

MEMORANDUM

To: Bedford Town Council
From: Rick Sawyer, Town Manager
Date: April 8, 2021
Re: **Manager's Report**



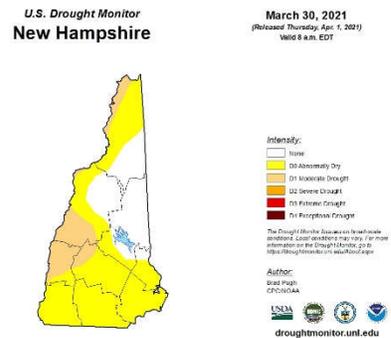
News & Noteworthy:

- 1) COVID-19 Pandemic – Bedford like the State has unfortunately has seen an increase in the number of cases with **48 current COVID-19 positive patients**. I strongly encourage all residents to follow the CDC and State of NH recommendations for protecting yourself including wearing a face covering, washing hands as often as possible, and to get vaccinated. Our Fire Department has been very busy with administering vaccinations to teachers, students, town employees, those in senior/assisted living facilities and others and I can't thank them enough for their efforts.
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- 2) Bedford Cares – Continues to provide an incredible service to members of our community who are in need of assistance with such things as shopping and picking up of prescriptions. If you need their support or want to help please reach out to them at 792-1319 or on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/bedfordnhcares/>
 - 3) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) – Bedford has been identified to receive \$2,240,191.06 as part of the ARPA with 50% coming by May 11, 2021 and the remaining 50% coming NOT earlier than 12 months after the first payment (so likely middle of 2022). Our funds will first be sent to the State who has up to 120 days to pass the funds on to us. What is not clear yet is what the money can be spent on and what the reporting requirements will be. The Treasury Department has until May 11, 2021 to provide instructions. Preliminary ARPA fund uses have been identified as 1) Emergency responses to the pandemic or its negative economic impacts, 2) The provision of government services due to the reduction in revenue during the most recent full fiscal year, 3) Investment in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure, and 4) Essential employee premium pay. The management team and I look forward to working with the Council on identifying the best uses of the funds once the Treasury guidance is received. For reference the City of Manchester will be receiving approximately \$44 million, and the State will receive \$194 million.
 - 4) Federal Community Project Funding (earmarks) – Congressman Pappas announce a brief filing period to request federal funding for one-time small to medium sized allocations for projects of local importance. We submitted 5 projects: 1) Police Station \$15 million, 2) Fire Station \$4.2 million, 3) Dirt Road Paving Program \$1.44 million for the paving of Polly Peabody Road and Tinker Road, 4) Bedford Center Road waterline extension \$700,000, 5) Beals Road Bridge replacement local match at \$223,000. Across the district over 250 projects

were submitted and it is my understanding that no more than 10 projects with a total value of \$30 million will ultimately be selected with announcements coming in August. The Congressman is utilizing a Community Advisor Board made of 5 individuals to review the projects and make recommendations. The police station project has already been cut due to it not being “shovel ready” enough. The Fire Station is considered more shovel ready as a site with utilities has been identified. Should an alternative fire station location be determined and the project receives funding it is my understanding that would not impact the award. We have also since removed the Beals Road Bridge from consideration because we were made aware of federal labor rate and reporting requirements that were going to increase the cost of the project by as much as 15% so it no longer made sense to continue. I will have 1 minute per project on Friday, April 9th to offer verbal testimony in support of the requests. SNHPC submitted funding for the widening of US Route 3 (South River Road) from Hawthorne Drive to the airport access road. Camp Allen in Bedford also submitted a request to fund construction of their new main dining hall. It is my understanding that each Senator will provide a similar opportunity for funding later in the year. The public is invited to review the projects and provide comment (support) at <https://pappas.house.gov/cpf>

- 5) In March we received notice that COVID-19 FEMA reimbursements would now be at 100% retroactive to the start of the pandemic versus the 75% that had originally been allowed. This resulted in Bedford receiving an additional \$15,338.

- 6) Drought conditions in NH have worsened over the winter and the area that is defined as “Abnormally Dry” has expanded to all of southern NH. Without a significantly wetter than normal spring it is likely that we will return to severe drought or worse this summer and watering restrictions will need to be considered.



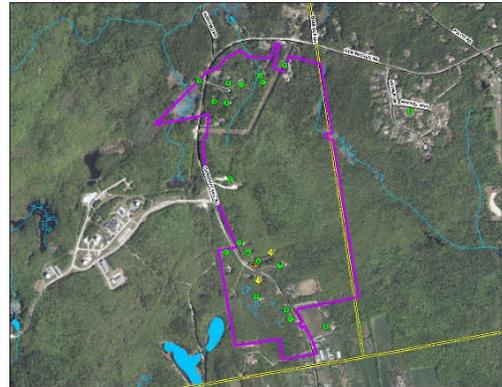
- 7) PFAS – NHDES and Saint Gobain are testing a large number of private wells in southeastern Bedford and many residents have called or emailed looking for an update as to when solutions will be provided or with just general questions and concerns but unfortunately NHDES has not made any decisions yet while they wait for more data. We have asked that NHDES hold a public information meeting as soon as possible and we expect that they will hold a virtual meeting within the next 3-4 weeks. If you have received a request for well testing it is critical that you sign the agreement and return the paperwork as soon as possible.

Through a number individual private well tests along Bedford Center Road from North Amherst Road to Primary Plaza it has been determined that there is a cluster of PFAS contamination north of Route 101. Unfortunately the consent decree between NHDES and Satint-Gobain stops



Saint-Gobain’s responsibility at Route 101 for any results less than 70 ppt. Without a identified responsible party the individual property owners are left to work with NHDES to determine how to move forward. As we have this portion of Bedford Center Road in our 2021-2022 roads program it would make sense to extend public water to the area from Bell Hill Road (see graphic above) in conjunction with the roadway work. A preliminary cost estimate has been completed by DPW at \$700,000. We are exploring all possible funding sources to complete this work. The Town Office Building well has tested below the PFAS limits but is not drinkable due to other contaminants.

We were also notified that the New Boston Air Force Tracking Station is now a known PFAS contamination contributor. In this case their PFAS pollution comes from use of materials on the base that leached into the groundwater. They are currently investigating the extent of the contamination but are only responding to issues above the federal PFAS standard of 70 ppt vs the lower State standards (varies 11-18 ppt).



- 8) Clean Up Bedford Day – April 17th, 9 AM-3 PM. Many town employees will be joining in this great activity by adopting the roads in and around the “village” adjacent to the Town Office and Town Hall/Library.



**CUB ROAD CLUB
SPRING EVENT
SATURDAY APRIL 17TH
9-3PM**

4 Locations to pickup Bags:

- * Bedford Transfer Station
- * Bedford Library
- * Bedford Safety Complex
- * The Farm at Joppa Hill

1st Annual “CUB” Clean UP Bedford day will be a day to clean up Bedford roads. This day is open to every Bedford resident. Take time to clean up your road or neighborhood. Many organizations plus students from Bedford schools will be out picking up the roads. Please be safe when you are working that day. Wear gloves and highly reflective clothing. When cleaning, always be aware of the road traffic and always walk towards traffic. **Safety is our first Priority.**

Simply leave the tied up BLUE bag on the roadside and staff from Bedford DPW will pick up the bags. The “CUB” Program will give everyone an opportunity to spend the day outdoors and a great way to make our community a cleaner place.

Need more information on “CUB” clean up day, contact Bill Carter @ wcarter@bedfornh.org

Lets make Bedford a cleaner place on April 17th. Thank you for your support!

- 9) State Legislation – This year has seen a number of bills of significant concern to municipal government operations to which I and many employees have spent time providing written and verbal testimony. The House is completing a 3 day session this week were they will vote on hundreds of bills and then all legislation that is moving forward will swap houses for

further action. I'd encourage everyone to read the legislative updates that are published by NHMA each Friday.

10) Registration for Camp Witzel summer camp and other summer camp programs are now open and information is available through the Recreation page of the Town Website <http://www.bedfordreonline.com/info/activities/default.aspx>

11) The Bedford Winter Parking Ban terminated on April 1st.

12) Dogs Licenses must be obtained from the Town Clerk by April 30th each year.

13) April is designated as Distracted Driving Awareness Month and as part of the campaign the Bedford Police Department is reminding everyone about the importance of attentive and engaged driving, and is focusing on the dangers distracted driving poses to everyone on the road.



14) Denise Nobert, DPW Business Manager has achieved certification in Government Accounting from the New Hampshire Government Finance Officers Association. DPW employee Brad Hatfield has obtained NH Roads Scholar I.

Project Updates:

1) Sportsman Field – Reconstruction has started again with the concrete footings and fence posts installation. Anticipated completion date is June 1st.



2) 2021 Revaluation – The consultant team has initiated their work and will be out in the community completing exterior reviews starting the week of April 12th. Their work and the project will continue through the summer.

3) 2020 Master Plan – The Planning Staff and Planning Board review committee have completed their work and will be presenting their recommendations to the Planning Board on April 12th. Following the Board review the updates will be completed and a public hearing scheduled for comments on the proposed plan as soon as possible.

4) Impact Fee Update – The consultant has been selected and is anticipated to start the data research over the next several weeks on this update that occurs every 6 years.

5) Stevens Buswell – The surveyor has completed their base plan survey of existing conditions and we are targeting a June Planning Board hearing for approval of the condominium subdivision. The next steps are drafting of the condominium documents.

6) Library Lighting – The contractor is mobilizing to the Library and is expected to start installation on or before April 19th. As previously reported this project is being completed through an

agreement with Eversource who will provide nearly 50% funding to complete a conversion of incandescent lighting to highly efficient models. The project is expect to have a 3-4 year return on investment through reduced operating cost while providing improved light quality and quantity. The projected savings is 74,945 kWh annually which is equivalent to 7 households and will reduce 46 tons of Carbon Dioxide, 907 pounds of Sulfur Dioxide, 462 pounds of Nitrogen Oxides from being released.

- 7) Audit - The financial audit for 2020 will continue with the five days of in office review April 12-16 and staff will follow up with any requested materials over the next few weeks in anticipation of a completed audit in mid May.
- 8) Voter Checklist Purge – The Supervisors of the Checklist have completed their review of the voter checklist and have identified over 3,300 voters that have not voted in the past 4 years that will be asked to be removed.
- 9) Rapid Response Vehicle – The Fire Department’s truck specification committee is nearing completion of their work and will be releasing the bid soon. It is expected that it may take as long as 12 months for delivery once the bid is awarded.
- 10) Roads Program – The 2021 construction season has started with crews on Gage Girls Road and Fosters Place/Commerce Park North.
- 11) Personnel – Amanda Mulrooney started this week as our new Deputy Tax Collector and Fund Accountant and comes to us with experience from the Town of Litchfield and City of Manchester. Peg Graveline has started as the full time Permit Technician in the Building Department moving up from her part time position that was eliminated. There are currently 3 openings in the Highway Department. A conditional offer has been made for an open paramedic position in the Fire Department and the Fire Inspector position remains advertised. The full time Associate Planner position has been advertised. One remaining Police Patrol position remains vacant. Our Accounts Payable position is vacant and advertised.

Events:

- April 17th – Clean up Bedford Spring Event, 9 AM - 3 PM.
- April 24th – National Prescription Drug Takeback Day, Bedford Safety Complex, 10 AM – 2 PM.
- May 23rd – Police Department Bicycle Rodeo at the High School, 10:00 – Noon
- May 23rd – Memorial Day Parade, 1 PM.
- June 19th – Household Hazardous Waste Day, 8:30 AM – 3 PM, Highway Garage, 19 Chubuck Road.



Upcoming Meetings:

- April 12th – 7:00 PM, Planning Board
- April 13th – 7:00 PM, Conservation Commission
- **April 14th – 7:00 PM, Town Council**
- April 16th – 11:30 AM, Telecommunications Committee
- April 20th – 7:00 PM, Zoning Board
- April 22nd – 7:00 PM, Energy Commission
- **April 24th – 8:00 AM, Town Council Retreat**
- April 26th – 7:00 PM, Planning Board
- April 27th – 7:15 AM, Highway Safety Committee
- **April 28th – 7:00 PM, Town Council**

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