

Town Administrator Report, March 13, 2023

- **USDA.**
 - Met with legal and engineering to determine how betterments should be handled.
 - Pre-construction meeting for pump station will be occurring March 15, 2023 at 8:30AM
 - Second project is almost ready to go to bid. I believe we are looking at next week. It should be in Ware River News next week
 - We have been working on an RFP for oversight. It is still in draft form. I have reached out to USDA regarding this and await a response

New:

- MIIA, the Town insurance agency, will be coming out in the next couple of weeks to inspect buildings worth over \$500K. I am hoping Marty and Scott can accompany them.
- We had another valve in our boiler let go. The exact same problems that arose in October occurred again. This time some of the same areas (that were just fixed with brand new materials, ceiling, flooring, etc.) were ruined along with new damage. Not every room was damaged. We believe we caught this faster than the first as there wasn't as much water, but still a lot of damage. The plumber came on scene within hours and couldn't replicate the problem. We also had the restoration company here setting up equipment for drying in less than two hours. I would like to thank all of the staff that pulled together and actually cleaned up all of the standing water before the restoration company arrived. We have some ideas in the meantime to hopefully not have this happen again! I am in discussions with BEC for a sensor or alarm to alert us before the pressure builds, possibly a water filter so the sediment doesn't accumulate, and more frequent draining. I do not know how to ensure this doesn't happen again without replacement.
- A fire line was leaking near Upper Church Street since Monday evening. The highway, fire and contractor worked Friday to fix the leak.
- I was informed the CDBG that Ware was the lead community on was rejected for not being in on time. They are working with DHCD to try and rectify.
- Tuesday, March 7 we had Guardian Energy come in to assess the Municipal Office Building, Fire Station and Highway. They will have recommendations on what we can do to make the buildings more efficient along with a possible new boiler/chiller for Town Hall. This would be through a Green Community grant.
- Thursday, March 9 at 6:30 was QRSD budget public hearing. Their proposal is on the website. Wednesday, March 15 is Pathfinder's budget public hearing.
- We have a meeting with National Grid on Wednesday, March 15 to discuss streetlight options for significant savings.
- Town election is April 10. There are 3 contested races: Board of Selectmen; Board of Health and School Committee

Ongoing:

- 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? I am trying to schedule a Capital Plan Committee meeting to discuss. We are shooting for Monday, March 20

- We were awarded a .gov domain. Insurance is requiring us to be more secure. All phones are supposed to have two step authenticators. This will also mean our website and emails will change. This was approved by the federal government on Tuesday, February 21. The current and future emails and website will bridge until fully integrated. I will have more information on this soon.
- Town Hall flooding: Flooring should be complete by the end of February. We should be live in person hopefully by next meeting! ← This is the saddest statement
- Our breakroom is nearly complete. It is open to all Boards and employees. It is located in the former Treasurer Office on the second floor of Town Hall ← but is all wet. Luckily the new furniture is not ruined
- Retirement Insurance: wrote policy for Personnel review. A few more updates and policy additions and will be coming to BOS for formal adoption at the next March meeting
- 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. I am told by DLS staff that it is nearly complete.
- Accountant; Shared services.
- Water Commission: We have received the water meters to upgrade technology and researching surrounding towns for rates, as well as exploring regulations and procedures. Most meters have been installed. We will hopefully be reading meters electronically at the next reading.
- Website is live as of February 27. Julie Murkette is working out some tweaks with Civic Plus
- 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.

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