

# Town Manager Report


Town of Lunenburg-August 4, 2020





## Contact Information

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## Announcement on Existing Vacancies:

The following is a list of vacancies on the following committees:

- Agricultural Commission (1 alternate vacancy)
- Americans with Disabilities Act Commission (1 vacancy)
- Architectural Preservation District Commission (3 vacancies)
- Fence Viewers (vacancies)
- Historical Commission (3 vacancies)
- Library Board of Trustees (1 vacancy)
- Personnel Committee (1 vacancy)
- Senior Center Property Tax Work Off Committee (1 vacancy)
- Zoning Board of Appeals ( 2 Associate vacancies)

Interested persons can find application forms on the Town Website and completed forms can be sent to the Board of Selectmen's Office.

## Update on State Aid:

We received notification on Thursday, July 30th that the Baker-Polito Administration and the Legislature have committed to no less than the Fiscal Year 2020 level of funding for Unrestricted

## Updates on the FY21 Capital Plan:

- Town Hall ADA Ramp: This project will be included in the Complete Streets project and bid as part of the larger project. The Engineer is currently working on putting together a design and specifications for the Complete Streets project that encompasses town center.
- Flat Hill Culvert Design: An engineering firm is under contract for this project and will begin soon. The engineer will also prepare an application for the Small Bridge Program to apply for construction funding.
- THES Asbestos Abatement: This project is in progress.
- Marked Police Cruiser: Bids were solicited and this will be ordered shortly.
- Self Contained Breathing Apparatus: This order is in progress.
- ALS Equipment Phase 1: This is on hold right now.
- ACO Vehicle: This vehicle has been ordered but is backordered and will be many months before we receive it.
- Midlife Overhaul of Squad 3: This is on hold right now. The pump may need to be repaired soon and would be approximately \$15,000 out of the \$65,000.
- Portable Radios: Four radios will be purchased (approx. \$2,000 out of the \$45,000) for new officers. Others on hold now due to possible need for frequency changes.
- AC Design for Primary: Currently out to bid.
- Senior Center Front Entrance Reconfiguration: Design in progress and then will need to be put out to bid.

## Infrastructure Bond Bill (House No. 4932):

The Legislature passed an Infrastructure Bond Bill that included \$150,000 for the acquisition of turnout gear for the Lunenburg Fire Department and \$100,000 for a fire alarm upgrade at the Lunenburg Primary School. This was sent to the Governor for approval on August 3rd and is waiting for his approval. I had notified the Board in May that Representative Hay had notified me of this bond bill that required a list of any projects by the next day so I had provided the list we had formalized for our legislators in February and two of the four projects were chosen out of that list with reduced amounts for each project.

A Bond Bill is not like an earmark in that it is guaranteed funding. We would need to formally request these funds be released through a bond and it would require the Governor's approval. I have requested additional information from our Senator and Representatives on the formal process to make these requests and if any projects from prior bond bills have been requested and funding released.

## Community Development Block Grant Award:

In April I had reported to the Board that I had read the federal stimulus package at that time had Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding so I had reached out to Montachusett Regional Planning Agency (MRPC) to see if they would be able to assist us with putting together a CDBG application. In June I requested the Board authorize the Chairman to sign a letter of support for Lunenburg to participate in a regional Coronavirus Community Development Block Grant Application. MRPC put together this regional application that included Lunenburg, Shirley, Royalston, Townsend, and Westminster. The application request was for \$264,500 for microloans for small businesses and support for local food banks. We were notified recently that we received an award of \$296,100. The Town of Shirley will be the lead community that administers the grant and we are currently awaiting all

the grant documents from the Department of Housing and Community Development. I will update the Board as this progresses.

## Department Head Meeting Updates:

- DPW: There are currently three Equipment Operator vacancies that are being advertised by the Assistant Town Manager/HR Director that we still have been unable to fill. The Director reported that MassDOT finished the 100% design phase for the Pleasant Street Bridge project and the Engineer is addressing MassDOT's comments in order to put the project out to bid in August. Once the construction begins sometime in the fall, the detours will be in place for months.
- Fire: The Ladder Truck is expected to be delivered to the Public Safety Building the first week of August. The new Engine is expected to be delivered by the end of August. Due to COVID-19 the employees attending paramedic school have seen a delay in completing the program but the classes are expected to re-start in the fall.
- Treasurer/Collector: The Treasurer/Collector is currently advertising the list of unclaimed checks on the town website. As required by MGL, in order to return the funds to our general fund for checks that were never cashed, the Town is required to advertise on the website for 60 days, advertise in the paper twice for a period of time and after a one year period at the end of the newspaper advertising can void the checks. The Treasurer/Collector is working towards another tax lien sale and auction for foreclosed properties.
- Land Use: The Land Use Director reported on the major greenhouse proposal from Bright Farms and a 2.5 MW solar project being developed by Nexamp on Electric Ave that is currently going through the permitting process. The process for updating the Master Plan is moving forward; the Collins Center will be the consultant to conduct a new population study as the first step in the process.
- Cable: Public Access has seen a 9% increase in local programming. The Cable Manager and IT have ordered and will be installing the equipment needed to move towards having in-person meetings that we can also conduct Zoom meetings. The third channel, an educational channel, is up and running and we will be able to run Library programs and information on Stormwater to meet one of the requirements in our MS4 permit.
- Library: The Library Director reported that curbside check-out is going well. All returned books are quarantined in the Community Room. The summer meal program called Project Bread that has operated out of the Library Community Room in the past is doing meal pick-ups at the TCP building Monday-Thursday 11 am-12:30 p.m. The summer reading program ends July 25th.
- COA: The Council on Aging Director reported there will be a Armchair Travel program on August 3rd with a 10 person limit, Tai Chi in the Park on Wednesday beginning on August 5th, and they have been having much success with their Drive Through events. Bingo will start up on August 6th and will be every Thursday 2-3 pm and on Fridays 10-11 am.
- Finance: The Finance Director is working on closing out Fiscal Year 2020 and has posted all Fiscal Year 2021 budget accounts to MUNIS.

## Meetings, Events and Other Announcements:

- The Conservation Commission has a meeting on Zoom on Wednesday, August 5th at 7:00 p.m.
- The School Committee has a meeting on Zoom on Wednesday, August 5th
- The Planning Board has a meeting on Zoom on Monday, August 10th at 6:30 p.m.
- Town Counsel will hold office hours on August 26th from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.

