



Town of Topsfield
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT
January 29, 2019

As partially reported at last night's Board Meeting, the following list outlines activities that have been completed, or are in progress at this time. Should you wish to have any one of these items discussed at an upcoming meeting, please contact me or Chairman Lyons to request an item for an upcoming agenda. As always, if you have any questions or need additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me or Debi Morong at 978-887-1500.

Summary of Verbal Update from Last Night's Meeting:

- **FY20 Budget:** All Town Departmental Budget Requests were submitted to Finance Committee for their review & consideration; Meetings are being planned and held with the Finance Committee to answer questions about budget requests and needs for FY20.
- **FY18 Free Cash:** FY18 Free Cash has been Certified by the State for \$2.5M.
- **Schedule A:** All required reporting data has been submitted to the DOR. The Town's Schedule A Report has been approved.
- **FY18 Audit:** Town's FY18 Independent Financial Audit is now complete. Report should be received on Friday, 2.1, 2019.
- **Bond Rating:** Finance Team is preparing all documents, updated data and reports for the upcoming Bond Rating Interview with Standard and Poors next week.
- **Fiscal Forecast:** FY20-24 Fiscal Forecast Spreadsheets and Narrative have been updated and revised as of 1.28.19. The current projection at this very early stage of the budget process shows an estimated \$416K deficit as FinCom begins the budget review process.
- **FY20 Capital Requests:** Initial list compiled & discussed wBOS at 1/24/19 Work Session.

List of Project/Activity Updates *(Not shared during the meeting):*

Prep for Meeting on January 7, 2019: (Regular BOS Business Meeting)

- **Signage By-Law:** Drafted Letter from 12/13/18 to Topsfield business re Updates to Sign Bylaw; Coordinated labels, documents for mailer; Met with Glenn Clohecy to review letter, packet, forms, objectives for mailing.
- **Public Hall:** Completed Public Hall policies, application, forms with Selectman Bermudez and Donna Rich; Set up webpage for Rentals, drafted & negotiated Contract for Custodial Services.

Prep for Meeting on January 10, 2019: (Budget Planning Work Session)

- **FY20 Budget Requests:** With Staff, coordinated all Town-Wide and BOS Budget Requests; Presented BOS Budget Items during Work Session
- **FY19 TA Goals:** Drafted Town Administrator's Objectives with Selectman Bermudez
- **FY20 Requests:** Drafted BOS Essential Unfunded Requests as follow-up to Work Session

Prep for Meeting on January 14, 2019: (Special Meeting/Work Session)

- **BOS Meeting re Borrowing Scenarios:** With Finance Team and Staff, coordinated information and Debt Service Repayment Structure for upcoming Borrowing. Drafted Memo for BOS overview and consideration; Prepared alternative scenarios for funding and anticipated increase in interest rates. Met with Financial Advisor to discuss options and generate reports for further consideration of the BOS.

Prep for Meeting on January 24, 2019: (Special Meeting/Executive Session)

- **FY20 Capital Requests:** Initial list FY20 Capital Budget Requests compiled for BOS
- **TA Contract Research:** Compiled 6 employment contracts from Comparable Communities for BOS Review; Assembled data into spreadsheet in order to fairly evaluate comparative salaries and benefits in Essex County

Miscellaneous:

- **Public Records:** Thirty-five (35) emails in 16 business days since BOS meeting on 1.7.19; Ninety-four (94) emails personally received/viewed since 7/1/18 (Ave. 2.2/work day)
- **Payroll Conversion Project:** Planned Payroll Conversion Project/Schedule with Treasurer and Accountant; Meet with Department Heads to discuss project and implementation plans; Drafted Memo to Department Heads and Employees regarding project, new payroll schedule, implementation plan; Coordinated special Payroll Advance Program to mitigate impact; Drafted letter to formally notify Union Reps of proposed changes and opportunity to impact bargain with represented employees.
- **ADA Grant \$25K:** Compiled & Completed ADA elevator grant Close-Out Report for the State; Toured the Town Hall with Representative
- **Elevator Grant \$75K:** Compiled all paperwork and contract documents to ensure payment of \$75,000 State Budget Earmark Grant for the Elevator.
- **Public Records:** Coordinated Meeting with Town Counsel to discuss Public Records law updates and training opportunities; Met with Town Clerk to review current procedures and new FOIA Direct Software Application for processing of public records requests and documentation; Attended MMA Sessions on Public Records Law.
- **Cable Television:** Continue to work with Boxford Cable Television to install and operate new server, audio equipment and cable related equipment necessary for new Town Hall
- **RECC Inter-Municipal Agreement:** Feedback compiled & sent 12.14.18; updated draft received and discussed with BOS on 1.28.19. Next RECC Meeting is January 30th.

BOS/TA Goals:

- **TA Goals Drafted:** Worked with Selectman Bermudez to draft and revise goals in accordance with FY19 BOS Goals as voted in December. Approved by BOS on 11.28.19.
- **Website:** Updated website with Cable information; Created a new page for the Public Hall, added all forms and applications for easy access; Coordinating additional updates and end-user feature enhancements with Select Chair Lyons in the coming week.
- **FY20 Department Budget Packets:** Town Accountant assembled all budget worksheets & distributed compiled budget requests to Finance Committee 3 weeks ago.
- **IT Survey:** Working with Selectman Bermudez on Departmental IT Survey.
- **IT Regional Grant:** Met with regional managers around Essex County to discuss IT needs and possible collaboration for a Regional IT Grant for Technical Assistance to pursue a Collaborative IT Service with the Towns of Danvers, Manchester, Essex, Wenham, Middleton and Hamilton.

Topsfield Downtown/Village Center Initiatives:

- **Parking Management Grant Application:** Grant application for \$15K submitted to the State's Downtown Initiative Grant Program to perform a Downtown Parking Management Plan. Awaiting notification of decision.
- **MAPC Initiatives:** Topsfield representatives attended the Metropolitan Area Planning Association ("MAPC") Meeting in November. A proposal was sent to MAPA for grant funds to develop a Downtown Village Strategic Plan. Awaiting notification of decision.

Town-Wide Signage:

- **Status:** Met with Glenn 2- 3 times regarding project; Drafted cover letter in December; Reviewed letter with Board at Work Session; Finalized letter with Board, Chair Lyons and Glen C.; Compiled address labels; Initial package assembled for mailing (By-Law, regs, etc.)
- **Status:** Letter forwarded to Selectman Gandt for further action on behalf of the Board
- **Task:** Complete intro/cover letter to accompany business outreach mailing;
- **Objective:** To inform businesses and community about 2018 updates to the Sign By-Law;
- **Goal:** Proactive education, outreach and information to encourage voluntary compliance for business owners and residents to follow the by-law and remove signage voluntarily.

FY2020 Capital Planning:

- **FY20 Capital:** Initial list of Requests shared with BOS on 1.24.19.
- **FY20 Capital Budget:** Holding meetings with all department heads to complete list of al FY20 Capital Budget Requests with back-up information;
- **FY21-25 Capital Planning:** Met with all departments to update 5 year CIP for a Five-Year FY20-24 Capital Improvement Plan to be presented to BOS and Finance Committee in January and February.

Financial Forecast & Policy Guidelines

- **Guidelines:** BOS and FC voted on comprehensive financial policy guidelines in December.

- **Forecast Released:** Forecast and narrative for FY20-24 released; Draft provided to BOS on January 10th. Initial discussion held with BOS on 1.28.19.
- **Next Steps:** Post on Town Website & distribute to FinCom and departments for review

Finance Committee Updates:

- **FY20 Budget Requests:** Finance Committee received FY20 Budget Departmental Budget Requests 3 weeks ago. Drafted and submitted memo with BOS Requests for Essential Unfunded budget items to the FinCom on January 10, 2019.

Capital Projects/Updates:

- **Public Hall:** BOS approved all policies and documents. Materials were posted on the Town's website; Marketing campaign is in development
- **Town Hall Project Completion:** Consigli Construction working on final project punch list items: Town Clerk transaction counter; Directories have been installed; Heating System trouble-shooting has been completed
- **Town Hall Building Committee:** Attended Town Hall Building Committee Meeting; Discussion of needs for ongoing facility maintenance support and resources to ensure that the Town Hall does not fall into disrepair
- **Steward School Project:** Construction is complete. Closed-out with MIIA. Await MSBA final close-out for the project and remaining 5% contingency
- **Proctor School Project:** Construction is complete. Closed out with MIIA. Await MSBA final close-out for the project and remaining 5% contingency
- **New values established;** Project \$65,000 additional MIIA premium costs for FY20.

Collective Bargaining:

- **Reserve Police Officers:** Two meetings held; Next meeting has not yet been scheduled.
- **Topsfield Teachers:** Ground Rules Meeting held Dec. 4th, 2018; Session One held 1.23.19. Session Two to be held Wednesday, January 30, 2019.
- **Water Dept.:** Working with Water Superintendent to research updated licensing and training certification requirements; Draft revisions for job titles; and seek relevant job descriptions in anticipation of the new Water Treatment Plant coming on line. Will set up meeting with Union representative for 2 -3 weeks to initiate notice process and any impact bargaining obligations.

Payroll Conversion Project

- **Status:** Worked with Treasurer to implement payroll conversion project.
- **Goals:** Convert from weekly to bi-weekly pay for all Town employees; Convert from Thursday-Wednesday to Sunday-Saturday pay periods; Increase efficiencies for payroll administration; Reduce redundancies in procedures; Improve payroll process for Department Heads, payroll staff and employees.
- **Milestone:** Target date for conversion is February 28, 2019.

40B Project – “Perkins Landing”:

- **Overview:** 28 residential homeownership units (7 affordable) 8.2 acres at 57 Perkins Row.
- **Status:** Awaiting State’s response to Town’s Letter of Response acknowledged 11.13.18.

Upcoming BOS Meetings:

- **Monday, February 4, 2019@ 7pm** – Regular Business Meeting
- **Thursday, February 21, 2019 @ 3pm** – Work Session/Executive Session
- **Monday, February 25, 2019 @ 7pm** – Regular Business Meeting