

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

Heather M. Munroe, Town Administrator

March 13, 2023

BOARD/COMMITTEE OPENINGS

Boards, Committees, Commissions

See the [Town's Website](#) for all openings and how to submit a letter of interest.

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

Check out the [Town's Website](#) for the latest programs.

Kid's Summer Program – The Recreation Department is now accepting applications for kids ages 4 through 6th graders. For information about the program, fee schedules, and employment opportunities, please check out the Recreation page of the [Town's website](#).

Paxton Days & Summer Jam – This year the Town has a fun filled day planned for Saturday, June 17th from 10am to 8pm. The festivities will take place at Central Fields and Band Stand. This is a FREE event open to all ages. There will be music, food, games, food trucks, and other vendors. To participate as a vendor, please contact Donna Parsons at dparsons@townofpaxton.net.

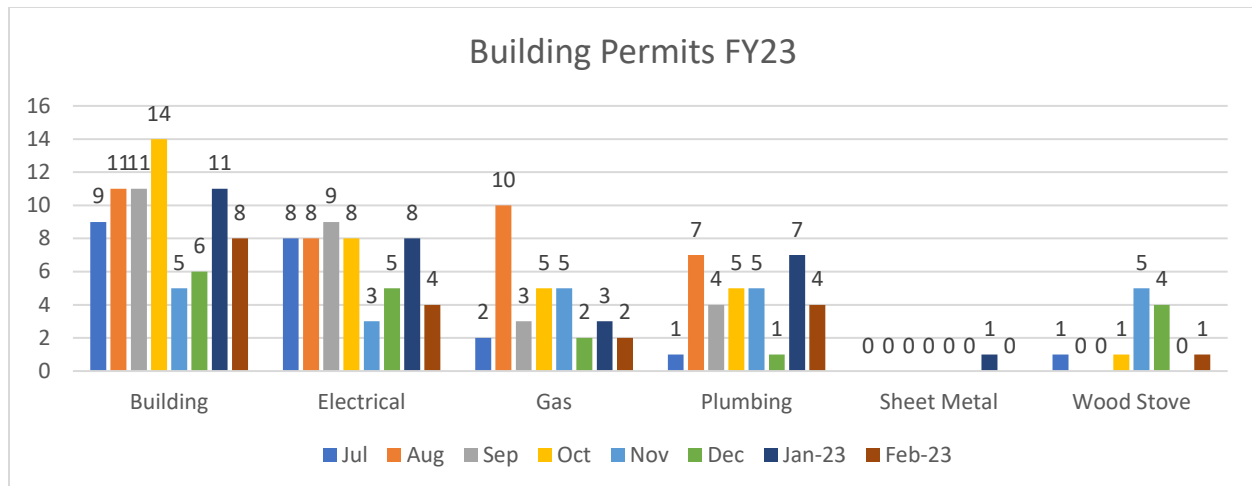
Town-wide Yard Sale – Each year, resident Bob Wilby organizes a Town-wide yard sale for Paxton. This year's yard sale is scheduled for Saturday, May 20th from 8 am to 2 pm. To be listed on the annual Yard-sale map, please contact Bob at (508) 792-4662.

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

Building Department

In February, we had eight building permits pulled, with a total of 19 permits for the department for the month. While that number was 11 less than January, it was the same number that we had in February 2022. By this time last fiscal year, we had a total of 228 permits pulled, this year we are at 207, or 9% less than last year. On a more positive note, we have had 75 Building Permits pulled in FY23, where as in at this same time in FY22, we only had 72 Building Permits pulled.

Of the building permits pulled in February 2023, three were for water damage, one was for a kitchen remodel, bathroom remodel, 2 roofs, and for an entry door. Of these projects, the remodels will likely impact our new growth figure, the water damage permits will depend on the extent of the repairs.



DPW

Paving – The DPW expects to pave/reclaim Forrestdale, Glen Alan, and Orchard this spring.

Complete Streets- The DPW is planning to apply for a complete streets grant this year to redo the sidewalks along Richards Ave.

MS4 Project – This project was ARPA funded in order to bring the Town into compliance with state regulations. The DPW is currently working with Fuss & O’Neil. Samples and inspections.

West Street Engineering – The project was ARPA funded and the Town has worked with Tatar & Howard on this project. The goal is to have a Mass Works grant ready to go this Spring, before the State’s deadline.

Black Hill Bridge – This project was funded by a Small Bridge grant by the State. We are working with CHA on this project. The consultant was behind and we have been working with the State. Once the project is complete, we expect to apply for a Small Bridge action grant.

DCR – Working through Wes and Sampson, our consultant that the Town worked with for our schematic design for the DPW building, we are applying for a Request for Determination of Applicability under the Watershed Protection Act to obtain an opinion of whether we will be allowed to use the same property to build a new DPW building and confirm that we can place a septic system on the site. We expect a response prior to May.

Asnebumskit Dam – We had a Phase I study completed in May 2022. One of the action items was to update our Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for the Dam. With the hard work of Jeff Olson from the Fire Department the Town now has an EAP for the Dam that staff will be reviewing.

IT

We received notice from our IT director that he will be complete his work with the Town on March 17th. We will be working with Rabidou Consulting for IT support for the remainder of the fiscal year. Shawn Mead from Fire and myself will be collecting IT requests over the next few weeks to address the ones we can in house and send the rest out. We are most curious as to what the requests are. We will look to build a scope of services for FY24+ IT services.

Town Administrator

On Wednesday, March 8, the Select Board met on Zoom to vote to move the Annual Town Meeting from May until Monday, June 5th at 7pm. The Select Board is expected to vote on extending the date for the closure of the warrant to a date in late April. The additional time will provide the Town with an opportunity to have the most up-to-date school figures used as part of the budget, and potentially reduce the impact of budget cuts to departments.

FINANCES

FY24 Budget Process

Finance Committee has been regularly meeting on Wednesday evenings. At the last meeting, it was restated that the Town currently has budget requests that exceed expected revenues. The Finance Committee and Town officials will work together to come to a balanced budget over the next few weeks.

Grants

Newly Awarded:

Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant – The Town received word last week that we received approximately \$4,455 in a reimbursable grant to update the Town’s Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Active/Status Update:

Community Compact (IT) Grant – Grant funds were awarded in December in the amount of \$115,000 to support conversion to records management system, including scanning and electronically filing many of the Town’s files to relieve storage burden and make files more user friendly and searchable.

Community Compact Grant “HR Procedures” – Turnover in staff at Collin’s Center. Working with them to finish up the project. In Progress

DFS Firefighter Safety Grant – FD was awarded for \$15,500 for a grant for turnout gear which they applied for in October.

Early Education & Care – The Recreation Department has received a grant for \$3,250 a month towards the Before/After School Program starting in October. (9/2022)- In Progress

MIIA Risk Management Grant – We were awarded half of the funding for the cost of chain saw safety kits (chaps, etc.), bucket truck communication gear, and cybersecurity simulation and testing costs for staff for a total of \$5626.53 out of the total \$9,237.50 applied for in September.

MIIA Wellness Grant – Partially Complete.

Office of Grants & Research – The Police Department received a grant with funding from the National Highway & Traffic Safety Administration in the amount of \$19,921 (9.2022) – In Progress.

SAFE Grant – FD applied for and were awarded a grant in the amount of \$5,400 for safety education.

Shared Streets Grant- In Progress.

Small Bridge Grant (2019) – Planning Grant Black Hill Road, in progress.

State Earmark of Funds – Senator Gobi and Representative Ferguson had contacted my office early this summer to inquire if there were projects related to economic development in which we could use funding. They submitted legislation that would support \$75k for redoing our Zoning Bylaws and \$125k related to our DPW building. We received notice on Friday that the earmark totaling \$200k was approved. Funds will be required to be used and projects completed by June 30, 2026.

United Way – The Recreation Department applied for and were awarded funds in the amount of \$5000 for additional after school/out of school programming.

Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Salt Reduction Grant – We were awarded the 50/50 matching grant for a polar flex system, that if awarded would reduce the cost of the item, which is originally \$6,700, in half.

Applied for:

Ambulance Certified Public Expenditure Program – FD applied for reimbursement for Medicaid/Mass Health ambulance billings for the prior Fiscal Year 2022, with the amount requested at \$62,566.

Assistance to Firefighters Grant- FD applied in January 2021 for \$450,000 for a Water Tanker. Funding to awarded through December, no word yet.

Procurement:

Active:

- **Security Cameras (Paxton Center School)** – With the assistance of Town Resident, Rick Bedard, and Principal Rickan and Facilities Director Mark Wilde, the Town was able to take advantage of the State contract vendor list, ITC-71. We disseminated materials for a request for quote on the State contract on 2/23, a voluntary walk-through was held on 3/3 and bids are due on Monday, March 13th at 12 noon.
- **Trash Collection** – We drafted an RFP for municipal trash collection for FY24. The Town Admin, Tom Carroll of the BOH, and Sheyrl Lombardi are meeting late this week to get everything wrapped up and get the process completed.

To do:

- ✓ Cable Access Software
- ✓ Records Building – Fence
- ✓ Security Cameras (Paxton Center School)
- ✓ Town Common area drainage (WRAP funding)
- ✓ Tivnan Field Lights (materials only)

JOB OPENINGS

Paramedic/Firefighter – There was a new opening for a paramedic/firefighter which closed last week. Interviews are underway.

PROJECTS

Updates

Town Building Phone Upgrade – All phones are now connected to the internet. We have resolved the last of the phone line issues and wifi matter at the Library. We are in the process of scheduling our official cutover.