



MEMORANDUM

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To: Selectboard
From: Richard J. Waldo, Town Administrator
Cc: Rebekah Eldridge, Executive Assistant to Town Administrator
Subject: Department Update Report for the September 5, 2023 Select Board Meeting
Date: August 30, 2023

Administration

- Our S&P Bond rating remained unchanged in our recent evaluation to the bond market. Despite the strong financials, they could not move past the staffing issues to upgrade our negative outlook to stable. There was a lot of discussion surrounding this issue and, hopefully, staffing will be in place for our next discussion.
- The Special Town Meeting Warrant has been mailed out. The meeting will take place on Monday September 18th, starting at 6pm and childcare will be provided for children ages 3 and up. Sign up for childcare is required, see link for more information <https://www.wellfleet-ma.gov/home/news/town-meeting-childcare-available-sign-up-now>
- The Administration has submitted a conditional offer of employment for the Assistant Town Administrator position. Pending an agreement to the principal terms of employment we will inform the Board of the proposed appointment as required by the Home Rule Charter.
- Interim Positions: The Town has offered an interim part-time position as Building Commissioner to Angelo Salamone. Angelo will work along with current part-time Commissioner Victor Staley to obtain a Building Commissioner Certification. Currently, Angelo possesses a local inspector certification. An interim Assistant Health and Conservation position has been offered. The interim role is pending the reorganization request by the administration to separate out health and conservation role into singular roles as Health Agent & Conservation Agent. The Administration will also request that the part-time administrative role be bumped to full-time status. Eastham will provide assistance in the department until we are fully staffed.
- The Administration would like to welcome Summer Fulcher as our new Assistant Treasurer/Collector. Ms. Fulcher started 8/30 and has begun a training schedule laid out by the Assistant Town Administrator, Principal Clerk, and Collector.

Building

- No Update

Community Services

Council on Aging

- Interviews for the Driver/Custodian position will be held the weeks of August 28th and September 4th
- Exercise classes are very well attended and we have added an additional morning of Yoga because of demand

Beaches

- Our season is over
 - Lifeguards last day is September 2
 - Beach Office and Parking lot people last day is September 3
 - Final numbers are not available but we took a big hit from the weather and I anticipate numbers being down over 2022

Social and Human Services

- Vouchers for children aged one month to five years, as authorized at ATM23, are complete.
 - A total of 35 children are enrolled
 - 6 are children of Town employees

Harbormaster

- No Update

Human Resources

- Ongoing recruitment for multiple open positions
- Creating interview questions as a guideline for meeting with applicants
- Implemented exit interview process with HR for full-time employees

Fire

- Firefighter/EMT Ernie Cox will be starting his Firefighter 1/11 recruit training at the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, Bridgewater campus, on September 11th• This is an intense ten (10) week program of classroom time and hands on/practical evolutions.
- We are finishing up the purchase of our new Squad 80 which is a 2023 Ford F-150 pickup truck (to replace our current 2015 pick up truck). Firefighter/EMT Luke Fancy has been the lead on this project and we hope to have the new truck in service in three (3) months, we will be awaiting some outfitting equipment (emergency warning lights, siren, tool box, etc.).
- We just inspected the new automatic sprinkler system and new fire alarm control panel at the Wellfleet Elementary School. There are just a few remaining components that still need to be corrected (25 dry sprinkler heads in the attic and three or four additional fire alarm pull stations). However, this project is largely completed and whatever work that still needs to be accomplished can be done during weekend(s) and after school hours.
- Firefighter/EMTs Luke Fancy and James Stergis will be starting paramedic school next month at Cape Cod Community College. This is a part time program and will entail approximately eighteen (18) months of classroom time, practical training, clinical//hospital time, ambulance ride time/mentorship, etc., (more than 1,000 hours of training) before completion.

- We continue to communicate and work with the owners of the Copper Swan, 70 Main Street, with respect to last month's fire and life safety inspection of both the inn and restaurant buildings to achieve code compliance.
- We have had three (3) meetings with Wellfleet Shellfish Promotion and Tasting, Inc. (SPAT) in preparations for this year's OysterFest on October 14th and 15th• These meetings have included this Department, the Police Department and have been productive so far.

Library

- Attendance has been way up at a lot of our events. Where we had been averaging about 40 people, now we have more like 60 and we just had our first fully full, standing room only event (Drew Gilpin Faust) on August 23 rd. We expect that our event with Alec Wilkenson, author of *Midnights: a year with the Wellfleet Police* (a new edition was released this year, as it is the book's 30th anniversary) will also be full. It is on August 30th at 7:00 PM. Alec is also a writer with the *New Yorker* and published another popular book this year.
- I finished my Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS) Report for the state last week and submitted it. Here are some trends. Our attendance is up more than 20,000 than last year, which is excellent, but we are not near our pre-Covid numbers yet. Our circulation has rebounded however. People are using our collection, both physical and online. Our circulation increased by several thousand and our interlibrary loan between libraries in CLAMS absolutely skyrocketed. We saw more people than ever using our ebooks and other online resources, and we have been doing more selection in these areas to accommodate those patrons. Our attendance at programs is way up and we had many more programs than last year. It's exciting to compare these reports year-to-year. Obviously, Covid put a wrench in the upward trends we had every single year, but it's nice to be rebounding.
- We now have 36 mobile hotspots. 25 are Verizon and are courtesy of our Trustees (and the generous donors who support our library). 11 are T-Mobile through Mobile Beacon/Tech Soup, a nonprofit that provides low-cost electronics to nonprofits and libraries. We know that we need to carry the Verizon ones because they have the greatest "reach" in areas with unreliable cell reception. Our hotspots are very popular and people rely heavily on them. We wish we could provide more.
- We are thrilled with our new public computers that we now have from our capital improvement plan. They are in constant use and the public is very pleased. It is such a relief to have computers that are fast and actually connect. We still need to purchase youth computers and a few more items, but are working towards this goal.
- Our Public Services Librarian, Luke Massouh, is leaving on September 1st to pursue graduate school full-time. I will be posting that job shortly and hope to find an energetic person who either has a library degree or has experience in libraries. I also want to have that person provide tech assistance to the public. We thank Luke for his two years of service to the people of Wellfleet and wish him the best in graduate school!
- On Tuesday, September 13th, we have local author, Chris Wisnewski, presenting her book, *The Hurricane of 1938, memories of the storm of the century*. This should be a very interesting event, especially given weather events happening now. The talk starts at 7:00 PM.

- On Friday, September 8th, we have an all-ages event - learn the ukulele with Julie Stepanek! Come and start learning a new instrument (I've actually taught myself - it's fun and it's not too hard!). The event starts at 3:30. Registration is required because Julie will be bringing ukuleles and there are a limited amount. Stop by the library or call at 508-349-0310 to reserve your spot!

Police

- The Department began the month of August with Officer Poska completing the Field Training and Evaluation Program, as well as completing a newly required training class that was mandated by the POST commission. After having completed this training Officer Poska is now a fully trained Wellfleet Police Officer.
- The Department continued its work at Cahoon Hollow Beach enforcing existing alcohol regulations. For the first three Saturdays of August 36 busses arrived on Ocean View Drive and were encountered by members of the department. This is in comparison to just one year earlier in 2022 the same three comparable Saturdays 76 busses arrived to drop off passengers at Cahoon Hollow beach this represents a 53% decrease in the number of busses.
- Hiring update: Two individuals have completed almost all pre-employment requirements for acceptance into an MPTC police academy. The department is currently evaluating which academy would be the most appropriate to send the candidates along with bringing them forward to a selectboard meeting for appointment.
- As the month of August draws to a close, members of the Wellfleet Police Command staff are busy meeting with Town officials and members of SPAT about the upcoming Oysterfest. The department is currently developing an Operations Plan for bringing the Oyster festival back to the Main Street Area.

Public Works

- No Update

Recreation

- The Baker's Field Recreation Program and Gull Pond Swim Lessons ended on August 18. Both programs received high praise from participating families. Much appreciation to Directors Patrick Finn at the Pond and Charity Robinson at Baker's Field and the exceptional seasonal staff for such a successful summer!
- Postmistress Josclyn Prudeaux was on hand at the annual skateboard competition held on August 19 at the Wellfleet Park, to announce a stamp dedication for the newly released "skateboard artwork stamp" in honor of the Wellfleet Park. Many thanks to Josclyn and the staff at the Wellfleet PO for this honor. In keeping with this praise, several young adult skaters/carpenters, led by Jake Sullivan and Thor Construction, volunteered to fix one of the wooden ramps so it could be fully utilized for the contest. Much gratitude to Mike Archer, owner the Boarding House Surf and Skate Shop, for donating hundreds of dollars' worth of prizes for participants and to Recreation Employee Anthony Rock for organizing such a well-run event.

- With approval from the Wellfleet Conservation Commission, the Mosquito Squad was able to treat the Baker's Field Pavilion area. Their donated services made a noticeable difference at all the August shows and events.
- Pickleball round robins and clinics will continue through September at the Baker's Field courts, for all levels of play. With the availability of six courts, pickleball is the fastest growing activity offered.
- The Department will again be sponsoring activities during Columbus Day weekend, including at Block Party featuring music, food trucks and a raw bar on Friday 10/6, a pickleball tournament on 10/7 and the Annual Shuck and Run Road Race on Sunday 10/8.
- Extensive planning is underway for the Recreational Soccer Season which begins the second week of September.
- Check the Town website for details about all Recreation Programming

Shellfish Department

Enforcement

- We continued grant inspections, completing all of Lt. Isle and Mayo Beach to Powers Landing. We have less than a dozen left to do and two re-inspections. (There are a total of 160 grants in Wellfleet, equaling 109 farms.)
- We have issued two written warnings – one for inadequate ice and one for seed. We also confiscated seed from two commercial shellfishermen for exceeding state limit of five percent seed; one will receive a citation.
- We continue to do random full state vibrio checks on farmers and commercial shellfishermen.
- We are working with a grant holder to remove gear that is not inside grant boundaries.
- We have been advising grant holders who are harvesting quahogs that all containers need to be tagged by the point of landing.
- We investigated a complaint that a boat was fishing over the Wellfleet-Eastham line. It was not.

Commercial Fishery and Grants

- We have been approached by many grant holders to meet on a diversity of issues from transfers and extensions, to grant inspections, minimum productivity, and regulation changes.
- We are working with grant holders who don't have professional surveys of their grant to ensure they get them done.
- We have been letting people know that the grant lottery is coming up.

- We advertised the Selectboard lottery of five shellfish grants and created separate pages on our website, so everything was easy to see and download. We had copies made for our office and sent a Crier to all in commercial shellfishing industry. Lottery application period opens Aug. 31 and closes Sept. 29.

Propagation

- We distributed oysters from hat seed grown on our grant to a commercial-only harvest area and to the recreational-only area on Indian Neck.
- We presented our 2023 cultching activities with maps and photos to the Conservation Commission and provided details about our understanding of our permits and orders of conditions to the commission in response to a complaint filed with them from Ms. Jude Ahern.
- We applied for a grant from the Mass Oyster Project for aquaculture gear, specifically spat collecting devices.
- We continue to break down our oyster seed and strap down bags on our grant.
- We submitted documentation to Conservation Commission for the renewal of our Town cultching permit.

Recreational Fishery

- We sent contaminated quahog samples from Burton Baker Beach to the State for testing. They came back with a clean bill of health, and we opened Burton Baker Beach to recreational shellfishing on Sunday, August 20.
- We submitted a memo on the recreational shellfishery to Shellfish Advisory Board addressing family permits with input from the seasonal Shellfish Deputies. It seems that a few recreational shellfishermen would want a family permit. Further discussions will take place.
- The seasonal Shellfish Deputies created a “Welcome to Wellfleet Shellfishing” email and sent it to all new permit holders. They also sent out a Crier announcing the opening of Burton Baker Beach and explaining the state-run contaminated quahog relay.
- Volunteer extraordinaire Wayne Clough made three-inch PVC rings for the rec fishery and gave them to us. We distributed them at the three landings and have them in our trucks, too.

State

- We did another two runs for state water quality testing. Herring River water quality was good and will close as usual on August 31. We await the results from this week on other areas.
- We have been advised by the state that in August, we had two single source cases of vibrio attributed to Wellfleet. Culturing of specimens still needs to be done in order to identify if it is Vibrio Parahaemolyticus; if it is, the Town will receive an advisory from the state.

- We sent photos of vibrio logbooks to the state, as requested, and followed up with all grant holders involved.
- We participated in an eel grass survey online.
- We sent all required documentation to the state to request biological surveys for three grant extensions.

Studies

- We are collaborating with the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension and the Center for Coastal Studies on a survey and study of bamboo worms in Wellfleet Harbor.
- WHOI came to Wellfleet to gather quahog samples as part of a continuing neoplasia study. They are comparing surface clams with neoplasia to clams without neoplasia to determine if there are any differences.

Regulations

- We updated the regulation changes made this spring and posted them on the Town website and in public places as per Section 3.1. [Current version is dated 5/23/2023.](#)
- We participated in a call with the Selectboard Chair and Vice Chair, the Town Administrator and Town Counsel to discuss taking corporations out of Wellfleet's Shellfishing Policy and Regulations. When we received Town Counsel's revisions, we went through and added our comments and suggestions as a team. We sent these immediately to Shellfish Advisory Board in advance of their meeting. SAB voted to advise Selectboard to take up only the regulations related to prohibiting corporations, and we agreed. We ran just those sections by the Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries, and they provided two comments, as well.

Other

- We were notified that we will have an Individual Placement AmeriCorps Cape Cod member serving with the department on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, beginning in October through July.
- We nominated Mass Oyster Project for a MassRecycle Award. We were informed that while they did not win this year, our nomination provided well-deserved recognition and a shortened version of our nomination will be posted at the awards ceremony and event.
- Nancy attended a Shellfish Advisory Board meeting, two Selectboard meetings and a staff meeting.
- We continue to work on ensuring access to shellfish resources with various private and non-profit landowners.
- We conducted a biological survey for two more monitoring points in the Blackfish Creek mitigation area.

- We also sent out another Crier to the commercial shellfishing industry.
- Nancy fulfilled another public records request from Jude Ahern regarding correspondence with the National Park Service about cultching in the Herring River per the Town's order of conditions.
- Nancy responded to second complaint filed by Ms. Ahern with the Mass. Dept. of Environmental Protection about the department's cultching activities.

Town Clerk

- Working on updating Vault Documents (Town meeting highlights & Voter registration affidavits).
- Gathering and organizing items needed in order to mail out over 650 Vote by mail ballots (Three different envelopes and instructions).
- Continued Elections training through the Secretary of the Commonwealth's office
- Working with General code to get recently passed, By-law amendments into our Town Code.
- Notifications and Webinars have begun for the 2024 Election year, Including Town Committee papers, and new applications for working with Voters who reside overseas.