



To: Town Council
Fr: Paul Bockelman
Town Manager
Dt: January 6, 2023
Re: Town Manager Report for January 9, 2023

All Town Manager Reports are available on the Town's website here: [Town Manager Reports](#)

TOWN MANAGER

- Presentations:
 - First Amendment Audit: I will be moderating a state-wide webinar on **January 10th** on First Amendment “audit” protocols for municipal officials. Municipalities are increasingly subjected to “auditors” who record interactions with local government officials and post them online. If you recall, the Town was subject to one of these “audits”. Town Attorney Lauren Goldberg, managing attorney at KP Law, will give an overview of First Amendment audits and how to prepare for one. Lauren will also share strategies for calmly communicating with auditors, reporting the interaction, and determining follow-up measures. More than 900 people have signed up for this webinar and they are sure they will have over 1,000 attendees. More information here: <https://www.mma.org/mma-to-host-webinar-on-1st-amendment-audit-protocols/>
 - MMA Annual Meeting Orientation: I will be serving on a panel of municipal officials providing insights, tips, and advice on attending the MMA Annual Meeting. This session will be on Friday, **January 20th** at 8:00 a.m. at the Hynes Convention Center.
 - MMA Annual Meeting Workshop: Director of Community Responders Earl Miller will be a featured member of a panel speaking on Mental Health and Policing: Crisis Intervention and Co-Responders at the MMA Annual Meeting and Trade Show on **January 21st**. This session will present the dynamic challenges in the law enforcement area and will demonstrate recent local approaches incorporating co-responders and alternative responders.
- Outreach:
 - Cuppa Joe with Paul: The last Cuppa Joe was held December 9th at the Bangs Community Center with special guest Comptroller Sonia Aldrich. We had a good turnout and were joined by Health Director Jennifer Brown.
 - Air Monitoring: In one of her final acts as Attorney General, now Governor Maura Healey announced funding for the installation of 10 new air quality monitors including one in Amherst. The new air quality monitors will expand the Pioneer Valley Healthy Air Network, a collaborative partnership with municipal, public health, and environmental leaders to provide important public health information and to support communities, in a

region that has been disproportionately impacted by environmental injustices in their effort to make the Pioneer Valley a healthier place to live. [Project Website](#)

- Here is some background:
 - The Greater Springfield area has been reported to be the #1 Asthma Capital in the US to live with asthma, according to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America. The Springfield Healthy Homes Asthma program and other community health worker asthma interventions in the region are helping to improve asthma outcomes is having an impact. There are still questions to be answered about the causes of asthma onset and asthma flare-ups.
 - Each of these sites will measure concentrations of particulate matter less than 2.5 µm (PM2.5) and ozone.
 - They will be using air sensors to measure PM2.5 and ozone concentrations. The air sensors will be able to point out where local pollutant concentrations are high and may identify source of pollution.
 - The data will be openly shared on the Pioneer Valley Air Monitoring Network website. Anyone, including but not limited to schools and hospitals, may access air quality data for local neighborhoods. One of the goals is to empower and educate residents of the region.
 - Here is a link to the Attorney General’s press release:
<https://www.mass.gov/news/ag-healey-expands-air-quality-monitoring-project-to-track-pollution-levels-in-pioneer-valley-communities>

COVID-19

- Update:
 - December and January winter holidays are beginning to wind down nationally, and although reported COVID metrics are flat due to holiday underreporting, experts predict respiratory virus case counts will increase due to resumed reporting and actual case counts, as people gathered around each other indoors.
 - Even though respiratory viruses spread year-round, experts predict they will continue to be elevated the next few months. Nationally, the ‘Triple Virus Threat’ of influenza, RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus), and COVID-19 is stressing the health care system with a severe RSV and influenza season and an increase in COVID hospitalizations and deaths. Globally, China is fighting a humanitarian ‘tragic battle’ as COVID spreads freely.
 - We are noticing a distinct uptick in absences due to one of these viruses among Town staff.
 - All these viruses can cause severe disease, the encouraging news is the same behaviors can help protect people from all three (plus others). We all have tools at our disposal, here are the CDC’s time tested, data driven steps to slow the spread of COVID, and other respiratory viruses:
 - Get vaccinated and stay up to date on your COVID and Flu vaccines. [Click here to find a vaccine with VaxFinders](#). There is no vaccine against RSV yet.
 - Know when to wear a [well-fitted mask](#) to help protect yourself and others.
 - Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces.
 - Use [Rapid Antigen Tests](#) to test for COVID before you visit, and after if symptomatic to prevent spread to others.
 - If you don’t take a test, you won’t know what to treat. There are tests for all three viruses, COVID, flu and RSV.
 - Stay 6 feet apart from others who don’t live with you.

- [Wash your hands often and for 20 seconds](#) with soap and water. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available.
- Stay home when you're sick.
- For flu and RSV and other viruses, clean surfaces such as toys, doorknobs and mobile devices.
- Vaccination:
 - The Bivalent booster is proving to be successful in reducing severe disease, especially for those 65 and older, by 84%, and mortality by 90%. There is now laboratory and real-world evidence that Fall boosters broaden protection, help against infection, protect against severe disease, and most likely provide longer protection. The bivalent vaccine booster works against the new subvariant – it is showing cross-immunity protection with XBB.1.5, even though it was directed at the BA.5 strain.
 - Unfortunately, bivalent booster vaccination rates are abysmal. 63% of Americans age 65+ have not had the recent bivalent booster, leaving them vulnerable. Why? Low uptake or vaccine fatigue may be due to a combination of trailing data, decreasing interest, confusion with schedule and availability, growing immunity of the population or rapid evolution of the vaccine and skepticism.
 - The Town helped coordinate and staff a DPH sponsored 'Family Friendly COVID Clinic' that offered a \$75 gift card for all vaccinated. It was held at the Bangs Community Center on December 5th and our Community Responders provided logistical support for this very popular clinic.
 - 463 people were vaccinated that day.
 - One kind family wrote the following note of thanks and I want to recognize the special efforts that were made by the Community Responders who helped them:
 - *Thank you so much for leading the efforts to get everyone and Amherst vaccinated against COVID-19.*
 - *Our family arrived today at the Boltwood Walk vaccine event with an appointment, however, thankfully, there were very many people who also had appointments at the same time! Our family celebrates this but participation in these kinds of events with long lines and a lot of waiting is very difficult for us because we have an adult son with autism and intellectual impairment whose behavior has been Pretty erratic for the past six months.*
 - *Today when we arrived, people in line ahead of us gently shared that the wait it would be one hour. Our family would not be able to do something like that, however as we turn to leave, one of the staff I believe from the Amherst health department ran after us. Literally, she ran!*
 - *She said wait, we want everyone to be vaccinated! She said we can see that some people have special circumstances. She very discreetly and kindly escorted us to a door away from the crowds and expedited our place in line. She even offered candy to our son, which was a huge help in getting him to wait a little longer.*
 - *The people who met us inside the facility were only kind. They were only gracious. They truly wanted to go out of their way to help us as a family get vaccinated.*
 - *I can honestly say that I have never had an experience like this before in the 30 years that we have been raising our son. No one has ever run after us inviting us to participate in anything. No one has ever kindly, graciously, and without judgment removed Barriers on our behalf.*

- *While many people have been tremendously supportive of our family and our son and done amazing things to include him in our community, in our schools, and in valued roles all around Amherst— and many people have made him welcome and have kindly inquired about his welfare. Today’s experience truly stands out.*
 - *I am so grateful to all of you. You’ve touched my heart and you’ve eased the way for our family. We are deeply moved by your concern for our health, the health of our community, and your generous, inclusive spirit!*
- A second clinic – again, with the \$75 incentive – was held at the Survival Center the following week. Again, our Community Responders assisted in managing the flow of people – in a rain storm.
- The Amherst Health Department will continue with Pfizer, Bivalent boosters every Thursday, 12:00 – 2:00 at the Bangs Community Center. Registration is preferred, walk in appointments are available.
- Later this month, there will be special vaccination clinic at the Middle School. The Health Department, working with the School Department and State Department of Public Health, hopes to vaccinate up to 400 additional people at this clinic.
- Testing:
 - Rapid Antigen Tests were distributed to high risk and social service partners during December.
 - The Town was able to obtain a fifth Rapid Antigen Test delivery from the State Department of Public Health. 10,170 kits = 20,340 tests are now being distributed by the Health Department. Other PPE will be included such as procedural masks, KN95 mask for adults and pediatric. With this shipment, Amherst will have received and distributed 76,140 tests to residents.
- Surveillance:
 - The CDC monitors [variant proportions](#) across the US, here in the Northeast, XBB.1.5 is rapidly becoming the dominant subtype. Experts explain the rapid spread suggests this strain is more transmissible, but there are other factors that may account for the spread such as waning immunity, indoor holiday gatherings and lack of mitigation strategies. Although the high transmissibility of XBB.1.5, there is still the question if it will cause worse outcomes such as severe illness or death.
 - Since PCR testing is significantly reduced, we cannot track raw case counts as previously done. Other key Public Health indicators remain important such as hospital capacity, deaths and other [State data](#), COVID wastewater levels are key to understand the burden of COVID in the Amherst community, and initiate interventions on whether levels are increasing or decreasing.
 - The wastewater testing program through the Department of Public Health and Biobot will be extended through the calendar year of 2023. Amherst’s Department of Public Works and Health Department provide samples and reports three times a week demonstrating the trend of COVID in Amherst.
 - Caution in interpreting results, the amount of virus that a person has in their stool and the length of time that they have virus in their stool varies. Because of this, the amount of virus measured in wastewater does not tell us total number of cases in the area and does not tell us the amount of increase or decrease in cases in communities (CDC).

- The wastewater test results is one of the most popular links on the Town’s website! Find Amherst’s wastewater testing results from Biobot [here](#), and DPH wastewater testing for Amherst and the State [here](#).

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

- **Administration and Finance**

- Human Resources:

- New Human Resources Director Melissa Loiodice-Walker began on December 19th. She has been actively meeting with department heads, staff, and other members of the community.
- With the endorsement from the Personnel board, we were able to budget for and implement the \$15 minimum wage in July 2022 (6 months ahead of the 2023 implementation requirement).

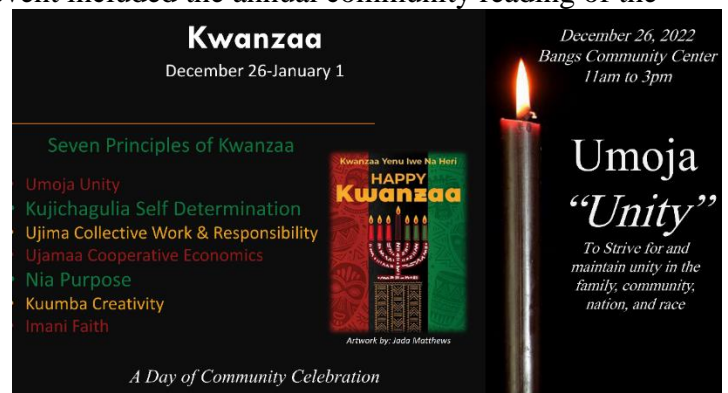
- Finance:

- ARPA:

- Family Outreach of Amherst, in Collaboration with the Town, has been allocated \$150,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), to help Amherst residents with overdue rent, mortgage, or utility bills. These funds will have a direct impact on our Towns’ residents, as most everyone in our community has been affected by COVID. Applicants must demonstrate that financial hardships are a result of COVID or the economic impacts of COVID. A minimum of 50% of the funds will be reserved for BIPOC, women, LGBTQ, or other marginalized communities. Financial ability will also be considered when awarding grants. Grants will be for a maximum of \$3,000 and accepted on a first come first serve basis, until funds are depleted. Residents should 1) download and [fill out the application](#), and then 2) contact Family Outreach of Amherst at (413) 548-1275 to schedule an appointment.
- The Town prepares quarterly reports on ARPA funding which are posted online here: <https://www.amherstma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/63921/Quarterly-Expenditure-Report---Period-Ending-93022> This is the report for the period ending September 30, 2022. The report for the period ending December 31, 2022 is in the works.

- DEI Department:

- Human Rights Day: The Human Rights Commission, with many members of the Town Council present, observed Human Rights Day on Saturday, December 10th on the North Common. The event included the annual community reading of the Declaration of Human Rights and the 2022 Human Rights proclamation read by Town Council.
- Kwanzaa: The DEI Department organized a well-attended Kwanzaa celebration at the Bangs Community Center on



December 26th. Many thanks to all who organized and to those who attended.

- **National Day of Racial Healing:** The DEI Department is organizing two events for the National Day of Racial Healing. Promoted by the Kellogg Foundation, we will be joining hundreds of other communities, schools, colleges, universities, – including the University of Massachusetts - businesses, and other organizations in initiating conversations designed to begin bridging the racial divide.
 - The first event is open to staff only. Members of the Town’s Core Equity Team and Community Responders will facilitate small group conversations for Town staff. We have asked that staff bring their curiosity, an open heart, and their brown bag lunch.
 - The second event is open to all community members and will occur on **January 17th** at the Survival Center from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- **Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day:** The DEI Department is organizing an event on Sunday, January 15th at 2:00 p.m. to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. King.



Join the Human Rights Commission to read the Town Council proclamation with a Bell Ringing Ceremony followed by a community reading and discussion of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr’s April 10, 1957 speech “A Realistic Look at the Question of Progress in the Area of Race Relations.” The reading of the proclamation will happen on Sunday, January 15th at 2:00 p.m. on the steps of Town Hall followed by the discussion in the Town Room. All are invited and encouraged to join in this timely discussion.

- **Self-Assessment Tool:**
 - The Department has developed self-assessment tools that Town departments are using to help the Town establish a baseline and benchmark in a number of areas through a DEI lens. Departments are being asked to review staffing, thinking about their operations, and suggesting professional development needs.
 - There are two self-assessment tools, the first asks departments to review the current EEO Data for their department. The second asks a series of questions related to diversity, equity and inclusion issues as they might appear in the work of municipal departments.
- **Flag Raising Policy:** The Department is developing a policy on flag raising in light of the recent court ruling against the City of Boston. This policy will be reviewed by the Town Attorney and will be submitted to the Town Council for its review and adoption. [Boston Flag Policy Court Decision Article](#)
- **Police Resident Oversight Board:** The Director has developed a draft timeline that would have a Resident Oversight Board begin in FY24. We will be seeking outside consulting support to create this new body. The development and implementation of such a Board would have budgetary implications that would be included in the FY24 Town budget, if approved by the Town Council.

- Reparations: The Massachusetts Municipal Association recently did a spotlight feature in its December issue of The Beacon covering the work of the Town's African Heritage Reparation Assembly. As the second community in the country to establish a fund addressing the historical and ongoing damage of structural racism, the Town of Amherst has since been examining what a reparations program could look like at the municipal level. <https://www.mma.org/amherst-explores-reparations-at-the-municipal-level/>
 - Economic Development:
 - All alcoholic beverages license: The Board of License Commissioners has requested applications for one available All Alcohol Off-Premises Liquor License ("package store" license). This is a very rare occurrence. The Board will review applications based on public need and the Board's regulations and in light of considerations set forth in the Amherst Master Plan, in *Ballarin v. Licensing Board of Boston*, and community feedback. Applications must be submitted to Amherst Inspection Services by 4:30 PM on Wednesday, February 22nd, 2023. Applications will be heard beginning on March 16th, 2023.
 - New Block Party: The Business Improvement District is looking into scheduling an Arts and Culture Block Party downtown on May 19th. The idea is to have a companion event to the Fall Block Party in the Spring that would focus on the rich offerings in the Town from our arts and culture communities. Stay tuned for more information.
 - New Business & Technical Assistance ARPA Grant Application: The second round of ARPA Grants for NEW Businesses and Technical Assistance. The Amherst BID continues to work closely with the Town on economic recovery, revitalization, and growth. Round 1 of grants was late summer of 2022. The application deadline for this second round is February 15, 2023. Applications will be reviewed using a scoring system and then by a committee between February 16 - 28. Funding will be released immediately upon award notice. Applicants can apply for ONE of the two grants:
 - NEW Business grants: These grants are to support small, brick and mortar, storefront businesses throughout the entire Town. Grants for new businesses will go up to \$10,000. To apply for a NEW business grant you MUST have a fully executed lease and business plan.
 - Technical Assistance grants: These funds are to assist with professional fees that are helpful to opening a business. These funds can be paid for services from architects, attorneys, internal systems, build-out needs, branding specialist for logos and web design etc. To apply for this grant you must have a preliminary business plan including concept, budget, management plan and have found space that would be suitable for your concept. A fully executed lease is not required to apply for this grant.
 - Events: Upcoming events include
 - Winterfest Kick-off on January 28th
 - Luminaria on February 4th
 - Fire and Ice Sculpture Festival on February 11th
- **Public Safety**
 - Fire:
 - The Fire Department was awarded a grant of \$24,952.76 from the Executive Office of Public Safety for firefighter safety equipment. The grant will provide cold water immersion suits and replacement hoses, nozzles, and valves.

- Three firefighters are projected to graduate from the Academy next week. They will then be able to serve as full-time paramedic-firefighters.
 - Police:
 - Three new officers are half-way through their 14 weeks of field training.
 - Four new officers are projected to graduate from the Academy on April 14th. They will then begin their 14 weeks of field training.
 - Community Responders Department:
 - The Department continues to develop its protocols, policies, and to respond to certain requests. we are still in training mode and learning from interactions that the responders encounter.
 - We continue to hold regular team meetings – a captains team to review data on a weekly basis and a leadership team that reviews policies, protocols, and procedures, equipment needs, dispatch decisions, etc.
- **Community Services**
 - Senior Center:
 - Outdoor Plaza: The Massachusetts Office on Disability, through its Municipal ADA Improvement Grant Program, awarded the Town \$155,512 to create an accessible outdoor plaza space outside the Bangs Center for use by the Senior Center and others. The Municipal ADA Improvement Grant Program is an annual grant program administered by the Office of Administration and Finance and the Massachusetts Office on Disability to fund capital improvements by municipalities to increase accessibility for people with disabilities.
 - Age-Friendly Community: The Town has become the 735th community to enroll in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities. Through the age-friendly program, the Town will work to become more livable and age-friendly by creating safer and more walkable streets, needed housing and transportation options, better access to key services, and opportunities for residents to participate in community activities.
 - New Van: The Senior Center has received a donation of a transport van from the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVRTA). We thank the PVRTA for its generous donation of the retired paratransit van. With an accessible van in place through this donation, Amherst Senior Services will have a way to transport those using walkers and wheelchairs, and the means with which to resume our medical ride transportation program. The Town has dedicated ARPA funds to support the operations and drivers of the new van.
 - Senior Spirit: The latest edition of the Senior Center’s newsletter can be found here: <https://www.amherstma.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/15205> If you haven’t reviewed the newsletter in a while, click the link to see the new look with easy to read text and a million activities.
 - CR Café: The Senior Center is starting a weekly CR Café, that stands for “Can’t Remember” café! Every Wednesday from 10am – 12noon, Town residents are invited to the Senior Center to enjoy company, entertainment, and some good treats!
 - Recreation Department:
 - Basketball: Nearly 70 young people are involved in youth basketball programs organized by the Recreation Department.
 - Cherry Hill: The Cherry Hill Golf Course is closed for the season. Staff are working with Amherst Nordic to put together a schedule for grooming trails when the snow arrives.

- Swimming: The Town’s new aquatics director is organizing swimming activities for the winter and spring. Winter swim lessons are being offered. She is organizing a “Masters Program” which will provide mid-day training for adults at the Hampshire College pool, provided as a courtesy to the community.
 - Theater: New ticketing software has been implemented to support the Amherst Theater shows in January. This year the show will be The Little Mermaid. Sets are being built at the Department of Public Works and performers are rehearsing. Performances are January 19-22 and 26-29 at Bowker Auditorium.
 - Winterfest: Recreation staff will be working with the Business Improvement District and Chamber of Commerce to bring light and activities to the darkest days of winter with a two-week celebration beginning January 28th with a kick-off event at Cherry Hill followed by Luminaria on the Town Common on February 4th, and Fire & Ice on the Town Common on February 11th.
 - Sheltering:
 - Permanent Shelter Site: I signed a Purchase and Sale Agreement to acquire 457 Main Street, formerly the site of the Amherst Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), for the purposes of developing a shelter for the unhoused, providing space for supportive/transitional housing and services, and building affordable housing with some directed toward veterans.
 - Craig's Doors: Craig’s Doors operates two locations, and both are currently at full capacity. One site is the Immanuel Lutheran Church that offers 23 beds, the other is the University Motor Lodge which offers 40 beds in individual rooms. The Craig’s Doors staff is working on obtaining funding for a housing navigator; also in conversation with PVTa regarding a possible partnership that will provide for collective purchasing of discount bus passes. The shelters are seeing an increase in covid at the shelter (providing isolation space on site). In other news, a guest at Craig’s Doors who has been residing off and on in the shelter for 10 years will be housed.
- **Conservation and Development**
 - Planning: The Department will be challenged to meet its mission as two Town planners have departed for exciting new jobs. We are recruiting new planners now.
 - Housing:
 - East Street/Belchertown Road: The Town is working with the chosen developer on a land development agreement.
 - Other Sites: Town staff are exploring other Town-owned property to determine its suitability for additional affordable housing.
 - Sustainability:
 - Electric Vehicle Charging Station: The Town received a \$43,000 grant to install a new DC Fast Charging station. This new Level 3 Charging Station will be located in the downtown area to be determined based on the infrastructure for electricity.
 - Residential Heat Pump Program: The Sustainability Director is working with the Energy and Climate Action Committee (ECAC) to develop a residential heat pump program utilizing the ARPA funding I set aside for members of the community.
 - Solar Bylaw:
 - The Town has contracted with GZA Environmental to develop a town-wide solar assessment for work being done by the Solar Bylaw Working Group (SBWG). The consultants have had introductory meetings with both the ECAC and the Solar Bylaw Working Group.
 - The SBWG has drafted an outline and begun to develop the solar bylaw.

- Hickory Ridge Solar:
 - The company installing solar on Hickory Ridge - AMP Energy - is completing all pre-construction requirements of their Zoning Board of Appeals Special Permit and their Conservation Commission Notice of Intent.
 - They hope to break ground in January. Town staff including those from Planning, Inspection Services, Fire, and Conservation are working to review final plans in preparation of the issuance of a Building Permit.
 - The solar array will include 6.44 mw of electricity and 3,500 kw of battery storage.
- Community Choice Aggregation (CCA): Amherst, Northampton and Pelham have hired Mass Power Choice to develop the CCA. They have provided the working group with an initial draft for review. Formulation of the Joint Powers Agreement is anticipated to happen prior to submission of the CCA application to the Department of Public Utilities (targeted for mid-December)
- BikeShare: ValleyBike removed bike stations for the winter.
- **Public Works**
 - Sidewalk Snow Removal: Snow and/or ice removal from sidewalks is the responsibility of the property owner. Depending on storm conditions, The Town may send a sidewalk plow around on major sidewalks to assist residents with this task. Once the Town machine has passed, the resident is responsible for maintaining the sidewalk in a passable condition.
 - Sculpture: Robert Frost sculpture was damaged by vandals and has been secured by the Department of Public Works until it can be repaired.
 - Shared Sewer Project with Hadley: The Town was awarded a \$155,000 grant through the Efficiency and Regionalization grant program to fund the design of a sanitary sewer connection for regional wastewater management between Amherst and Hadley. This project will finalize the design of a potential sewer force main connection between the Town of Hadley's sanitary sewer and the Town of Amherst's Waste Water Treatment facility. The Amherst Waste Water Treatment facility was designed and constructed in the late 1970's as a regional facility. To date the system receives flow from the Town of Amherst and part of Pelham.
 - Roads: Work has shifted to repairing potholes by public works crews.
 - Northampton Road: Caracas Construction has closed down major operations on Northampton Road for the winter. This project is part of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation roadway reconstruction project that extends between University Drive and South Pleasant Street.
 - West Pomeroy Lane: We anticipate this road will be paved in the first half of 2023.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

- Short-Term Event Uses of Town Commons (Section 1a of the Town Council Policy):
 - Sustainability Festival by Town Staff (South Common): April 22, 2023
- Short-Term Parking Requests (Section 2a of the Town Council Policy):
 - 14 Boltwood Avenue – January 3-4, 2023 – Grace Church for construction vehicles
- Short-Term Public Way Closures (Section 3b of the Town Council Policy):
- Placement of Road and Temporary Signs (Section 3d of the Town Council Policy):

MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

- Jones Library:
 - Residents are invited to share their thoughts on the kind of bathroom they think should be in the new, renovated Jones Library. Here is a link to the survey:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfRGSEe8xx6LuleHEPs_aQiuJ49IXVcHI-NpqOh98mS-j18Bw/viewform
 - See the schedule attached to the end of this Town Manager Report.
 - Up-to-the-minute updates can be found here:
<https://www.joneslibrary.org/buildingproject>
- DPW Building/Fire Building:
 - Staff continue to explore multiple options for a new site for the Department of Public Works.
- Elementary School Building Committee:
 - The Committee is very excited to share the initial (draft) video rendering of the entryway for the Elementary Building Project. Find it here:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HdVclXmr6O2o8pFoCGwVkcPUtVXMRvHZ/view>
 - The Elementary School Building Committee will meet three times in January to review and discuss the cost estimates: January 13, January 20, and January 27, all beginning at 8:30 a.m.
 - There will be Community Forums January 25 (8:30 AM) and January 26 (6:30 PM).
 - The Committee will make a presentation to the Town Council on Monday January 23rd at 5:30 p.m.
 - The Town Council will be asked to select a date for the debt exclusion override election in early February.

PROJECTS UPDATE

- Hickory Ridge:
 - The company installing solar on Hickory Ridge - AMP Energy - is completing all pre-construction requirements of their Zoning Board of Appeals Special Permit and their Conservation Commission Notice of Intent. They hope to break ground in January. Town staff including those from Planning, Inspection Services, Fire, and Conservation are working to review final plans in preparation of the issuance of a Building Permit.
 - Town staff are working towards the development of a land-use and management plan for Hickory Ridge which will outline various options for the types of activities and uses which can take place at Hickory Ridge and how the site can be maintained and managed to best serve the community and the sensitive habitat on the site.
 - Town staff are preparing an assessment of the existing structures to determine which are usable and which are not.
- Pomeroy Village MassWorks Grant: Caracas Construction will begin stormwater drainage installation work on West Street near the intersection of Pomeroy Lane.

- North Common Restoration/Main Street Parking Lot: The Town is putting the final touches on the plans for the North Common with the goal of putting a package out to bid in the coming weeks.
- North Amherst Library: The building is taking shape. Work continues and is close to being on schedule. The weather has proven to be cooperative to allow progress to continue.



UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- January 23rd – Town Council meeting
- February 6th – Town Council meeting
- February 27th – Town Council meeting
- March 6th – Town Council meeting
- March 20th – Town Council meeting

Town of Amherst

Jones Library

○ Owner Meeting

◆ Major Milestone

I. Schematic Design Phase			
1	Submit revise SD package to MBLC	◆	January 4, 2023
2	Anticipate MBLC approval		January 11, 2023
II. Design Development Phase		January 2023 thru May 2023	
1	Outreach Subcommittee - input on gender inclusive toilet partitions, balance of privacy &	○	January 16, 2023 to January 31, 2023
2	LBC / Design Subcommittee Meeting - Review VE list and Sustainability Goals	○	January 19, 2023
3	LBC / Design Subcommittee Meeting - Present Preliminary Landscape Design	○	January 26, 2023
4	LBC / Design Subcommittee Meeting - Present Interior Design Schemes, Confirm VE list & Sustainability Goals	○	February 2, 2023
5	LBC Meeting - Approve Interior Design Schemes, Confirm VE list & Sustainability Goals (if needed)	○	February 9, 2023
6	LBC / Design Subcommittee Meeting - Present Exterior Design (colors)	○	February 14, 2023
7	LBC Meeting - Approve Exterior Design (colors)	○	February 16, 2023
8	LBC / Design Subcommittee Meeting - Present Final Landscape Design	○	February 21, 2023
9	LBC Meeting - Approve Final Landscape Design	○	February 23, 2023
10	LBC Meeting - Report on progress (50% DD)	○	March 16, 2023
11	LBC Meeting - Report on progress (75% DD)	○	April 13, 2022
12	Issue DD Pricing Set	◆	May 5, 2023
13	Submit DD package to MBLC	◆	May 8, 2023
14	Anticipate MBLC approval		May 19, 2023
15	LBC Approval of DD package	○	June 5, 2023 to June 9, 2023
III. Construction Documents Phase		June 2023 thru November 2023	
IV. Bidding Phase		November 2023 thru February 2024	
V. Construction Phase		February 2024 thru September 2025	