
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

April 7, 2020



ADMINISTRATION:

- Town Administrator (TA) Greg Johnson, Assistant Town Administrator (ATA) Megan Zammuto, Human Resources (HR) Coordinator Stephanie Duggan, Public Health Agent Kelly Pawluczzonek, and Public Health Nurse Katherine Castle have been in nearly constant communication regarding the conditions and communications surrounding the current public health crisis.
- ATA Megan Zammuto has been diligently updating the town's webpage and social media platforms to communicate the information available to be shared publicly concerning the COVID-19 public health crisis.
- HR Coordinator Stephanie Duggan has been collaborating with public health officials, labor counsel and benefits consultants to communicate benefits changes, such as the Family First Coronavirus Response Act and the Family Medical Leave Act, to town staff, as well as other matters effected by the public health crisis.
- The Chair of the Recreation Commission replied to the TA's inquiry on behalf of the Board of Selectmen concerning the expected actions of the Board following the groups' joint meeting that the Recreation Commission will deliberate on next steps and seek input from the School Committee regarding proposed advertising on school district property or athletic facilities.
- Town Administration and the Office of Municipal Services (OMS) continues to meet with the Fazheng Group who is developing 111 Powder Mill Road to be an international school. A member of the Board of Selectmen is encouraged to participate in discussions as a liaison to the Board and give additional perspective to the town's working group on the matter.
- The Fazheng Group has generously offered to donate personal protective equipment (PPE) to public safety departments of the town in support of current operations amid the public health crisis.

PUBLIC HEALTH:

Report from the town's Health Agent:

- Agent still receiving complaints regarding housing issues and odor/trash- although inspections are currently not being done at this time, I'm still able to reach out to landlords and remind them of their responsibilities related to the State Sanitary Code 105 CMR 410.100.
- Before Stay at Home orders came from Governor, received numerous complaints of individuals out and about appearing to have COVID-19 symptoms
- Septic System reviews and installation inspections still occurring as considered essential

- Working with the town's Food Inspector Beth Grossman on getting up to date information to the restaurants that are open
- Numerous complaints received regarding proper glove use at food establishments
- Numerous complaints about people not obeying social distancing, having gatherings
- Received a complaint about "princess parties" having the Easter bunny going to people's houses
- Working with Kathryn Castle, our Public Health Nurse out of Emerson Hospital, for COVID-19 related questions, positives, and getting them the additional help they need by using student nurses
- Working with MA DPH and securing funds for the additional work/hours being done by public health nurse and health agent
 - o First round: \$2,620.00
 - o Second Round: \$4,127.00
- Attending Zoom meetings with the town's Office of Municipal Services (OMS) staff
- Attending calls with the state's Department of Public Health (DPH)

PUBLIC WORKS:

- Due to the recent COVID-19 pandemic the Department of Public Works (DPW) has been adjusting and changing our daily operations to ensure both health and safety for our residents and our staff. As the federal and State government has changed orders and made recommendations, the department has been adjusting to those orders and ensuring that we are efficiently and effectively doing the right work for our town. When this pandemic increased in intensity several weeks ago, the department executed a COVID-19 action plan which temporarily changed the day-to-day operational approach to the following:
 - o We identified and rearranged our "emergency" essential and non-essential staff to accommodate the social distancing protocols.
 - o We individualized our water treatment staff, this includes isolating our plant operators to minimize contact with outside and internal personnel. During these times, water operations is our highest priority as it effects all residents from a public health perspective.
 - o We split our Highway, and Parks divisions into two groups, these groups are operating opposite of each other. Each group is working one week on, while the other is off. This is to ensure that we have adequate personnel to assist in an emergency. The reasoning for this it to isolate a group if they become compromised from the virus, and must go into quarantine.
 - o These groups will continue to provide seasonal operation work that has been designed to limit close proximity interaction and contact, such as street sweeping, which is a vital operation during this time of year. We are also starting spring clean-up at the school campus as well as the parks and cemetery.

- We contract out our waste water facility operations, we have implemented in conjunction with our vendor “Veolia” similar procedures to ensure that this vital operation does not become compromised as well.
- We ask all residents to review the posts we put on Facebook and our website with regards to concerns we have that residents can follow to limit exposure and problems during these isolated times. Two of the more important messages we as a department encourage residents to follow is
 - Continue your efforts to conserve water, as we have an ongoing water capacity issue. With all residents being told to stay at or work from home, the usage has surged. Please be mindful of water conservation measures.
 - Be mindful of the use of non-flushable objects, such as baby wipes, cleaning/sanitizing wipes, etc. [Please refer to the department’s website for what can and cannot be flushed.](#) We would like to remind all residents, that even if the wipes say “flushable or Biodegradable” it does not mean our centralized sewer system can handle these. The truth is that we have a number of pumping stations that handle raw effluent, these pumps get clogged with these wipes. When that happens, we put our staff at risk to many diseases and viruses such as COVID-19. Please think before you flush.
- During the start of this pandemic, the department has worked and continued to work diligently with our School District’s Superintendent’s Office for action plans regarding the three school facilities. This can be echoed with all town facilities as well, such as COA and library, as we have worked with each of the facilities department heads in plans for both closures and sanitizing methods to limit the exposure to our residents and staff.
 - We have closed both the High School and Green Meadow to zero personnel for the past two weeks. This was a strategic effort to naturally sanitize the two facilities. All research indicates the maximum life span of the virus on outside objects is three to nine days. This effort has allowed the town to limit the reduction in cleaning and sanitizing supplies, which are limited. We have ordered supply’s and newer technologies to help continue to combat viruses such as COVI-19. We are continuing to approach this situation with efficient and effect means.
 - Fowler Middle School has been approximately 90% secured to zero personnel within the past week. The only access is the essential functions of the Superintendent’s Office as well as the food program held out of the cafeteria. We have supplied all personnel with sanitizing supplies to keep them safe during their essential function.
- We appreciate all residents understanding the gravity of this ongoing situation. We want to assure all residents that we are up to the task that is in front of us, and will continue to focus our efforts on vital functions such as water and sanitation services that provide health and safety to all residents within the community.

COUNCIL ON AGING:

- We are working remotely during our normal hours, Monday through Friday, 9:00 to 3:00. Voicemail messages can be left and will be responded to as soon as possible. The Council on Aging phone number is: (978) 897-1009. Amy Loveless, Council on Aging Director, can be reach at: aloveless@townofmaynard.net
- We have done, and continue to do, outreach via direct phone calls to participants in the COA's programs to determine needs and if the senior has ongoing supports such as family, friends, etc. in place. Our outreach calls have provided an opportunity for socialization as well.
- We are encouraging seniors to note if there are other seniors in their neighborhood who might be of need of services and to have them contact the COA or provided us their information so we can reach out.
- The Council on Aging van is continuing to operate. Grocery store transportation is being provided to Stop and Shop and Shaw's primarily during senior hours. If a senior feels it's not in their best interest to leave their home, the COA van driver is able to shop for and drop off groceries. We are diligently following precautions to keep the van surfaces disinfected. To make a reservation contact the Council on Aging at (978) 897-1009 or CrossTown Connect at (978) 844-6809.
- Minuteman Senior Services is continuing to provide referrals to the Meals on Wheels program and Home Care services. They can be reached at: (781) 272-7177 or (888) 222-6171 (toll free).
- Protective Services (elder abuse/exploitation investigations) can be reached at the Elder Abuse Hotline (800) 922-2275.

FINANCE:

Chief Assessor's Office:

- During this time of uncertainty and limited hours at work, the Assessing Department has maintained all functions.
- The office is answering emails and phone calls from home and is processing the mail and Motor Vehicle excise tax abatements.
- The office is processing deeds that it gets from the Registry of Deeds for property ownership changes.
- Required functions of the Chief Assessor continue, such as creating the bill file for the fourth quarter tax bills, preparing and qualifying any exemptions and abatements for fiscal year 2020, analyzing sales and making the updates to the assessing database for fiscal year 2021 along with many other required filings like the personal property form of lists, income and expense forms, and the 3ABC forms.
- The Board of Assessors (BOA) is expected to meet virtually to vote on the real estate abatements and exemptions for fiscal year 2020.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES:

Planning Zoning and Economic Development:

- 115 Main Street (former Grubers): The Planning Board site plan/special permit hearing continued to April 14, 2020. The Planning Board has offered to have a member work with the applicants and both the engineering and design peer reviewers to help move the project along.
- Market Basket was authorized by the Planning Board to work past construction hours required by the Decision for a limited period to facilitate concrete slab pouring and application of interior insulation. Abutters were notified via surface mailing, website and emailed (where possible).
- The Planning Board approved a bank drive-thru for Maynard Crossing.
- On March 23, 2020, the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) continued Civico's request for variances for the Coolidge School site to May 11, 2020. Civico is the developer awarded the Request for Proposals (RFP) to redevelop the site. The project proposes 12 residential units. One of the three requested variance is to allow increased density for up to 12-units. The ZBA is concerned about lack of parking and requested the applicant provide an engineering plan with additional parking before they authorize the additional density.
- Town staff created a newsletter to share community updates. Two newsletters were sent out in March, and the publication currently has 555 subscribers.
- Working with the town's Cultural Council, the Maynard Business Alliance (MBA), and the Economic Development Committee (EDC) to share online offerings, takeout/delivery etc. for Maynard businesses.
- We encourage the business community to visit the town's Resources for Businesses and Nonprofit Community in response to COVID-19:

[Resources for Businesses and Nonprofit Community in response to COVID-19](#)

- The Office of Municipal Services (OMS) received notice from Well Spring, a proposed recreational marijuana retailer who has an approved Host Community Agreement (HCA) with the town, that their initial application was approved by the state's Cannabis Control Commission (CCC). OMS will work with the Board of Selectmen and TA Office, as well as the Planning Board, DPW and public safety departments, to develop the application for a license and site plan approval and any special permits for the business.

Conservation

- The Conservation Commission (ConsCom) has been working with the applicant on the final baseline report for the Conservation Restriction at 129 Parker Street. Once the Baseline Report is approved, the Conservation Commission will sign the Conservation Restriction and it will then be brought before the Board of Selectmen (BOS).
- Public outreach regarding dog waste and stormwater issues have been reposted on town websites and social media per the MS4 (municipal stormwater regulations) public outreach requirements. A combined message on fertilizer and proper lawn maintenance is schedule to go out next week.
- The ConsCom has been receiving multiple application inquiries regarding residential projects such as decks, patios, and tree removal, and has been working to educate applicants on the new state Department of

Environmental Protection (MassDEP) submittal protocols due to the virus. Currently there are no public hearings on the docket.

- The ConsCom will hold its first remote meeting via Zoom on April 14th.

Public Health

- Maynard's Public Health Nursing staff is contracted through Emerson Hospital.
- Public Health staff received a \$4,220.00 grant from the Massachusetts Health Officers Association to assist with public health nursing expenses.
- [Current COVID-19 cases can be found here.](#)

PUBLIC SAFETY:

Fire Department:

- We have had 111 emergency requests for services between March 2nd, and March 30th, 2020.
- We have suspended our fire prevention program until the COVID-19 threat passes. The Governor has suspended the requirement for smoke/carbon monoxide certifications for 90-days. Once the order is lifted, we will most likely be inundated with inspection requests.
- We have had 41 in-house training events since March 2nd, 2020. Training remains focused on Firefighter on Probation Training.
- We have had 97 maintenance related activities since March 2nd, 2020.
- We have been extremely busy during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have altered our shift schedule in an effort to minimize the number of people in and out of the building and to keep the building as sanitized as possible. A lack of ventilation or positive pressure in the building does make keeping it sterilized a challenge. We have also canceled all scheduled leave until further notice unless an emergency presents itself and one of our people needs time off. Our goal is to minimize the impact on our firefighters so that we can continue delivering service with a full staff, however; we have already been impacted by this virus, and unfortunately, we are likely to be further impacted as the pandemic escalates, and it is escalating daily. This is a very stressful time for all of our firefighters, particularly those with families as nobody wants to bring the COVID-19 virus into their home.
- We appear to be in good supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) as of right now. Acacia Communications donated 120 N-95 masks; a private citizen has donated gloves and surgical masks. And we have received a recent shipment of supplies we ordered through CMERA. We are awaiting some supplies from MEMA for both the fire and police departments.
- We have worked with the Maynard Communications Supervisor on developing a list of screening questions to be asked when some requests emergency service. Unfortunately, these questions are not a guarantee

firefighters will not encounter an infected patient. More and more contaminated patients are presenting with no signs or symptoms.

- We have put together a plan to continue our EMS training via Zoom to practice social distancing. We have done the same as participants for various regional meeting we would typically attend.
- We have seen a rise in call-volume from last year, and the longer the pandemic lasts, the more volume we expect. A response to a suspected COVID-19 patient involves first responders being in full PPE during the entire operation until the ambulance and all equipment can be decontaminated. Ambulance decontamination is another reason I would like to keep the current ambulance as a reserve apparatus. If we require a long or drawn out decontamination, as we saw with the Ebola Scare in 2015, or even the current situation, our ambulance and associated equipment will be unavailable for the duration of the process.
- We have been working with Fire District 14 on developing a continuity of operations plan should we see wide-spread impacts on the firefighting workforce in the area. This is certainly a last resort should we need to combine resources with other communities temporarily, and it is my hope and belief we will never need it, but it is prudent to plan for it.
- We have postponed our annual physicals until this coming fall, and the same for our upcoming promotional process.
- We have had a four-alarm structure fire on Walcott Street on March 15th. We received help from Stow, Acton, Concord, Sudbury, Hudson, Marlborough, Weston, Boxborough, Carlisle, Wayland, Pro-ALS, the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services, Fire District 14, as well as Maynard Police, Communications, and DPW. Firefighters found heavy fire conditions upon arrival, as well as live electrical wires down in the street. Multiple hidden spaces in the building made for a long incident but crews worked hard and brought the fire under control in about 90 minutes.



Police Department:

- *Covid-19:*
On March 10, 2020, Governor Charlie Baker declared a State of Emergency in response to coronavirus pandemic. Due to this pandemic many police departments across the commonwealth have altered their policies in response. The following are some of the policy changes. We receive daily situation reports from the MEMA - COVID-19 Response Command Center. We are following the best police practices that have been outlined by the Commonwealth and the Mass. Chiefs of Police.
- *Community Outreach:*
On March 14, 2020 the Maynard Police Department offered a pick-up and delivery service for seniors and high-risk residents during the coronavirus pandemic. This program received community and statewide praise including several media outlets publishing it. We have been communicating information with the community using social media regarding reports.
- *Policy Changes:*
On March 13, 2020 Police Chief Noble issued the below special orders to the members of the Maynard Police Department. This pandemic is unprecedented, and the policy changes made by the police department will be in place until such time that they are no longer necessary.

SPECIAL ORDER 20-1

Special Order 20-1
Effective March 13, 2020-indefinitely
RE: COVID 19

The Governor has declared a state of emergency due to the COVID 19 virus. As a police department, it is impossible for our employees to cut off all face to face contact. Our role in the community is vital and we must respond to calls for service with some changes in order to minimize exposure. If an officer(s) were to contract the disease it could devastate the department. Therefore, in order to limit the exposure of officers to the COVID 19 virus the following orders are in effect until further notice.

Medical Calls – *Officers will no longer respond to medical calls unless they are of a serious nature or the Fire Department needs traffic assistance.*

Roll Call – *Roll calls are suspended until further notice and shall be replaced by supervisor using email and or other electronic means to give out information and assignments.*

Shift Change – *When an officer arrives for his shift, he shall notify the supervisor and the officer coming off shift may leave. One officer in one officer out.*

Time in the Station - *Employees should not congregate in groups in the station nor should they remain in the station unless completing a report or an arrest or their duties are station duties. Officers should not go to dispatch unless needed for a law enforcement purpose. When employees are in contact with one another, they should use social distancing - standing at a distance of six feet or so - to prevent any spread of the virus*

Cruisers – Prior to starting a shift the officer will sanitize their assigned cruiser. Cruisers should be supplied with a box of rubber gloves and hand sanitizer.

Common Areas - Employees should wipe down common areas before and after they use them such as the report room, squad room, supervisor's office etc... They should take extra care when using common computers or phones to ensure that they wipe those surfaces.

Arrests - Officers are encouraged to use complaint applications as an alternative to arrest where appropriate. The close contact needed during an arrest is an opportunity to spread the virus.

Illness - Employees who have flu-like symptoms should not come to work until the cessation of symptoms and they have been cleared by a doctor. These symptoms include, but are not limited to, fever, cough, shortness of breath, and body aches.

Exposure – Employees who have been exposed, or think they have been exposed, should report that exposure to their supervisor via telephone immediately and avoid contact with others. They should then follow the exposure protocol.

Hand Washing - Employees should make it a habit to wash their hands with warm soapy water, for at least 20 seconds, after each interaction with the public whenever possible. If necessary, officers should check with Dispatch upon clearing a call and return to the station to wash up. In the alternative, and where possible, they should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer on their hands until they can wash them.

Food - Food brought to the station by members of the community shall not be accepted. Eating from a large common tray of food is an effective way to spread an illness; therefore, we shall not take these trays in until further notice.

- **Statistics and Activities:**
As a result of the social distancing being practiced by the department our statistics are significantly down. We have been more reactive and community service oriented as there are not the same “problems” we are usually confronted with. The closings of restaurants, bars, school, and other non-essential businesses have diminished traffic, drunk driving, and general patrol areas of enforcement.
- **Commonwealth Agency Changes:**
Our processes have also been altered by the changes made regarding Commonwealth agencies, including but not limited to the Massachusetts Courts System, Massachusetts Police Training Committee, Office of Alcohol Testing, Middlesex Sheriff's Department, and other collateral supporting agencies. All mandatory and specialized training in the Commonwealth was suspended, we will have to complete all required trainings at a later date.
- **Personnel:**
The department had one officer who had flu like symptoms, and he was self-quarantined. At first, he did not fit the criteria to be tested and it was not until the state offered expedited testing for first

responders in Shrewsbury that he was able to get tested; the results for the officer were negative for the coronavirus.

We have contingencies in place in case of having to quarantine several officers. Including agreements with the surrounding towns for mutual aid if there is an outbreak. I have reassigned the SRO as a reserve for patrol and as the community service officer, i.e. responding to community requests as the duties during this pandemic have changed.

- *Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Supplies:*

We currently have enough personal protection equipment (PPE's) to provide our essential services. The community and Commonwealth have been outstanding in providing us with supplies during this crisis. The donations and requests to help have been phenomenal and are still regularly coming in.

- *Summary and Enforcement:*

The Governor's State of Emergency names the local Board of Health and agents as the primary enforcers, who "if necessary . . . [may employ] the assistance of State or municipal police."

We will continue to encourage voluntary compliance with the orders, including limits on gatherings, activities, business closings and quarantines; however upon seeing or learning about prohibited activity the Maynard Police will report it to the Board of Health (BOH). The BOH has the authority to decide how to deal with the issue and can request the police departments assistance if needed.

We have limited, as much as possible, officers' interactions with the community and we look to assist in any way needed as community caretakers. We understand we may be called on to provide services not normally provided as these are uncharted times.

LIBRARY:

- The Library is responding to the medical emergency in these ways:
 - We have updated the library web site with information about the virus. We have also updated our resource guide.
 - Please note that fines will not be charged for overdue items during this time.
 - One of the challenges people face while isolating is ways to stay busy. We have responded to this by uploading Story Times for children to watch and are in the process of completing book lists and challenges for children to solve.
 - We also update our Facebook and Instagram accounts a couple of times a day. These include a daily "boredom buster" style posts to Instagram that include trivia, craft ideas, scavenger hunts, and stem activities.
- Staff has spent some of this time becoming more adept with different technological tools useful now and in the future.. Additionally, staff has spent time doing more routine activities such as planning future events, processing payments, applying for grants, and putting together lists of items to purchase when the time comes.

