



Town Administrator

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To: Board of Selectmen

From: Ryan M. McLane, Town Administrator

Date: November 30, 2020

Subject: Town Administrator's Report

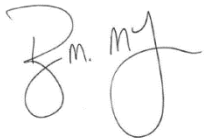
The following is the Town Administrator's report for the period ending November 26, 2020.

1. **COVID-19 Information** – The Town of Hubbardston is now a “green” community according to the state, an increase from our previous “grey” status. This means that we are a community of less than 10k, have less than or equal to 15 cases, but more than 10. Hubbardston has seen 36 total cases and 15 in the last 14 days for a per 100k incident rate of 22.9 cases. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Hubbardston residents have been tested 3,000 times. We continue to monitor the increased positivity and testing rate. We also, last week, had our first staff member test positive for COVID-19; however, this staff member never entered the town after infection and is asymptomatic at this time. As of today, I am recommending no change in our current service delivery. In COVID-related news, I am looking for the Board to complete the attached subrecipient agreement with the Quabbin Regional School District. This previously reported agreement would allow our school to purchase laptops for Hubbardston Center School teachers and students.
2. **Department Report** – Our newly formed Land-Use Department continues to consolidate permitting processes and is now regularly scheduling department-level coordination meetings to streamline/coordinate efforts. Our Assessing Department will see some significant changes in the coming month, moving to remote services for all processing work and open to the public (post COVID restrictions) during all business hours. We will be publishing new contact information for the Assessing Department, but the goal is to provide increased customer service times while simultaneously increasing inter-office efficiency. Information flow continues to improve on the Town Web site. The new Economic Development Coordinator is working on consolidating all town events/programs on the [Town Calendar](#) and the Executive Office added links to the Homepage directing residents to [Town Policies](#) and the [Town Budget](#).
3. **Financial Management** – Our finance team completed the audit process with our external auditors (Scanlon). We will have findings for you to review at your December meeting. We are awaiting guidance from the state on the continuance of the CARES Act in order to fund COVID-related service increases; however, current guidance

indicates no additional spending past December 30, 2020. We will start the CARES ACT reconciliation process in two weeks. We have three grant announcements to make. First, we were not successful in getting a 2020 MassWorks Grant for Lombard Road. The very competitive process saw very few small-town awards for road projects. We will meet with the state to receive lessons learned for the 2021 rounds. Hubbardston has been approved for a Byrne Justice Assistance Grant's (JAG) Local Law Enforcement (LLE) Grant Award in the amount of \$22,830. This money will be critical to provide officers with in car cameras as well as video storage, portable radio upgrades and more. This grant will limit the department's capital impact and increase officer safety. We also received a \$60,000 Community Compact IT Grant for our document reduction project. This is a huge project and will offer the following benefits - less wasted employee time searching for records, less errors for duplicated land-use work, more public access to street files and more space in the town offices due to less paper storage. It also removes this item from the capital plan.

4. **Infrastructure Updates** – Last we finalized our Fire Department Exhaust Mitigation System procurement, awarding the project to Murphy Specialties Inc out of Boston. They will install the system in the coming months under the supervision of Seaman Engineering, our design firm. We also finalized our procurement process for the Curtis Recreational Field Gazebo Roof. The Lions Club is facilitating this work under the direction of my office. We should have a new roof installed before the spring. This week, we initiated procurement for an emergency repair of the DPW Salt Shed Roof. This project is necessary due to fall wind damage. Residents should also see the Park Department's portable ice rink start to take shape at the recreational fields in time for winter. And finally, assessment work began on the Library Foundation. Our engineering firm is assessing the masonry damage with assistance from the DPW.
5. **Employee Recognition** – This week I would like to recognize Dennis O'Donnell for his outstanding work as our Emergency Management Director during the COVID-19 pandemic. Few realize the time Dennis spends keeping up to date with the latest information in addition to his coordination work with our safety and health departments. He also works diligently to complete complicated FEMA grant applications. Many towns have full-time support for this type of effort, but thanks to Dennis, we continually receive maximum support and coordination for COVID-19 and more. His service to the community in many aspects is exemplary, but during this year, it has gone far past above and beyond.

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