scheduled for November 30th. Our finance team also met this week with our Center School Roof Project OPM and our town financial advisor to ready the school roof project finances. We are working with the schools to ensure the financial aspects of this project run smoothly. The state informed us this week that we were selected for another DLRT grant, allowing us to fund the last chapter of our Master Plan without using the dedicated Free Cash funds from Town Meeting. And finally, the state certified our Free Cash this week after closing the books on FY20. We will have \$312k available for use in FY22. This is less than optimal for our current funding strategies. Although we expected less Free Cash this year due to the impacts of COVID-19, this total will impact the FY22 Capital Budget and limit options. We will discuss this more in the months to come.

4. **Infrastructure Updates** – This year’s capital projects continue to move forward now that Town Meeting has finalized the FY21 Capital Budget. For a full listing of project status, please see our [FY21 Q1 Financial Report](#). This month I finalized a grant proposal through the Community Compact for the digitizing of town records. If successful, this grant will not only modernize and improvement our public records process, but it will also free up space in all town buildings for social distancing and employee workspace.
5. **Employee Recognition** – This week I would like to recognize the Parks Commission under the leadership of Sanda Barry for their efforts during the COVID-19 outbreak and beyond. It turned out to be a very challenging year for the Commission, navigating COVID-10 restrictions while still providing high-quality services to our town’s residents. Additionally, the Parks Commission continues to advocate for town recreational space, analyzing the town’s need for continued Parks maintenance and maintaining a focus on its upkeep. No project highlighted this effort more than the proposed renovation of Rainbow’s End. Not only did the Parks Commission work with town residents to secure this funding, they also donated hours of personal time to file for a competitive, but complicated grant to help offset town costs. I appreciate the efforts of this all volunteer board and their efforts to provide big town recreational services with small-town resources.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rm. McLane'.

Ryan M. McLane
Town Administrator