

MEMORANDUM

To: Bedford Town Council
From: Rick Sawyer, Town Manager
Date: September 3, 2021
Re: **Manager's Report**



News & Noteworthy:

- 1) The news of the double homicide at the Country Inn is horrific and my condolences go out to the families and friends of those involved. I truly want to express my appreciation to our Police, Fire, Communications, and CERT teams for their outstanding work and response to this call. Chief Bryfonski has called the response, "textbook" and is extremely proud of how his personnel responded at all levels. Part of their great response is due their internal makeup as individuals and dedication to the job and also in part to the excellent training that has been provided by the Council and taxpayers of Bedford. Responding to an event like this and the fatal accident that occurred on the Turnpike the following week compound mentally and physically on our first responders and I want them to know how happy I and our residents are to have them working in support of our community.
- 2) National Building and Code Staff Appreciation Day – Annually on September 1st we take a moment to thank our Building Department Staff for all of their efforts that go into making and keeping Bedford as a safe place to live and work. I truly want to thank Code Official Matthew Lavoie, Building Inspector Terry Carter, Permit Technician Peg Graveline, and Executive Assistant Liz Duclos for their efforts all year long.
- 3) **A Special Election for State Representative will be held on September 7, 2021 from 7AM-7PM at the Bedford High School.** This Special Election is being conducted to fill the seat vacated with the passing of former Representative Dave Danielson. There are two candidates Linda Rae Camarota (R) and Catherine A. Rombeau (D). Absentee ballots can be requested through the Town Clerk's office.
- 4) The Tax & Motor Vehicle Windows have returned to regular hours even though we have one window clerk vacancy. The vacancy and training of new staff will extend transaction times therefore residents are encourage to make use of the payment options that don't require you to come into the office building by following the links below:

[MV Renewals - Offsite Payment Options](#)

[Real Estate Tax - Offsite Payment Options](#)

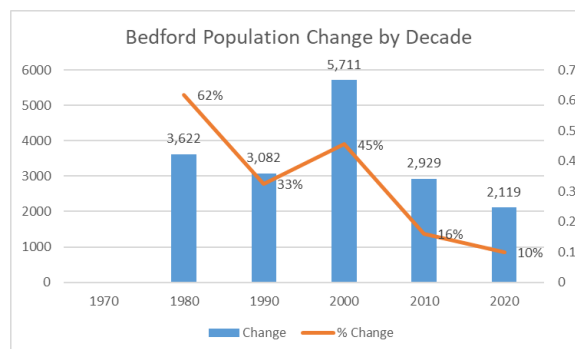
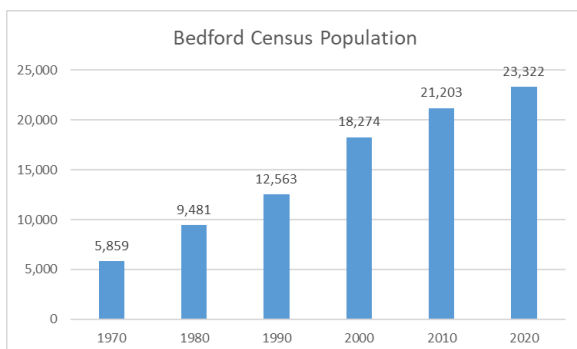
- 5) COVID-19 Pandemic – **Bedford currently has 20 current COVID-19 positive patients** and has had a total of 2,179 cases. **There are currently MORE active cases in Bedford and the State that at the same time last year.** 54.1% of NH residents are currently vaccinated with Bedford having 57.9% fully vaccinated residents and 63.0% with one dose. The Delta Variant has been labeled as being significantly more contagious than the earlier COVID-19 strains however vaccines are extremely good at keeping someone from contracting the virus and if

there is a breakthrough then it generally keeps the patient from being extremely ill. I strongly encourage anyone who can be vaccinated to do so. We will monitor the situation and put mask recommendations or mandates in place for our public buildings as warranted. Currently masks are encouraged in all buildings and required at the Safety Complex. **The State's Vaccine Van will be available during the Special Election, September 7, 2021 at the High School from 7 AM to 2:30 PM. No appointment needed.**

- 6) PFAS Contamination – On June 29th NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) notified the Town that we are a potential responsible party for the apparent pollution of groundwater in and around 10 Meetinghouse Road from the use and storage of Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) (commonly known as firefighting foam) at the former fire station (now BCTV) at 10 Meetinghouse Road. NHDES is requiring the Town to conduct a Focused Site Investigation that must be completed by a professional engineer who has been retained and who has started work. The investigation will include documenting the history of AFFF use and storage, abutting well testing, the potential installations of ground water monitoring wells, and potential solutions for those impacted. If you live in the area and receive a letter from Nobis Engineering requesting to test your water please respond as soon as possible. Bottled water is being provided to those already identified as being impacted while the study is completed and they determine if well water treatment or connection to the public water system is their preferred solution. The State's consultant for the use of ARPA funds has not yet been able to determine if the funds can be used to improve contaminated private water systems.
- 7) PFAS Contamination – NHDES and Saint Gobain are testing a large number of private wells in southeastern Bedford but unfortunately they have not announced any remediation steps yet while they wait for more data. If you have received a request for well testing from Golder Associates it is critical that you sign the agreement and return the paperwork as soon as possible.
- 8) PFAS Contamination – The DPW team continues to work on a water main extension project for those residents and businesses impacted by PFAS contamination along Bedford Center Road between North Amherst Road and Primary Plaza that are outside of the Saint-Gobain and former Fire Station study areas. A preliminary cost estimate has been developed with Pennichuck Water Works and a request for grant funding through NHDES is being pursued.
- 9) 2021 Revaluation - The Assessing Department along with their consultant team have completed the revaluation process after holding 213 hearings (down from 280 in 2019) with concerned property owners. Assessor Irvine provided a full update on the value changes at the August 11, 2021 Council meeting which is available to watch on demand through the BCTV website and it where it was reported that the median residential increase will be approximately 19% and commercial will be 9% for an overall average of 17%. These numbers reflect the continued strong value and interest of people wanting to live and work in Bedford and the extraordinary housing market in the region.

- 10) The Student Parking Program – There are 186 Town spaces available and 181 names were provided from the High School lottery that did not get spaces on campus. This is 9 more names than last year, but it appears many did not have a license and therefore are ineligible for a Town permit as 22 spaces remain available on a first come first served basis.
- 11) Amtrak has announced plans that they would like to provide passenger rail service between Boston, MA and Concord, NH with new stations in Nashua, Merrimack, Manchester, and Concord. What is not clear is how this might impact NHDOT announced plans to develop passenger rail with the MBTA. It is also not entirely clear if the stop servicing the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport will be in Bedford or Merrimack.
- 12) Bedford resident Morgan Stickney won two Gold Medal at Paralympic Games in Tokyo Japan in the 400m freestyle and the 4x100m medley relay swimming races representing the USA.
- 13) The Citizens Police Academy unfortunately have been postponed until the spring of 2022.
- 14) The Bedford Pool and Splash Pad are open through Labor Day with open swim between 4-6:30 PM on weekdays and Noon-5 PM on weekends and holidays.
- 15) The Bedford Farmers Market continues on Tuesdays from 3-6 PM until October at the Murphy’s Taproom parking lot, 393 Route 101.
- 16) The 2020 Census population data has been released which shows that Bedford grew by 10% from 21,203 to 23,322 over the last decade.

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Population	5,859	9,481	12,563	18,274	21,203	23,322
Change		3,622	3,082	5,711	2,929	2,119
% Change		62%	33%	45%	16%	10%



Project Updates:

- 1) 2022 CIP & Budget – The Department Heads have completed their proposed budgets and review meetings will be held with the Manager and Finance team. Work continues on revenue projections, fund balance standing, and tax impacts of requested elements and programs. The CIP will be provided to the Planning Board at their September 13th meeting who can provide individual comments to the Manager through staff at the meeting or directly after the meeting.

The CIP will be presented to the Council on September 22nd, but remains a flexible document throughout the budget process.

- 2) Master Plan – The Master Plan is on track to be reviewed by the Planning Board in September with a public hearing to follow.
- 3) Personnel – There are currently 2 openings in the Highway Department and 2 others are out on medical leave. The Police Department has 5 patrol and 1 Captain openings and 5 offers for patrol are pending with 4 of them being already certified officers. There is one open position in communications and one offer is pending. The Finance department has filled one window clerk position, however the second position is now open and advertised. The Library clerk position has been filled. The Deputy Town Clerk position is vacant which can only be filled by Bedford residents. Those interested should contact the Town Clerk for more information.

Events:

- **September 4th – Library closed in honor of Labor Day**
- **September 6th – Town Office, Library & Transfer Station closed in honor of Labor Day.**
- **September 7th – State Special Election, 7 AM- 7 PM, Bedford High School**
- **September 7th – Vaccination Van, 7 AM- 2:30 PM, Bedford High School, no appointment needed.**
- September 11th – Guided Bird Walk, Benedictine Park, 9-11 AM. See Library Facebook/website for details.
- September 14th – BioBlitz Walk for adults & teens, 3-4 PM at the Bedford Library and in conjunction with our Conservation Commission. A BioBlitz is a species scavenger hunt where volunteers help find and record data on as many different species as possible in a certain area and a short amount of time. It's a fun, easy way to get outside and explore nature! See Library Facebook/website for details.
- September 18th – BioBlitz Walk for kids & families, 10-11 AM at the Bedford Library and in conjunction with our Conservation Commission. See Library Facebook/website for details.
- September 23rd – Fire & Police Department combined Open House, Safety Complex, 55 Constitution Drive, 5-7 PM.
- October 3rd – 1st Family Trail Run, Educational Farm at Joppa Hill, 10 AM. (Registration required)
- October 3rd – Fall Fair, Educational Farm at Joppa Hill, Noon - 4 PM.
- October 16th – Clean Up Bedford Fall Event, 9 AM – 3 PM.

Upcoming Meetings:

- **September 8th – 7:00 PM, Town Council**
- ~~September 9th – 7:45 AM Water & Sewer Committee~~
- September 13th – 7:00 PM, Planning Board
- September 14th – 7:00 PM, Historic District Commission
- September 17th – 11:30 AM, Telecommunications Subcommittee
- ~~September 21st – 7:00 PM, Zoning Board~~
- **September 22nd – 7:00 PM, Town Council**
- September 23rd – 7:00 PM, Energy Commission
- September 27th – 7:00 PM, Planning Board (workshop)
- September 28th – 7:15 AM, Highway Safety Committee
- September 28th – 7:00 PM, Conservation Commission
- September 29th – 7:00 PM, Parks & Recreation Commission

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