

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

Heather M. Munroe, Town Administrator

April 10, 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](#).

Memorial Day – Join the Town for Memorial Day. Parade will begin at the Public Safety Building at 10am, with a ceremony to follow. Concluding the Ceremony, please join the Paxton American Legion Post 306 in paying respect (gun salute) at each of the three cemeteries in town:

1. Old Cemetery behind Congregational Church
2. Mooreland Cemetery at WWII Memorial Monument
3. Worcester County Memorial Park (WCMP) at the Garden of Honor

The Paxton American Legion Post 306 invites everyone to the Legion Hall for a luncheon following the last gun salute at WCMP (approx. 12 Noon). In the event of rain, the ceremony will take place at 10 AM in the Paxton Center School cafetorium.

Pick-Up Paxton- Join us for the 4th Annual Pick It Up, Paxton! Event April 22 - May 1, 2023. Visit our [website](#) to learn more and sign up to pick up trash. Special Thanks to Pellegrino Trucking for donating the dumpster and to Paxton Tennis & Fitness Club for hosting the dumpster. Follow us on [Facebook](#).

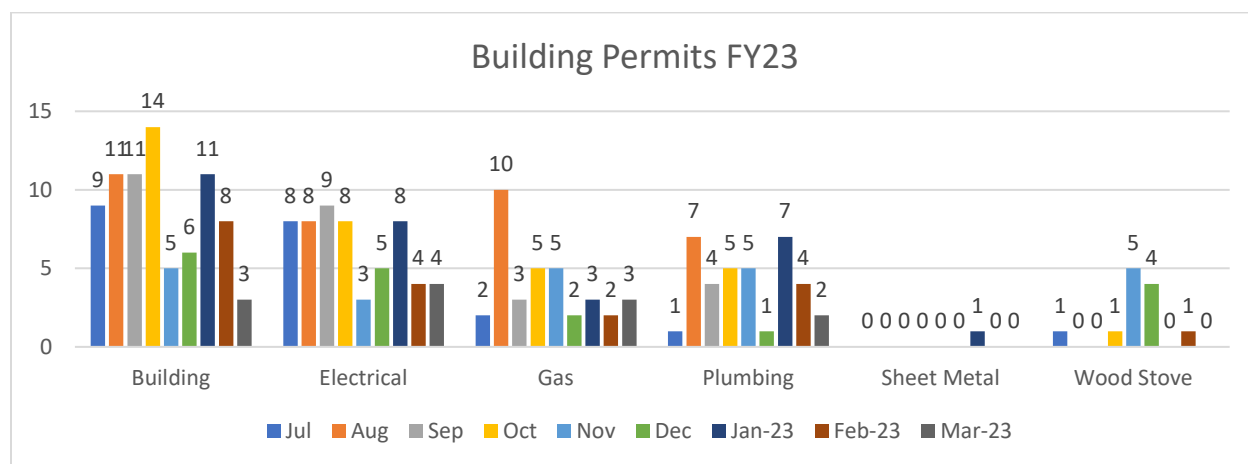
Paxton Days & Summer Jam – This year the Town has a fun filled day planned for Saturday, June 17th from 10am to 8pm. The festivities will take place at Central Fields and Band Stand. This is a FREE event open to all ages. There will be music, food, games, food trucks, and other vendors. To participate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

In March, we only had 3 building permits pulled, with a total of 12 permits for the department for the month. While that number is seven less than February, it was 26 less than March 2022. One permit was for chimney work, one for siding, and one for a small interior change.



Cable Access

Interested in watching your favorite government meetings live from wherever you are? Help us get to 100 You Tube subscribers and we will be able to stream live! Click here to check out the Cable’s channel and subscribe live at [WPAX Paxton Public Access TV](#). As of today, we are at 72 subscribers, 28 to go!

DPW

The DPW is working with Tata & Howard to finish up the West Street Water Line Design. We have expanded the scope, within available funds, to have Tata & Howard assist us with applying for a Mass Works Grant.

IT

The past two weeks have involved some connectivity issues, printer issues, and phone functionalities. Phones are now fully operational and the Town’s faxes have now been ported to a single number in the form of electronic fax.

FINANCES

FY23 Budget

This update will cover the FY23 year until March 31, 2023, our 3/4 point.

Revenues

To date, are revenues are only updated through the end of February 28, 2023. The revenues typically do not get updated until mid-month after interest rates and bank statements are in. Items that are reported as of February 28, 2023 between 70-75%.

- ✓ **Cemeteries (50.67%)** – These are lower than expected, but as much as we estimate, this will vary each year.
- ✓ **Misc Recurring (Teacher Retirement) – (0%)** – This comes from the State and had not been received by the Town to date.
- ✓ **MV Excise (54%)** – This is still on target as our major excise billing have not reached out report as they were collected in the month of March.
- ✓ **Rentals (42.11%)** – This is for the 10 West Property which we rent. A few months of rent were forgiven as there was a purchase that was made for the building directly by the tenants.
- ✓ **WRSD Maintenance Account (61.68%)**

Revenue categories that have exceeded our expectations thus far this year:

- ✓ **Penalties & Interest on Taxes (101.71%)** – Interest rates came back as the year took off. Yielding about \$325. more than expected to date.
- ✓ **PILOT (102.50%)** – We billed and collected more than we budgeted for the FY. Yielding about \$1.1k more than expected to date.
- ✓ **Investment Income (276.98%)** – Interest rates were more favorable than we expected. Yielding about \$7k more than expected to date.

Expenses

We are holding our own with expenses in FY23. To date, there are not any major concerns with our budget and ability to stay on track for the remainder of FY23. A few things that we will be watching very closely are: the retirement board and votes that could impact our assessment midyear; and heating oil use and costs.

✓ **On Target (65-75%)**

○ Central Purchasing

○ EMS

- Fire Department
- Library
- Police Department
- Public Building Maintenance
- Select Board
- Street Lighting
- Town Accountant
- Town Clerk
- Treasurer
- Tree Warden
- Veteran's Agent
- Vocational School
- Waste Collection
- Water Department

✓ ***Not Used to Date (0%)***

- Debt Borrowing
- Historical Commission
- Historical District
- Short Term Interest
- Town Report

✓ ***Under Budget (below 65%)***

- **Board of Health (10%)** – Less than \$5k budget to begin with. Stipends get issued in the fourth quarter and purchased services expended at the same time.
- **Building Inspector (50.29%)** – Transitioned employees early in the fiscal year. In doing so, we switched from an annual compensation to hourly salary, which means we now only pay for hours worked.
- **Cemetery Commission (40.75%)** – Mowing season is back for the last quarter of the year and should catch the compensation back up to finish on target.
- **COA (59.81%)** – Van use is slower this year, only at less than 50% of wages.
- **Con Com (7.3%)** – Con Com Agent position vacant for most of the year. New hire started in March.
- **Debt (100%)** – Paid in full at this time.
- **Elections/Registration (41%)** – The annual election and annual town meeting both occur in the last quarter of the year, which are the major draws of this budget.

- **Employee Benefits (57.26%)** – With some folks coming off and going onto the health insurance plans, we are currently experiencing a bit of a savings.
- **Fin Com (59.27%)** – No change in expenditures since end of second half.
- **Inspector of Animals (50%)** – Paid quarterly, still due for 3rd and 4th quarter.
- **Legal (44.4%)** – Well within budget and on target.
- **Municipal Assistant (46.52%)** – The MA left in the Fall of 2022 and we did not fill the position until January/February with two individuals in the Town Clerk and Treasurer's Offices.
- **Public Safety Complex (51%)** – Some annual inspections have not been billed yet. Otherwise, this account is right on target.
- **Registrars (5.82%)** – Stipends and purchases are usually addressed during the last quarter.
- **Reserve Fund (28.36%)** – Four requests approved to date, the two newest totaled approx. \$3,120 on 4/5/23. Most transfers done to date were ones where there were funds available within the department, but inaccessible until May 1st for transfer.
- **Sanitation Engineer (50%)** – Paid quarterly, still due for 3rd and 4th quarter.
- **Town Administrator (56.21%)** – Contract is less than amount budgeted. This line will end in the FY with just under \$30k balance.
- **Town Coordinator (62.59%)** – Town Services Coordinator works 24 hours a week regularly and additional hours as needed for meetings. It has been a lighter year and we had budgeted for more hours than she has currently needed to use.
- **Wachusett Greenways (44%)** – Reimbursements submitted as projects happen. No change since last quarter.
- **Wire Inspector (46.74%)** – We pay this position in quarterly amounts. Third quarter payment has not hit the books yet.

✓ **Over 75% Budget**

- **Animal Control Officer (55.96%)** – We paid the annual, prorated, cost for this service through Rutland a month or so ago. The only reason there are still funds, is because we switched from an employee to a service after the fiscal year began and required a reserve fund

transfer into the account to cover the cost. Once May presents itself, we will be able to transfer the \$8k and some change out to another line. No change since last quarter.

- **Assessors (79.78%)** - Payment to Vision for services. Salaries and purchased services are all on target.
- **DPW (78.19%)** – Supplies are a bit higher, and leases are mostly already paid. Other than that, wages are on target.
- **Municipal Info Services (84.13%)**– Purchase of all computers that we planned on purchasing. We have also transitioned to an IT company from an IT employee. This department should finish close to on target for year-end.
- **Plumbing Inspector (90.13%)** – We currently pay the plumbing inspector per inspection. This amount suggests the possibility that we may have to come to the reserve fund as the year proceeds if we have more inspections that are needed than we have funds to cover inspections.
- **Property Insurance (95.12%)** – Mostly paid up front.
- **Regional Dispatch (81.25%)** – Current year we just pay for a contract for fiber, which has been paid. The remainder is to cover any service calls we may need to have.
- **Regional Planning Assessment (99.97%)** - Upfront
- **Retirement Assessment (100%)**– Paid in full in July.
- **Snow & Ice (117.21%)**- We are over budget by \$34,427.34. Assuming the season is over, we will be able to cover this in May with a transfer of funds from the Town Admin line (~25k) and the ACO line (~8k).
- **Town Clock Purchased Services (100%)** – Completed for year
- **Wachusett School District (100%)**– Paid.

Grants

Active/Status Update:

Combination Dynamic Speed Feedback and School Zone Speed Limit Sign Assemblies (Delivery Phase 2 for Municipal Roads) – The DPW received a grant from Mass DOT to install electronic signage for speed limits on West Street.

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

Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant – We received approximately \$4,455 in a reimbursable grant to update the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan. – 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)** – This contract was awarded to Security 101 in the amount of \$49,945 and includes internal and external cameras, access door system for main entries, and monitoring and online storage for a year. Project will be underway over April Vacation.
- **Trash Collection** – An RFP has been drafted and has been sent out to area vendors who offer this service. As this contract is exempt from Chapter 30B, we have a little leeway in timing. The requests went out on March 27th and are due back, after a good amount of expressed interest, on April 19th at 12 noon. The goal is to have the Select Board award the contract on Monday, April 24th.

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

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