



MEMORANDUM

TO: Select Board

FROM: John C. Curran, Town Manager

CC: Clancy Main, Assistant Town Manager
Robert Maynard, Director of Administrative Services

SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report, March 18, 2024

DATE: March 14, 2024

Boston Road North

MassDOT will be paving the length of this project with a skim coat to improve the driving conditions during the project. They will be implementing temporary lane shifts on Boston Road northbound and southbound from Simmons Lane to Danforth Village in Billerica. The lane shifts are scheduled to start on Monday, March 18 and will continue until Sunday, September 1. The temporary lane shifts are necessary to allow the contractor to perform roadway reconstruction, paving operations, and other incidental work safely and effectively for the reconstruction of Boston Road North. The Town will also be performing a cleaning and relining of the water main. Appropriate signage, law enforcement details, and advanced message boards will be in place to guide drivers through the work area. Drivers traveling through the affected areas should expect delays, reduce speed, and use caution. The Town posted a link to the Mass DOT website describing these operational announcements on its' social media venues.

New DPW Facility

Last week the Project team received approval from the Planning Board and Conservation Commission. This is a significant project milestone. Work will begin on preparing the bid packages and those are expected to go out early this Summer. Construction is scheduled to begin this coming fall.

Opioid Analysis and Press Call

Over the last couple of months, Angela Consentino, a Doctoral student at UMass Lowell, has been conducting the Landscape Analysis. She met with various individuals and groups involved in the opioid Epidemic and gathered information. This includes the Police Department, the Chair of the Billerica Substance Awareness and Prevention (BSAP) Committee, the Substance Abuse Director, the Town Manager and residents with lived experiences with substance abuse. Angela created a community survey to gather feedback from those affected by the opioid epidemic and the Town disseminated this survey on social media and the website. In May there will be a public meeting for residents to attend and voice their grievances about the epidemic. Angela will use all the information she's gathered to prepare a landscape analysis for the Town.

The Town participated in a press call with UMass Lowell on Friday highlighting the Town's comprehensive and ambitious approach to using the opioid settlement in the most effective manner possible. It will be released in several of the Universities media venues.

Sergeant Interviews

Last week the Town conducted interviews with eleven patrol officers for four sergeant positions in the Police Department. This will have a substantial impact, given there are only eight sergeant positions in the department. The Town is pleased with the candidates, their dedication and passion for their work and protecting Billerica was evident. The Town is enthusiastic about the future for the department.

Cyber Security

At one of our previous meetings Vice Chair Conway inquired about the Town's ability to withstand a cyber security incident. This office met with Lieutenant Commander Katz, Deputy Chief Glen Magnan, and the Town's IT Director Chris Bartlett to review our policies and assess our preparedness. Our IT Director has implemented numerous safeguards in conjunction with Lieutenant Commander Katz to ensure that the Town is protected. Whether that be firewalls, different networks for Public Safety and the Town, or two factor authentication, the Town has enacted industry standards to ensure our preparedness to protect the Town from an incident. If it is the will of the Board to receive more detail on this issue an executive session can be scheduled in the future to discuss Cybersecurity with our IT team.

Clean Up Green Up

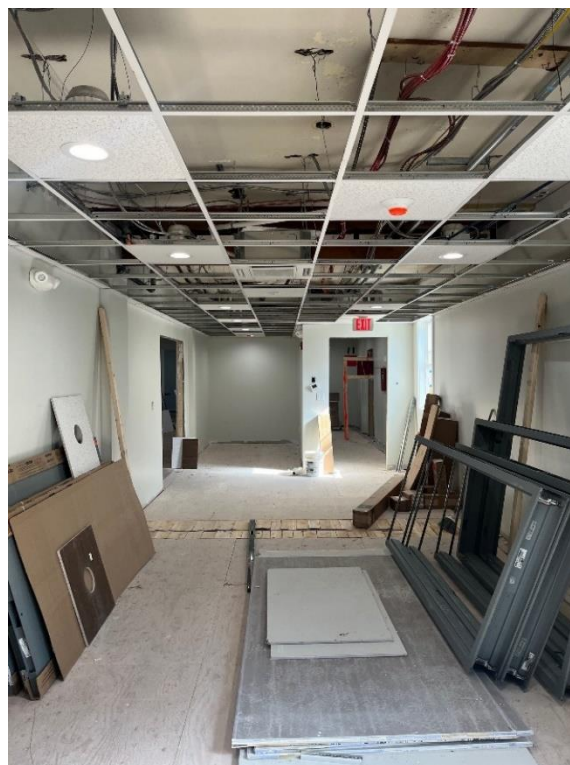
Clean up green up will take place on April 20th this year from 10AM-12PM! The sign-up link is available on the Town's website and can be accessed here; <https://tinyurl.com/3f2ua4ek>

Shifting YDPB

Selectboard member Rosa had inquired about shifting the layout of the Bike Path between Richardson St. and River St., to municipally owned land to avoid the easement costs on private property. BETA and our Town Engineer, Kelley Conway, reviewed the layout and concluded that due to the grade difference shifting the layout would add more cost when compared to the cost of easements.

11 Concord Road

Construction work at 11 Concord Road continues to move forward. The Town expects the food pantry to move back in April. Most of the work completed to date has been regarding the utilities and code issues. The remaining work is primarily finishes, floors, doors, ceiling tiles, fixtures, etc. The Town does not expect any of the remaining work to delay the Food Pantry from operating out of 11 Concord Road in April.



Sweetheart Dinner Dance

For the first time since COVID the Council on Aging will be hosting their Sweetheart Dinner Dance. An evening of dinner and dancing for Billerica Couples with 50 or more years of marriage! An accomplishment worth celebrating. This year the Sweetheart Dinner Dance will take place

Thursday, May 16 from 5:00 – 9:00pm at the Billerica Elks. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact Jeanne Teehan at the COA, 978-671-0916.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Public Forum

The final public forum will take place on Wednesday March 20th at 6:30PM in the Buck Hall Auditorium and on Zoom. More details can be found on the Open Space and Recreation webpage on the Town's website. Help the committee and Town review the plan before the seven-year plan is finalized. The link to register for the Zoom Meeting is here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZctfuuvrD4vEt1zxsh-JQIMAzacAPrTF6-R#/registration>

Insurance Advisory Committee (IAC)

The Town sat down with the IAC to go over our proposed adjustments to the Blue CrossBlue Shield HMO health plan. These changes were presented to the board at their last meeting. Many in attendance were amenable to the changes, however some clarification is needed regarding the PillarRX program and the change to the Medicare Part B premium reimbursement. We will be sitting down with the IAC again in early April to determine whether we will be taking on these changes or not.

Independent Audit

Select Board member Burrows requested information about performing an independent audit. The Town performs one every year. The past three years were included in your mailbox.

Below is an excerpt from the Division of Local Services:

An audit is an examination of systems, programs, and financial data intended to provide independent assurance that a community's financial statements are reliable, accurate, and complete. An audit also confirms that financial checks and balances are in place to protect public assets. As a matter of best practice, communities engage certified public accountants to conduct independent audits of their financial records to review operating procedures, verify financial controls, and comment on management practices in a formal, transparent process.