




## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Select Board

**FROM:** Christopher Dillon, Town Manager 

**SUBJECT:** Town Manager's Report

**DATE:** April 24, 2026

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### Town Manager

#### **Gazebo Survey**

From March 20<sup>th</sup> to April 20<sup>th</sup>, an online survey was advertised to gain additional public comment regarding the desired next steps for the Town Common gazebo. Full results will be discussed at next agenda. Thank you to the 450 residents that provided comments and to the Planning Department and community leaders who helped circulate the survey.

#### **Chapter 90 Funding**

I have attached a letter we recently received from State Representative Mark Lombardo who informed us the Town of Billerica will be receiving \$1,970,420 in Chapter 90 state funding as part of House Bill 5375 for local road and bridge repair. The bill still requires Senate approval and the governor's signature. This is in addition to our \$2,000,000 allocated in our FY2027 budget.

#### **Meeting with Businesses**

This past week, I met with a business owner and staff regarding concerns he has with processes for approving businesses. It was a great meeting as I have heard from other businesses in Town the processes can be difficult in Billerica. This gentleman provided specific examples as to the challenges they have experienced in recruiting businesses to fill open spaces in their properties.

This next week, I will be meeting with additional staff on what we can do to help businesses as they navigate our procedures and will report back to the board over the summer on what we have changed and what still needs to be modified moving forward.

#### **Vacation**

On page 3 of my contract, it states:

*"The Town Manager shall be allowed to carry over from one fiscal year to the next unused vacation benefit time of up to, but not exceeding, five (5) days in total. The Town Manager shall provide written notification to the Select Board, prior to may 1<sup>st</sup> of each fiscal year, of his intention to carry over any vacation benefit time into the next fiscal year."*

Please accept this as notification of my intention to carry over five (5) days of vacation time from fiscal year 2026 to fiscal year 2027. Additionally, I want to notify the board of my intention to take a few

days off after Town Meeting the end of May and some days here and there in June. Also, I am scheduled for a couple weeks' vacation next fiscal year (2027) the week of July 6-10<sup>th</sup> and July 27-31<sup>st</sup>.

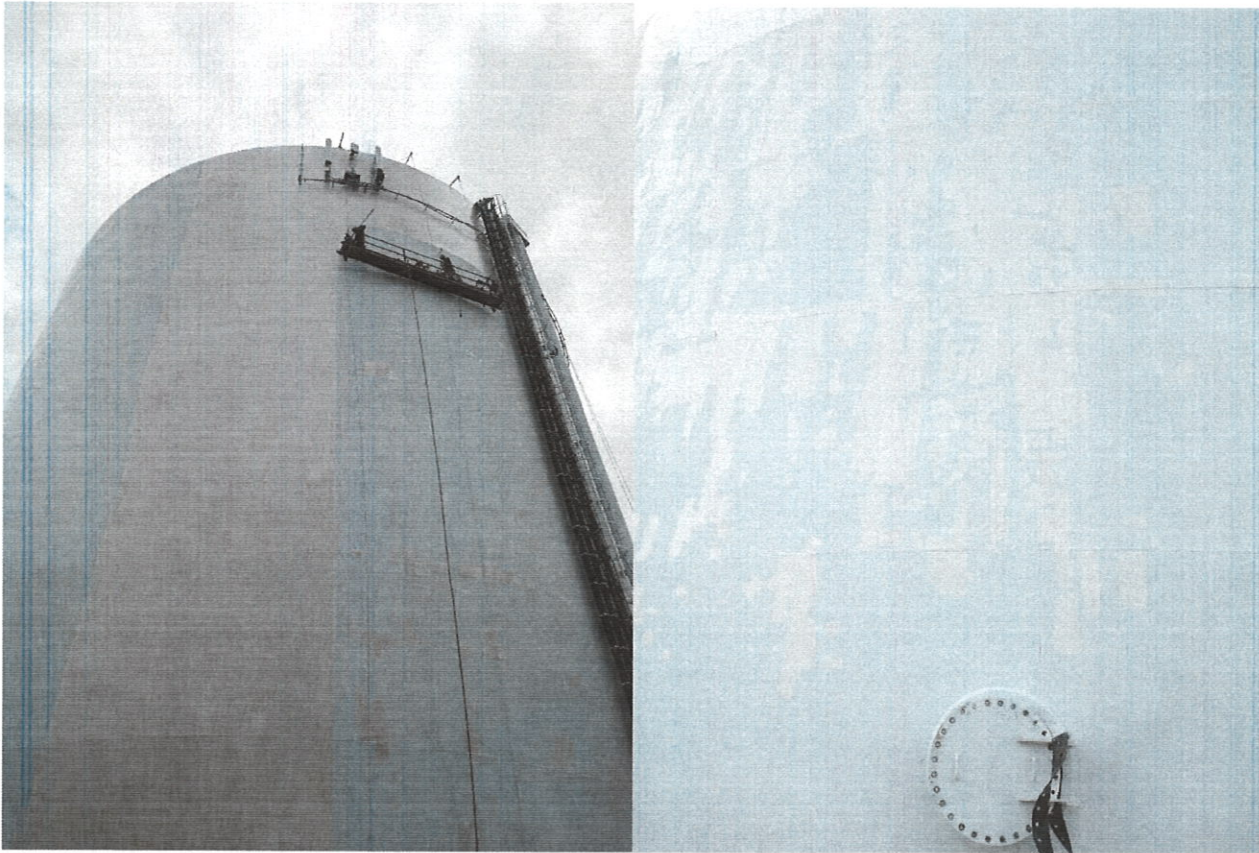
## **Department of Public Works**

### **Engineering**

**Yankee Doodle Bike Path:** April 28-29, Barletta is tentatively planning on mobilizing to begin creating access areas at the Concord Road (at Middlesex Turnpike) & Middlesex Turnpike (at the proposed parking lot across from the National Grid electrical substation). This work is in anticipation of the proposed tree clearing (and subsequent erosion/sediment controls) scheduled the week of May 4, 2026. All tree clearing, for now, is to take place between Concord Road & Orchard Road. No trees on Astrig Way will be observed until all parties have approved the new layout/design for the bike path.

### **Water**

1. Tower Farm Storage Tank: The work is progressing well. I am very pleased with the work of the contractor and Tighe and Bond.
  - a. Tank Drainage went exceedingly well, with coordination with both treatment and distribution staffs
  - b. The outside work that has been completed:
    - i. Full power washing
    - ii. Full spot sanding and painting
    - iii. First full primer coat completed
  - c. Inside work completed:
    - i. Cleaning of sediment from the bottom only took half of a day due to it being cleaner than expected or planned for
    - ii. Sanding Blasting of the interior of the tank is 2/3rds complete
  - d. Contractor has been accommodating; they have two crews working conjointly. They focused both crews first on getting outside as far along as possible before the rainy week. Then focuses the same two crews on the inside while rain, wind and temperature hinder the outside work.
2. Ozone Strainer Repair: The ozone strainer went beyond our ability to clean or repair; it was removed for rehab/rebuild by manufacturer and has been reinstalled. Ozone has resumed operation
3. Raw Water VFD: arrived sooner than expected and contractor onsite for the installation:
  - a. VFD #3 (the inoperable VFD) has been replaced with the new VFD and is now in service.
  - b. VFD #2 (the oldest remaining VFD) has been installed and is in place, however it is not in service yet due to a broken control board arriving. The replacement board is in the contractor's possession and is scheduled to be installed on Wednesday 4/29/2026.
4. Meter Program: is ramping up after the winter limiting the contractor to endpoints only. The team is pivoting to concentrating to full meter installations as the circumstances will allow. I believe meter total program 60% complete.
  - a. Staff overcoming significant hurdles (Distribution and Meter groups)
5. Metering/Billing System Improvement:
  - a. Communication Health: Overall rating 97% (single best is 99%)
    1. Improvements 2023: 93% of 14,250 meters
    2. increased improvement of 4% while adding 1,150 working meters
  - b. Device Health: Overall rating 98% (single best is 99%)
    1. Improvements 2023: 93% of 14,555 endpoints
    2. increased improvement of 6% while adding 980 working devices
  - c. Billing Status: Overall rating 97% (single best is 97%)



### **Wastewater**

We are continuing to move forward on several projects so not much that is brand new here, just continued progress towards the Division's goals:

- The appeals for SRF funding on the Brown Street Force main project were unsuccessful. The town did everything within its power including letters from Marc Lombardo, Chris Dillon, and DPW along with attending the public hearing conference call. MBTA did not send treat this matter in an urgent manor, finally getting back to us weeks after the appeal. Design work on the force main has continued and is close to completion.
- The Wastewater Division, DPW, Engineering and ECT (Environmental Consulting & Technology) are working on proposed revisions and refinement of the current town sewer regulations. It has been several years since a major revision.
- We are currently seeing around 1 million gallons a day of Inflow and Infiltration as the snow has been melted for weeks now. Weather has been relatively dry otherwise for a spring. We were seeing as much as 3 Million Gallons per day of Infiltration and Inflow this spring.
- We are halfway through the I&I rehabilitation project approved in 2024. Snow has slowed work down due to several manholes being buried in easements as well as the snow emergencies themselves making it difficult to perform the remaining work. We are still in good shape since National Watermain started quickly after being awarded the project.

- We were just informed that Billerica has received a grant for loan forgiveness on this project, the dollar amount is \$63,357. We are awaiting further communication on this loan adjustment.
- Work should resume soon
  
- The New Atlas Copco Blower is officially installed, integrated with SCADA and running
- Design on the Admin and Sludge building roof replacements has started with Weston and Sampson
- Research and planning are continuing to move forward on converting from emulsion style polymer to dry polymer for the phosphorus removal unit known as “comag” in the plant. This is better for the environment and over time dry polymer is cheaper than the emulsion style.
- Darby and Waterview Pump Station design work has started
- Rehabilitation of sewer on Lowell St. made the SRF funding IUP list that was just released.



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

**MARC T. LOMBARDO**  
**REPRESENTATIVE**  
22<sup>ND</sup> MIDDLESEX DISTRICT  
BILLERICA

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April 15, 2026

Christopher Dillon  
Town Manager  
365 Boston Road  
Office #201  
Billerica, MA 01821

Dear Chris,

I am writing to let you know that today the House of Representatives approved a \$1.4 billion transportation infrastructure bond bill; The total FY27 Apportionment Billerica will receive is \$1,970,420.30 in Chapter 90 state funding for local road and bridge repair.

Chapter 90 funds can be spent on a variety of municipal roadway projects, including resurfacing, drainage, sidewalks, guardrails, traffic control, and right of way acquisition as well as street lighting. This funding can also be used for bikeways, landscaping and tree planting, and purchasing and maintaining certain road building machinery, equipment and tools.

House Bill 5375 now moves to the Senate for its consideration as this bill still requires Senate approval and the governor's signature before it can take effect.

I will keep you apprised of the Senate vote and willing the bill can be signed by the Governor and this funding can be finalized. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my office for any additional information regarding this funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marc T. Lombardo".

**MARC T LOMBARDO**  
State Representative

The Town Manager shall not take more than five (5) consecutive vacation days without prior written request to and written approval of such extended vacation by the Chair of the Select Board. The Town Manager shall, furthermore, provide the Chair of the Select Board with 24 hours' written notice of his intention to use any vacation benefit.

The Town Manager may, at his election, receive pay in each fiscal year subject to this Agreement in the amount equivalent to his unused vacation benefit, up to a maximum of five (5) days. At the time of termination of his employment, the Town Manager shall be compensated for all accrued but unused vacation leave at the then current wage rate being earned by the Town Manager at the time of termination of employment.

The Town Manager shall be allowed to carry over from one fiscal year to the next unused vacation benefit time of up to, but not exceeding, five (5) days in total. The Town Manager shall provide written notification to the Select Board, prior to May 1<sup>st</sup> of each fiscal year, of his intention to carry over any vacation benefit time into the next fiscal year. Failure to the Town Manager to provide said required notification shall void his right to carry over vacation benefits.

d. Sick Leave Benefit:

The Town Manager shall be entitled to a sick leave benefit in an amount equal to, but not in excess of, fifteen (15) days per fiscal year. The Town Manager shall be allowed to accumulate and carry over up to, but not exceeding, seventy (70) sick leave benefit days. In the event that the Town Manager utilizes all of his accumulated sick leave benefit time for illness, the Select

To: Mr. Christopher Dillon, Billerica Town Manager

From: Werner F. Gossels

Date: April 22, 2026

RE: Suggested Improvements

Not long ago we attended a meeting here in Billerica Town Hall to discuss what Billerica officials could do to help attract businesses to open in Billerica. I requested this meeting as my response to that question.

Please streamline the Town's involvement in the occupancy process for welcoming new businesses.

1. For those businesses that are permitted as of right by the zoning by-laws, allow them to occupy their leased premises immediately after they submit their letter of intent,
2. For those businesses requiring a special permit, encourage the permit granting authority to streamline its procedures so that they issue their decision within 7 days of the vote and allow occupancy immediately after the 20 day appeal period.
3. Issues that now interfere with occupancy should be resolved between the Town and the property Owner without delaying the new business's ability to begin setting up.
4. When an applicant applies for a re-occupancy permit, the Building Department should expedite the permit by making sure that each department issues its approval concurrently within 7 business days.
5. When issues take longer, the follow up by the Building Department must communicate what needs to be done to move forward.
6. When a Building Permit or Occupancy permit is issued, a copy should be sent to the property Owner.
7. Return to normal procedure to hold store owners accountable for their own water/sewer meters.

I have begun this meeting with what I consider the solution to what is now an enormous hurdle that new businesses have to overcome.

At the present time, the re-occupancy procedure that precedes issuing an occupancy permit, encourages a veto from every department in the Town with serious consequences to the applicant and nothing to encourage the vetoer to act quickly.

My experience has been that the issue causing the veto is not necessarily related to the applicant's business. In fact, the veto has been used to pressure property owners.