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# TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

July 21, 2020



## ADMINISTRATION:

- Town Administrator (TA) Greg Johnson, Assistant Town Administrator (ATA) Megan Zammuto, Human Resources (HR) Coordinator Stephanie Duggan, Public Health Agent Kelly Pawluczzonek, and Public Health Nurse Katherine Castle continue to be in nearly constant communication regarding the conditions and communications surrounding the current public health crisis.

Please visit the [town's webpage devoted to COVID-19 information](#):

- TA Greg Johnson is planning to take Personal Time Off (PTO) from August 17-21, 2020, and will request to be excused from attending the scheduled Board of Selectmen meeting for August 18, 2020.
- TA Greg Johnson and Director of Public Works (DPW) Justin DeMarco met on-site with representatives of Art Space, including Executive Director Jerry Beck and board member Tim Hess, to review the organization's vision for improvements to the building, both indoors and outdoors, and expansion of programming. More information is expected for review by the Board of Selectmen at a future date.
- TA Greg Johnson, ATA Megan Zammuto, and Town Planner Bill Nemser met with Master Plan Steering Committee Chair Brendon Chetwynd to prepare for the request for Town Meeting's acceptance of the committee's report and implementation strategy of the Plan.
- TA Greg Johnson, ATA Megan Zammuto, and Town Planner Bill Nemser, along with Maynard Affordable House Trust member Rick Lefferts and Maynard Housing Authority Bob Larkin met with Regional Housing Services Office team members for the first "kick-off" meeting. A short-term contract is in place through September, with a full inter-municipal agreement (IMA) scheduled to begin in October.
- TA Greg Johnson requests to take Personal Time Off (PTO) from August 17-21 and be excused from the scheduled August 18 Board of Selectmen meeting. ATA Megan Zammuto is expected to attend in his stead.

## TOWN CLERK:

As submitted by Town Clerk Michelle Jenkins:

- Although the Annual Town Meeting warrant was dissolved on June 13<sup>th</sup>, that did not mean that everything was final. Since then five articles have been sent to the Attorney General's Office for approval and two articles were sent to the Legislature for approval. The Legislature is set to hold session at the end of the month.
- The Annual Town Election results have been finalized and all necessary reports have been completed.

- Now on to the Fall Elections. It is going to be a VERY busy election season. Federal Law mandates that all ballots for military and overseas citizens be sent prior to July 18th. I am happy to say all went out on Tuesday, July 14th.
- Recently, the Legislature has made numerous changes to the Election Laws, due to COVID. The most drastic change to the Election Law is the ability for voters to “Early Vote by Mail”, earlier than in past years. In addition, “In Person Early Voting” has been extended and requires all Clerk’s to hold sessions on both Saturdays and Sundays. With the increase of the volume of ballots that are going to be returned I had to purchase, with the help of Head Custodian Kyle Brainard, a larger mailbox which will be locked and chained to the railing in the front of Town Hall. This will be emptied daily.
- I recently had a meeting with both Mr. Brainard and DPW Director Justin Demarco to begin discussions on how to handle all the new changes. We have decided to hold Early Voting in the Soup Campbell Room as opposed to the Michael Gianotis Room. We truly believe this is the most practical and safest for not only the voters in Town but for the Town Hall Staff. Other reasons for the room change include, it is better handicapped accessible, voters will be entering and exiting 1 door as opposed to walking throughout the building, and the larger room will make it easier to enforce social distancing. “A” frame signs will be placed at the front door directing voters to enter through the rear of the building. I plan to only let 5 voters in at a time, so Mr. Brainard will be putting up tents for voters to stand under while waiting to enter to vote.
- I have updated the website with quite a bit of information for the voters. A list of all the dates and times of “In Person Early Voting” has been posted. In addition, I posted a guide for the voters. I hope this guide will be helpful for voters and answer any of the questions they may have.

## **LIBRARY:**

As submitted by Library Director Stephen Weiner:

- Budget Status: We are closing out FY 20. Expenditures were frozen in April but we were allowed to continue to expend in order to meet our requirement. We are looking at an uncertain budget cut in FY 21; however we are trying to reduce salary as little as possible.
- Virtual services: Over the last few months, staff has created a compelling virtual program, including Story Times, programs for adults and informational updates. These programs appear on Facebook, Instagram, and on Twitter.
- Physical services: We began a curbside delivery program on June 3. We estimate our circulation to be about 40% of what we consider normal for spring. The work is very labor intensive.
- Grants: We expect to hear fairly soon about 2 grants: a \$2,500 CARES grant for hardware to support virtual programs, and a \$ 7,500 LSTA programming grant.
- Workflow: We are still doing regular work functions such as processing invoices, ordering materials, etc. Most staff are in the building weekdays. The Town is working on a set of safe working guidelines. At present, I’m working with the Health agent.

## **POLICE:**

As submitted by Police Chief Mike Noble:

- DOWNTOWN BUSINESS/RESTAURANTS: The Department has heard from several members of the community regarding the downtown new parklets/restaurant and they have been overwhelmingly

positive. We have not received any parking complaints and only minor issues that were easily addressed.

- **COMMUNITY INCIDENTS:**

- On June 5<sup>th</sup>, Officers assisted in leading the Maynard High School Senior parade through town.
- On June 27, 2020, we entered an elderly woman, Betty Thorndike, as a missing person. She had stopped and asked Officer Eric Davoll for directions to Plymouth where she said she lived. Officer Davoll gave her directions, however something just didn't sit right with him and he checked on her destination and found she actually moved from Plymouth to Maynard a few weeks earlier and had memory impairment issues. A Silver Alert (missing/endangered elderly person) was sent out. Mrs. Thorndike did not have a cell phone or other way of tracking her except credit/debit cards, so we were essentially chasing her by where she had been. We received information of her being in Connecticut then New York City. She was found Tuesday morning by the NYPD in Queens, NY. Special thanks was sent to the Connecticut State Police and the NYPD for their help in locating her.
  - Officer Eric Davoll should also be commended in his perceptive and caring when he checked to make sure she arrived at her destination, this was crucial in finding Mrs. Thorndike unharmed. We were able to put out alerts and know that she was missing and possibly in need of assistance right away and not days later. Well done Off. Davoll.

- **DEPARTMENT REFORMS:**

On May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, George Floyd was killed at the hands of Minneapolis Police officers. I personally condemned the actions of those officers on social media and followed it up with a letter describing the actions the Maynard Police Department takes so that does not happen here. Since then there have been several calls for reform. Massachusetts policing has always been ahead of the curve and many of the reforms people are requesting across the country are already part of the Maynard Police Department. Further as a fully accredited agency we use the best police practices. As part of our accreditation we are always looking at our policies and confirming they are up to date and in line with the best police practices. Our trainings have never included choke holds and throughout our policies we outlined duties whereby a police officer must intervene when another officer is using excessive force or committing a crime. However, so as not to have any doubt about our policies: I added a specific ban on chokeholds and put in a specific duty to intervene to our policies in order for the officers to be able to reference it when reviewing the policies and so newer officers can easily access it. The updated policies were then distributed throughout the department and were discussed during the roll calls.

I also had a very informative conversation with our State Representative, Kate Hogan, with regards to proposed state reforms and my support and possibly issues with parts of them and their implementation.

- **PROTESTS & DEMONSTRATIONS:**

At the end of May and throughout June there were several protests/demonstrations across the nation in response to the atrocity from the killing of George Floyd and to bring to light police-brutality. Maynard had a few demonstrations that were peaceful and there were no reported incidents. We will always support and defend the communities right to protest peacefully.

- **POLICY CHANGES:**

Banned the use of chokeholds and specified the duty to intervene. Previously added Special Orders for COVID 19 remain in place. Continue to review all policies as part of our annual review.

- **STATISTICS & ACTIVITIES:**

As a result of the non-essential businesses closings, stay at home requests, and social distancing guidelines our statistics are significantly down.

- Overall Calls for service 1,584 Down – 25% from June 2019
- 90 Incident Reports – Up 17% from June 2019
- 6 Arrest – Down 54% from June 2019
- 8 Citations – Down 93% from June 2019
- 6 Accidents – Up 20% from June 2019

- **TRAINING:**

Since COVID 19 restrictions were put in place the police department has not been able to attend mandatory trainings required by statute and accreditation. Currently there has been more than 300 hours of missed training due to COVID 19, and the department is anticipating another 200-300 hours of missed training over the next month. The MPTC has extended the deadlines of these trainings and most of these mandatory trainings will need to be completed in FY 2021.

- **PERSONNEL:**

Officer Karl Nyholm worked his last shift on June 25, 2020, after over thirty-six (36) years of service. Officer William Duggan worked his last shift on July 1, 2020, after twenty (20) years of service. I personally thank them both for their years of service and the department will miss their experience and dedication.

- **HIRING:**

We are in the process of doing background checks on the final two (2) deputy chief candidates. We have also sent conditional offers for anticipated new hires pending the usual background checks, psychological & medical checks, graduation from a full-time academy, and appointment by the BOS.

## **MUNICIPAL SERVICES:**

### Conservation:

- Conservation Commission (ConsCom) issued a negative determination in response to the Request for Determination filed by the owners of 115 Acton Street regarding the removal of a barn and the installation of a pool in the latter 50 feet of the protective buffer around intermittent streams. This means that the work can go forward without a full permit. This is because the work is occurring outside of the 50 foot no disturbance zone, and certain residential uses are exempt from permitting.
- ConsCom issued a Certificate of Compliance for the Stormwater Permit at 173 Main Street.
- ConsCom issued an enforcement order to 2 Brian Way for expanding a driveway within the wetland buffer without Conservation Commission review, and for potential violations of Conditions in Perpetuity per a previous permit issued to the property.

- A scout, Vincent Boothroyd, will begin his Eagle Scout project this month. The project includes re-establishing the overgrown trail off of Blue Jay Way.

#### Planning, Zoning and Economic Development:

- 115 Main Street (former Grubers) – The Planning Board denied the applicant’s site plan/special permit application for a 28 unit mixed-use project by a 4-1 vote. The board indicated they felt they had not been provided materials and updates to plans that they had requested. No new information had been provided for the last several meetings and the board believed no further progress could be made without additional material. The Developer indicated no new material was forthcoming request for the project. It should be made clear that all a listing of all material required for board hearings is located in the Planning Board Rules and Regulations, Landscape Regulations and Zoning By-laws: <https://www.townofmaynard-ma.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/pb-submitting-site-plans-and-special-permit-application.pdf?v=201909>
- The developers of Maynard Crossing, the Capital Group, has been scheduled for the September 22 Planning Board meeting where the board will determine if the developers are in violation of the Planning Board Decision approving the project. If the board determines the developer is in violation, they could withdraw their Special Permit approval. The potential violation involves a dispute between the proportional costs of sewer and the amount to be paid by the Town and the Developer. Additionally, the board directed the Capital Group to correct lighting and violations of hours of work that had been occurring. The board stated they would consider these infractions on September 22 as well if not resolved. Staff believes an agreement for the sewer costs should be reached shortly but if not, the hearing will go on.
- Mill and Main is proposing leasing part of their parking lot to Ryder Truck Rental. The overnight storage and daytime storage of vehicles is a “By Right” Use in the HCI Zone. However, because the site plan parking is being affected, the Planning Board will determine if this is a minor modification or a hearing is required. No operations will be conducted on site. Vehicles will only be moved in and out for storage related task.

#### Housing

- Office of Municipal Services staff is working with the Affordable Housing Trust and the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) to implement an Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). The ERAP provides temporary monthly rental assistance in the form of a grant to eligible households who have a loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic. ERAP will pay between \$350 - \$800/month in rental assistance, depending on the unit size for four months. Payments are made directly to the landlord. The RHSO will be accepting applications later this month. Program details will be available in English, Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese.

#### Public Health

- The Board of Health encourages residents to read [tips for preventing EEE](#), a rare but serious illness spread by the bite of an infected mosquito.
- [Town’s COVID-19](#) webpage is updated daily with positive cases in Maynard