

MEMORANDUM

To: Bedford Town Council
From: Rick Sawyer, Town Manager
Date: November 13, 2020
Re: **Manager's Report**



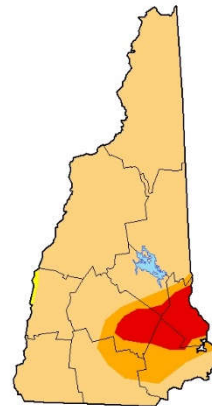
News & Noteworthy:

- 1) COVID-19 Pandemic – Bedford unfortunately has seen an increase in the number cases recently with **69 current COVID-19 positive patients**. It is my understanding that **our current cases are a result of significant community spread** and not outbreaks in long term care facilities as it had been in the past with our high numbers. We need to continue to be a cautious as possible when out in the public. I strongly encourage all residents to follow the CDC and State of NH recommendations for protecting yourself including wearing a face covering and washing hands as often as possible. **The State's guidelines for traveling out of New England now recommends quarantining for 14 days or 7 days then having a negative test when you return.** Many states now require you to quarantine for 14 days when you travel from New Hampshire. Organizationally we continue to have employees out due to being positive or having family members who are or due to exposures to positive people. We are also working collectively to assist those with students at home or in hybrid situations.
- 2) Bedford Cares – continues to provide an incredible service to members of our community who are in need of assistance with such things as shopping and picking up of prescriptions. If you need their support please reach out to them at 792-1319 or on <https://www.facebook.com/BedfordNHCares/>.
- 3) On Tuesday November 3rd the community came together with a total of 14,775 ballots cast for the General Election which represents approximately 75% of our 19,762 people on our voter checklist. 52.3% or 7,727 of the ballots were done through the absentee process with the remaining 7,185 ballots cast in person. I want to thank our Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, Moderator, Supervisors of the Checklist, Election Workers, Police Department, Department of Public Works, CERT, and the School District for all of their hours of preparation, weeks of working to making absentee voting as easy as possible, long hours of service on Election Day, and for the continued hours involved in closing out the election. In 2016 Bedford saw a turnout of 81% or 13,657 total ballots cast. During 2021 the Supervisors of the Checklist will be completing a "purge" of the checklist in compliance with state regulations to remove those who are no longer eligible to remain on the checklist.
- 4) The Tax Rate has been set at \$20.02 up from \$18.95 or \$1.07 (5.65%). The Town is up to \$4.24 from \$4.14 last year. The school saw an increase of \$1.06 increasing their rate from \$11.65 to \$12.71. County is down \$0.05 to \$1.07. State Ed is down \$0.04 to \$2.00. Tax bills are due December 1st.

5) Drought – **Bedford** and a much of southern NH **has been reduced one level but remains in the condition defined as “Severe Drought”** with nearly all of the rest of the state being in “Moderate” or “Severe Drought”. Southeastern NH still remains in “Extreme Drought”. We are aware of Bedford residents having water supply problems. It is imperative that all residents and businesses implement water conservation measures immediately like only watering vegetable garden crops. Merrimack Village Water District has implemented an outdoor watering ban which impacts those in Greenfield Farms, Cabot Preserve, Jenkins Road, and the Brick Mill Road area who receive their water from Merrimack through Pennichuck Water Works.

**U.S. Drought Monitor
New Hampshire**

November 10, 2020
(Released Thursday, Nov. 12, 2020)
Valid 7 a.m. EST



Intensity:
 None
 D0 Abnormally Dry
 D1 Moderate Drought
 D2 Severe Drought
 D3 Extreme Drought
 D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

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droughtmonitor.unl.edu

- 6) PFAS – NHDES and Saint Gobain are testing private wells in southeastern Bedford now that the PFAS standards have been adopted into law. It is unknown how long it will take before we know what solutions will be proposed. If you have received a request for well testing it is critical that you sign the agreement and return the paperwork as soon as possible.
- 7) The period for citizen petition zoning amendments runs between November 9th and December 9th. Anyone interested submitting a petition is encouraged contact the Planning Department for assistance.
- 8) BCTV and WBNH have received a total of 7 awards from their regional associations for their outstanding work in 2019. Congratulations to their entire team!
- 9) November 18th – December 18th Santa’s Mailbox will be available in the lobby of the Town Office Building, 24 North Amherst Road for Express Mail to the North Pole. Santa’s helpers have asked that you be sure to print your name and address clearly on your letter.
- 10) The Bedford Winter Parking Ban began on November 1st, which requires no parking on public roads between midnight and 8 AM.

Project Updates:

- 1) Right to Know Request – The Planning Staff, Town Manager team, and IT Manager have spent numerous hours responding to Right to Know requests filed by the proponents of the Market and Main development.
- 2) 2020 Roads Program – Work continues with the major focus being on Gage Girls Road and completing final pavement on roads that we initiated this year prior to winter conditions. Mill and overlays will be completed on Beals Road and sections of McAllister Road. Drainage

work will be completed on Olde English Road, Rockwood Court, Stowell Road, Clifton Road, Beech Street, and Winchester Lane as long as weather permits.

- 3) Sportsman Field reconstruction has been initiated with all necessary demolition having been completed and grading and drainage work initiated.
- 4) The Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Emergency Operations Plan updates both continue to have meetings and will be completed over the next several months.
- 5) Personnel: A candidate for Building Code Official has accepted our offer and should be starting in early December. Our top candidate for the IT position has turned down the offer and the position has been re-advertised. We have one opening in the Library for a part time clerk. We are currently fully staffed in Police and Public Works. We will be advertising for our 4 firefighter and the 4 shift Captain positions that come available on January 1st.

Events:

- November 26-27 – Thanksgiving Holiday, Town Office, Library, Transfer Station closed. The Library closes at 5 PM on the 25th.

Upcoming Meetings:

- November 17th – 7:00 PM, Zoning Board
- **November 18th – 7:00 PM, Town Council**
- November 19th – 11:30 AM, Telecommunications Subcommittee
- November 19th – 7:00 PM, Energy Commission
- November 23rd – 7:00 PM, Planning Board
- November 24th – 7:15 AM, Highway Safety Committee
- November 24th – 7:00 PM, Conservation Commission
- December 1st – 7:00 PM, Historic District Commission
- December 7th – 7:00 PM, Planning Board
- December 8th – 7:00 PM, Parks & Recreation Commission
- December 10th – 7:45 AM, Water & Sewer Advisory Committee
- December 15th – 7:00 PM, Zoning Board
- **December 16th – 7:00 PM, Town Council**
- December 17th – 11:30 AM, Telecommunications Subcommittee
- December 17th – 7:00 PM, Energy Commission
- December 21st – 7:00 PM, Planning Board
- November 22nd – 7:15 AM, Highway Safety Committee
- December 22nd – 7:00 PM, Conservation Commission

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