

# TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

Heather M. Munroe, Town Administrator  
September 11, 2023

## BOARD/COMMITTEE OPENINGS

### **Boards, Committees, Commissions**

**Board of Appeals** – There is one two vacant associate positions available for the Board of Appeals. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.

**DPW Building Committee** - The Town of Paxton has reconfigured its DPW Building Committee to update the charge and membership. This Committee will be instrumental in matching the Department of Public Works building infrastructure needs with the Town's financial constraints and the Community desires. There are currently 4 resident vacancies. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.

**Historic District Commission** - The Historic District Commission is a group of individuals committed to maintaining the historic integrity and aesthetic appeal of Paxton's treasured landmarks. We work to ensure that our town's rich history remains an integral part of its future. There is currently 1 opening. Please see the [Town's website](#) for more information.

[See the Town's Website for all openings and how to submit an application.](#)

## COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

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

**COA Annual Health Fair** – Join the COA for their annual Health Fair on September 27<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to 1 pm at the Council on Aging, 17 West Street. For more information, check out the [COA's newsletter](#).

## DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

### **Town Administrator**

I had the opportunity to attend a webinar on Fraud Prevention and Awareness hosted by the Inspector General's Office this week. When we next look at policies, we will want to start evaluating our current fraud prevention and risk assessment policies to ensure that they are up to date and that we are broadly educating all of our employees on fraud and counseling everyone on how to report suspected fraud. The key take away from the training is that while fraud awareness is hard, fraud prevention is a good area to focus.

I will be out of the office next Thursday and Friday for the annual Mass Municipal Human Resource Conference at the Cape.

Earlier today, the Town submitted some basic information to CMRPC to submit collectively with other communities in support of legislation that would create a similar funding source to the Schools Building Authority MSBA to help fund Town Buildings. As quoted from the CMRPC

email: “S.1489/H.3802 creates an independent public authority, similar to the MSBA and the MBLC grant programs, to provide matching funds for local municipal and public safety buildings. The legislation sets up a process for the state to establish criteria, have independent experts evaluate proposed renovations or new buildings, and recommend funding based on available resources. This Act is a response to the dire needs and challenges many municipalities face to repair and construct new municipal and public safety buildings. [...] More information about the bill and how to testify here: <https://malegislature.gov/Events/Hearings/Detail/4664>”

Capital forms and materials for FY25 and the upcoming four successive years has been sent out to all department heads with a turnaround date of October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Once received, we will compile the materials and submit in their entirety to CIPC.

We will be working with the EDC members to set up a meeting date for the first meeting of the reconstituted committee over the upcoming weeks.

We have received interest in two of the four currently open DPW Building Committee seats. We will work to do some outreach to find a few more interested parties to be considered at the September 25<sup>th</sup> SB meeting for appointments.

### **Town Clerk**

On September 5<sup>th</sup>, the Attorney General’s Office has sent notice of approval for the General Bylaws for alcohol use on Town Property and a revision of the Finance Committee Bylaw as approved at Town Meeting.

## **FINANCES**

### **Grants**

FY24

**Recreation Earmark** – In the FY24 final budget, the Governor approved an earmark for \$27,000 for enhancements for the recreation department to include the following:

#### **Playground Repair and Mulch (\$4,000)**

The Town owns one public playground next to the Paxton Center School. During school hours, the students use the playground for recess. After hours, the playground is utilized during the afterschool program and by members of the public. The playground needs more odds/ends maintenance to keep all parts safe. In addition, because of the after-school program, we must maintain a minimum level of 9 inches of mulch around all potential fall zones.

#### **2. Adjustable Basketball Hoops at the Paxton Center School (\$18,000)**

The Recreation program runs a basketball program at the Paxton Center School. The current basketball hoops do not allow for younger kids to play and require volunteers to tediously attach and manually lower basketball hoops for each game, which brings with it its own safety risk. If we were to replace current hoops with four adjustable hoops, that would make them versatile, serve both the

basketball program and the students at the Paxton Center School, and would alleviate the chance of injury through manual adjustments.

### **3. Wentworth Bathroom Repairs (\$5,000)**

The Recreation and Town own a bathhouse out by our Wentworth field. The bathhouse is used during games and during the Summer Program. The building is old and in dire need of repairs.

**Town Common Earmark** – In the FY24 final budget, the Governor approved an earmark for \$50,000 for a design, feasibility, and traffic study for the town common/town center.

### *Outstanding FY23*

**Community One Stop** – Applied for West Street. Expected decision late Fall 2023.

**Ambulance Certified Public Expenditure Program** –\$62,566 - Pending

**Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities.** \$20,000 project to support Sensory Processing Disorder.

**Community Compact (IT) Grant** –\$115,000 to support conversion to records management system, including scanning and electronically filing records.

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

**Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant** –\$4,455 reimbursable grant to update the Town’s Hazard Mitigation Plan.

**Small Bridge Grant (2019)** – Planning Grant Black Hill Road, extended until December 2023.

**State Earmark of Funds** – Zoning Bylaw rewrite, underway.

### **Procurement:**

**Richards Memorial Library Low Slope Roof** – Quotes are due back on 9/13 at 12 noon. The Library Trustees will review at their meeting on September 12<sup>th</sup> and determine any next steps.

**Richards Memorial Library HVAC Controls Update** - Quotes are due back on 9/13 at 12 noon. The Library Trustees will review at their meeting on September 12<sup>th</sup> and determine any next steps.

**Richards Memorial Library Gutter Replacement** - Quotes are due back on 9/13 at 12 noon. The Library Trustees will review at their meeting on September 12<sup>th</sup> and determine any next steps.

**Cable Access Equipment** – The RFP for Cable Access Equipment was awarded by the Select Board on September 11<sup>th</sup> to TelVue in the amount not to exceed \$103,000. We had received a total of 3 RFPs for this project.

*To do:*

- ✓ Records Building – Fence
- ✓ Town Common area drainage

## **PROJECTS**

**Black Hill Bridge Grant** – This project began in 2020 when the State approved a grant for the study on Black Hill Bridge with CHA. We have been through two extensions for this project with MassDOT, and have been assured by CHA that we will be able to complete the work before the end of this calendar year, which will line us up to apply for a construction grant.

While the study is underway, the State DOT and our consultant CHA both recommend consideration of closing the road over the bridge for safety reasons.

**DPW Earmark** – We are in the process of getting started on the State Earmark we received in the Spring for \$200k for the DPW building improvements. We are working closely with vendors for accurate quotes to include a replacement/new septic system for the DPW, two bathrooms, and some other modifications that will last for the long-term.

## **JOB OPENINGS**

**Police Officer** – There is one opening for a police officer.

**Temporary Full-time benefited Mechanic/Heavy Equipment Operator-** The position for a temporary mechanic/heavy equipment operator has been posted. This person will fill in for our mechanic who will be on military leave for the next 12-18 months.