

# Town Manager Report


Town of Lunenburg-March 10, 2020





## Contact Information

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## Announcement on Existing Vacancies:

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

- Agricultural Commission (2 alternate vacancies)
- Americans with Disabilities Act Commission (1 vacancy)
- Architectural Preservation District Commission (1 design professional; craftsperson or building contractor familiar with historic renovation)
- Finance Committee (1 position appointed by the Finance Committee Appointing Committee)
- Open Space Committee (1 vacancy-citizen at large)
- Planning Board (1 position appointed by the remaining members of the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen until the next Annual Town Election in May)
- Zoning Board of Appeals (2 Associate vacancies)

Talent bank forms can be obtained on the Town Website and forwarded to the Board of Selectmen's Office.

## Board of Health Information on the Coronavirus (COVID-19):

Another update from the Board of Health was issued and has been shared on the website, Town Facebook page, emailed to the townwide listserv, and the Ledger. Any further updates will be shared

through these sources.

## Active Shooter Trainings:

The active shooter training at the Town Hall was very informative and some recommendations to address vulnerabilities have been put into motion. I want to thank Chief Marino and the Police Department staff that conducted the training, including Sgt. Connery, Sgt. Tocci, Sgt. Zrate, Officer Melnicki, Officer Wagner, and Officer Russell.

These trainings will also be taking place at our other town buildings at dates to be determined.

## Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning Grant:

The kick-off meeting with our consultant (CEI) was held on Monday, March 9th. The Land Use Director will be sending out a poll to all the individuals/groups that our consultant has recommended be part of the MVP Planning Workshop on potential dates to hold this workshop. Initially we thought it best to break this up into two 4 hour sessions but our consultant recommended that we would have a better product by making it one session as each portion of the workshop builds upon the previous. We hope to schedule this in March or the beginning of April in order to be able to apply for the project funding, which should be released sometime in April. After the Planning Workshop, there will be a Public Listening Session to hear the results of the Planning Workshop.

## FY 2021 Financial Updates:

As relayed to the Board in an email on March 4th, we received the Monty Tech assessment for FY21 and it is approximately \$92,000 more than the estimate we have in our budget; our budget had estimated a 2.5% increase and the actual assessment is a 14.3% increase.

The Finance Director is looking at the Overlay account that is used to cover abatements and exemptions to see if we can reduce the estimate for FY21.

## FY21 Town Counsel Retainer:

At the end of this fiscal year we will have completed three years with Mead, Talerman, and Costa providing Town Counsel Services. During this three years, we have not seen an increase in our retainer agreement; Mead, Talerman and Costa is proposing an amendment of agreement with them that would increase our monthly retainer \$455/month. This fee increase is proposed to adjust for inflation since 2017 and based on their effective hourly rates which they track on a month by month basis (the effective hourly rate is calculated by dividing the retainer amount by the billable hours). I have asked Attorney Costa to send an amended agreement but my recommendation is to continue services with MTC at the proposed retainer fee that increases the average hourly rate by \$10.95/hr. I have reviewed the Legal Expense account and based on the previous year's expenses, the current year's projected expenses and that we will only be negotiating one collective bargaining agreement next year that is billed from our labor counsel, there are sufficient funds in that account barring any unforeseen legal expense that would be extraordinary.

## Career Expo at Monty Tech:



Monty Tech is having a Career Expo on Tuesday, April 28th and I have signed up to have a table to meet with students about a career in municipal government.

## Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company Tree Trim Program:

The Tennessee Gas Pipeline is currently undergoing its Tree Trim Program on their Right of Way in the Town of Lunenburg (see map below). Periodically they need to clear their ROW of trees that have either grown within the ROW or are growing over the top of the ROW. They must maintain an open view from the sky in order to view the pipeline by slow moving aircraft, and also to have a clear view from one ground marker to the next marker when standing in the ROW. This was done a number of years ago on the northern section of the pipeline through Lunenburg to Fitchburg. The section that is currently being worked on is the line between Lunenburg and Leominster.

They have contacted all the relevant landowners and there are no environmental issues on the 8 parcels they are working on. Currently they are working on Lancaster Ave.



Department Head Updates:



Library: The Library is getting new shelving in the Tween Room that will be paid through a grant from Hannafords.

Treasurer/Collector: The Treasurer/Collector is working on unclaimed checks and will be advertising the list as required by MGL. Twelve thousand motor vehicle bills went out and are due March 23rd.

COA: The new van driver has started and is working out very well. The Eagle House is busy with their variety of programs and events all throughout the week. The new HVAC is up and running in the older section of the building and is working well.

Police: The Police Association is planning the annual Car Show in June and will be trying to bring in more food vendors this year. The PD Critical Response Team is coordinating trainings at each of the town buildings and then will go to the larger commercial businesses in town. The Police Department has put a lot of time into some cases such as a bank robbery case that spanned multiple communities and a drive by shooting case. Thank you to the good police work to all involved.

Public Access: PACC is working on getting the third channel for education up and running; the Cable Manager has been working with the IT Director on possible video conference solutions that meet remote participation guidelines; PACC received the Media Award from the Salvation Army for a public service announcement they did in September. The YouTube Live feed was taken down by YouTube with the reason that it violated community standards. The Cable Manager filed an appeal and received notice that the appeal was rejected. I will keep you updated with any changes.

IT Director: The IT Director is working with PACC's consultant on possible remote participation solutions. The solution will require additional hardware and training for videographers.

Finance Director: The Finance Director is sending out emails to departments about reimbursable grants to make sure all reimbursement requests are submitted in time for the closeout of fiscal year 2020 and is reviewing all previous capital projects to closeout balances if the projects are completed.

Land Use: The Land Use Director reported that the Earth Removal public meeting is on March 9th and the Planning Board is still working on the Stormwater bylaw. The Howard Street developer is looking to alter the Howard Street property from 122 houses to 500 one bedroom rental units. The Planning Board has another meeting with the Proctors on March 9th for their Stormwater Permit. The MVP kick-off meeting will be held on March 9th with certain department heads that make up the core team.

## Meetings, Events and Other Announcements:

- The Green Communities Task Force will be meeting this Thursday at 6:30 p.m.
- I will be attending the TCP Design Building Committee meeting tomorrow, at 6:00 p.m. at the Ritter and the Finance Committee meeting on Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall. Finance will be hearing presentations from the School and the DPW.
- Reminder that the warrant closes on Monday, March 16th at 4 pm and Finance will hold their public hearing on the budget on Thursday, March 26th at 6:30 pm.
- The Citizens Party Caucus will be Monday, March 16th at 7 pm in the Turkey Hill Elementary School Cafeteria.
- The Special State Representative Election will be March 31st 7 am - 8 pm at the TC Passios Building.
- Dog Licenses for 2020 are due by April 1st to the Town Clerk's Office.