



## TOWN OF UPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

### Office of the Town Manager

# MEMORANDUM

TO: BOARD OF SELECTMEN

FROM: JOSEPH LAYDON, TOWN MANAGER

SUBJECT: TOWN MANAGER REPORT FOR MAY 2, 2023

DATE: MAY 2, 2023

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The following is the Town Manager's Report for the May 2, 2023 Board of Selectmen Meeting.

**Town Manager:** The Town Manager reviewed the following topics:

Annual Town Meeting Resources – In addition to the Town Manager's FY 24 Budget Recommendation, the Finance Committee FY 24 Report and the Annual Report are available online. A Town Meeting Preview Video was recorded to be played on our access channel and our YouTube channel.

Town Hall Bathrooms – Replacement Toilets have been installed and waste lines were inspected and appeared to be clear. An email went to town departments and boards/committees that the restriction of Town Hall has been rescinded.

Town Website – A subcommittee of town staff recently reviewed a mock-up of the website and provided feedback to the consultant to revise the mockup for approval.

**Treasurer Collector:** Employee Forward, the Town's employee portal, is live and employees can get their paystubs electronically. Elected Official stipends were processed and sent out. After Town Meeting, prior year stipends for five will be processed. The Town is implementing electronic onboarding, starting with Recreation's seasonal employees.

**Assessor:** 118 Main Street closed and sold the business. A new restaurant will open in a month or two, though no date has been scheduled. There is new legislation proposed for land that is developed for solar fields. If land is taken out of Ch. 61, the Town has a first right of first refusal. If the Town does not exercise that right, and it is then developed for solar there is a 10 year look back on taxes. The Department is working on the valuation of the GURR.

**Conservation:** The Commission is finishing up their review of Governors Landing. The Commission is also working with 162 Main Street on encroachment of endangered species and Rivers Act.

**Town Clerk:** Two vacant board positions are on the ballot; one Finance Committee and one Planning Board. She heard of someone organizing a write-in campaign for the Planning Board vacancy. The deadline for absentee voting is Monday at noon. Third Graders will be visiting Town Hall on June 6th.

**Fire:** Three recruits are going to the Call Fire Academy in June. They are self-paying, and one has EMT experience. The Dept. completed their second inspection of 6 Milford Street. The building owner is undertaking safety improvements, but still more work needs to be done. The Dept. got through burning season, there were higher costs associated with brush season than was anticipated. Increase will be offset by reduction in expenses.

**Police:** The Dept. purchased 4 radar speed signs to be installed by DPW in June. Two will be deployed at either side of Upton Center. Officer Bianca graduated from the Lynnfield Police Academy and a swearing in ceremony will be scheduled for an upcoming Board of Selectmen meeting.

**Board of Health:** Hazardous Waste Day scheduled for July 15th including shredding.

**Library:** 162 people participated in the book walk on Saturday. The Spring Library Book sale is Saturday May 13th. Library is also going to be selling trash bags once they are available at the Community Center.

**Elder & Social Services/COA:** With moving into the UCC, new fitness programs are being offered and the department welcomed two new bus drivers. The ESS Dept will be hosting a training from Mass Office of the Blind on the use of phones and technology. They will schedule a similar program for the hearing impaired. This week a pediatricist will be coming to the Community Center for a clinic.

**Building:** Code visited the Community Center for an inspection and a few things remain that need to be addressed. The Dept. continues to deal with a lot of zoning issues and enforcement actions.

**Planning:** The Dept. is working with the owners of 33 Milford Street that had started un-permitted demolition. Staff is working with them to get permitting in place. A zoning question from a resident about solar farms and is citing case law that they can be built anywhere in town. Legal assistance will be needed. The James Road 40B decision is being prepared to finalize that project this month. Potential for the decision for Governors Landing to be approved next month. Planning Board voted to support Article proposing the increase in ZBA membership but not to support the 5G article. Staff is working on the MassWorks Grant application, which will cover water and sewer extension to Governor's Landing, The deadline is June 2nd.

**TM Office/Human Resources:** Open enrollment for health insurance and benefits is now open and closes May 25. Currently hiring for ESS/COA department specialist. Preparing for dedication of the UCC on June 14, 2023.

Thank you.