

# Memo

**To:** Board of Selectmen

**From:** James J. Ferrera, Town Administrator

**cc:** Karen Dusty, Administrative Assistant

**Date:** February 6, 2025

**Re:** Monthly Departmental Report (January 2025)

---

## Administrator

- FY26 Budget Calendar and Budget instructions were sent out to all departments on 1/7. Budget meetings with the Town Administrator are scheduled to start on 2/10.
- New selectmen's desks have been ordered from MassCor and a quilt box was installed on the main corridor of the Shepard Building to properly display a commemorative Town quilt. Both projects are being funded through the Town's remaining ARPA funds.
- The Senior Center kitchen project is 90% completed, we are awaiting on custom side tables to be installed from Singer Kittredge. The entire kitchen was down for less than one week.
- Encore fire protection completed the critical repairs needed to the boxing room in the Shepard Building.
- The first department head / board chair meeting for the new year happened on January 7<sup>th</sup>. Deb Williams from MIIA risk management was in attendance.
- Attended the annual Massachusetts Municipal Association Connect 351 conference in Boston with Selectmen Eichacker. This three-day conference helped the Town earn valuable renewal credits for its liability insurance.
- Participated in teacher contract negotiations at Quaboag as the Town's representative.
- Interviewed and recommended a candidate to hire as a Operator / Mechanic for our Sewer department.
- Worked with the Police Chief in evaluating all the candidates for the position of Police Sergeant, with recommending Officer Charlie Williams for the position.

## Financial Departments

- The Finance Team met on 1/15 to discuss the FY26 budget process and to get an update from the financial departments on progress that is being made by addressing the auditor's comments on his management letter last year.
- W-2s were made available to all employees starting on 1/15.
- On 1/28 received the resignation of the Clerk in the Assessor's office.
- Third quarter FY25 real estate and personal property tax bills are due by February 3, 2025.

### **Total Monthly Tax Collections as of 1/31/2025 are \$1,891,628.58**

- a) Real Estate \$1,534,789.10
- b) Personal Property \$239,870.13
- c) Motor Vehicle Excise \$6,978.86
- d) Interest and fees \$7,059.28
- e) Sewer liens \$88,995.04
- f) Registry clears \$1,140.00
- g) Mobile Home Parks \$348.00
- h) MLC fees \$300.00
- i) Water liens \$12,148.17

## Conservation Commission

- The Commission is in process of setting up a petty cash account.
- Paquette brother construction received a permit to build a home within the 50 ft buffer of a wetland on Cronin Road.
- ASD solar (the site is in West Brookfield and Brookfield) has applied for a permit to create an access road for national grid to install poles on an adjacent lot in Warren on Cronin Rd. This road will go up to, but not connect with, the solar complex it is serving. They are requesting permission to widen the existing driveway to 20 feet, which is just a few feet away from either side from two wetland systems. The Commission hired a peer reviewer to confirm the delineation of the wetlands. Also, recently (early January) hired a stormwater peer review to check the Project's stormwater design to ensure that it follows stormwater regulations overall and as it relates to the wetland's protection act. The access road mostly follows an existing driveway, but they are expanding to 20 feet-and again this access road comes within 5 feet of two wetland systems. The existing driveway was allowed because the home was built in the 1940s. prior to the wetland's protection act. On the service, it seems straightforward - simple. This, however, is not an ideal project and their submission is missing important data that stormwater designers generally would not have overlooked.
- The MACC Conference is coming up early March-It will be Karen's first conference! It's all that Holy Cross and is always Quite informative!