

## Town Administrator Report, February 13, 2023

- **USDA.**
  - We are working on rates and betterments with RCAP. Met with RCAP and USDA on Monday, January 9. Reviewed rate study and betterments. We are meeting with RCAP again on Friday, February 17 to hone in on rates.
  - Easement agreement and grant of easement recorded. USDA approved and signed off on Notice to Proceed.
  - A Change Order took place because of location change and is complete and approved by USDA.
  - Second project is almost ready to go to bid. I believe we are looking at next week or the week after.
  - USDA approved paying our sewer debt BAN's of \$2,007,400.00

### *New:*

- Working on .gov domain. Insurance wants us to be more secure. This will mean our website and emails will change. I was also told I will need two step authentication for my cell phone for work. I am contemplating requesting a work cell phone.
- We received a \$5000 employee wellness grant. We are purchasing break room equipment to be located in the Treasurer/Collector former office as it is empty. We are also purchasing stand up desk accessories and picnic tables for Fire Station and Highway to have breaks outside in the warmer weather.
- I have begun attending coffee hour at the Hardwick/Barre Senior Center the first Wednesday of the month. Please come join me for a conversation or if you have any questions or concerns.
- I attended the Ware Community Development Committee public hearing on Monday, February 6. There are many social outreach programs they are applying for that include Hardwick. More information to follow to see which programs will be funded.
- Open Space and Recreation Plan is moving along with the update in order to apply for PARC grants for playground equipment
- Water Meters will be going in shortly. All residents will get notices to call to schedule a time for install.
- Vacant town owned parcels; White Building; Paige Building; Ruggles Hill School. What shall we do? I recently insured them, as there has been none on the properties. RFP? Auction?
- My Massachusetts Municipal Association Conference went very well especially with presenting for the first time. Lots of great feedback and it was nice to be in person for the first time in three years!
- I will be attending MMA Women Leading Government (WLG) in Devens on March 3.

### *Ongoing:*

- Town Hall flooding: Flooring should be complete by the end of February. We should be live in person hopefully by next meeting!
- Retirement Insurance: wrote policy for Personnel review. A few more updates and policy additions and will be coming to BOS for formal adoption.
- Council on Aging are holding office hours once again! 12:30PM at Quabbin Estates and Municipal Building (Town Hall) at 10:00AM. Please come down and check out all of the services they have.

Snacks served! Eileen and Brenda will be at each location on the last Wednesday of the month for an hour at each place unless otherwise necessary.

- DLS came out to conduct interviews for a financial review. Their initial impression was that they feel optimistic on where the Town is headed and the accomplishments over the past year. The formal review will take up to 12 weeks.
- Accountant; Shared services.
- Water Commission: We have received the water meters this week to upgrade technology and researching surrounding towns for rates, as well as exploring regulations and procedures. We had a leak on December 28. It was fixed by Highway. We have another leak that is currently being investigated by Highway and our outsourced water firm. We must start looking into upgrades. I will be prioritizing this project and looking for grants.
- Website going live February 20. Julie Murkette is working out some tweaks with Civic Plus

As always, please feel free to reach out to me anytime. My email along with work and cell numbers are on the front page of the website, and my door is always open.