

MEMORANDUM

To: Bedford Town Council
From: Rick Sawyer, Town Manager
Date: August 4, 2021
Re: **Manager's Report**



News & Noteworthy:

- 1) **Limited Hours at Tax & Motor Vehicle Windows - During the remainder of August, the Tax and Motor Vehicle windows will be closed all day on Wednesdays and also closing at 1:00 PM on Thursday, 8/26 & Friday, 8/27** due to staffing issues,. **There will likely be long lines during the remaining hours that the windows are open.** Please check the Tax Collection and Vehicle Registration website page for updates as limited staffing may force additional closures. Thank you for your patience as we take steps to return to normal staffing levels.

Residents are encourage to make use of the payment options that don't require you to come into the office building by following the links below:

[MV Renewals - Offsite Payment Options](#)

[Real Estate Tax - Offsite Payment Options](#)

- 2) **A Special Election for State Representative will be held on September 7, 2021 from 7AM-7PM at the Bedford High School.** This Special Election is being conducted to fill the seat vacated with the passing of former Representative Dave Danielson. There are two candidates Linda Rae Camarota (R) and Catherine A. Rombeau (D). Absentee ballots can be requested through the Town Clerk's office. A Candidate Forum will be hosted by the Bedford Men's Club live on BCTV during the evening of August 23, 2021.
- 3) COVID-19 Pandemic – **Bedford currently has 24 current COVID-19 positive patients** and has had a total of 2,108 cases. **There are currently MORE active cases in Bedford and the State that at the same time last August.** 53.7% of NH residents are currently vaccinated with Bedford having 57.6% fully vaccinated residents and 62.6% with one dose. The Delta Variant has been labeled as being significantly more contagious than the earlier COVID-19 strains however vaccines are extremely good at keeping someone from contracting the virus and if there is a breakthrough (1-2%) then it generally keeps the patient from being extremely ill. I strongly encourage anyone who can be vaccinated to do so. We will monitor the situation and put mask recommendations or mandates in place for our public buildings as warranted.
- 4) PFAS Contamination – On June 29th NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) notified the Town that we are a potential responsible party for the apparent pollution of groundwater in and around 10 Meetinghouse Road from the use and storage of Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) (commonly known as firefighting foam) at the former fire station (now BCTV) at 10 Meetinghouse Road. NHDES is requiring the Town to conduct a Focused

Site Investigation that must be completed by a professional engineer who has been retained and who has started work. The investigation will include documenting the history of AFFF use and storage, abutting well testing, the potential installations of ground water monitoring wells, and potential solutions for those impacted. If you live in the area and receive a letter from Nobis Engineering requesting to test your water please respond as soon as possible. Bottled water is being provided to those already identified as being impacted while the study is completed and they determine if well water treatment or connection to the public water system is their preferred solution. The State's consultant for the use of ARPA funds has not yet been able to determine if the funds can be used to improve contaminated private water systems.

- 5) PFAS Contamination – NHDES and Saint Gobain are testing a large number of private wells in southeastern Bedford but unfortunately they have not announced any remediation steps yet while they wait for more data. If you have received a request for well testing from Golder Associates it is critical that you sign the agreement and return the paperwork as soon as possible.
- 6) PFAS Contamination – The DPW team continues to work on a water main extension project for those residents and businesses impacted by PFAS contamination along Bedford Center Road between North Amherst Road and Primary Plaza that are outside of the Saint-Gobain and former Fire Station study areas. A preliminary cost estimate has been developed with Pennichuck Water Works and a request for grant funding through NHDES is being pursued.
- 7) 2021 Revaluation - The Town is completing a revaluation process this year and preliminary values have been mailed to each taxpayer. As part of that mailing you received information about how to schedule a hearing should you want to question your assessment. It is important that you do not estimate your projected tax bill based on our current tax rate as the rate will change based on several factors. With the 2017 update the average assessment went up 15% and the tax rate went down 15%. Similarly in 2019 the average assessment went up 7% and the rate went down approximately the same amount. The Town Assessor will provide a detailed update on the revaluation to the Council and community at the August 11, 2021 Council meeting.

- 8) The Student Parking Program – There are 186 Town spaces available and 181 names were provided from the High School lottery that did not get spaces on campus. This is 9 more names than last year, but it is unclear how many do not have a license and therefore are ineligible for a Town permit. All 181 students received an email with permit payment & pickup procedures but only about a 40% have completed the process. **Please check your email and come into the Town Clerk's office by August 17th to pick up your permit before it is awarded to students on the waitlist.**



- 9) Bedford resident Morgan Stickney rated number one in the world for 400-meter freestyle swimming will be representing the USA in the upcoming Paralympic Games in Tokyo Japan.
- 10) The Library Summer Reading Program has had another great year with over 700 people of all ages participating who read for over 12,000 hours.
- 11) The Town Clerk has reported that over 400 dogs still remain unregistered. Please be sure to register your dog as soon as possible to avoid any additional late fees.

- 12) Our Police and Fire Departments participated in an Annual National Night Out softball game on August 3rd which is intended to foster police-community relationships. Bragging rights go to the Police team this year who won in extra innings.



- 13) The Bedford Pool and Splash Pad are open through Labor Day with open swim between Noon-7 PM on weekdays and Noon-5 PM on weekends and holidays.
- 14) The Bedford Farmers Market continues on Tuesdays from 3-6 PM until October at the Murphy's Taproom parking lot, 393 Route 101.
- 15) The Bedford Citizens Police Academy is returning this fall, for those interested in joining the class please contact the Police Department.

Project Updates:

- 1) 2022 CIP & Budget – The Department Heads have submitted their department goals, CIP, and staffing requests, and budget requests are due in two weeks. The CIP is being reviewed and a draft will be provided to the Planning Board and Council in September.
- 2) 2021 Roads Program – The Bedford Village Common parking lot has been paved. The remaining portion of South River Road that was not paved a few years ago in the area of Whole Foods and Market & Main will be paved as soon as possible, the most recent delay is due to the number of rain days in July. The DPW team will be updating the Council and community on the program at the August 11, 2021 meeting.
- 3) Master Plan – The Master Plan is on track to be reviewed by the Planning Board in September with a public hearing to follow.
- 4) Personnel – Paul Mathieu a 34 year employee in the Department of Public Works has announced his intention to retire. I can't thank Paul enough for his dedication to the job and community and for his countless hours behind the wheel keeping our roads clear during the 3+ decades of snowstorms he has worked. There are currently 3 openings in the Highway Department and 2 others are out on medical leave. The Police Department has 3 patrol and

1 Captain openings. The Assistant Assessor position has been by our top candidate who comes to us with 20 years of assessing experience including having been part of several revaluations in Bedford. The Finance department has an opening for a window clerk and the other window clerk remains out on extended leave. The Library has a vacant clerk position. The Deputy Town Clerk position is vacant which can only be filled by Bedford residents. Those interested should contact the Town Clerk for more information.

Events:

- Summer Concert Series – Runs every Wednesday night through August 11th at 6 PM at the Bedford Village Common.

August 11 60's Invasion

August 29, Sunday at 4 PM Studio Two (Beatles Tribute) (rescheduled)

- August 15th – Friends of Aine, 9th Annual Kid's Try-Athlon, Bedford Recreation Complex & High School, 8 AM.
- August 19th – Bedford Rotary, 4th Annual Trails to Ales 2K & 5K, 5:30 PM, Legacy Park.
- **September 6th – Town Office, Library & Transfer Station closed in honor of Labor Day.**
- **September 7th – State Special Election, 7 AM- 7 PM, Bedford High School**
- September 23rd – Fire & Police Department combined Open House, Safety Complex, 55 Constitution Drive, 5-7 PM.

Upcoming Meetings:

- **August 11th – 7:00 PM, Town Council**
- ~~August 12th – 7:45 AM Water & Sewer Committee~~
- August 16th – 7:00 PM, Planning Board
- August 17th – 7:00 PM, Zoning Board
- ~~August 20th – 11:30 AM, Telecommunications Subcommittee~~
- August 24th – 7:15 AM, Highway Safety Committee
- August 24th – 7:00 PM, Conservation Commission
- August 26th – 7:00 PM, Energy Commission
- **September 8th – 7:00 PM, Town Council**
- September 9th – 7:45 AM Water & Sewer Committee
- September 13th – 7:00 PM, Planning Board
- September 14th – 7:00 PM, Historic District Commission
- September 14th – 7:00 PM, Parks & Recreation Commission
- September 17th – 11:30 AM, Telecommunications Subcommittee
- September 21st – 7:00 PM, Zoning Board
- **September 22nd – 7:00 PM, Town Council**
- September 23rd – 7:00 PM, Energy Commission
- September 27th – 7:00 PM, Planning Board (workshop)

- September 28th – 7:15 AM, Highway Safety Committee
- September 28th – 7:00 PM, Conservation Commission

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