

Town Manager Report to the Board of Selectmen – Mon., January 4, 2021

Town Street List – Town Clerk Carin Kale reminds residents that the 2021 Street List/Census Forms were mailed at the end of December and that residents should return them as soon as possible.

As a reminder to residents: Your information provides Town departments with up to date data to use for grant applications, programming, state aid and is used to determine residency and benefits. The forms can be mailed or left in the Town Hall drop box.

CARES Act Funding – Congress has extended the deadline for cities and towns to use CARES Act funding, so the Town will have access to this funding to continue with its on-going pandemic response efforts. Specifically we have used this funding locally to support increased staffing in the Town’s public health nursing function to assist with local COVID tracing and assisting residents with COVID related questions. The Town has also used CARES Act funding to provide for needs based testing for local residents who either have symptoms or have been identified as a close contact to a positive COVID patient.

As a result of the extension on the use of these funds the programs will be continuing over the next several months as needed.

COVID Testing at Miles River Middle School – Following on the announcement above, the Town announces new COVID-19 testing dates for this week on Wednesday, Jan. 6 and Saturday, January 9, residents should check out the Town website for details and registration forms for testing.

Also, we expect to be adding other testing dates at least through February in the coming week or so, so please check the Town website frequently.

Information About Compost Program – I would also like to use this space to ask residents to check out the Town website for information on the rollout of the Town’s new organics ban in the trash stream.

We realize that residents have had a lot of questions and that still some may not have heard about the new program. Please visit the Town website at www.hamiltonma.gov for information about how and when the program will begin to be rolled out, as well as forms and information about how to make sure you have the bins and materials you need to comply.

Budget Season – Our department heads are now full immersed in the preparation of budgets for the FY’22 year, which will begin on July 1, 2021. Department heads will begin meeting with their Finance and Advisory Committee liaisons in mid-January and the Town is already working closely with the HW Regional School District and our partners in other shared programs with other communities.

We want to remind residents that due to the onset of the Coronavirus Pandemic last spring and the ensuing economic slowdown at the time, the Town cut budgets and reduced services across many departments. However, those reductions in programs and services are not sustainable in the long term. We hope to be able to reintroduce the level of services that were provided prior to the recession in the coming fiscal year.

Shared Winter Streets and Spaces Grant Application – The Town will be applying for approximately \$100,000 to the state’s Shared Winter Streets and Spaces grant program this week, with an eye toward activating winter uses at Patton Park and connecting the park to our downtown shopping district.

The grant application was developed in collaboration between our Public Works and Recreation Departments and the Hamilton Development Corporation, with assistance from local resident Ted Acworth and management of the grant process from Pat Shannon, the Town’s Assistant to the Town Manager and Community Preservation Coordinator.

Master Plan Process – Town staff will be procuring the services of a professional planning consultant to assist us with a Master Plan, with the goal of beginning the 12-18 month planning process in mid-winter.

This will be a comprehensive planning process that is designed to help give our local leaders the information they need to determine how to move Hamilton forward in the next 25-30 years. The plan will look at zoning, natural resources, education, economic development, public services, emergency response and visioning for the Town, and will be broken down into

Public/Private Partnership at Patton Homestead – Work continues at the Patton Homestead to make the second and third floors suitable for a shared office working environment, in preparation for our planned partnership with Inc.ubate Co-working.

Some improvements to some bathrooms on those floors, as well as some minor electrical upgrades and accessibility considerations are scheduled to take place this week and rooms on the upper floors are already being painted.

The Town is utilizing a mix of volunteer and Town staff along with some professional trades and members of Inc.ubate themselves helping to get the spaces ready. None of the costs of these projects is utilizing local tax dollars, as the entire project is being handled within the Patton Enterprise Fund.

We are still aiming for a late January opening.